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INQUIRIES

- For further information about these and related statistics contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070, or refer to contacts listed at the back of this publication.

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Preface

Australian Social Trends 2008 is the 15th edition of an annual series that presents information on contemporary social issues and areas of public policy concern. By drawing on a wide range of ABS statistics, and statistics from other official sources, *Australian Social Trends* describes aspects of Australian society, and how these are changing over time. It is designed to assist and encourage informed decision-making, and to be of value to a wide audience including the public, those engaged in research, journalism, marketing, teaching and social policy, as well as anyone interested in how we live today and how we've changed over recent decades.

The material presented in *Australian Social Trends 2008* is organised into nine chapters. As in previous editions, each of the first seven chapters represents a major area of social interest (i.e. population, family and community, health, education and training, work, economic resources, and housing), with an eighth chapter covering other areas of interest (e.g. transport and communication). The ninth chapter provides international comparisons for a number of these areas, comparing Australia with major OECD countries, our closest neighbours, and our trading partners.

Following the release of 2006 Census data, most chapters in this edition contain at least one article with a regional focus. Topics covered by these articles include towns of the mineral boom, people with a need for assistance, and participation in education. We have presented some articles which expand and update analysis of topics examined in previous editions. For example, in this edition, such articles cover voluntary work, trade union membership and Internet access. There are also articles on topics of interest not previously examined, such as families with a child with a disability, and complementary therapies. We have now published 453 articles across all 15 editions of *Australian Social Trends.* These articles are listed in the cumulative index.

The publication also includes national and state summary tables which present key social indicators in each of the seven major areas of social concern. Each set of tables is accompanied by a summary of key points and graphs for selected indicators.

In addition to thanking the people throughout the ABS who compiled, wrote and edited *Australian Social Trends 2008*, I would like to thank Gerry Redmond (Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales) and Siobhan Austen (Curtin University of Technology) for writing an article for the Economic resources chapter. I would also like to thank various organisations that assisted by providing data and advice, in particular the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.

The ABS welcomes readers' suggestions on how the publication could be improved. To convey your views or to ask for more information, please contact the Director of Social and Progress Reporting at the address below.

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Introduction

ABS framework for social statistics

The broad framework ABS uses to develop and organise its social statistics program was published in *Measuring Wellbeing: Frameworks for Australian Social Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 4160.0) in 2001. This framework describes the scope of social statistics and the linkages both within this field of statistics and with economic statistics. It also describes commonly used definitions, classifications and counting rules and, where relevant, is consistent with national accounting standards. Its systematic approach supports the identification and analysis of data needs and helps to ensure that a comprehensive and well balanced array of data items are collected across the social statistics program.

The concept of wellbeing is central to the framework. This multifaceted concept recognises a range of fundamental human needs and aspirations, each of which can be linked to an area of social concern. These needs and aspirations are the focus of government social policy and service delivery, and are reflected in many of the structures of government.

...key dimensions

A number of key areas of social concern form one dimension of the framework. The areas identified are: population; family; health and community; education and training; work; economic resources; housing; crime and justice; and culture and leisure. Each of these areas is explored through a series of questions:

- How does this area relate to the wellbeing of both individuals and society?
- What are the key social issues that need to be informed in this area?
- What groups are at risk of disadvantage?
- What are the social and economic transactions that affect individual wellbeing?
- What detailed frameworks relate to this area?
- What definitions, classifications and units of measurement will result in effective social indicators for the area?
- What data sources relate to this area?

	Areas of social concern								
Selected population groups	Population	Family and community	Health	Education and training	Work	Economic resources	Housing	Crime and justice	Culture and leisure
Unemployed people	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Retirees	✓					✓			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lone parents	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Children	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Migrants	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
Older people	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
People with low income	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
People with a disability	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Crime victims	✓		✓					✓	

Another dimension of the framework focuses on a variety of population groups which are of special interest to the community and to governments. These groups include, for example, older people, children, youth, families with children, the unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities, carers, recipients of various government benefits, low income earners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people whose language background is other than English.

These two basic dimensions of the framework are brought together in the form of a matrix showing areas of social concern by population groups. The diagram on the previous page illustrates this matrix, showing how each area of concern can be related to selected population groups and how different areas of concern can be interconnected. The scope of social statistics in Australia is broadly defined by reference to this matrix and the relationship of its elements to various aspects of human wellbeing, both at the level of the individual and for society as a whole. The ABS aims to provide information about the elements of this matrix over time through its work program activities.

...application of the framework in *Australian Social Trends*

Australian Social Trends (AST) is structured according to the framework's areas of concern. It draws on a wide range of data, sourced both from ABS and other agencies, to present a contemporary picture of Australian society. For each area of concern it provides a set of national and state/territory indicators which describe how key aspects of wellbeing in that area have been changing over time and how circumstances differ between states/territories. It also provides comparisons with other countries.

AST aims to:

- inform decision-making, research and discussion on social conditions in Australia, social issues of current and ongoing concern, population groups of interest, and changes in these over time, by drawing together up-to-date social data and analysis from both ABS and other sources, and incorporating readily understood commentary about the statistics
- support the monitoring and review of progress towards social goals, changes in social conditions, and levels of population wellbeing, by presenting a comprehensive set of social indicators on a regular basis.

Each year, the selection of topics for the articles aims to address the current or perennial social issues which may be informed using recent data, and to provide answers to key social questions across the range of areas of concern. The suite of articles changes each year, with some topics refreshed as new data become available. The aim of this approach is for each edition to remain responsive to contemporary concerns, while accumulating a more comprehensive picture of Australian social conditions across editions. To enhance this objective, articles often include cross references to other relevant articles in the current edition, and in previous editions.

AST aims to increase the accessibility of information on important social issues and so a key aspect of the publication is its readability. Information is deliberately presented in non-technical language that can be readily understood by the general reader. Statistics are organised to illustrate specific issues, and to highlight the meaning behind the data and the main patterns and exceptions. As far as possible, technical terms are defined separately from the flow of the main story, but are included within each article, so each article can stand alone.

In keeping with these aims, AST articles focus strongly on people and social issues. Each article aims to tell a story, providing a sense of the social and historical context in which a particular issue is embedded, moving from the general to the specific, and using statistics to bring light to the issue. Articles aim to balance 'what' analysis (relating the relevant statistical facts surrounding the issue, e.g. number, characteristics, change over time, sex, age and other differences), with 'why' analysis (providing context and explanation by highlighting relevant social changes and events and the chronologies of these). For example, each article may examine current circumstances, how circumstances have changed over time, how different groups of people have been affected, and how various factors may be linked to observed trends.

Features of *Australian Social Trends*

Structure

Seven core areas of social concern form the chapters of each edition: population, family and community, health, education and training, work, economic resources, and housing. An additional chapter covers other areas of social concern or interest, such as culture and leisure, transport, crime and justice, and the environment. Occasionally an AST edition will focus on a theme. This edition has a regional issues theme.

Chapters

Summary tables — The summary tables at the beginning of each chapter present a range of statistics that summarise the key aspects of each area. They show at a glance changes that have taken place at a national level over a decade, and differences across states and territories for the most recent year. Each set of tables is accompanied by a summary of key points and graphs for selected indicators.

Articles — Each chapter contains several articles which focus on specific social issues or population subgroups. They are designed to stand alone, while complementing one another in terms of content. Most articles contain references to other AST articles that provide more background or in-depth discussion of a topic. Endnotes at the end of each article direct readers to further Australian and international references on specific issues.

Sources and definitions — The main data sources used in an article, and definitions of key terms used, generally appear on the first page of the article, in the upper right hand corner. Data sources and definitions for the summary tables are provided directly after these tables.

Other features

International comparisons — A set of international summary tables covering the areas of population, health, education and work are located towards the end of the publication. These tables enable the reader to consider Australia's international standing in relation to various key social indicators.

Cumulative topic list — This index lists all articles, from all AST editions, under topic subheadings.

AST seminars — The dissemination of AST includes two-yearly seminars held in most states and territories. These are based on articles from the most recent edition supported by related statistics, with a state or territory focus where feasible. For information contact the client liaison area in ABS state/territory offices.

Access — All editions of AST can be accessed via the ABS website. The website version includes Excel spreadsheet versions of the summary tables. To purchase a hard copy of the publication, call 1300 135 070. For more information, see p. 234 of this edition.

...social indicators and progress

AST complements the five-yearly ABS publication, *Measures of Australia's Progress* (MAP) (ABS cat. no. 1370.0), and the annual electronic publication, *Measures of Australia's Progress: Summary Indicators* (ABS cat. no. 1383.0.55.001). MAP presents a suite of indicators for reporting on economic, social and environmental progress and considers the interrelationships between these aspects of life. MAP focuses on progress, while AST presents a detailed set of social indicators and profiles diverse aspects of society in short articles.

Inquiries about these statistics

General inquiries about the content and interpretation of statistics in this publication should be addressed to:

Director
Social and Progress Reporting Section
Social Analysis and Reporting Branch
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2616

Telephone Canberra (02) 6252 7187

Inquiries about the availability of more recent data from the ABS should be directed to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070, or email client.services@abs.gov.au. A great deal of information can be found on the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in this publication.

Australia, states and territories of Australia

Aust.	Australia
NSW	New South Wales
Vic.	Victoria
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
WA	Western Australia
Tas.	Tasmania
NT	Northern Territory
ACT	Australian Capital Territory

Other abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABSCQ	ABS Classification of Qualifications
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AIRC	Australian Industrial Relations Commission
ALLS	Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ASCO	Australian Standard Classification of Occupations
ASFR	Age-Specific Fertility Rate
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
AST	Australian Social Trends
BITRE	Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics
CHINS	Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey
CO_2-e	Carbon dioxide equivalent
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DALYs	Disability-adjusted life years
DEWHA	Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
EHPI	Established House Price Index
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GL	Gigalitre
GSS	General Social Survey
HES	Household Expenditure Survey
HILDA	Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia
ICD-10	International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision
ICD-10-AM	International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, Australian Modification
IHO	Indigenous Housing Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MAP	Measures of Australia's Progress
ML	Megalitre
NATSIHS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2004–2005
NDSHS	National Drug Strategy Household Survey
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHPA	National Health Priority Area
NHS	National Health Survey
NZ	New Zealand

Other abbreviations continued

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSTN	Public Switched Telecommunication Network
RA	Remoteness Area
SAR	Special Administrative Region
SD	Statistical Division
SDAC	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SEIFA	Socio Economic Indexes for Areas
SEW	Survey of Education and Work
SIH	Survey of Income and Housing
SLA	Statistical Local Area
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UC	Urban Centre
UITP	International Union of Public Transport
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WEU	Western European Union cities
WHO	World Health Organisation

Symbols and usages

The following symbols and usages mean:

kg	kilogram
Kbps	kilobits per second
m	metre
n.a.	not available
n.e.c.	not elsewhere classified
n.f.d.	not further defined
n.p.	not published
n.y.a.	not yet available
no.	number
r	figures or series revised since previous edition
'000	thousand
'000m	thousand million
billion	thousand million
$	dollar
$m	million dollars
$b	billion dollars
$US	American dollar
%	per cent
*	estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution
**	estimate has a relative standard error of greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use
. .	not applicable
—	nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and totals.

Unless otherwise stated, where source data used included a non-response category (i.e. not stated), data in this category have been excluded prior to the calculation of percentages. Total numbers shown with such percentages include the number of non-responses.

Each chapter contains a national summary table which provides, where possible, ten years of data for a particular indicator. These time series are designed to give a long-term overview and readers should be cautious when interpreting small year to year variations, as some may not be statistically significant.

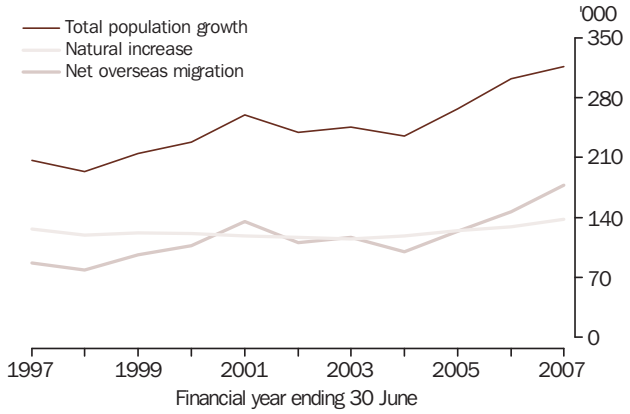
Unless otherwise stated, all data from the Census of Population and Housing are based on the location of people on census night, i.e. their place of enumeration.

Unless otherwise stated, all data from the Census of Population and Housing exclude overseas visitors.

Population

Population: national summary — key points

Components of Australia's population growth

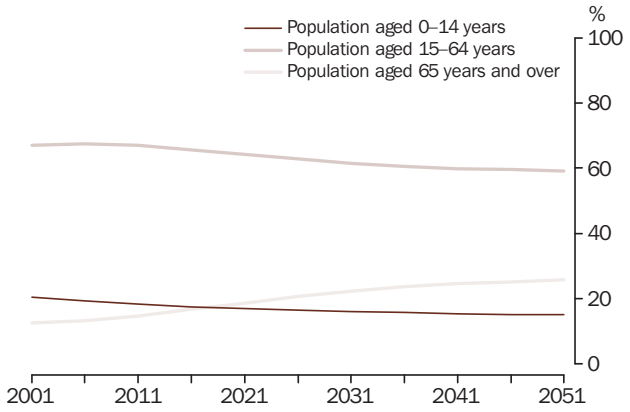


- Australia's total population grew by 2.5 million people in the 10 years from June 1997 to be 21 million people at June 2007.
- Annual growth fluctuated during this period with the smallest increase in 1997–98 (193,700 people) and the greatest increase in 2006–07 (315,700 people).
- Natural increase contributed 51% to total population growth over the 10 years to June 2007. In 2006–07, natural increase contributed 138,100 people, which is 11,700 more than in 1996–97 (126,400 people).
- Net overseas migration fluctuated over the ten year period to June 2007. In 2006–07, net overseas migration added 177,600 people to the population, compared with 87,100 in 1996–97.

Source: Australian Demographic Statistics (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

For further information see *Population: national summary*, page 4, indicators 18, 21–22.

Australian population projections(a)(b)(c) by age



- In 2007, the estimated population was 21.0 million people which is projected to increase to 21.7 million people by 2011 and 28.2 million people by 2051.
- The age composition of Australia's population is projected to change considerably.
- In 2007, people aged 65 years and over made up 13% of Australia's population. By 2051 this proportion is projected to double, to reach 26%.
- In 2007, those aged under 15 years made up 19% of Australia's population. This is projected to decrease to 15% by 2051.
- In 2051, the proportion of Australia's population aged 15–64 years is expected to be 59%, a decrease from 67% in 2007.

(a) At 30 June.
(b) Series B projection.
(c) Data for 2001 are based on estimated resident population. Data from 2006 onwards are based on population projections.

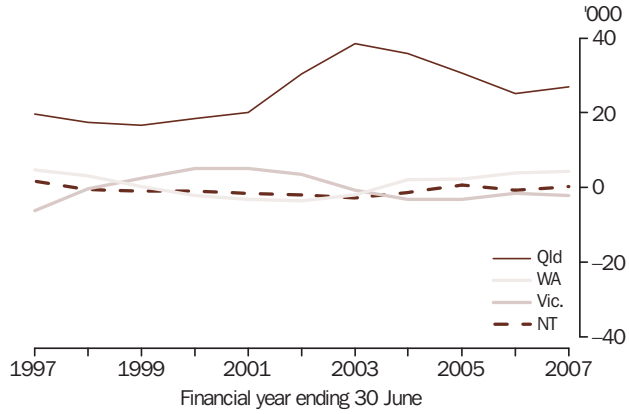
Source: Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories (ABS cat. no. 3201.0) and *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101* (ABS cat. no. 3222.0).

For further information see *Population: national summary*, page 4, indicators 10–12 and 32–34.

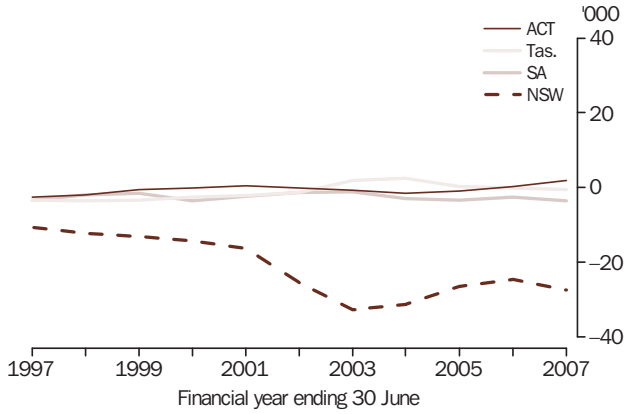
Population: state summary — key points

Interstate migration

HIGHEST AVERAGE INTERSTATE MIGRATION



LOWEST AVERAGE INTERSTATE MIGRATION



Source: Australian Demographic Statistics (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
For further information see *Australian Social Trends: Population, 2008,* data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 23 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

- Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, Queensland consistently experienced the highest net interstate migration, with the greatest net increase occurring in 2002–03 (38,400 people). In 2006–07, the net interstate gain for Queensland was 27,000 people.
- New South Wales consistently experienced the greatest net population losses due to interstate migration during the period 1996–97 to 2006–07, with net losses of 10,700 people in 1996–97 and 27,300 people in 2006–07. The greatest net loss for New South Wales was in 2002–03 (32,700 people).

Population: national summary(a)

COMPOSITION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1 Total population	'000	18 518	18 711	18 926	19 153	19 413	r19 653	r19 898	r20 133	r20 400	r20 701	p21 017
2 Male population	'000	9 203	9 295	9 397	9 505	9 631	r9 755	r9 878	r9 999	r10 135	r10 290	p10 452
3 Female population	'000	9 314	9 417	9 529	9 648	9 783	r9 898	r10 020	r10 134	r10 265	r10 411	p10 566
4 Indigenous population(b)	'000	423.4	432.2	441.1	449.9	458.5	466.9	475.4	484.0	492.7	p517.2	n.y.a.
5 Born overseas(c)	%	23.3	23.2	23.1	23.0	23.1	r23.3	r23.6	r23.8	r24.2	r24.6	p25.0
6 Born in United Kingdom	%	6.2	6.1	6.0	5.9	5.8	r5.7	r5.6	r5.6	r5.5	r5.5	p5.5
7 Born in Europe	%	13.0	12.8	12.5	12.3	12.0	r11.9	r11.7	r11.6	r11.5	r11.4	p11.3
8 Born in East, Central or Southern Asia	%	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.5	r5.8	r6.0	r6.3	r6.6	r6.9	p7.3
9 Population living in capital cities(d)	%	63.5	63.6	63.6	63.6	63.6	r63.7	r63.7	r63.7	r63.6	r63.6	n.y.a.
10 Population aged 0–14 years	%	21.2	21.0	20.9	20.7	20.5	r20.3	r20.1	r19.9	r19.7	r19.6	p19.4
11 Population aged 15–64 years	%	66.7	66.7	66.8	66.9	66.9	r67.0	r67.2	r67.3	r67.4	r67.5	p67.5
12 Population aged 65 years and over	%	12.1	12.2	12.3	12.4	12.5	r12.6	r12.7	r12.8	r12.9	r13.0	p13.1
13 Population aged 85 years and over	%	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	p1.6
14 Median age of total population	years	34.4	34.8	35.1	35.4	35.7	36.0	36.2	36.4	36.7	r36.6	p36.8
15 Median age of Indigenous population(b)	years	20.5	20.5	20.4	20.4	20.5	20.6	20.7	20.8	21.0	p21.1	n.y.a.
16 Sex ratio of population aged 0–64 years	ratio	102.2	102.0	101.8	101.7	101.5	r101.6	r101.6	r101.6	r101.6	r101.6	p101.6
17 Sex ratio of population aged 65 years and over	ratio	77.5	77.9	78.4	78.7	79.2	79.8	r80.3	r80.8	r81.4	r82.0	p82.6

POPULATION GROWTH	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
18 Total population growth	'000	206.9	193.7	214.6	227.5	259.9	r239.3	r245.5	r234.7	r267.1	r301.7	p315.7
19 Births(e)	'000	253.7	249.1	250.0	249.3	247.5	247.4	247.4	252.1	255.8	r263.4	p272.9
20 Deaths(e)	'000	127.3	129.3	128.3	128.4	128.9	130.3	132.2	133.2	131.4	r134.0	p134.8
21 Natural increase(e)	'000	126.4	119.9	121.7	120.9	118.6	117.2	115.2	118.9	124.5	r129.4	p138.1
22 Net overseas migration(f)	'000	87.1	79.2	96.5	107.3	135.7	110.6	116.5	100.0	123.8	r146.8	p177.6
24 Population growth rate	%	1.13	1.05	1.15	1.20	1.36	r1.23	r1.25	r1.18	r1.33	r1.48	p1.53
25 Contribution of net overseas migration to total growth	%	42.1	40.9	45.0	47.1	52.2	r46.2	r47.5	r42.6	r46.3	r48.6	p56.3

MIGRATION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
27 Total settler arrivals(g)	'000	85.8	77.3	84.1	92.3	107.4	88.9	93.9	111.6	123.4	131.6	140.1
28 Skilled settler arrivals	%	23.0	33.6	33.2	35.1	33.3	40.5	41.0	46.2	43.0	45.2	43.4
29 Family settler arrivals	%	42.6	27.3	25.6	21.6	18.8	26.3	29.9	26.5	26.9	26.4	26.5
30 Humanitarian settler arrivals	%	11.5	11.4	10.4	7.9	7.1	7.6	10.2	9.3	10.7	9.2	8.7

PROJECTIONS — SERIES B	Units	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051	2101
31 Total population	'000	21 699	22 808	23 871	24 873	25 773	26 536	27 169	27 704	28 170	30 595
32 Population aged 0–14 years	%	18.3	17.5	16.9	16.5	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.2	15.1	14.8
33 Population aged 15–64 years	%	67.1	65.7	64.3	62.8	61.5	60.5	59.9	59.6	59.1	57.8
34 Population aged 65 years and over	%	14.6	16.8	18.7	20.7	22.4	23.7	24.6	25.2	25.8	27.4
35 Population aged 85 years and over	%	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.8	3.3	4.2	4.8	5.3	5.8	6.6
36 Median age of total population	years	38.5	39.6	40.7	41.8	42.8	43.7	44.4	44.9	45.2	46.1
37 Population living in capital cities	%	63.9	64.1	64.3	64.4	64.7	64.9	65.2	65.4	65.7	n.a.

(a) Includes Other Territories.

(b) Data for 1997 to 2001 are experimental estimates for the Indigenous population, based on the 2001 Census. Data for 2002 to 2005 are experimental projections of the Indigenous population (low series), based on the 2001 Census. Data for 2006 are preliminary experimental estimates of the Indigenous population, based on the 2006 Census.

(c) Includes country of birth not stated.

(d) Data for 1997–2001 are based on the 2001 Census. Data for 2002–2006 are based on the 2006 Census. All data are based on 2006 Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) boundaries.

(e) Data are based on year of occurrence up to 2006. Data for 2007 are based on year of registration.

(f) These estimates contain a break in time series. Estimates from 30 June 2006 use an improved methodology and are not comparable with estimates for earlier periods.

(g) Includes special eligibility and non-program migration in addition to family, skilled and humanitarian migration.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–17 and 31–37 are at 30 June.
Data for indicators 18–30 are for the financial year ending 30 June.

Population: state summary

COMPOSITION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.(a)
1 Total population	'000	2007	p6 889	p5 205	p4 182	p1 585	p2 106	p493	p215	p340	p21 017
2 Male population	'000	2007	p3 414	p2 577	p2 089	p783	p1 065	p243	p112	p168	p10 452
3 Female population	'000	2007	p3 475	p2 628	p2 093	p802	p1 041	p250	p103	p171	p10 566
4 Indigenous population(b)	'000	2006	p148.2	p30.8	p146.4	p26.0	p77.9	p16.9	p66.6	p4.0	p517.2
5 Born overseas(c)(d)	%	2001	24.8	24.6	18.0	21.2	28.5	10.8	16.1	22.9	23.1
6 Born in United Kingdom(c)	%	2001	4.6	4.7	5.3	8.9	11.6	5.0	3.9	5.8	5.8
7 Born in Europe(c)	%	2001	10.7	13.7	8.7	16.0	17.4	7.7	7.4	12.4	12.0
8 Born in East, Central or Southern Asia(c)	%	2001	7.4	6.3	2.9	2.9	5.4	1.1	4.4	5.8	5.5
9 Population living in capital cities(e)	%	2006	r62.8	r73.0	r44.5	r73.1	r73.8	42.0	r54.3	99.9	r63.6
10 Population aged 0–14 years	%	2007	p19.3	p18.8	p20.2	p18.1	p19.8	p19.6	p24.1	p18.6	p19.4
11 Population aged 15–64 years	%	2007	p67.0	p67.7	p67.6	p66.7	p68.4	p65.6	p71.0	p71.7	p67.5
12 Population aged 65 years and over	%	2007	p13.6	p13.5	p12.2	p15.2	p11.9	p14.8	p4.9	p9.7	p13.1
13 Population aged 85 years and over	%	2007	p1.7	p1.7	p1.5	p2.1	p1.4	p1.8	p0.3	p1.1	p1.6
14 Median age of total population	years	2007	p37.0	p36.9	p36.2	p38.9	p36.4	p39.1	p31.1	p34.6	p36.8
15 Median age of Indigenous population(b)	years	2006	p20.6	p21.6	p20.3	p21.5	p21.6	p20.9	p22.6	p21.3	p21.1
16 Sex ratio of population aged 0–64 years	ratio	2007	p101.2	p100.9	p101.8	p101.4	p104.7	p100.3	p107.7	p100.3	p101.6
17 Sex ratio of population aged 65 years and over	ratio	2007	p81.4	p81.2	p86.8	p79.0	p85.7	p81.8	p115.2	p81.8	p82.6

POPULATION GROWTH	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.(a)
18 Total population growth	'000	2006–07	p71.9	p76.9	p90.5	p16.3	p46.7	p3.4	p4.3	p5.6	p315.7
19 Births(f)	'000	2006–07	p90.2	p65.9	p54.6	p18.7	p28.6	p6.6	p3.7	p4.5	p272.9
20 Deaths(f)	'000	2006–07	p45.9	p34.0	p24.6	p12.0	p11.8	p4.0	p1.0	p1.5	p134.8
21 Natural increase(f)	'000	2006–07	p44.3	p31.9	p30.0	p6.7	p16.8	p2.6	p2.8	p2.9	p138.1
22 Net overseas migration	'000	2006–07	p54.9	p47.2	p33.5	p13.1	p25.5	p1.3	p1.3	p0.8	p177.6
23 Net interstate migration	'000	2006–07	-27.3	-2.2	27.0	-3.6	4.4	-0.5	0.2	1.9	n.a.
24 Population growth rate	%	2006–07	p1.05	p1.50	p2.21	p1.04	p2.27	p0.70	p2.04	p1.69	p1.53
26 Net interstate migration rate	%	2006–07	-0.40	-0.04	0.66	-0.23	0.21	-0.09	0.11	0.57	n.a.

MIGRATION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
27 Total settler arrivals(g)	'000	2006–07	43.8	34.7	28.6	10.1	19.8	1.0	0.8	1.3	140.1
28 Skilled settler arrivals	%	2006–07	39.0	45.2	31.1	64.8	57.4	38.3	36.5	40.6	43.4
29 Family settler arrivals	%	2006–07	35.2	29.2	17.3	17.6	19.0	24.5	34.4	38.7	26.5
30 Humanitarian settler arrivals	%	2006–07	9.6	9.5	4.9	12.2	8.3	25.2	16.8	7.4	8.7

PROJECTIONS — SERIES B	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
31 Total population	'000	2051	8 743	6 574	6 899	1 581	3 165	453	350	402	28 170
32 Population aged 0–14 years	%	2051	15.3	14.6	15.3	13.8	14.9	14.8	21.5	15.3	15.1
33 Population aged 15–64 years	%	2051	59.0	59.1	59.4	56.3	59.5	53.9	66.9	61.9	59.1
34 Population aged 65 years and over	%	2051	25.7	26.3	25.4	29.9	25.6	31.3	11.6	22.8	25.8
35 Population aged 85 years and over	%	2051	5.7	6.0	5.3	7.3	5.7	7.5	1.4	5.3	5.8
36 Median age of total population	years	2051	44.9	45.5	45.2	48.5	45.3	49.8	35.0	42.4	45.2
37 Population living in capital cities	%	2051	64.2	76.7	48.6	76.2	77.5	48.5	66.4	n.a.	65.7

(a) Includes Other Territories.

(b) Data for 2006 are preliminary experimental estimates of the Indigenous population, based on 2006 Census.

(c) State and territory data only available in census years. Updated data on state and territory distribution of Estimated resident population by country of birth based on 2006 Census are expected to be released in early 2009.

(d) Includes country of birth not stated.

(e) Data for 1997–2001 are based on the 2001 Census. Data for 2002–2006 are based on the 2006 Census. All data are based on 2006 Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) boundaries.

(f) Data for 2007 are based on year of registration.

(g) Includes special eligibility and non-program migration in addition to family, skilled and humanitarian migration.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–17 and 31–37 are at 30 June.
Data for indicators 18–30 are for the financial year ending 30 June.

Population: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–3, 18–26	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
4, 15	*Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population* (ABS cat. no. 3238.0).
5–8	*Migration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3412.0).
9	*Regional Population Growth* (ABS cat. no. 3218.0).
10–14, 16–17	*Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories* (ABS cat. no. 3201.0).
27–30	Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Settler Arrivals 1996–97 to 2006–07, Australia, States and Territories*.
31–37	*Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101* (ABS cat. no. 3222.0).

Population: definitions

Births

the birth of a child, who, after delivery, breathes or shows any other evidence of life such as a heartbeat. Birth estimates may differ from estimates given in the Family and Community chapter of this publication, which are based on the year in which the birth was registered.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Deaths

death is the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life after birth has taken place. The definition excludes deaths prior to live birth. Death estimates may differ from estimates given in the Health chapter of this publication, which are based on the year in which the death was registered.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

East, Central and Southern Asia

includes the countries of North-East, South-East and Southern and Central Asia.

Reference: *Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)* (ABS cat. no. 1269.0).

Estimated resident population (ERP)

the official measure of the population of Australia based on the concept of residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality or citizenship, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents who are overseas for less than 12 months. It excludes overseas residents who are in Australia for less than 12 months.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Europe

includes the countries of North-West, Southern and Eastern Europe.

Reference: *Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)* (ABS cat. no. 1269.0).

Family settler arrivals

migrants who have been sponsored by a relative who is an Australian citizen, or permanent resident of Australia, under the family stream of the migration program.

Reference: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Settler Arrivals 1996–97 to 2006–07, Australia, States and Territories.*

Humanitarian settler arrivals

comprise: those who arrive under the refugee program (which provides protection for people who have fled their country because of persecution); those who arrive under the special humanitarian programs (those suffering persecution within their own country or who have left their country because of significant discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights); and those who arrive under the special assistance category (groups determined by the Minister to be of special concern to Australia and in real need, but who do not come under the traditional humanitarian categories. It includes those internally and externally displaced people who have close family links in Australia).

Reference: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Settler Arrivals 1996–97 to 2006–07, Australia, States and Territories.*

Indigenous population

people who identify, or were identified by another household member, as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin or both. Data referring to the size of the Indigenous population are experimental estimates in that the standard approach to population estimation is not possible because satisfactory data on births, deaths and migration are not generally available. Furthermore, there is significant intercensal volatility in census counts of the Indigenous population due in part to unexplained growth in the number of people identifying as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin or both.

Reference: *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS cat. no. 3238.0).

Long-term arrivals and departures

long-term arrivals comprise overseas visitors who intend to stay in Australia for one year or more (but not permanently) and Australian residents returning after an absence of one year or more overseas. Long-term departures comprise Australian residents who intend to stay abroad for one year or more (but not permanently), and overseas visitors departing who stayed one year or more in Australia.

Reference: *Migration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3412.0).

Median age

for any distribution the median value is that which divides the relevant population into two equal parts, half falling below the value, and half exceeding it. Thus, the median age is the age at which half the population is older and half is younger.

Reference: *Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories* (ABS cat. no. 3201.0).

Natural increase

the excess of births over deaths during the year.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Population: definitions continued

Net interstate migration

the difference between the number of people who have changed their place of usual residence by moving into a given state or territory and the number who have changed their place of usual residence by moving out of that state or territory during a specified time period. The difference can be either positive or negative. The net interstate migration rate expresses this as a proportion (per cent) of the population at the beginning of the year.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Net overseas migration

is net permanent and long-term overseas migration, adjusted for change in traveller duration intention and multiple movements.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Other territories

includes Jervis Bay Territory, Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Permanent arrivals

comprise travellers who hold migrant visas, New Zealand citizens who indicate an intention to settle, and those who are otherwise eligible to settle.

Reference: *Migration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3412.0).

Permanent departures

are Australian residents (including former settlers) who on departure state that they are departing permanently.

Reference: *Migration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3412.0).

Population growth

for Australia, is the sum of natural increase and net overseas migration. For states and territories, population growth also includes net interstate migration. After the census, intercensal population growth also includes an allowance for intercensal discrepancy.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Population projections

the ABS uses the cohort-component method for producing population projections of Australia, the states, territories, capital cities and balances of state. This method begins with a base population for each sex by single year of age and advances it year by year, for each year in the projection period, by applying assumptions regarding future fertility, mortality and migration. The assumptions are based on demographic trends over the past decade and longer, both in Australia and overseas. The projections are not predictions or forecasts, but are simply illustrations of the change in population which would occur if the assumptions were to prevail over the projection period. A number of projections are produced by the ABS to show a range of possible future outcomes. The base year for these projections is 2004.

Reference: *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101* (ABS cat. no. 3222.0).

Sex ratio

the number of males per 100 females.

Reference: *Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories (*ABS cat. no. 3201.0).

Skilled settler arrivals

the skill stream component of the migration program is designed to contribute to Australia's economic growth. Settlers under this program meet a demand in Australia for their particular occupational skills, outstanding talents or business skills.

Reference: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Settler Arrivals 1996–97 to 2006–07, Australia, States and Territories.*

Total settler arrivals

consist largely of those who arrive under the Migration and Humanitarian programs and those who are not required to seek a visa before travelling (mostly New Zealand citizens). These programs include the following categories: the family stream; the skilled stream; special eligibility migrants; refugees; special humanitarian and special assistance migrants.

Reference: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Settler Arrivals 1996–97 to 2006–07, Australia, States and Territories*.

Population distribution

Between 1996 and 2006, the population in Australia's big cities grew faster (1.6% per year) than the national average (1.2%), while the number of people living in Australia's remote areas fell.

Australia's population is spread across a diverse range of places, from large metropolitan cities to isolated, outback locations. The distribution of the population is an important issue as it influences policies around service provision, economic performance and the socio-economic wellbeing of communities. Between 1996 and 2006, Australia's population grew by 2.4 million people. As the population grows, its distribution and composition changes.

Population distribution

In 2006, Australia's population reached 20.7 million people. More than two-thirds of people lived in Major Cities (68%) and the remainder (32%) were in Regional and Remote areas. The proportion of the population living in each of the Remoteness Areas (broad geographical areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness – see box on this page) varied considerably across the states and territories. For most of the large states, including New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, people were concentrated in the Major Cities. Queensland had a relatively high proportion of its population in the Inner and Outer Regional areas (37%) compared with the other large states. All of the people living in the Northern Territory were located in either Outer Regional areas (including Darwin) (55%), Remote areas (22%) or Very Remote areas (23%).

Data sources and definitions

The analysis in this article is based on the preliminary estimated resident population (ERP) data for 30 June 2006, based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Remoteness Area (RA) is a structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). It classifies areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into six broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. As remoteness is measured nationally, not all Remoteness Areas are represented in each state or territory. The six Remoteness Areas are: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia; and Migratory. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these names with 'Australia' omitted. For further information about Remoteness Areas see Chapter 8 of *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), July 2007* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0).

Population growth

Between 1996 and 2006, Australia's population grew by 2.4 million people, an average annual growth rate of 1.2%. During this decade, the population in Major Cities grew at a faster rate than the national average with an annual average growth rate of 1.6%, followed by Inner Regional areas (0.8%). In contrast, the population in Outer Regional areas remained stable and the population

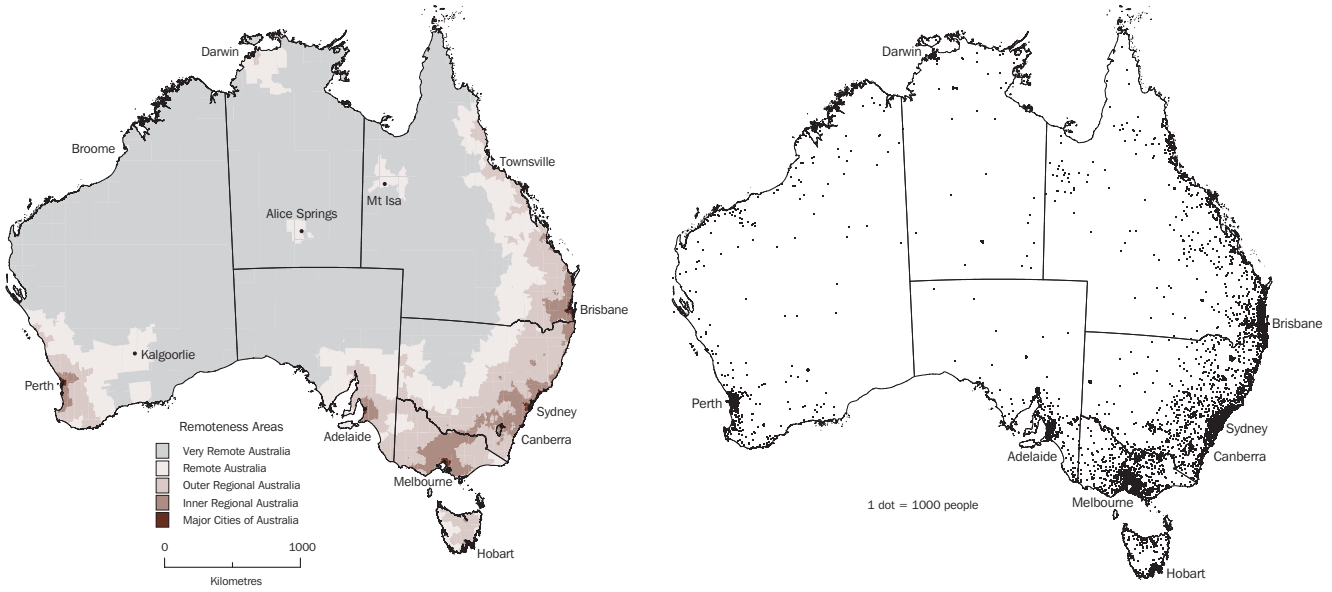
Distribution of the population across Remoteness Areas — 30 June 2006

	Major Cities	*Inner Regional*	*Outer Regional*	*Remote*	*Very Remote*	*Total*
State or territory	%	%	%	%	%	'000
New South Wales	72.6	20.3	6.5	0.5	0.1	6 817.2
Victoria	74.8	20.2	4.9	0.1	. .	5 128.3
Queensland	59.6	21.9	15.2	2.1	1.2	4 091.5
South Australia	72.7	12.0	11.5	2.9	0.9	1 568.2
Western Australia	71.5	12.5	9.3	4.5	2.3	2 059.0
Tasmania(a)	. .	64.7	33.2	1.5	0.5	489.9
Northern Territory(b)	. .	. .	54.8	21.7	23.5	210.7
Australian Capital Territory	99.8	0.2	. .	. .	. .	334.2
Australia(c)	**68.4**	**19.7**	**9.5**	**1.5**	**0.8**	**20 701.5**

(a) Hobart is classified as Inner Regional.
(b) Darwin is classified as Outer Regional.
(c) Includes Other Territories.

Source: ABS preliminary Estimated Resident Population, based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Remoteness Areas and population distribution — 30 June 2006



Source: ABS preliminary Estimated Resident Population, based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

declined in Remote (–0.4%) and Very Remote (–0.3%) areas during the decade to 2006. The population declines in these areas were particularly evident in areas that have been affected by drought. For example, the New South Wales local government areas of Moree Plains and Walgett declined by 1,700 (–2.1%) and 1,100 people (–2.9%) respectively between 2001 and 2006. Moree Plains recorded the largest population decline of any local government area in inland New South Wales.[1]

The largest variation in average annual growth between 1996–2001 and 2001–2006 was in Outer Regional areas with an average annual growth rate of –0.7% for 1996–2001 and 0.8% for 2001–2006. The growth of Major Cities slowed in the second half of the decade, while the growth rate of all other Remoteness Areas increased.

Population change — 1996–2001 and 2001–2006

	Population change	*Average annual growth rate*		
	1996–2006	*1996(a)–2001*	*2001–2006*	*1996–2006*
Remoteness Areas	'000	%	%	%
Major Cities	2 069.2	1.8	1.4	1.6
Inner Regional	330.2	0.3	1.4	0.8
Outer Regional	9.3	–0.7	0.8	0.0
Remote	–12.2	–0.7	0.0	–0.4
Very Remote	–5.7	–0.5	–0.2	–0.3
Australia	**2 390.8**	**1.2**	**1.3**	**1.2**

(a) 1996 Remoteness Areas derived at Statistical Local Area level.

Source: ABS 1996, 2001 and preliminary 2006 Estimated Resident Population.

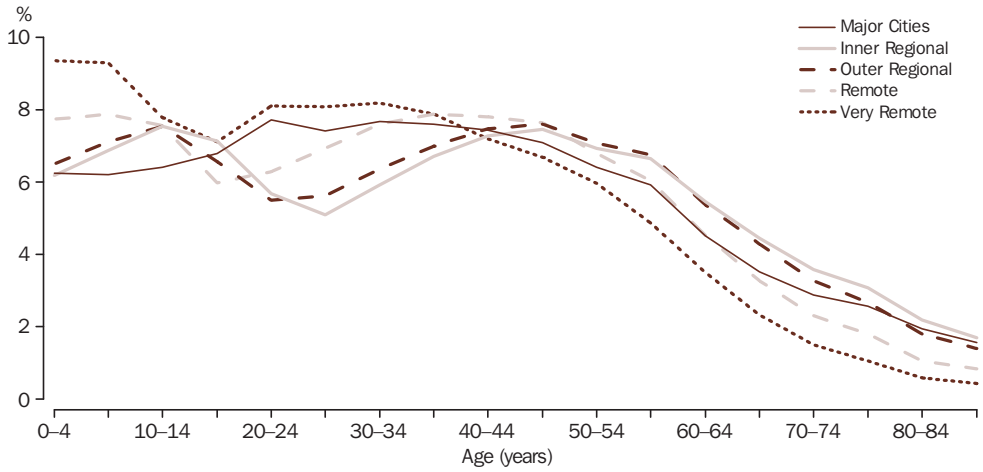
Demographic characteristics

In 2006, there were 99 males for every 100 females in Australia. Women outnumbered men in Major Cities and Inner Regional areas, but the reverse was true in more remote areas. The highest ratio of males to females occurred in Very Remote areas, where there were 113 males for every 100 females. This is likely to be due to the types of industries common in Very Remote areas, such as agriculture and mining, which tend to be dominated by men.

In 2006, the median age of the Australian population was 37 years. In Inner Regional areas the median age was highest at 39 years, followed by Outer Regional areas at 38 years and Major Cities at 36 years.

In 2006, Remote and Very Remote areas had the highest percentage of children (aged 0–14 years) as a proportion of the population. This is likely to be partly due to the younger age profile of Indigenous Australians (who make up nearly half the population in very remote areas) and the relatively high fertility rates of women in remote areas. Very Remote areas also had the highest proportion of young people (aged 20–34 years), followed by Major Cities. The industry structure of very remote areas may affect the age structure, with some mining towns having relatively young populations

Age structure of Remoteness Areas, Australia — 2006



Source: ABS preliminary Estimated Resident Population, based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

(see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Towns of the mineral boom, pp. 13–18), while Major Cities attract and retain young people by offering greater opportunities for higher education, employment and social interaction.

Regional areas had the highest proportions of people aged 50–79 years, partially including the baby boomer generation (aged 41 to 60 years in 2006). The lower cost of housing in inner and outer regional areas compared with city areas, in combination with the larger number of services for the aged compared with remote areas, may have contributed to this pattern.[2] There is also a counter-flow of young people moving from regional areas to Major Cities for employment and education.[3] The median age of regional areas is likely to increase in the future with baby boomers expected to live longer[4] and regional areas being able to provide specific services for older people, such as aged care and specialist health care.

Median age and sex ratio across Remoteness Areas — 2006

	Median age			
	Males	*Females*	*Persons*	*Sex ratio(a)*
Remoteness Areas	years	years	years	ratio
Major Cities	35.1	36.7	35.9	97.6
Inner Regional	38.3	39.9	39.1	98.9
Outer Regional	38.1	38.6	38.3	104.4
Remote	35.5	34.4	35.0	111.4
Very Remote	31.0	29.1	30.1	113.0
Australia	**35.9**	**37.4**	**36.6**	**98.8**

(a) Males per 100 females.

Source: ABS preliminary Estimated Resident Population, based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

At 30 June 2006, the preliminary estimated resident population of Indigenous Australians was 517,200 people, comprising 2.5% of the total population.[5] The distribution of the Indigenous population was notably different from the population as a whole. In 2006, just under a third of Indigenous people lived in Major Cities (32%), which was much less than the proportion living in Major Cities for Australia as a whole (68%). A further 43% of Indigenous people lived in Inner or Outer Regional areas, 10% lived in Remote areas and 16% lived in Very Remote areas. As a result, Indigenous people comprised 48% of the total population in Very Remote areas, and 16% of the total population in Remote areas.

After the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and South Australia had the highest proportion of Indigenous people living in Major Cities (50% and 49% respectively), followed by New South Wales (43%). In contrast, 79% of Indigenous people from the Northern Territory lived in Remote and Very Remote areas combined. Similarly, in Western Australia a relatively high proportion of Indigenous people lived in Remote and Very Remote areas (42% combined).

Most Indigenous people lived in New South Wales (29%), Queensland (28%), Western Australia (15%) and the Northern Territory (13%).

Indigenous Australians comprise only a small percentage of the total population in the states and the Australian Capital Territory. In the Northern Territory, in contrast, almost one in three people are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population(a) — 30 June 2006

	Proportion by Remoteness Area								
State or territory	*Major Cities* %	*Inner Regional* %	*Outer Regional* %	*Remote* %	*Very Remote* %	*Total* %	*Indigenous population* '000	*Proportion of total Indigenous population* %	*Proportion of state/territory population* %
New South Wales	43.3	33.3	18.3	4.3	0.8	100.0	148.2	28.7	2.2
Victoria	49.6	34.8	15.4	0.1	–	100.0	30.8	6.0	0.6
Queensland	28.1	20.6	29.1	8.6	13.7	100.0	146.4	28.3	3.6
South Australia	48.8	9.2	23.3	4.2	14.4	100.0	26.0	5.0	1.7
Western Australia	34.6	8.0	15.0	17.4	25.0	100.0	77.9	15.1	3.8
Tasmania(b)	–	53.9	42.5	2.4	1.2	100.0	16.9	3.3	3.4
Northern Territory(b)	–	–	20.7	23.3	56.0	100.0	66.6	12.9	31.6
Australian Capital Territory	99.9	0.1	–	–	–	100.0	4.0	0.8	1.2
Australia(c)	**31.8**	**20.9**	**21.9**	**9.6**	**15.8**	**100.0**	**517.2**	**100.0**	**2.5**

(a) Preliminary estimated resident population data. Estimates are subject to revision once 2006 Census-based population estimates have been finalised.
(b) Hobart is classified as Inner Regional. Darwin is classified as Outer Regional.
(c) Includes Other Territories, so components may not add to total.

Source: ABS Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2006 (cat. no. 4713.0).

Looking ahead

Australia's population is projected to increase to between 24.9 million and 33.4 million people in 2051 (depending on the prevailing fertility and migration). The ageing of Australia's population, already evident in the current age structure, will also continue. The median age of Australia's population, 36.6 years at June 2006, is projected to increase to between 44.6 years and 48.2 years in 2051. All capital cities are projected to experience higher growth (in percentage terms) than the respective balance of each state and territory, resulting in further concentration of Australia's population within the capital cities.[6]

Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Regional Population Growth, Australia, 1996 to 2006,* cat. no. 3218.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 Sparrow, L 2006, 'Migration and Return Migration in the Older Population of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula – an overview', *Ageing-in-place: Implications for local government,* Australian Local Government Association, Occasional Paper 1, July 2006, pp. 6–10.

3 Ward, G and Barker, R 1997, 'Population Change Between 1986 and 1996 in Australia: Population numbers, components of change and age profiles', *People and Place*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 1–11.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003, *Western Australia's Baby Boomers,* cat. no. 4149.5, ABS, Canberra.

5 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, cat. no. 4713.0, ABS, Canberra.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101,* cat. no. 3222.0, ABS, Canberra. This publication presents three main series of projections (series A, B and C), based on different assumptions. The projections for median age are based on series A and C and projections for capital cities are based on series B.

Towns of the mineral boom

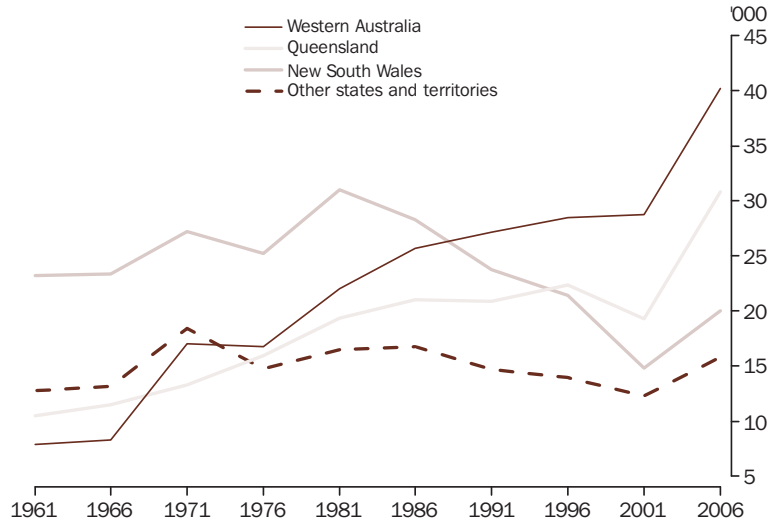
On census night 2006, numerous regional and remote mining towns accommodated substantial numbers of 'drive-in/drive-out' and 'fly-in/fly-out' workers, with implications for the planning and provision of goods, services and infrastructure such as housing, water and sewerage.

Rising demand and prices for many minerals has breathed new life into some regional and remote towns. In recent years, some towns have experienced relatively rapid growth because of strong demand for labour by the mining industry, accompanied by its ability to pay comparatively high wages.

The need for workers and accommodation in some regional and remote mining towns has led to increased incomes, property values, rents and people, though not necessarily a commensurate increase in the number who consider the town to be where they live. Flexible working practices such as extended shift rosters and greater provision of temporary housing have made 'drive-in/drive-out' and 'fly-in/fly-out' arrangements common for mining company employees and associated contractors in regional and remote mining towns.[1]

In the 2006 census, a considerable number of people enumerated in mining towns reported that they usually live elsewhere, such as in a capital city or regional coastal city. These people are classified as 'visitors' to the town on the basis of their census form response. Yet many may spend most of their time at either the mining town, a nearby mine, or a service centre/town. For this reason, estimates of the usually resident population of mining towns tend to understate the number of people these towns need to service during any given 24 hour period.

People enumerated in the mining industry in their main job



Source: 1961–2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

Data sources and definitions

This article is based on data from the ABS Census of Population and Housing. This data source provides information on small geographic areas and on where people spend time in addition to where they consider they usually live. However the quality of census data is adversely affected by undercounting, non-response and self-reporting. For this reason, the number of people who state on a census form that they are employed in the mining industry will be lower than ABS Labour Force Survey and industry estimates of the size of the mining industry workforce. Census measures of unemployment, labour force participation and income presented in this article are likely to also differ from survey estimates and administrative records.

The *census-enumerated population* of a geographic area is the number of people counted in that area on census night plus the number of people who (because of non-contact by census collectors) were imputed to have spent census night in that area.

The difference between an area's census-enumerated population and its *census usual residence population* is that the latter excludes people enumerated in the area on census night who usually live elsewhere, and includes people enumerated outside the area on census night who usually live in the area.

An area's *estimated resident population* is calculated by increasing its census usual residence population to compensate for the net undercounting of people in that area on census night,[2] and for usual residents who were overseas on census night.

Throughout this article (unless otherwise stated) the characteristics of an area's people are the characteristics of that area's census-enumerated population, as this population best depicts the actual experience of life in that area.

Mining industry employment trends

Although slower than overall employment growth, the number of people recorded on population census forms as being employed in the mining industry in their main job almost doubled between 1961 (54,401) and 2006 (106,895). Over this 45-year period, the mining industry experienced times of robust jobs growth punctuated by periods of contraction, with employment trends differing between the states and territories. Western Australia and Queensland had particularly strong growth between 2001 and 2006, with smaller increases observed in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.

The sharp increase in mining industry employment between 2001 and 2006 is likely to have barely been felt in the vast majority of Australia's towns and cities where mining

industry jobs comprise a very small proportion of all jobs. However census data suggest that during this time marked change was experienced in numerous regional and remote towns traditionally characterised by proportionately high levels of mining industry employment.

Population growth

Of all the urban centres in Australia in 2001, there were 12 that had average annual census-enumerated population growth of at least 2% between 2001 and 2006, and at least one in six employed people working in the mining industry in their main job in 2006.

With the sole exception of South Australia's Roxby Downs (near a large copper, uranium, gold and silver ore body) all of these urban centres are located in either the Pilbara region in north-west Western Australia (mainly iron ore, oil and gas) or the Bowen Basin in central-eastern Queensland (mainly coal).

Some of these towns reversed population decline they had experienced during preceding intercensal periods. For example, the number of people enumerated on census night in Moranbah (Queensland) fell from 6,883 in 1986 to 6,133 in 2001, before rebounding to 8,258 in 2006.

Geographic classifications

In broad terms, an *Urban Centre* (UC) is a population cluster of at least 1,000 people and a *Locality* is a population cluster of between 200 and 999 people. The residual *Rural Balance* comprises population clusters of fewer than 200 people. Categorisation criteria are detailed in *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) July 2007* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0). Maps showing the location of urban centres appear in *Statistical Geography: Volume 3* (ABS cat. no. 2909.0).

For Western Australia, the boundary of each *Statistical Division* (SD) aligns with the boundary of its corresponding State Planning Region. The boundaries of Western Australian SDs at the time of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing can be viewed in maps in the 2006 edition of *Statistical Geography: Volume 1* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0). See the 2001 edition of this publication to view the slightly different Western Australian SD boundaries applying at the time of the 2001 Census.

Almost 6% more people were enumerated in Australia on census night 2006 than in 2001, representing an average annual rate of population increase of 1.1% during the five year period. Compared with this national average, the census-enumerated populations of the 12 featured high-growth mining towns expanded at between 2.2% per year (Roxby Downs) and 8.0% per year (Dysart) between 2001 and 2006.

Population growth in selected urban centres(a)

	Census-enumerated population			*Census usual residence population*			*Estimated resident population(b)*		
	7 August 2001	*8 August 2006*	*Annual growth*	*7 August 2001*	*8 August 2006*	*Annual growth*	*30 June 2001*	*30 June 2006*	*Annual growth*
	'000	'000	%	'000	'000	%	'000	'000	%
Dysart (Qld)	2.5	3.6	8.0	2.4	3.1	5.6	2.5	3.4	6.0
Paraburdoo (WA)	1.2	1.7	7.5	1.2	1.6	5.9	1.3	1.7	6.1
Dampier (WA)	1.5	2.0	6.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.6
Moranbah (Qld)	6.1	8.3	6.1	5.9	7.1	3.8	6.3	7.6	3.8
Newman (WA)	3.5	4.7	6.1	3.3	4.2	4.9	3.6	4.6	5.3
Blackwater (Qld)	4.9	6.2	4.5	4.5	5.0	2.1	4.8	5.4	2.4
Middlemount (Qld)	2.1	2.5	4.2	1.9	2.0	1.3	2.0	2.2	1.7
Karratha (WA)	10.8	13.3	4.2	9.9	11.7	3.5	10.5	12.6	3.8
Tieri (Qld)	1.6	1.9	3.1	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.8	2.2
Emerald (Qld)	10.1	11.5	2.6	9.3	11.0	3.5	9.9	11.8	3.5
Moura (Qld)	1.8	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.8	0.6	1.8	1.9	0.5
Roxby Downs (SA)	3.6	4.0	2.2	3.4	3.8	2.6	3.5	4.1	2.9
Australia	**18 972**	**20 062**	**1.1**	**18 769**	**19 855**	**1.1**	**19 413**	**20 698**	**1.3**

(a) All 2001 urban centres with average annual census-enumerated population growth of at least 2% between 2001 and 2006 and at least one in six employed people working in the mining industry in their main job in 2006.

(b) Estimates for the urban centres at 30 June 2006 are preliminary rebased estimates and are based on the 2006 Census. Final rebased estimates will become available on 19 August 2008. For more information see the feature article in *Australian Demographic Statistics, December Quarter 2007* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing; *Australian Demographic Statistics, December Quarter 2007* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

... visitors

Of those enumerated in the selected 12 high-growth mining towns, the proportion spending census night away from home generally rose relatively sharply between 2001 and 2006. For example, compared with the marginal nationwide increase from 5% to 6%, Dampier's census night visitor population jumped from 17% to 37%, Blackwater's from 8% to 24%, and Tieri's from 10% to 26%. Visitor increases were less marked in Roxby Downs (7% to 11%) and Karratha (13% to 17%) while the most populous urban centre in Queensland's Bowen Basin (Emerald) actually had a slightly smaller proportion of visitors in 2006 (11%) than in 2001 (12%). The generally increased visitor presence suggests that 'drive-in/drive-out' and 'fly-in/fly-out' arrangements have become an increasingly popular way of attracting workers to regional and remote mining towns.

... usual residents

All of the featured mining towns increased their census usual resident populations between 2001 and 2006, and most of them gained residents much faster than the rest of the country. However, because of the generally increased visitor presence, only Emerald and Roxby Downs increased their census usual resident population more swiftly than their census-enumerated population.

In 2006, most of the towns had an estimated resident population smaller than their census-enumerated population, with the shortfall largest in Blackwater, Karratha, Moranbah and Dampier. Knowledge of this difference is useful to planning agencies and providers of goods, services and infrastructure such as accommodation, water and sewerage.[1]

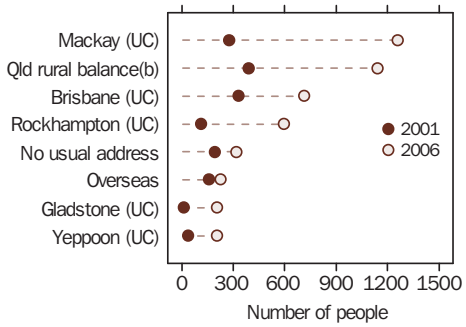
Where do the visitors usually live?

On census night in 2006, 49,560 people were enumerated in a Bowen Basin urban centre or locality, including those featured in this article. Of these people, 17% (8,512) spent the night in a dwelling in which they did not usually live. Some (225) usually lived overseas, 320 did not have a usual address, 1,313 were from farms and small communities of less than 200 people throughout Australia (of whom 1,144 were Queenslanders) and the remaining 6,654 hailed from 386 Australian urban centres and localities. Topping the list was Mackay, home to 1,260 or 15% of all census night visitors in Bowen Basin urban centres and localities in 2006. Next on the list was the state capital, Brisbane (713), followed by the nearby inland city of Rockhampton (595) and the central Queensland coastal centres of Gladstone (206) and Yeppoon (also 206). There were appreciably more census night visitors from Mackay, Brisbane, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Yeppoon and rural Queensland in Bowen Basin towns in 2006 than in 2001.

The increase in the number of residents of Brisbane and Mackay enumerated in Bowen Basin towns was accompanied by relatively large increases between 2001 and 2006 in the number of Brisbane and Mackay residents employed in the mining industry (up by 65% and 202% respectively). In 2006, Brisbane and Mackay each had more residents employed in the mining industry than did Mount Isa or any Bowen Basin town.

By far the largest mining centre in Australia (in terms of mining industry employment) is Perth. This was even more apparent in 2006 than in 2001, due to a surge in the number of

Usual residence of census night visitors in Bowen Basin towns(a)



(a) Comprises the urban centres and localities of Biloela, Blackwater, Capella, Clermont, Collinsville, Dysart, Emerald, Glenden, Middlemount, Moranbah, Moura, Nebo, Springsure, Theodore and Tieri.
(b) Areas within Queensland populated by clusters of less than 200 people (e.g. farms and small communities).

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

Urban centres with the most residents employed in the mining industry(a)

(a) In their main job held in the week prior to census night.

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

Perth urban centre residents who said they were employed in the mining industry in their main job (from 11,543 in 2001 to 19,160 in 2006). In 2006, most of them (11,255 or 59%) reported the workplace address of that job to be in the Perth Statistical Division. However, many resided in Perth and worked in the Pilbara (1,972 or 10%), South Eastern (1,613 or 8%) and Central (1,068 or 6%) Statistical Divisions of Western Australia. Between 2001 and 2006, the census enumerated a near fourfold increase in Perth residents working in the mining industry in the Pilbara Statistical Division, where this article's featured towns of Paraburdoo, Dampier, Newman and Karratha are situated.

Demographic changes

Partly because many of the usual residents of the featured mining towns had moved to their town within the previous five years, people enumerated in these towns were less likely than other Australians to have been living at the same address one year earlier and five years earlier. The influx of new residents combined with the increased visitor presence resulted in some marked changes to the demographic profile of most of the towns. All 12 had more males than females in 2001, and increased their male to female ratio during the ensuing intercensal period. The

Workplace of residents of the Perth urban centre employed in the mining industry(a)

	2001	*2006*
	no.	no.
Western Australia		
Perth (SD)	6 666	11 255
Pilbara (SD)	526	1 972
South Eastern (SD)	1 468	1 613
Central (SD)	840	1 068
Kimberley (SD)	289	308
Midlands (SD)	292	242
South West (SD)	144	87
Upper Great Southern (SD)	32	29
Lower Great Southern (SD)	69	8
Off-Shore Areas & Migratory	92	165
No fixed place of work	316	826
Undefined	221	428
Interstate	226	264
Not stated	362	895
Total	**11 543**	**19 160**

(a) In the main job held in the week prior to census night. Data quality affected by census underenumeration, and census form non-response and inadequate response.
* SD = Statistical Division

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

Selected demographic characteristics of people enumerated in selected urban centres(a)

	Census night visitors		*At home on census night and usually lived in same home 1 year earlier*		*At home on census night and usually lived in same home 5 years earlier*		*Median age*		*Aged 0–14 years*		*Males per 100 females*		*At home on census night and living with family in a private dwelling*	
	2001	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	years	years	%	%	ratio	ratio	%	%
Dysart (Qld)	7	19	67	61	40	32	31	32	25	23	143	173	77	66
Paraburdoo (WA)	8	16	67	63	28	17	28	31	31	27	122	149	79	69
Dampier (WA)	17	37	61	47	36	29	34	38	24	17	136	191	70	50
Moranbah (Qld)	7	20	70	55	40	27	31	31	27	22	126	158	81	66
Newman (WA)	10	17	58	54	24	21	30	32	28	24	119	133	74	63
Blackwater (Qld)	8	24	62	53	29	26	30	32	29	21	124	173	80	60
Middlemount (Qld)	10	25	65	50	35	20	30	33	25	23	138	185	76	56
Karratha (WA)	13	17	59	53	28	22	30	32	26	23	118	126	76	63
Tieri (Qld)	10	26	62	56	20	21	28	32	29	20	147	190	77	62
Emerald (Qld)	12	11	57	60	22	26	29	29	25	25	108	114	76	76
Moura (Qld)	7	19	69	58	44	37	33	33	23	21	124	139	78	67
Roxby Downs (SA)	7	11	65	59	20	25	28	30	30	27	125	130	81	75
Australia	**5**	**6**	**74**	**78**	**47**	**50**	**35**	**36**	**21**	**20**	**97**	**97**	**79**	**77**

(a) All 2001 urban centres with average annual census-enumerated population growth of at least 2% between 2001 and 2006 and at least one in six employed people working in the mining industry in their main job in 2006.

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

ratio increased most dramatically in Dampier (from 136 to 191 males per 100 females), Blackwater (124 to 173), Middlemount (138 to 185) and Tieri (147 to 190).

Between 2001 and 2006, the median age of the population rose in most of the towns, and the proportion of 0–14 year olds in their populations generally fell. Nevertheless, in 2006 they still tended to be relatively youthful in comparison with the rest of the nation. People in the 12 high-growth mining towns also tended to have been less likely in 2006 than in 2001 to have spent census night at home with one or more family members in a private dwelling. This is largely due to the increased visitor presence and may in part reflect larger 'drive-in/drive-out' and 'fly-in/fly-out' workforces. The three abovementioned demographic characteristics underwent pronounced change in towns that experienced a large increase in their visitor population (i.e. Dampier, Blackwater, Tieri and Middlemount). In contrast, they were stable in Emerald and little changed in Roxby Downs.

Strong labour markets

All of the selected mining towns had higher labour force participation rates and, with the sole exception of Middlemount, lower unemployment rates in 2006 compared with 2001. Relative to the modest lift in the census-measured national labour force participation rate (from 63% in 2001 to 65% in 2006) particularly strong rises were observed in Blackwater (75% to 85%) and Moranbah (76% to 85%). The smallest increase among the towns (1.8 percentage points in Newman) was still larger than the national increase of 1.6 percentage points.

In 2006, each town's census-enumerated population had an unemployment rate below 2.6%; less than half the census-measured national rate of 5.2%. Apart from Blackwater and Dampier, employed people in each town were more likely in 2006 than in 2001 to work in the mining industry in their main job.

... and high incomes

The mining industry's dominant and generally rising share of employment in the towns, in tandem with its payment of high wages[3], partly explains the comparatively large and mostly rising incomes of full-time workers enumerated in the featured towns. In 2006, census-measured median weekly income usually received from all sources by Australians who worked at least 35 hours in the week prior to the census was $881. In Tieri, where 61% of employed people worked mainly in the mining industry, it was almost

Change in labour utilisation and real income(a) in selected urban centres(b)

	Labour force participation rate		*Unemployment rate*		*Employed in the mining industry*		*Real(c) median weekly income of full-time workers*	
	2001	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*	*2001*	*2006*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	$	$
Dysart (Qld)	79	84	3.0	1.5	44	49	1 376	1 579
Paraburdoo (WA)	82	87	2.2	1.8	53	58	1 630	1 703
Dampier (WA)	81	86	3.7	1.5	28	27	1 296	1 616
Moranbah (Qld)	76	85	4.3	1.6	45	47	1 392	1 573
Newman (WA)	82	84	3.2	1.4	41	45	1 400	1 565
Blackwater (Qld)	75	85	5.1	2.0	42	38	1 360	1 467
Middlemount (Qld)	79	86	1.0	2.0	51	57	1 670	1 610
Karratha (WA)	79	82	5.0	2.3	14	19	1 079	1 342
Tieri (Qld)	78	84	2.3	1.5	58	61	1 740	1 759
Emerald (Qld)	78	82	4.4	1.9	12	18	852	1 032
Moura (Qld)	74	81	5.3	2.6	30	40	1 209	1 389
Roxby Downs (SA)	84	88	3.1	2.4	44	48	1 317	1 406
Australia	**63**	**65**	**7.4**	**5.2**	**1**	**1**	**818**	**881**

(a) Among people enumerated in the listed geographic area on the night of the census.
(b) All 2001 urban centres with average annual census-enumerated population growth of at least 2% between 2001 and 2006 and at least one in six employed people working in the mining industry in their main job in 2006.
(c) Actual 2001 dollar values have been upward-adjusted for inflation using the All groups Consumer Price Index. This enables an assessment of how people's purchasing power or standard of material wellbeing changed between 2001 and 2006.

Source: 2001 and 2006 ABS Censuses of Population and Housing; *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March 2008* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

double ($1,759). Although still relatively high, incomes were clearly lower in the regional service hubs of Emerald ($1,032) and Karratha ($1,342) which had much lower proportions in mining industry jobs (18% and 19%).

According to census data, Australia's full-time workers had $63 per week more purchasing power in 2006 than in 2001. Much larger real gains were received by full-time workers in Newman (up $165 per week), Moura ($180), Emerald ($180), Moranbah ($181), Dysart ($203), Karratha ($263) and Dampier ($320).

Future directions in measurement of service populations

In addition to 'drive-in/drive-out' and 'fly-in/fly-out' workers, many other Australians have multiple places of residence. They include children living with parents in separate dwellings, students at boarding schools, members of the armed forces, Indigenous communities in some parts of northern Australia who live in different areas in wet and dry seasons, and the emerging phenomenon of 'grey nomads' who travel north during winter.[4]

The increasing mobility of Australians and use of population numbers for the allocation of resources has created a growing demand for estimates of service populations within local government boundaries. In recognition of the rising interest in service population estimation, the ABS has recently published the information paper *Population Concepts, 2008* (cat. no. 3107.0.55.006) which discusses various service population definitions, conceptual clarifications, and associated measurement issues. Future directions for ABS population estimation will be influenced by the need for service population estimates and their application in matters related to decision making and policy and program formulation and monitoring.[4]

Endnotes

1 Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation 2006, *Bowen Basin population report: Full-time Equivalent population estimates for nine Local Government Areas in the Bowen Basin, June 2006*, Queensland Government, Brisbane.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *August 2006 Census of Population and Housing – Details of Undercount, Australia*, cat. no. 2940.0, ABS, Canberra.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, February 2008*, cat. no. 6302.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *Population Concepts, Australia, 2008*, cat. no. 3107.0.55.006, ABS, Canberra.

How many children have women in Australia had?

In 2006, 11% of women aged 40–44 years had had four or more babies, compared with 28% of women that age in 1981.

Despite recent increases in Australia's fertility rate, low fertility remains a significant population issue in Australia. The magnitude of the future economic and social impacts of an ageing population will be largely determined by long-term fertility, as well as migration trends.[1,2]

Population fertility is most often measured by looking cross-sectionally at birthrates in a particular year. This is summarised by the total fertility rate (TFR). The TFR is a hypothetical measure of the total number of babies a woman would have on average, if the age-specific fertility rates of that year prevailed throughout her reproductive life. Alternatively, fertility can be measured by counting the total number of babies ever had by women. Using information on 'children ever born' from selected population censuses, this article examines changes in completed fertility and the number of children had by women at particular ages and from selected sociodemographic backgrounds.

Children ever born

Over the past several decades, successive generations of Australian women have been having fewer babies on average throughout their childbearing years, and tending to have them at older ages. In 1981, women who could be considered to have largely completed their fertility (aged 40–44 years) had had an average of 2.8 children each (including the women who had no children). By 2006 the average number of children ever born had fallen by 0.7 babies each to 2.0, just below the replacement level of 2.1 babies.

The higher level of completed fertility among the 40–44 year old women in 1981 reflects the particular fertility experience of these women (born 1937–1941) who were in their early twenties when the baby boom peaked in 1961. Just 8% of women in this cohort were childless by the time they were aged 40–44 years and 28% had had four or more children. In contrast, women aged 40–44 years in 2006 (born 1962–66) were twice as likely to be childless (16%) and only 11% had had four or more children.

Data sources and definitions

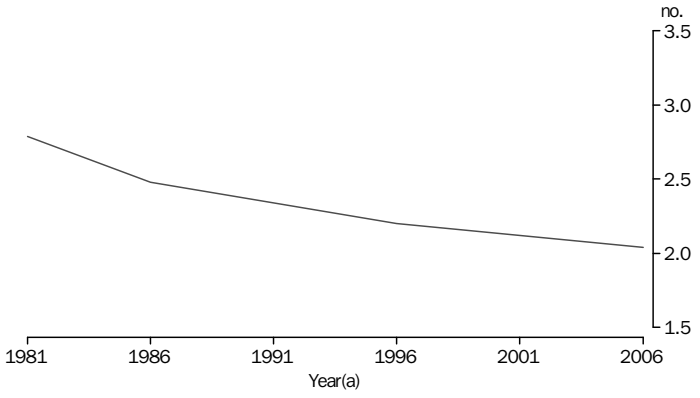
The primary sources of data for this article are the 1981, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing. Each of these censuses asked a question about the number of children ever born (live born only) to females aged 15 years and over.

Completed fertility is the number of children a certain cohort of women who have completed childbearing actually had during their entire reproductive lifetime. In this article the age group 40–44 years is used to represent those women who have recently finished their fertility potential. Although some women may still have babies at age 45 years or over, they have been excluded as only a negligible proportion of all births are to women aged over 44 years (less than 0.2% in 2006).

The *total fertility rate* (TFR) for any given year is the sum of the age-specific fertility rates for that year. It is a hypothetical measure which represents the average number of babies a woman would give birth to during her lifetime if the age-specific fertility rates of that year prevailed at each age of her reproductive life.

Age-specific fertility rates (ASFR) are the number of live births in a year to mothers at each age per 1,000 of the female population of the same age.

Average number of children ever born: women aged 40–44 years



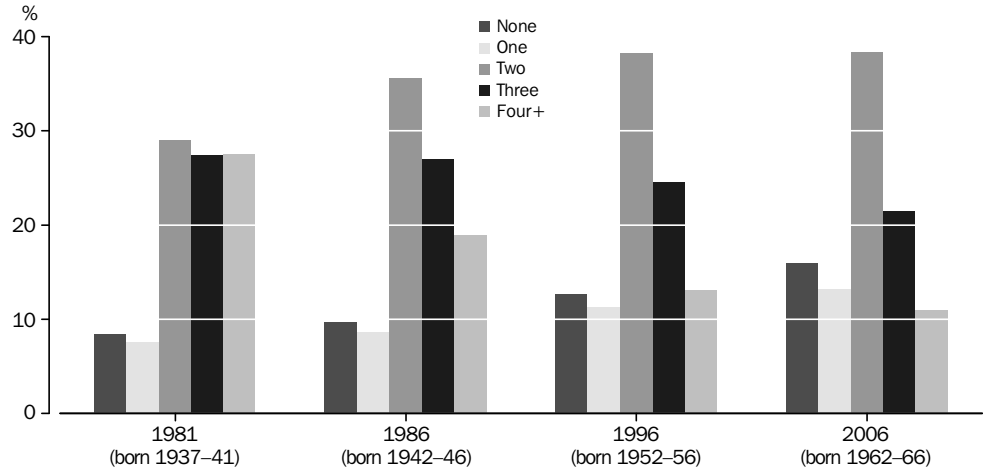
(a) Graph based on five yearly data. Data for 1991 and 2001 are interpolated.
Source: ABS 1981, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

...delaying of births

One of the features of decreased fertility in recent decades is the progressive postponement of women's first birth. Delays in childbearing reduce the remaining time in which women can have babies and increase their likelihood of remaining childless.

In 1986, 25% of women aged 20–24 years (i.e. born 1962–66) had had at least one child. For women in the same age group a decade later in 1996 (born in 1972–76), 18% had at least one child, while 14% of those born in 1982–86 had at least one child by their early to mid twenties.

Number of children ever born to women aged 40–44 years



Source: ABS 1981, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

...childlessness

As women have delayed childbearing, a greater proportion have remained childless into their thirties and forties. In 2006, 37% of women in the peak child bearing age of 30–34 years (born 1972–76) had not had any children. This was greater than the 29% of childless 30–34 year olds in 1996 (born 1962–66) and the 20% in 1986 (born 1952–56).

For women aged 40–44 years, childlessness increased from 10% for women born in 1942–46, to 13% for women born in 1952–56, and 16% for women born in 1962–66. Due to recent increases in first births to older women, the rise in childlessness over the lifetime for these successive cohorts of women was not as great as it might otherwise have been. In the decade to 2005, the proportion of women who had their first baby at 35 years of age or older doubled from 5% to 10%.

Social trends associated with changing fertility

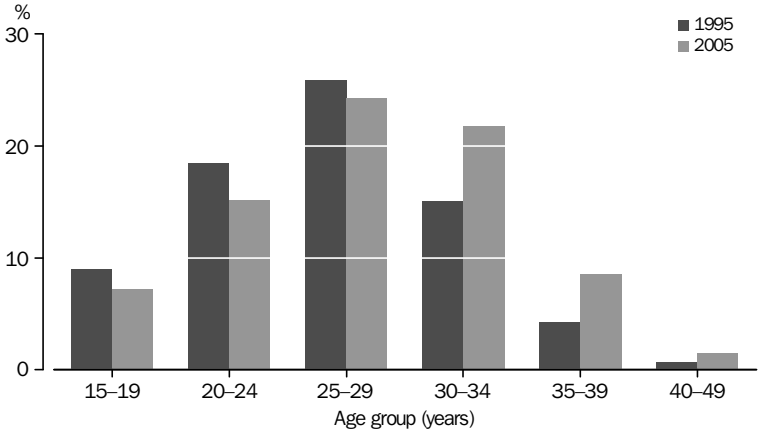
Declining fertility levels over the lifetimes of successive cohorts of women in recent decades have been associated with particular societal changes in Australia and other developed countries. Increasing social liberalism (including the availability and use of contraception) as well as economic

Number of children ever born: mother's birth cohort and age

Cohort, age group at Census	*None* %	*One* %	*Two* %	*Three* %	*Four or more* %	*Average number of children* No.
Mother born 1952–56						
30–34 years (1986 Census)	19.9	15.4	36.2	20.0	8.5	1.8
40–44 years (1996 Census)	12.8	11.3	38.2	24.6	13.1	2.2
Mother born 1962–66						
20–24 years (1986 Census)	75.4	14.6	7.7	1.8	0.5	0.4
30–34 years (1996 Census)	29.0	18.8	30.7	15.0	6.4	1.5
40–44 years (2006 Census)	15.9	13.2	38.3	21.5	11.0	2.0
Mother born 1972–76						
20–24 years (1996 Census)	81.5	11.6	5.2	1.3	0.4	0.3
30–34 years (2006 Census)	36.5	20.8	26.7	11.0	5.0	1.3
Mother born 1982–86						
20–24 years (2006 Census)	85.5	9.3	3.9	0.9	0.3	0.2

Source: ABS Censuses of Population and Housing.

Women having a first birth by age group(a)



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), *Australia's Mothers and Babies, 1996 and* 2005, derived from age of mother and number of births.

deregulation have produced conditions in which women have become freer to control their fertility, while at the same time increasing the perceived opportunity costs of childbearing.[3]

Increasing liberalism was characterised by an upsurge in lifestyle options for women and men. A key indicator related to the decline in fertility (particularly at younger ages) is the decline in the proportion of the population who were cohabiting in either a registered or de facto marriage. In 1986, almost three-quarters (74%) of people aged 18–44 years were either married or in a de facto relationship. By 2006, the proportion cohabiting had declined to around one-half (51%).

Women's labour force participation and level of qualification increased considerably from the 1980s as changing attitudes and labour markets opened employment opportunities to women. In 1986, 59% of women aged 18–44 years were employed. By 2006, 70% of women this age were employed. By contrast, employment of men aged 18–44 years remained at 84% in each period.

In tandem with increasing labour market opportunities, women have been becoming increasingly educated over time. In 1986, 7% of women aged 18–44 years had a Bachelor degree or higher; by 2006, this had increased to 25%. Pursuing post-school education can reduce fertility directly as women are less likely to have children while studying, and upon completing their qualification, women may delay childbearing in order to establish a career.

Socioeconomic differentials in fertility

Education, income, religion and country of birth all have some bearing on the fertility experience of women, and many of these factors can also be seen to be interrelated to varying extents.

...income

In 2006, women aged 40–44 years in the lowest quintile of equivalised household income had an average of 2.4 babies each, compared with 1.4 for those in the highest quintile of income. The average of the second, third and fourth quintiles fell in order between the lowest and highest quintile.

...education

Women with higher levels of educational qualification tend to have fewer children than do those with lower education levels. In 2006, women aged 40–44 years with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification had an average of 1.7 babies, while those with no non-school qualifications had 27% more children on average, with an average of 2.2 babies each. Not surprisingly, the differential between qualification level is greatest at younger ages. Among women aged 25–29 years in 2006, the average number of children ever born to those without non-school qualifications was almost five times that of women with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification (1.04 and 0.22 respectively).

As education may provide incentives to participate in the labour force, and skilled workers tend to earn greater incomes than unskilled workers, it follows that income is

Selected population characteristics: women aged 18–44 years

	1986	*1996*	*2006*
	%	%	%
In a registered or de facto marriage	74.2	55.1	51.2
Females employed	58.7	64.6	70.2
Females with Bachelor degree or higher qualification	6.5	16.0	25.0

Source: ABS, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

closely associated with educational attainment and completed fertility.

However, while it is apparent that fertility was generally lower in higher income groups, it is also evident that lower education level within each income quintile is associated with higher lifetime fertility level.

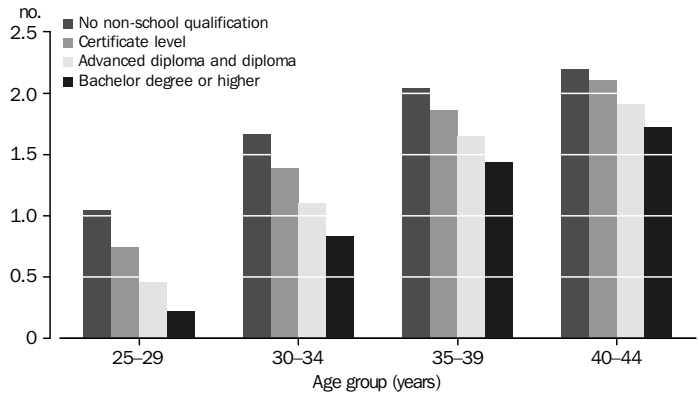
...country of birth

Women who were born in Australia tend to have more babies than Australian residents who were born overseas. In 2006, Australian-born women aged 40–44 years had an average of 2.1 babies each compared with 2.0 for those born overseas. This pattern has been consistent throughout recent decades and may be in part because larger families are less likely to migrate, and many migrants are seeking to establish themselves economically so family formation may be a lower priority. This is supported by the observation that the more recently a woman migrated, the lower her fertility. For example, women aged 40–44 years in 2006 who arrived from overseas more than twenty years earlier (i.e. pre 1986) had an average of 2.1 babies each compared with an average 1.9 babies each for the women aged 40–44 years who had arrived since 1986.

Overseas born women who were born in East Asia tended to have a low average number of children. For example, women aged 40–44 years born in China had an average of 1.5 babies, while women born in either Hong Kong, Thailand or Japan had an average of 1.4 children each.

While on average women born overseas had fewer babies throughout their lifetimes than Australian-born women, there were some notable exceptions. Women aged 40–44 years born in Polynesia had an average of 2.5 babies each, while women born in the Middle East had 2.8 babies each on average. Within the Middle East, women born in Lebanon had the highest fertility with 3.3 babies per woman. Lebanese-born women aged 40–44 years who arrived more than twenty years earlier (i.e. pre 1986) had an average 3.4 babies each, while those 40–44 year olds who have arrived since then have had 2.9 babies each.

Average number of children had by women: highest level non-school qualification — 2006

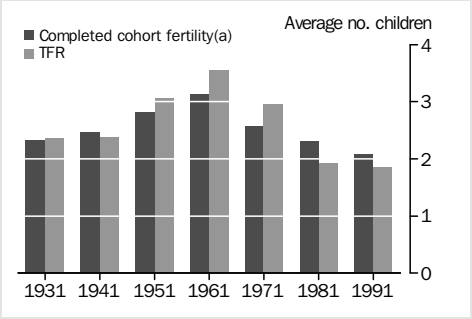


Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Completed cohort fertility rate (CCFR) and total fertility rate (TFR)

Fertility can be measured in a summary rate either across reproductive lifetimes (CCFR) or cross-sectionally in the population for a particular year (TFR). The major limitation of measuring the completed cohort fertility is that a cohort's fertility can only be fully measured once its members have passed through their potentially reproductive years. While the TFR provides more timely information about fertility levels, it may exaggerate fertility trends whenever there are shifts in the timing pattern of births. For example, during the baby boom (1946–65) the TFR was lifted beyond the actual completed fertility level for any cohort in that time because many births were 'brought forward' as younger women had increased fertility rates, while simultaneously, older women also had higher fertility rates. However, those younger women did not go on to have as many babies in the latter part of their childbearing years as the older women had. Likewise, the decreases in the TFR in recent decades may overstate the decline (compared with the CCFR). This is because the TFR fell in response to the lower fertility among younger women, but the fact that many of these women are delaying (as opposed to cancelling) means that any eventual 'catch-up' at older ages is not reflected in the TFR until a later period.

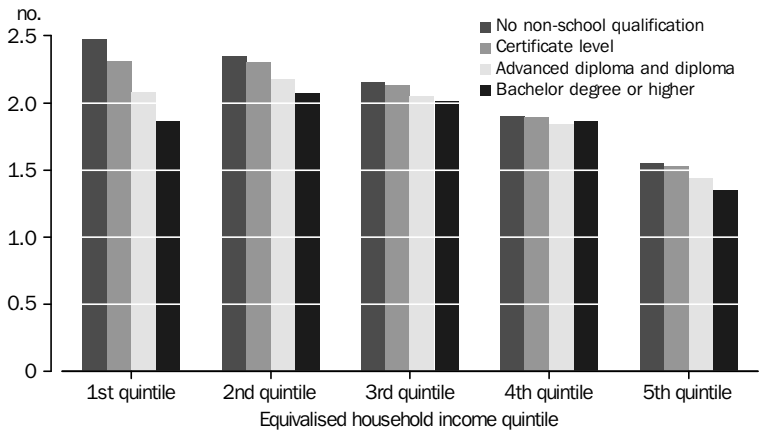
Completed cohort fertility and period TFR, 1931–1991



(a) Completed fertility at age 40–44 years for the cohort aged 25–29 years in that year. For example, for 1991, the cohort comprises those women born in 1962–66 and their completed fertility is measured in 2006.[4]

Source: Derived from *Australian Historical Population Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3105.0.65.001).

Average number of children ever born, highest non-school qualification and household income: women aged 40–44 years — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

...religion

The higher fertility among women born in Middle Eastern countries was also reflected in the fertility pattern associated with religious affiliation. The 10,900 women nominating Islam as their religion in the 2006 Census had higher fertility in all age groups than did women of all other religions or no religion. On average, Islamic women aged 40–44 years had had 2.9 babies each, compared with 2.0 for all women in Australia. These Islamic women tended to have a somewhat lower level of educational attainment and lower incomes than did Australian women overall. After adjusting to take account of these differences, the average number of children ever born to Islamic women was reduced to around 2.5 babies per woman, still considerably higher than for all women.

Christianity (nominated by 74% of the 749,600 women aged 40–44 years enumerated in the 2006 Census) had the second highest average fertility level at 2.1 babies ever born. There was little difference in average fertility among women belonging to the main denominations of Christian faith with Catholic and Anglican women aged 40–44 years each having an average of 2.1 children.

The 21,200 Buddhist women enumerated in the census had had an average of 1.7 babies each, while the 5,900 Hindu women had an average of 1.8 babies each. Hindu women were more likely than women of any other religion to have had exactly two children (56%); compared with 39% among Christians, 37% among Buddhists and 29% among Islamic women. While adjusting to account for differences in education and income made no difference to the average number of children ever born to Anglican, Catholic or Christian women overall, it made a modest difference for Buddhist and Hindu women. The standardised average number of children ever born to Buddhist women was 1.6 (compared with the unadjusted average of 1.7) while the standardised average for Hindu women was 1.9 (compared with 1.8).

Women who nominated no religious affiliation (18% of all women aged 40–44 years) had an average of 1.8 babies each.

Average number of children ever born by selected countries of birth, women aged 40–44 years — 2006

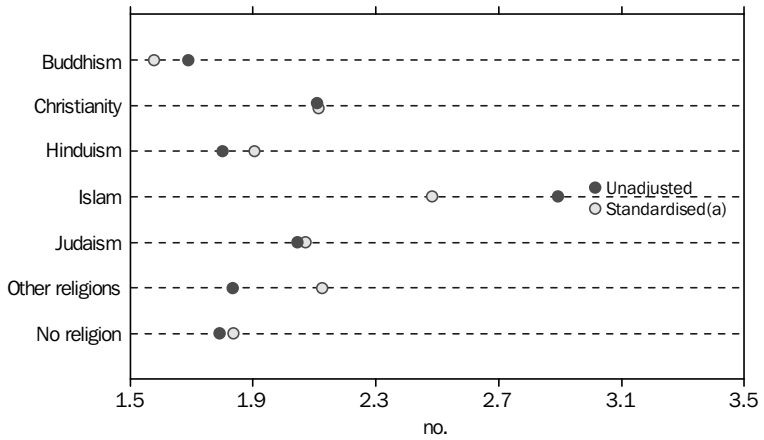
Country of birth	*Average number of babies* No.	*Proportion of total overseas born women in age group* %
England	2.0	21.2
New Zealand	2.0	9.4
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan Province)	1.5	6.3
Philippines	1.8	4.7
Viet Nam	2.0	4.6
India	1.8	2.9
Scotland	2.0	2.6
South Africa	2.0	2.4
Lebanon	3.3	2.2
Other overseas born	2.0	43.6
Total overseas born	**2.0**	**100.0**
Australia	2.1	. .
Total	**2.0**	. .

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

...Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Fertility among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is considerably higher than among the non-Indigenous population. There were 14,300 Indigenous women aged 40–44 years enumerated in the 2006 Census. Among these women the average number of children ever born was 2.8, compared with 2.0 among non-Indigenous women (the same as for Australian women overall). The younger age at which Indigenous women have children is a particular difference, with almost half (49%) of Indigenous women aged 20–24 years having at least one child, compared with 13% of non-Indigenous women. After adjusting to take account of differences in education and income the relative difference between the average number of children born to Indigenous and

Average number of children ever born and religious affiliation, women aged 40–44 years — 2006



(a) Standardised to the total 40–44 year old women's level of education and income.

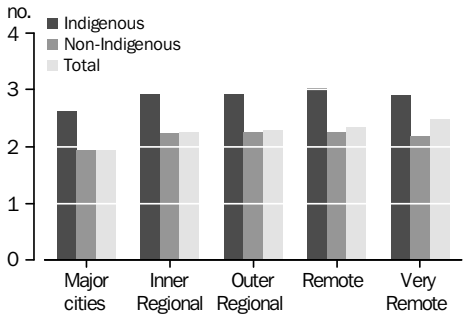
Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

non-Indigenous women was reduced. The standardised average for Indigenous women was about 2.5 compared with 2.0 for non-Indigenous women.

...Remoteness Area

The average number of babies women had increased with their level of remoteness. In 2006, women aged 40–44 years living in Major Cities had an average of 1.9 babies each. This compares with an average 2.5 in Very Remote regions. Higher fertility in the Very Remote regions is partly due to the relatively high proportion of Indigenous people living there. Among the non-Indigenous population, the average number of babies had by women in Very Remote areas was 2.2, fewer than in the Remote areas (2.3), although higher than the Major Cities (1.9).

Average number of children ever born by Remoteness and Indigenous status: women aged 40–44 years — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Endnotes

1 Productivity Commission 2005, *Economic Implications of an Ageing Australia, Research Report*, viewed 1 May 2007 <http://www.pc.gov.au/ study/ageing/ docs/finalreport>.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101,* cat. no. 3222.0, ABS, Canberra.

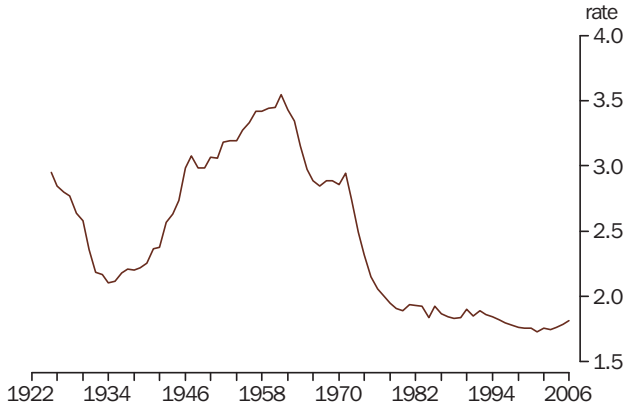
3 McDonnell, P, 2005, *Fertility and the State: the efficacy of policy,* paper presented at the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population 25th International Population Conference, July 18–23, 2005, Princeton.

4 McDonald, P, 2000, 'Low fertility in Australia: Evidence, causes and policy responses'. *People and Place,* vol 8, no 2, pp. 6–21.

Family and community

Family and community: national summary — key points

Total fertility rate(a)



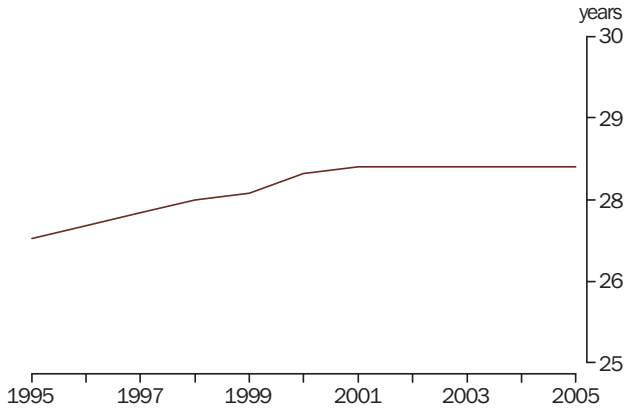
- Over the last 80 years, Australia's total fertility rate (TFR) has fluctuated considerably. The highest fertility rate over this period was 3.5 babies per woman in 1961.
- Since the peak in the early 1960s, the TFR has been falling. By 1977, the TFR had fallen to 2.0 babies per woman, below the population replacement level of 2.1 babies per woman.
- In the late 1970s, the TFR began to decline at a slower rate, and this continued through the 1980s and 1990s.
- The lowest Australian TFR was recorded in 2001 (1.7 babies per woman).
- In 2006, the national fertility rate was 1.8 babies per woman, the highest level since 1995.

(a) Births per woman.

Source: Births, Australia (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

For further information see *Family and community: national summary*, page 29, indicator 38.

Median age of mothers at first birth



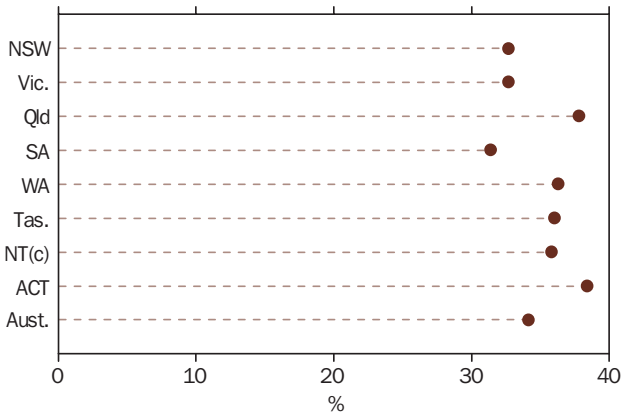
- In 1995, the median age of mothers at first birth was 26.9 years.
- By 2001, the median age of mothers at first birth had risen to 28.0 years.
- The median age of mothers at first birth has remained at 28.0 years since 2001.

Source: National Perinatal Data Collection, AIHW National Perinatal Statistics Unit.

For further information see *Family and community: national summary*, page 29, indicator 44.

Family and community: state summary — key points

Volunteering(a) — 2006(b)

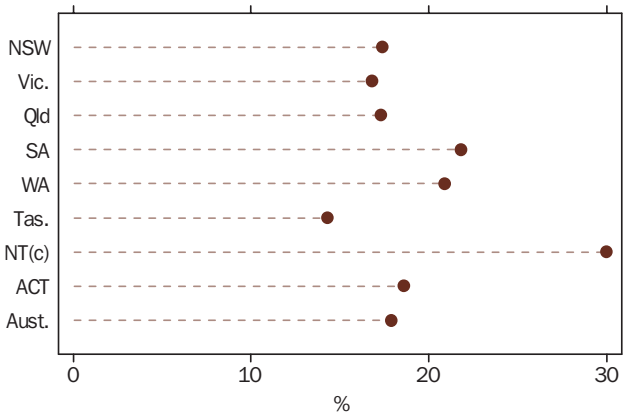


- In Australia in 2006, the volunteer rate for people aged 18 years and over was 34%.
- In 2006, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland had the highest rate of volunteering (38%) and South Australia had the lowest (31%).

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over who volunteered in the 12 months prior to the survey.
(b) Survey conducted in March–July 2006.
(c) Estimates for the Northern Territory refer to mainly urban areas only.

Source: General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia 2006 (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).
For further information see *Family and community: state summary*, page 33, indicator 51.

Persons who felt unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in local area after dark(a) — 2006(b)



- In 2006, 18% of Australians reported that they felt unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark.
- In 2006, Northern Territory (30%) reported the highest percentage of people who felt unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark.
- Tasmania (14%) reported the lowest percentage of people who felt unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark.

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over.
(b) Survey conducted in March–July 2006.
(c) Estimates for the Northern Territory refer to mainly urban areas only.

Source: General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia 2006 (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).
For further information see *Family and community: state summary*, page 33, indicator 56.

Family and community: national summary

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Households												
1 Total households(a)	'000	6 910	7 015	7 127	7 250	7 367	7 506	7 645	7 784	7 921	8 058	8 187
2 Lone-person households(a)	%	23.6	23.7	24.1	24.6	24.5	24.9	25.3	25.7	26.1	26.5	26.7
3 Households with three or more persons(a)	%	43.8	43.2	43.1	42.5	42.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Families												
4 Total families	'000	4 899	5 027	5 056	5 116	5 240	5 353	5 438	5 525	5 592	5 665	5 751
5 Families with children aged under 15 years	'000	2 130	2 160	2 166	2 172	2 179	2 210	2 189	2 221	2 229	2 261	2 240
6 Couple families(b)	'000	4 090	4 158	4 197	4 265	4 346	4 421	4 523	4 548	4 655	4 732	4 773
7 De facto couple families – of all couple families	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	12.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14.8	n.a.
8 Couple-only families – of all couple families(b)	%	41.2	41.9	42.2	42.9	44.2	44.9	45.9	46.2	46.0	46.7	47.1
9 Couple-only families with female partner aged under 40 years – of all couple only families(b)	%	r20.9	r21.3	r21.3	r21.5	r21.4	r22.3	r22.8	r22.0	r22.8	r22.6	22.5
10 Couple families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15(b)	%	80.0	78.4	78.8	79.1	78.3	77.0	78.2	76.9	78.6	79.3	78.3
11 Lone-father families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	2.3	2.0	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.9
12 Lone-mother families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	17.7	19.5	19.3	18.6	19.4	20.3	19.3	20.3	18.7	18.0	18.8
13 Families with at least one child aged under 5 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	47.8	r46.1	45.0	46.1	45.0	43.9	44.8	45.0	45.0	44.4	45.1
14 Average family size – persons	no.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Persons												
15 Children aged under 15 living in one-parent families – of all children aged under 15	%	18.0	19.5	19.0	18.2	19.6	20.5	19.8	20.7	18.9	19.0	19.5
16 Persons aged 20–24 living with parents – of all persons aged 20–24	%	46.7	48.4	47.1	45.2	45.5	45.5	45.0	46.8	47.0	45.9	45.8
17 Persons aged 25–34 living with parents – of all persons aged 25–34	%	11.7	12.5	11.9	12.2	12.4	12.5	11.6	12.5	11.9	11.8	12.6
18 Persons aged 15–64 who live alone – of all persons aged 15–64	%	7.6	7.7	7.9	8.1	8.4	8.4	8.6	8.7	8.5	8.8	8.9
19 Persons aged 65 and over who live alone – of all persons aged 65 and over	%	26.5	25.5	26.2	27.3	25.8	26.8	26.9	25.3	26.2	25.9	25.8
20 Children aged 0–17 with a natural parent living elsewhere – of all children aged 0–17(c)	%	21.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	22.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

FAMILIES AND WORK	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Couple families with children aged under 15 years(b)												
21 Both parents employed – of all couple families with children aged under 15	%	54.4	55.6	54.9	56.3	56.7	57.1	57.6	57.3	60.2	59.9	59.9
22 Neither parent employed – of all couple families with children aged under 15	%	8.6	8.5	7.9	7.5	7.5	7.2	6.3	6.4	5.3	5.4	4.8
23 One-parent families with children aged under 15, parent employed – of all one-parent families with children aged under 15	%	42.9	42.1	44.0	47.3	46.4	46.2	46.4	48.0	49.0	52.3	55.1
24 Children aged under 15 living in families where no resident parent is employed – of all children aged under 15(d)	%	18.6	17.7	n.a.	17.9	17.4	n.a.	16.2	15.7	n.a.	15.8	n.a.

Family and community: national summary cont.

	FAMILY FORMATION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Registered marriages												
25	Number of marriages	'000	106.7	110.6	114.3	113.4	103.1	105.4	106.4	111.0	109.3	114.2	n.y.a.
26	Crude marriage rate (per 1,000 population)	rate	5.8	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	n.y.a.
27	Marriages where both partners married for the first time – of all marriages	%	66.6	66.7	66.9	66.6	66.9	66.3	66.4	67.2	68.0	68.4	n.y.a.
28	Median age of males at first marriage	years	27.8	27.9	28.2	28.5	28.7	29.0	29.2	29.4	r29.5	29.6	n.y.a.
29	Median age of females at first marriage	years	25.9	26.2	26.4	26.7	26.9	27.1	27.3	27.5	r27.6	27.6	n.y.a.
30	Median age at remarriage – divorced males	years	41.8	42.0	42.2	42.7	43.1	43.6	43.6	44.3	r44.5	45.0	n.y.a.
31	Median age at remarriage – divorced females	years	38.2	38.4	38.6	39.1	39.5	39.8	40.2	40.7	r41.2	41.4	n.y.a.
	Divorce												
32	Number of divorces	'000	51.3	51.4	52.6	49.9	55.3	54.0	53.1	52.7	52.4	51.4	n.y.a.
33	Crude divorce rate (per 1,000 population)	rate	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5	n.y.a.
34	Median duration of marriage until final separation	years	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.2	8.3	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.8	8.9	n.y.a.
35	Divorces involving children aged under 18 years – of all divorces	%	54.0	53.4	53.9	52.7	51.2	49.7	50.1	49.8	49.8	50.1	n.y.a.
36	Children aged under 18 involved in divorce	'000	51.7	51.6	53.4	49.6	53.4	50.5	49.9	49.3	49.4	48.4	n.y.a.
	Fertility(e)												
37	Births	'000	251.8	249.6	248.9	249.6	246.4	251.0	251.2	254.2	259.8	265.9	n.y.a.
38	Total fertility rate (babies per woman)	rate	1.78	1.76	1.75	1.76	1.73	1.76	1.75	r1.76	r1.79	1.81	n.y.a.
39	Births to mothers aged under 20 – of all births	%	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.0	n.y.a.
40	Births to mothers aged 35 and over – of all births	%	15.3	16.1	16.8	17.4	17.8	18.4	19.1	19.9	20.6	21.7	n.y.a.
41	Births outside marriage – of all births	%	28.1	28.7	29.2	29.2	30.7	31.3	31.6	32.2	32.2	32.7	n.y.a.
42	Births outside marriage acknowledged by father – of all births outside marriage	%	85.5	87.1	88.2	88.2	87.9	88.0	88.2	89.2	90.0	90.4	n.y.a.
43	Females aged 35 and over giving birth for the first time – of all females aged 35 and over giving birth	%	22.4	23.3	23.7	24.7	25.2	25.6	26.2	27.0	27.2	n.y.a.	n.y.a.
44	Median age of mothers at first birth	years	27.3	27.5	27.6	27.9	28.0	28.0	28.0	28.0	28.0	n.y.a.	n.y.a.

(a) Data for the years 1997–2000 are household estimates based on the 1996 Census. Data for 2001 are household estimates based on the 2001 Census. Data for 2002 onwards are household projections (Series II).

(b) From 2001 data includes both opposite-sex and same-sex couple families.

(c) Excludes children with no natural parent living in the household.

(d) Data for this indicator are derived from the ABS Survey of Income and Housing; results are benchmarked by age for children aged 0–4 years and 5–14 years. These data are not necessarily consistent with data for indicator 15, which are derived from the ABS Labour Force Survey and are not benchmarked for people aged less than 15 years.

(e) Based on year of registration.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–3 are at June 30.
Data for indicators 4–6, 8–19 and 21–23 are at June.
Data for indicator 7 are at census date.
Data for indicator 20 are at April 1997 & June 2003.
Data for indicator 24 are for financial year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 25–44 are for the calendar year.

Family and community: national summary cont.

CHILD CARE	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
45 Children aged under 3 using formal care – of all children aged under 3(f)(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	22.0	n.a.	n.a.	25.0	n.a.	n.a.	28.2	n.a.	n.a.
46 Children aged under 3 using informal care – of all children aged under 3(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	43.0	n.a.	n.a.	36.9	n.a.	n.a.	38.4	n.a.	n.a.
47 Children aged 3–4 using formal care – of all children aged 3–4(f)(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	34.8	n.a.	n.a.	41.4	n.a.	n.a.	45.5	n.a.	n.a.
48 Children aged 3–4 using informal care – of all children aged 3–4(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	43.2	n.a.	n.a.	36.4	n.a.	n.a.	38.3	n.a.	n.a.
49 Median weekly hours of care received by children aged under 3 – formal and informal combined(f)	hours	n.a.	n.a.	11	n.a.	n.a.	14	n.a.	n.a.	14	n.a.	n.a.
50 Median weekly hours of care received by children aged 3–4 – formal and informal combined(f)	hours	n.a.	n.a.	14	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.

COMMUNITY	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
51 Persons aged 18 and over – volunteer rate in the previous 12 months(h)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.p.	n.a.	n.p.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	34.1	n.a.
52 Carers for person with a disability – of all persons(i)	%	n.a.	12.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a	n.a.
53 Primary carers for person with severe/profound disability – of all persons(i)	%	n.a.	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a	n.a.
54 Persons aged 18 and over – donated money to an organisation in previous 12 months	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	84.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	76.9	n.a.
55 Persons aged 18 and over – could ask for small favours from persons living outside the household	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	93.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	92.9	n.a.
56 Persons aged 18 and over – persons who feel unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in local area after dark	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	17.9	n.a.
57 Persons aged 18 and over – contact with family or friends living outside the household in last week	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	95.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	96.3	n.a.
58 Persons aged 18 and over – actively participated in at least one community group/organisation in previous 12 months	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	72.0	n.a.

(f) Excludes preschool.

(g) Includes children who used a combination of formal and informal care.

(h) Comparison with the volunteer rate for 2002 (as presented on page 35 of the 2006 edition of *Australian Social Trends*) should be undertaken with caution due to differences in applying the concept used to measure volunteering between the 2002 and 2006 General Social Surveys, from which the estimates were taken. For further information see *Voluntary Work Australia, 2006* (cat. no. 4441.0). Note: The 2006 General Social Survey was designed to provide a detailed account of volunteers and their volunteering activities. As such its results will be different (and more accurate) than those available from other sources including the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. The census data will be more useful, however, for comparing the characteristics of volunteers at the small area level.

(i) Excludes persons living in institutions.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 45–50 are at June for 1999, 2002 and 2005.
Data for indicators 51 and 54–58 are at March–July 2002 and 2006.
Data for indicators 52–53 are at April–June 1998 and August–November 2003.

Family and community: state summary

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Households											
1 Total households(a)	'000	2007	2 679	2 004	1 620	655	822	205	68	132	8 187
2 Lone-person households(a)	%	2007	25.7	26.5	26.2	31.0	27.5	31.1	23.8	26.9	26.7
3 Households with three or more persons	%	2001	43.9	43.5	41.6	37.5	42.1	37.6	49.9	43.9	42.5
Families											
4 Total families	'000	2007	1 896	1 420	1 153	437	577	140	41	86	5 751
5 Families with children aged under 15 years	'000	2007	758	529	459	160	228	54	18	34	2 240
6 Couple families(b)	'000	2007	1 564	1 188	960	361	479	116	32	73	4 773
7 De facto couple families – of all couple families	%	2006	13.2	13.4	17.2	15.0	16.8	17.3	25.7	16.7	14.8
8 Couple-only families – of all couple families(b)	%	2007	44.7	46.9	49.1	50.7	48.3	49.4	50.2	44.3	47.1
9 Couple-only families with female partner aged under 40 years – of all couple only families(b)	%	2007	21.4	23.8	23.4	19.0	24.3	15.0	29.6	29.5	22.5
10 Couple families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15(b)	%	2007	78.6	80.8	76.9	74.8	77.3	77.6	72.2	79.8	78.3
11 Lone-father families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	2007	2.7	2.6	3.1	3.3	3.0	2.9	9.3	2.7	2.9
12 Lone-mother families with children aged under 15 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	2007	18.6	16.6	20.0	21.9	19.8	19.4	18.4	17.4	18.8
13 Families with at least one child aged under 5 – of all families with children aged under 15	%	2007	46.3	43.4	45.6	44.8	44.4	43.5	43.8	44.5	45.1
14 Average family size – persons	no.	2007	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0
Persons											
15 Children aged under 15 living in one-parent families – of all children aged under 15	%	2007	19.3	17.0	20.6	23.4	20.2	20.1	25.7	19.0	19.5
16 Persons aged 20–24 living with parents – of all persons aged 20–24	%	2007	50.4	51.4	35.7	46.5	40.3	40.0	17.4	41.3	45.8
17 Persons aged 25–34 living with parents – of all persons aged 25–34	%	2007	14.7	14.2	9.0	9.8	11.4	10.4	6.2	13.2	12.6
18 Persons aged 15–64 who live alone – of all persons aged 15–64	%	2007	8.7	8.7	8.1	11.5	9.4	10.2	9.5	9.4	8.9
19 Persons aged 65 and over who live alone – of all persons aged 65 and over	%	2007	26.1	24.0	24.9	29.1	28.2	26.9	21.9	22.4	25.8
20 Children aged 0–17 with a natural parent living elsewhere – of all children 0–17(c)	%	2003	21.8	20.0	24.6	26.7	21.2	28.7	21.3	26.8	22.5

FAMILIES AND WORK	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Couple families with children aged under 15 years(b)											
21 Both parents employed – of all couple families with children aged under 15	%	2007	59.0	59.4	62.8	59.3	56.4	57.7	75.4	71.2	59.9
22 Neither parent employed – of all couple families with children aged under 15	%	2007	5.3	4.8	4.2	6.7	3.5	5.8	*1.7	*3.0	4.8
23 One-parent families with children aged under 15, parent employed – of all one-parent families with children aged under 15	%	2007	53.2	49.5	61.1	51.5	60.3	54.2	55.9	73.4	55.1
24 Children aged under 15 living in families where no resident parent is employed – of all children aged under 15(d)	%	2005–06	14.6	18.4	16.2	18.6	11.6	21.6	n.p.	*6.6	15.8

(a) Household projections (Series II).

(b) Includes both opposite-sex and same-sex couple families.

(c) Excludes children with no natural parent living in the household.

(d) Data for this indicator are derived from the ABS Survey of Income and Housing; results are benchmarked by age for children aged 0–4 years and 5–14 years. These data are not necessarily consistent with data for indicator 15, which are derived from the ABS Labour Force Survey and are not benchmarked for people aged less than 15 years.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–3 are at June 30.
Data for indicators 4–6, 8–19 and 21–23 are at June.
Data for indicator 7 are at census date.
Data for indicator 20 are at June 2003.
Data for indicator 24 are for financial year ending 30 June.

Family and community: state summary continued

FAMILY FORMATION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Registered marriages											
25 Number of marriages	'000	2006	38.1	28.6	25.0	7.8	11.6	2.7	0.8	1.6	114.2
26 Crude marriage rate (per 1,000 population)	rate	2006	5.6	5.2	6.1	5.0	5.6	5.4	3.8	4.9	5.5
27 Marriages where both partners married for the first time – of all marriages	%	2006	70.1	70.8	65.2	67.4	67.1	63.0	64.0	68.0	68.4
28 Median age of males at first marriage	years	2006	29.5	29.8	29.5	29.4	29.9	29.7	30.5	29.2	29.6
29 Median age of females at first marriage	years	2006	27.5	28.1	27.4	27.2	27.7	27.6	28.0	27.5	27.6
30 Median age at remarriage – divorced males	years	2006	44.3	44.7	45.0	46.3	45.6	46.6	50.0	45.1	45.0
31 Median age at remarriage – divorced females	years	2006	40.7	41.1	41.5	42.2	42.3	43.5	42.8	41.9	41.4
Divorce											
32 Number of divorces	'000	2006	14.8	12.1	12.2	3.9	5.5	1.2	0.4	1.5	51.4
33 Crude divorce rate (per 1,000 population)(e)	rate	2006	2.1	2.4	3.0	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.1	n.p.	2.5
34 Median duration of marriage until final separation	years	2006	7.7	8.8	9.3	10.2	9.6	10.1	7.9	9.6	8.9
35 Divorces involving children aged under 18 – of all divorces	%	2006	47.0	49.8	52.4	53.1	50.3	53.4	50.2	52.2	50.1
36 Children aged under 18 involved in divorce	'000	2006	12.5	11.4	12.2	3.9	5.3	1.3	0.4	1.5	48.4
Fertility(f)											
37 Births	'000	2006	87.3	65.2	52.7	18.3	27.8	6.5	3.7	4.5	265.9
38 Total fertility rate (babies per woman)	rate	2006	1.80	1.75	1.83	1.79	1.94	2.12	2.19	1.68	1.81
39 Births to mothers aged under 20 – of all births	%	2006	3.4	2.5	5.2	4.6	5.0	6.3	12.7	2.4	4.0
40 Births to mothers aged 35 and over – of all births	%	2006	22.1	25.0	18.7	20.4	20.7	16.0	15.1	23.6	21.7
41 Births outside marriage – of all births	%	2006	28.4	27.3	38.8	36.6	37.4	49.2	64.7	27.2	32.7
42 Births outside marriage acknowledged by father – of all births outside marriage	%	2006	89.8	94.1	91.6	90.4	91.2	80.1	66.7	92.4	90.4

(e) Based on the location of the Family Court where the divorce is granted and registered. Due to the large number of divorces granted in the Australian Capital Territory to usual residents of another state, the divorce rate for the Australian Capital Territory is not representative of the Australian Capital Territory population.

(f) Based on year of registration.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 25–42 are for the calendar year.

Family and community: state summary continued

CHILD CARE	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(g)	ACT	Aust.
45 Children aged under 3 years using formal care – of all children aged under 3(h)(i)	%	2005	25.9	23.4	36.9	25.3	28.9	32.3	*40.8	40.1	28.2
46 Children aged under 3 years using informal care – of all children aged under 3(i)	%	2005	41.9	37.3	32.5	43.5	37.3	38.3	*28.6	46.0	38.4
47 Children aged 3–4 using formal care – of all children aged 3–4 years(h)(i)	%	2005	46.0	42.6	53.7	38.8	36.0	49.1	*42.6	58.6	45.5
48 Children aged 3–4 years using informal care – of all children aged 3–4 years(i)	%	2005	38.2	43.4	30.7	50.6	35.0	35.1	*29.4	35.3	38.3
49 Median weekly hours of care received by children aged under 3 years – formal and informal combined(h)	hours	2005	16	12	16	12	10	14	25	17	14
50 Median weekly hours of care received by children aged 3–4 years – formal and informal combined(h)	hours	2005	18	12	18	11	15	12	30	20	16

COMMUNITY	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(g)	ACT	Aust.
51 Persons aged 18 and over – volunteer rate in the previous 12 months(j)	%	2006	32.7	32.7	37.8	31.4	36.3	36.0	35.8	38.4	34.1
52 Carers for person with a disability – of all persons(k)	%	2003	11.4	14.1	14.3	14.8	12.7	14.8	n.a.	10.8	13.0
53 Primary carers for person with severe/profound disability – of all persons(k)	%	2003	2.3	2.4	3.0	2.5	2.0	3.1	n.a.	1.2	2.4
54 Persons aged 18 and over – donated money to an organisation in previous 12 months	%	2006	73.1	78.6	79.9	75.3	81.0	71.4	70.3	85.1	76.9
55 Persons aged 18 and over – could ask for small favours from persons living outside the household	%	2006	92.8	91.7	93.6	95.1	92.6	93.4	91.1	95.8	92.9
56 Persons aged 18 and over – who feel unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in local area after dark	%	2006	17.4	16.8	17.3	21.8	20.9	14.3	30.0	18.6	17.9
57 Persons aged 18 and over – contact with family or friends living outside the household in last week	%	2006	96.2	96.5	95.1	97.7	97.2	96.4	94.8	97.1	96.3
58 Persons aged 18 and over – actively participated in at least one community group/organisation in previous 12 months	%	2006	72.5	70.4	73.8	68.0	73.8	69.0	73.8	79.1	72.0

(g) Estimates for the Northern Territory refer to mainly urban areas only.

(h) Excludes preschool.

(i) Includes children who used a combination of formal and informal care.

(j) Note: The 2006 General Social Survey was designed to provide a detailed account of volunteers and their volunteering activities. As such its results will be different (and more accurate) than those available from other sources including the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. The census data will be more useful, however, for comparing characteristics of volunteers at the small area level.

(k) Excludes persons living in institutions.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 45–50 are at June 2005.
Data for indicators 51 and 54–58 are at March–July 2006.
Data for indicators 52–53 are at August–November 2003.

Family and community: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–3	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0); *Household and Family Projections, Australia, 2001 to 2026* (ABS cat. no. 3236.0).
4–6, 8–19, 21–23	ABS Labour Force Survey.
7	ABS 2001 and 2006 Census of Population and Housing.
20	*Family Characteristics, Australia, June 2003* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0).
24	ABS Survey of Income and Housing.
25–26	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0); *Marriages, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).
27–31	*Marriages, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).
32–33	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0); *Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).
34–36	*Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).
37–38	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0); ABS Births Collection.
39–42	ABS Births Collection.
43–44	National Perinatal Data Collection, AIHW National Perinatal Statistics Unit *Australia's mothers and babies,* (AIHW cat. no. PER 34).
45–50	ABS Child Care Survey.
51, 54	*General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).
52–53	*Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia: Summary of Findings 2003* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).
55–58	*General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0); *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia 2002* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).

Family and community: definitions

Average family size

for any group of families, the total number of family members divided by the number of families in the group.

Reference: *Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families* (ABS cat. no. 6224.0).

Births

live births registered in that year. A live birth is the delivery of a child irrespective of the duration of pregnancy who, after being born, breathes or shows any evidence of life such as a heartbeat.

Reference: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

Births outside marriage

the birth of a child whose parents are not legally married to each other at the time of the child's birth. Also known as ex-nuptial births.

Reference: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

Births outside marriage acknowledged by the father

births outside registered marriage where the father's name is recorded on the birth certificate. Also known as paternity-acknowledged births.

Reference: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

Carer

a person of any age who provides any informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to persons with disabilities or long-term conditions, or older persons (i.e. aged 60 years and over). This assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing, for at least six months.

Reference: *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

Contact with family or friends living outside the household

refers to face to face contact, or other types of contact such as telephone, mail and email, which a person has had with family or friends who do not live with them.

Reference: *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).

Couple family

a family based on two persons who are in a registered or de facto marriage and who are usually resident in the same household. The family may include any number of dependants, non-dependants and other related individuals. It is not necessary for a parent-child relationship to be formed, thus a couple family can consist of a couple without children present in the household.

Reference: *Family Characteristics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0).

Couple-only family

a couple family with no children (of any age) present.

Crude divorce rate

the number of decrees absolute granted during the calendar year per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 June. It should be noted that for divorce rates relating to state and territory data, the numerator and denominator are based upon different types of data, reducing the accuracy. While state or territory of usual residence is used as the denominator, the numerator is based upon state or territory of registration. Therefore, divorce applicants may contribute to the divorce rates of states and territories where they are not usual residents.

Reference: *Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).

Crude marriage rate

the number of marriages registered during the calendar year per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 June. In the interpretation of this rate, it must be kept in mind that a large and varying proportion of the population used in the denominator is below the minimum age of marriage or is already married.

Reference: *Marriages, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3306.0.55.001).

Family and community: definitions continued

De facto married couple

two people (of the same or opposite sex) who live together in a couple relationship and who are not registered as married to each other. In practice, a de facto marriage exists when two people are usual residents in the same household and their relationship is reported using a term indicative of a couple relationship, for example: de facto, partner, common law husband/wife/spouse, lover etc.

Reference: *Family, Household and Income Unit Variables* (ABS cat. no.1286.0).

Divorce

decree absolute of dissolution of a registered marriage.

Reference: *Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).

Divorces involving children

divorces of couples with unmarried children of the registered marriage who were aged under 18 years at the time of application for divorce. Under the *Family Act 1975*, adopted and ex-nuptial children and children from a former registered marriage may be included (in certain cases). Children who are registered as married or aged 18 years and over are not subject to custody and guardianship orders and are excluded.

Reference: *Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).

Duration of marriage until separation

the interval measured in complete years between the date of marriage and the date of separation.

Reference: *Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3307.0.55.001).

Employed

persons aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind, in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers); or
- worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers); or
- were employers or own account workers who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work; or
- were employees who had a job but were not at work and were:
  - away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement; or
  - on strike or locked out; or
  - on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job; or
- were employers or own account workers who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Estimated resident population (ERP)

the official measure of the population of Australia based on the concept of usual residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality or citizenship, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents who are overseas for less than 12 months. It excludes overseas residents who are in Australia for less than 12 months.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Family

two or more persons, one of whom is aged 15 years or over, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering; and who are usually resident in the same household. The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent-child relationship or other blood relationship. Some households will, therefore, contain more than one family.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Formal child care

regulated care, away from the child's home. The main types of formal care are: before and after school care; long-day care; family day care and occasional care.

Reference: *Child Care, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4402.0).

Household

a group of two or more related or unrelated people who usually reside in the same dwelling who regard themselves as a household and who make common provision for food or other essentials for living; or a person living in a dwelling who makes provision for his or her own food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person. Households include group households of unrelated persons, same-sex couple households, single-parent households as well as one-person households. A household usually resides in a private dwelling (including caravans etc. in caravan parks). Persons usually resident in non-private dwellings, such as hotels, motels, boarding houses, gaols and hospitals, are not included in household estimates. This definition of a household is consistent with the definition used in the census.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Informal assistance

unpaid help or supervision that is provided to persons with one or more disabilities or persons aged 60 years and over living in households. It includes only assistance that is provided for one or more of the tasks associated with the activities of communication, mobility, self care, health care, paperwork, transport, housework, meal preparation, light property maintenance and cognition or emotion because of a person's disability or age. Informal assistance may be provided by family, friends or neighbours. For the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, any assistance received from family or friends living in the same household was considered to be informal assistance regardless of whether or not the provider was paid.

Reference: *Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

Informal child care

non-regulated care, arranged by the child's parent/guardian, either in the child's home or elsewhere. It comprises care by (step) brothers or sisters, care by grandparents, care by other relatives including a parent living elsewhere and care by other (unrelated) people such as friends, neighbours, nannies or babysitters. It may be paid or unpaid.

Reference: *Child Care, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4402.0).

Lone parent

a person who has no spouse or partner present in the household but who forms a parent-child relationship with at least one dependent or non-dependent child usually resident in the household.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Lone person

a person who makes provision for their food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person to form part of a multi-person household. He or she may live in a dwelling on their own or share a dwelling with another individual or family.

Reference: *Household and Family Projections* (ABS cat. no. 3236.0).

Marriage

refers to registered marriages only.

Reference: *Marriages, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3306.0.55.001).

Median

the value at which half the population falls above and half falls below.

Median age

the age at which half the population is older and half is younger.

Reference: *Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories* (ABS cat. no. 3201.0).

Family and community: definitions continued

Median age of mothers at first birth

the median age of mothers at the end of first confinement. A confinement is a pregnancy which results in at least one live birth: multiple births (e.g. twins) may be involved.

Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Australia's mothers and babies* (AIHW cat. no. PER 34).

Median hours of care

the number of hours of formal and/or informal child care at which half the children who received child care fall below the value and half above.

Reference: *Child Care, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4402.0).

Median value

for any distribution, the median value (for example, age, duration) is that value which divides the relevant population into two equal parts, half falling below the value and half exceeding it. Where the value for a particular record has not been stated, that record is excluded from the calculation.

Natural parent

a parent who is related to his or her child(ren) by either birth or adoption.

Reference: *Family Characteristics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0).

Natural parent living elsewhere

a child's natural parent who is not usually resident in the same household as the child.

Reference: *Family Characteristics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0).

Non-resident parent

persons aged 15 years and over who have one or more natural children aged 0–17 years living elsewhere.

Reference: *Family Characteristics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0).

One-parent family

a family consisting of a lone parent with at least one dependent or non-dependent child (regardless of age) who is also usually resident in the household.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Primary carer

a person who provides the most informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to a person with one or more disabilities. The assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing, for at least six months and be provided for one or more of the core activities (communication, mobility and self care). In the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, primary carers only include persons aged 15 years and over for whom a personal interview was conducted. Persons aged 15 to 17 years were only interviewed personally if parental permission were granted.

Reference: *Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

Registered marriage

formally registered marriage for which the partners hold a marriage certificate.

Reference: *Marriages, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3306.0.55.001).

Small favours

assistance which a person may seek from other people in their day to day lives. Examples of small favours include looking after pets or watering the garden, collecting mail or checking the house, minding a child for a brief period, helping with moving or lifting objects, and borrowing equipment.

Reference: *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).

Support in time of crisis

whether there is someone outside the person's household who could be asked for support in a time of crisis. Support could be in the form of emotional, physical or financial help. Potential sources of support could be family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and various community, government and professional organisations.

Reference: *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS. cat. no. 4159.0).

Support for other relatives living outside the household

any of the following types of support provided to relatives such as elderly parents, children aged 25 years and over, grandchildren who live outside the household:

- give money to pay rent and/or other housing costs
- give money to pay bills or meet debt
- provide or pay for food
- provide or pay for clothing
- let them borrow the car
- drive them places
- pay for educational costs or textbooks
- provide pocket money or an allowance
- buy or give them money to buy big cost items such as a car, computer, sound system, etc.

Reference: *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).

Total fertility rate

the sum of age-specific fertility rates (live births at each age of mother per female population of that age). It represents the number of children a female would bear during her lifetime if she experienced current age-specific fertility rates throughout her reproductive life.

Reference: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

Volunteer

someone who willingly gave unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group, in the previous 12 months.

Reference: *Voluntary Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4441.0).

Volunteer rate

for any group, the volunteer rate is the number of volunteers in that group expressed as a proportion of the total population in that same group.

Reference: *Voluntary Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4441.0).

Families with a young child with a disability

In 2003, 13% of families in Australia with children aged 0–14 years had a child with a disability, including 7% with a child with a profound/severe disability.

The majority of children with a disability live and are cared for in their own family home. Family members take on caring responsibilities and have differing degrees of access to more formal types of support.[1]

The impact of having a child with a disability varies across families. The type of disability, family structure and dynamics, as well as individual characteristics and socioeconomic circumstances of the family, all influence the nature of stress which families may experience, and the coping mechanisms they may have for dealing with this stress.[2]

Children with a disability

In 2003, almost 320,000 children aged 0–14 years had a disability. Almost all (99.7%) of these children lived in family households, as opposed to institutions. Around 4% of all children aged 0–14 years had a profound/severe disability. These children needed assistance all or most of the time with self-care, communication or mobility.

Children may have more than one type of disability. In 2003, the most common types of disability among children were intellectual disabilities (59% of children with a profound/severe disability) and sensory/speech disabilities (53%).

Data sources and definitions

Data in this article are drawn from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) and refer to families with children aged 0–14 years.

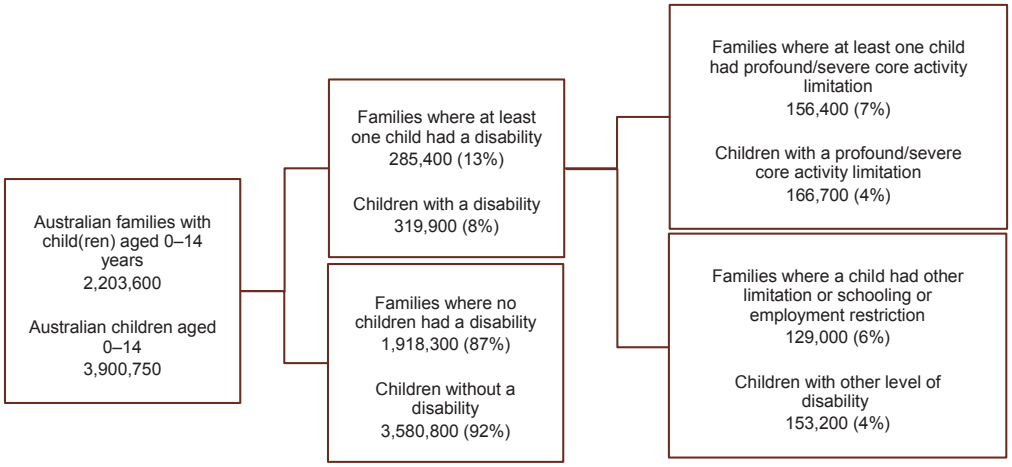
Disability as defined in SDAC refers to a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activity.[3] This definition is consistent with the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, which defines disability as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. *Core activities* include self-care such as bathing and eating, mobility and communication. With a *profound/severe* disability the person always or sometimes needs help with core activities. With a *moderate/mild* disability the person needs no help or supervision but has difficulty with a core activity task, or the person uses aids and equipment but needs no help with a core activity task. For further details, see '*Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings*', *2003* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

The *Primary carers* in this article are those who are parents of a child aged 0–14 years with a disability, who live with that child, and assist them with core activities on an ongoing basis.

The *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Disadvantage* summarises various attributes (such as low income and unemployment) of an area in which a population lives to provide a measure of the level of social and economic disadvantage in that area.

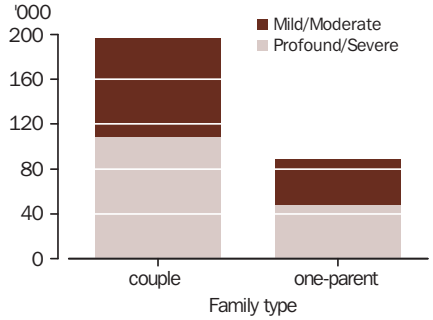
Equivalised family income is a measure of income which is adjusted to account for the different size and composition of families.

Families with child(ren) aged 0–14: child's disability status — 2003



Source: ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Families with a child with a disability — 2003



Source: ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Families with a child with a disability

In 2003, there were around 2.2 million families in Australia with children aged 0–14 years. One in eight of these families (13% or 285,000) had a child with a disability, similar to the rate in 1998 (12%). In 2003, 7% of families had a child with a profound/severe disability.

In 2003, of all families with at least one child with a disability, 69% were couple families and 31% were one-parent families. One-parent families, irrespective of whether or not they have a child with a disability, are considered to be at higher risk of disadvantage, for example in income, housing and employment.[4] One-parent families that have a child with a disability may be at increased risk of disadvantage.

Families with a child with a disability were generally larger than were families without a child with a disability. In 2003, there were on average 2.3 children aged 0–14 years in couple families with a child with a disability compared with 1.8 children in couple families without a child with a disability. Similarly, for one-parent families the average number of children of this age was 2.1 and 1.6, respectively.

In 2003, a much higher proportion of one-parent families had a child with a disability compared with couple families. About one in five one-parent families with children aged 0–14 years (19%) had a child with a disability, and 10% had a child with a profound/severe disability. Correspondingly, about one in nine couple families with children of this age (11%) had a child with a disability and 6% had a child with a profound/severe disability.

In 2003, there were 438,000 families (20%) with children aged 0–14 years where one or both parents had a disability. The proportion of families who had a child with a disability was higher in these families than in families where a parent did not have a disability.

Couple families where at least one parent had a disability were more than twice as likely to have a child with a disability as those couple families where a parent did not have a disability (22% and 9% respectively).

Similarly, one-parent families where the parent had a disability were more than twice as likely to have a child with a disability (32%) as those where the parent did not have a disability (15%).

Socioeconomic status

The relationship between disability and socioeconomic status is complex. Disadvantage may contribute to and precede disability through exposure to environmental risks, inadequate nutrition, or maternal risk factors.[1] Alternatively, disadvantage may be the result of having a child with a disability, reflecting reduced opportunities to engage in paid employment and the greater costs of caring for a child with a disability.

Furthermore, families with a larger number of young children generally have lower levels of labour force participation by parents, and therefore of income, than do families with fewer children. Since families with a child with a disability have more children on average than do families without a child with a disability, some of the differences in socioeconomic circumstances may be due to family size.

In 2003, families with a child with a disability were more likely to be living in areas of greater socioeconomic disadvantage, as identified by the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Disadvantage. Almost one-fifth (18%) of families living in areas of greatest socioeconomic disadvantage (the first decile) had a child with a disability, compared with 13% of all families.

...educational attainment of parents

The educational status of parents is also associated with disability. Among couple families where at least one parent had completed secondary school, 10% had a child with a disability, whereas in couples where neither parent had completed secondary school, the proportion was 15%. In one-parent families, 11% of parents who had completed secondary school had a child with a disability compared with 23% of lone parents who had not completed secondary school.

Couple families where neither parent had completed secondary school, were almost twice as likely as other couple families to have a child with a profound/severe disability (9% compared with 5%).

Families(a): labour force status of parents — 2003

Selected labour force status of parents	At least one child had a disability %	No children had a disability %
Couple families		
Both employed	50.9	61.4
One employed	40.0	33.3
Neither employed	9.1	5.3
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
One-parent families		
Employed	38.1	52.1
Not employed	61.9	47.9
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
	'000	'000
Total families	**285.4**	**1 918.3**

(a) With children aged 0–14 years.

Source: ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Labour force participation

One of the indirect costs of having a child with a disability can be the reduced opportunity for parents to work. This may be related to the availability of specialised care for the child, as well as the inability of the parents to find employment with flexible arrangements.[1] While many parents continue on in employment, some parents may have ceased working after their child acquired or was diagnosed with their disability, and others may not have been working to begin with.

In 2003, around 51% of couple families who had a child with a disability had both parents employed, compared with 61% of couple families where no child had a disability. If the child's disability was profound/severe, the proportion having both parents employed was lower (42%).

Over one-third (38%) of lone parents who had a child with a disability were employed, compared with around one-half (52%) of lone parents who did not have a child with a disability. The proportion employed dropped to 29% where the child's disability was profound/severe.

After adjusting to account for differences in family size between families with and families without a child with a disability, the gap between the labour force participation of parents was reduced. The standardised proportion of couple families with a child with a disability in which both parents were working was 56% (compared with the unadjusted rate of 51%) while the corresponding proportion for couple families without a child with a disability was 61% (the same as the unadjusted rate). Standardisation made less difference to the relative rates of labour force participation between lone parents with and without a child with a disability.

Families(a): disability status and gross equivalised family income per week(b) — 2003

Equivalised gross family income quintiles(c)	At least one child had a disability %	No children had a disability %
Lowest quintile	32.6	20.5
Second quintile	27.3	21.7
Third quintile	20.3	23.3
Fourth quintile	10.2	20.6
Highest quintile	9.7	14.1
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
	$	$
Mean weekly equivalised gross family income	501.3	605.0
	'000	'000
Total families(d)	**246.2**	**1 603.3**

(a) With children aged 0–14 years.
(b) Regular cash income before tax and the Medicare levy, adjusted for the number of adults and children in the family.
(c) Those in the lowest quintile have the lowest income, those in the highest quintile have the highest income.
(d) Excludes families who did not report their income.

Source: ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Income

An income quintile is derived by ranking the population from lowest to highest income, and dividing it into five equal groups. The lowest quintile is made up of the 20% of the population with the lowest incomes.

Reflecting in part the differences in employment by parents, the incomes of families with a child with a disability were generally lower than were incomes of families without a child with a disability. In 2003, over half (60%) of families with a child with a disability were in the two lowest quintiles for gross equivalised family income (that is, income adjusted for the size and composition of the family) and 10% were in the highest quintile. This is in contrast to families with no children with a disability, of whom 42% were in the lowest two quintiles and 14% were in the highest quintile.

In 2003, the mean gross equivalised family income for families with a child with a disability ($501 per week) was 83% of the corresponding mean income of families where no child had a disability ($605 per week).

Families with a child with a disability may be affected not only by reduced income but also by the increased costs associated with the child, such as health care, special diets and equipment needed for their care.[1]

Housing tenure

Buying, renting or owning one's home are each associated with different costs and different levels of security of tenure. For families with a child with a disability, renting may also be associated with a reduced ability to modify their house to better accommodate their child's disability (by installing hand rails, ramps, hoists etc). On the other hand, renting may enable some families to live closer to treatment facilities.

In 2003, 41% of all families with a child with a disability, and 47% of families who had a child with a profound/severe disability, rented their accommodation compared with 28% of other families.

Primary carers

A primary carer provides most of the informal help for their child, assisting with mobility, communication or self-care. In 2003, the majority of parents who were primary carers, living with and caring for their child aged 0–14 years with a disability, were mothers (92%).

Children with a disability may require many more hours of care than other children. While many parents of very young children would expect to spend 40 hours or more per week caring for their child, this time usually decreases when the child starts school and becomes more independent. However, for children with a disability, the need for care may not reduce as they get older. Among primary carers, over half (58%) who were caring for children aged 5–9 years and 52% who were caring for children aged 10–14 years were still spending more than 40 hours a week providing care for their child.

...assistance

Many primary carers have someone with whom they can share some of their caring responsibilities, or who can offer them assistance. In 2003, assistance was most often provided by a spouse or partner (40%), a parent (10%), or a formal provider (15%). However, around one-third (31%) of primary carers reported that they had no assistance, and one-third (32%) reported that they needed assistance or needed more assistance than they received.

...respite care

Respite care services provide alternative care arrangements for children with a disability so that parents can take a short-term break from their caring role. Such services may be used on a regular basis or in an emergency. Respite care may have waiting lists, access criteria, and may not be available locally.[5]

Emotional effects of caring role on primary carers(a)(b) — 2003

	%
Need more support, or an improvement in situation to aid role as carer	51.3
Weary or lacks energy due to caring role	50.5
Frequently worried or depressed due to caring role	34.1
Often feels angry or frustrated due to caring role	17.6
Has been diagnosed with stress-related illness due to caring role	17.8

(a) Primary carers of children aged 0–14 years with a disability.
(b) Components do not add to total as emotional effects are not mutually exclusive.

Source: ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Of the parents identified as primary carers in 2003, 29% had used a formal respite care service for their child at some time in the past, and 17% had done so within the previous three months. About two-fifths (38%) felt they needed more respite care than they received. Over half (55%) of primary carers of children aged less than 15 years had never accessed respite care and felt they did not need it. A further 16% had never received respite care, but felt they needed it.

...emotional effect of caring

Caring for a child with a disability can be emotionally challenging.[1] One of the significant factors influencing how well carers cope is the emotional support and friendship they receive from family and friends.[1]

Around half (51%) of all primary carers of children aged less than 15 years felt they needed more support, and half (50%) felt weary or lacking in energy. Some carers reported feeling worried or depressed (34%) and angry or frustrated (18%) due to their caring role; and almost one-fifth (18%) had been diagnosed with a stress-related illness.

...effect of caring role on relationships

In 2003, almost half (47%) of parents who were primary carers for their co-resident child reported that their relationship with the child was not affected by performance of the primary carer role. Where the relationship had changed, the result was more likely to have been an improved relationship with the main care recipient (42% of all primary carers) than placing a strain on that relationship (11%).

While many parents' relationships with their child with a disability became closer as a consequence of providing primary care, relationships with partners and other co-resident family members such as their other children were more often subject to strain. One-third (33%) of these carers reported that their caring role had placed strains on their relationship with their spouse or partner, or that they lacked time alone together. Around half (52%) of the primary carers reported that they were losing touch/lacking time with other co-resident family members. In addition, around one-quarter (26%) of parents who were primary carers reported losing touch with existing friends due to their caring role.

Conclusion

Families who care for a young child with a disability have a variety of different experiences and circumstances. While around 13% of all families with children aged up to 14 years had at least one child with a disability, this proportion was higher for one parent families and families where one or both parents also had a disability.

Because families with at least one child with a disability tend to have more children than other families with young children, some of the differences between these families may be related to family size. Families with at least one child with a disability tended to have lower socioeconomic status, labour force participation and income when compared with other families with young children aged up to 14 years. In addition, families with a child with a disability were more likely to be renting than either owning or paying off their own home.

Endnotes

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2004, *Children with disabilities in Australia*, cat. no. DIS 38, AIHW, Canberra.

2 Floyd, F and Gallagher, E 1997, 'Parental Stress, Care Demands and Use of Support Services for School-Ages Children With Disabilities and Behaviour Problems', *Family Relations*, vol. 46.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003, *Disability, Ageing and Carers: summary of findings,* cat. no. 4430.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Australian Social Trends,* 'One-parent families', cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

5 Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs 2007, *Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/territory Disability Agreement*. Viewed 12 December 2007, <http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/cstda/report/index.htm>.

Voluntary work

In 2006, 21% of the Australian population aged 18 years and over volunteered at least once a fortnight.

Volunteers make a valuable contribution to society in both economic and social terms.[1] Volunteers provide services which would otherwise have to be paid for or left undone, allowing organisations to allocate their often limited finances elsewhere. The value of the work contributed by volunteers to non-profit institutions in 1999–2000 was estimated to be $8.9 billion.[2]

The effect of volunteering on the functioning and connectedness of communities is increasingly being recognised. Through their contribution to a wide range of organisations, volunteers help to build social networks, shared values and social cohesion.[3]

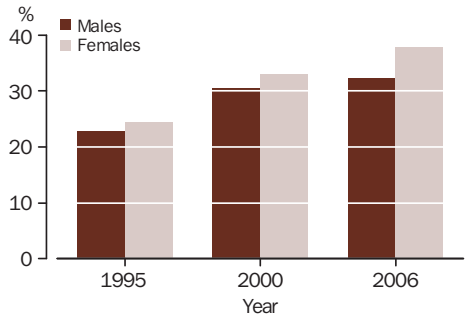
This article focuses on adults aged 18 years and over who volunteer at least once a fortnight for one or more organisations.

Trends in volunteering

The proportion of the population who volunteered at least once in a 12 month period increased from 24% in 1995 to 32% in 2000 and 35% in 2006. This increase occurred for both men and women across most age groups. While the total annual hours contributed by volunteers increased between 1995 and 2006, the amount of time each volunteer gave decreased. The median annual hours contributed by volunteers fell from 74 hours per person in 1995 to 56 hours per person in 2006.

In 2006, 5.2 million people aged 18 years and over participated in voluntary work at least once in the previous 12 months. Of these, 3.1 million (21% of the population aged 18 years and over) were volunteers who worked at least once per fortnight for one or more organisations.

Volunteering rates(a)



(a) 2006 data have been made comparable to data from 1995 and 2000. For more information see *Voluntary Work, Australia, 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4441.0).

Source: Voluntary Work, Australia, 2006 (ABS cat. no. 4441.0).

Data sources and definitions

The *Voluntary Work Survey* was conducted throughout Australia from March to July 2006 as part of the General Social Survey (GSS). It is the third detailed ABS survey conducted on volunteering, with previous surveys conducted in June 1995 and over four quarters in 2000. The survey collected data on rates of participation in voluntary work, hours contributed, characteristics of volunteers and the types of activities undertaken by volunteers aged 18 years and over.

A *volunteer* is someone who willingly gives unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group at least once in a 12 month period.

A *regular volunteer* is someone who gives unpaid help at least once a fortnight for one or more organisations.

The *volunteer rate* for any group (for example an age group) is the number of volunteers in that group expressed as a percentage of the total population of that group.

Many people volunteer for more than one organisation. For each person, detailed information was collected about the voluntary work done for up to three organisations.

For further information see *Voluntary Work, Australia, 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4441.0).

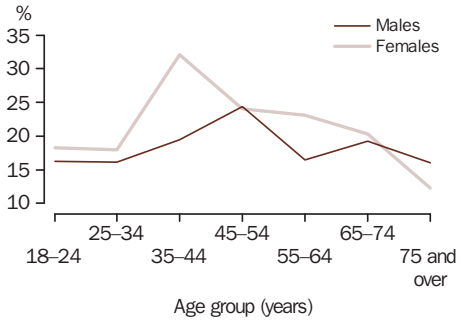
Who are the regular volunteers?

In 2006, 22% of women were regular volunteers compared with 19% of men. Rates of regular volunteering were highest among people aged 35–44 years and 45–54 years. Women aged 35–44 years were the group most likely to be regular volunteers (32%) followed by men and women aged 45–54 years (24% each).

...labour force status

People's participation in unpaid voluntary activities is related to their type of engagement in the paid labour force, with different patterns for men and women. Men who were employed were more likely than those who were unemployed to be regular volunteers, with 19% of both full-time and part-time employed men volunteering at least once a fortnight.

Rates of regular volunteering for adults aged 18 and over, by age and sex — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Voluntary Work Survey.

For women, those employed part-time had the highest rates of regular volunteering (29%), followed by those who were unemployed (25%). Women employed full-time were equally as likely as men who were employed full-time to be regular volunteers.

...health status

Research has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health. Health issues may limit a person's ability to participate in some voluntary activities and good health leads to continued volunteering. Studies have also suggested that volunteering leads to improved physical and mental health.[4]

In 2006, people who described their own health as excellent or very good were more likely to be regular volunteers (23%) than people who described themselves as having fair or poor health (14%).

...geographic differences

In 2006, the rate of regular participation in voluntary work was higher outside capital cities (23%) than in capital cities (19%).

Life stage

The rate of regular volunteering and the type of organisation a person volunteers for varies as people move through different stages in their lives. Among the selected life stages, people with a child aged less than 15 years were the most likely to volunteer regularly (29% of people in couple relationships and 27% of lone parents). While people with young children had higher rates of volunteering than people in other life stages, on average they spent fewer hours per week volunteering than did people with older children or older people living without children.

Regular volunteers aged 55 years and over in a couple only relationship contributed the most hours among the selected life stage groups, with an average of nearly six and a half hours per person per week. Lone persons aged 55 years and over contributed an average of five and a half hours per week.

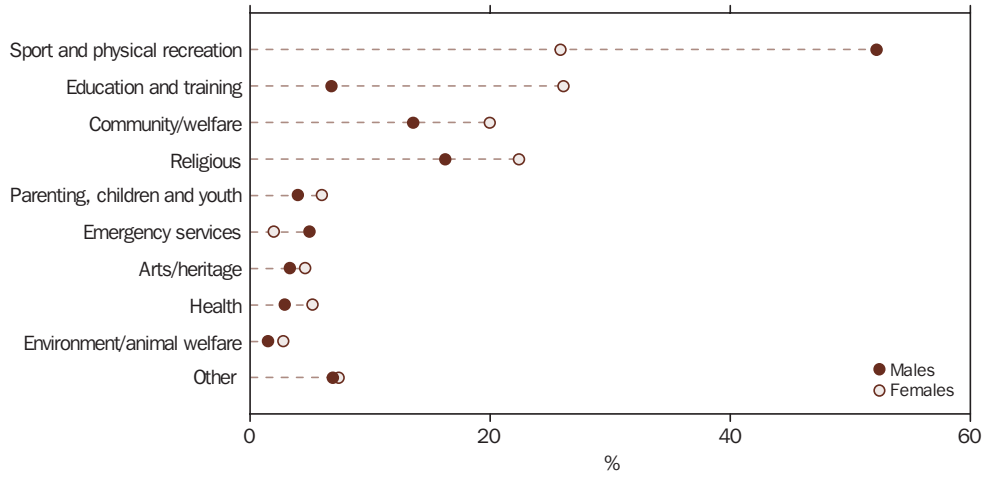
In total, regular volunteers contributed 646 million hours to their communities in the 12 months prior to the 2006 survey. People aged 55 years and over in a couple-only relationship contributed over a quarter of those hours (170 million). A further 151 million hours were contributed by people in a couple relationship with a child aged less than 15 years.

Persons in selected life stages — 2006

Selected person's life stage	*Rate of regular volunteering* %	*Average weekly hours* hours	*Total annual hours* million hours
Lone person aged less than 35 years	14.8	3.3	7.4
Couple only, aged less than 35 years	17.2	2.5	21.3
Couple with youngest child aged less than 15 years	28.6	2.8	151.5
Couple with youngest child aged 15 years and over	18.6	4.8	67.0
Lone parent with youngest child aged less than 15 years	26.5	3.6	21.6
Lone parent with youngest child aged 15 years and over	17.4	4.2	14.4
Couple only aged 55 years and over	19.9	6.4	170.3
Lone person aged 55 years and over	17.6	5.5	53.8
All persons aged 18 years and over	**20.5**	**4.0**	**645.9**

Source: ABS 2006 Voluntary Work Survey.

Type of organisation(a) by sex: regular volunteers aged 18 and over — 2006



(a) Does not add to 100% as people may report their voluntary work for up to three organisations.

Source: ABS 2006 Voluntary Work Survey.

Type of voluntary organisation

People volunteer regularly for a variety of organisations. The type of organisation people choose to volunteer for differs between men and women and according to their life stage.

Over half (52%) of men who volunteered regularly did so for a sport and physical recreation organisation. Women who volunteered regularly spread their time between sporting organisations (26% of female volunteers), education and training organisations (26% of female volunteers), religious organisations (22% of female volunteers) and community or welfare organisations (20% of female volunteers).

The voluntary work undertaken by parents is likely to be related to their child's education and extracurricular activities. In 2006, the most common organisations for which people with a child aged less than 15 years volunteered, were education and training organisations (34% of people in couple relationships and 43% of lone parents), and sports and physical recreation organisations (46% of people in couple relationships and 36% of lone parents).

People aged 55 years and over, whether in a couple only relationship or living alone, were more likely to volunteer for welfare and community organisations (31% and 39%) and religious organisations (25% and 29%).

...type of voluntary activities

The most common activities performed by regular volunteers were fundraising, preparing and serving food, teaching and coaching or refereeing.

Among regular volunteers, over half of women (55%) and just under half of men (49%) regularly participated in fundraising and sales activities.

Preparing and serving food was a more common activity among regular female volunteers (48%) than regular male volunteers (29%). Around half (48%) of all regular male volunteers coached, judged or refereed compared with around one-fifth (21%) of regular female volunteers. Men were also more than twice as likely as women to regularly participate in repairing, maintenance and gardening activities (35% and 15% respectively).

Of regular volunteers, 6% volunteered for emergency and community safety activities and just under 7% volunteered for activities involving environmental protection.

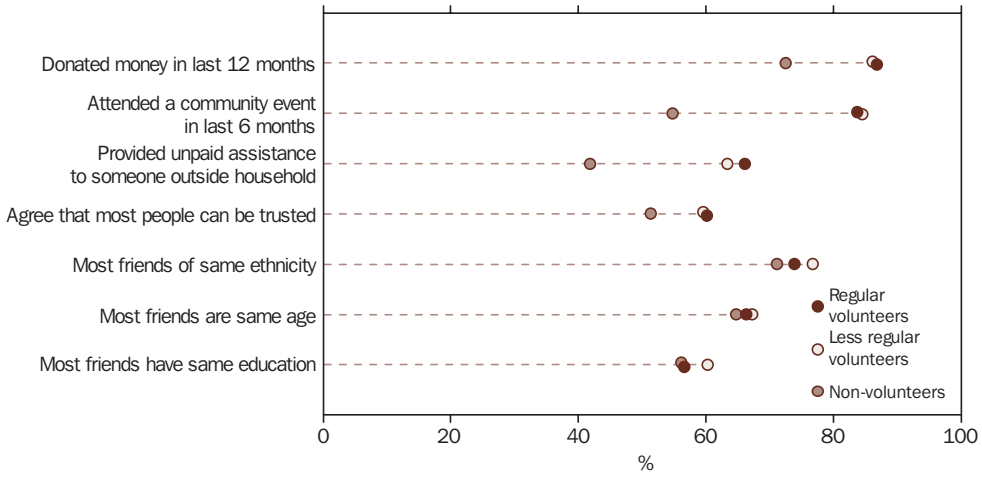
Social capital

Social capital is a measure of the connectedness and functionality of communities. It grows through the social networks we build and the network transactions we take part in (such as providing support or sharing knowledge).

While volunteering itself is considered a strong indicator of social capital,[3] volunteers are also involved in other transactions which build social capital.

In 2006, volunteers, regardless of the frequency of their volunteering, were more likely than non-volunteers to donate money, attend a community event or provide unpaid assistance to someone outside their household.

Social networks and transactions by volunteer status — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Voluntary Work Survey.

In addition to their formal volunteering for an organisation, 66% of people who volunteered at least once a fortnight and 63% of less regular volunteers provided unpaid assistance to someone outside their household, compared with 42% of non-volunteers.

While volunteers did not appear to have more diverse friendships (with respect to the age, educational level or ethnic background of their friends) than people who did not volunteer, they did report higher levels of trust in other people. In 2006, 60% each of regular and less regular volunteers felt that most people could be trusted compared with 51% of people who were not volunteers.

Endnotes

1 Volunteering Australia, 2004, Submission on the Productivity Commission's commissioned study: 'Economic Implications of an Ageing Australia', October 2004, viewed 22 February 2008, <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/J4LR59D9LE/ProductivityCommissionsubmission041025.pdf>.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account, 1999–2000*, cat. no. 5256.0, ABS, Canberra.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004, *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and Indicators*, cat. no. 1378.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Corporation for National and Community Service, Office of Research and Policy Development, *The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research*, 2007, Washington, DC.

Social participation of migrants

Almost one in seven people born in countries other than Australia or main English-speaking countries reported that they had no source of support during a time of crisis.

High levels of social participation and social connectedness are believed to contribute to the overall wellbeing of individuals and their communities.[1] Opportunities for social participation and interaction may be found through participation in paid and unpaid work, friendships and participation in culture and leisure activities.[1]

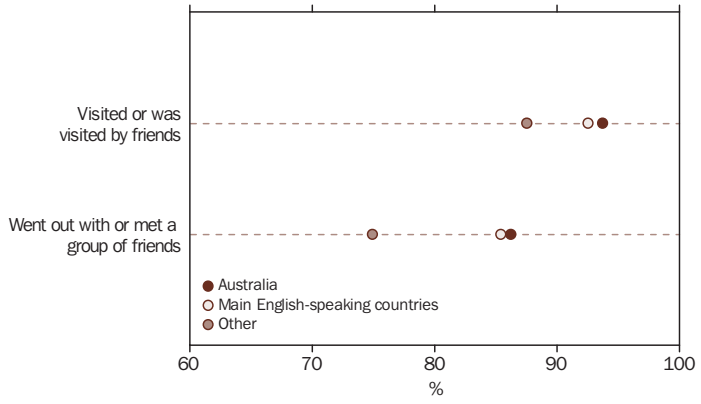
Australia is a culturally diverse nation with migrants arriving from around two hundred countries during the past two centuries.[2] These migrants have played an important role in shaping our nation.[3] Recent social and economic issues such as the ageing population and skills shortages have highlighted the role migration will play in the economic and demographic future of Australia.[4] While migrants contribute to and enrich Australian society through their different skills, abilities and experiences, they potentially face difficulties such as language barriers, cultural differences and discrimination, which could affect their ability to participate in some social activities.

This article examines several areas of social participation in the context of whether migrants came from main English-speaking countries or other countries. These migrants may or may not be proficient in spoken English.

Migrants in Australia

According to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 22% (4.4 million) of people in Australia were born overseas. A further 26% of people who were born in Australia had at least one parent who was born overseas.

Participation in informal social activities by country of birth — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

Data sources and definitions

Data for this article are primarily from the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS). This survey collected data on a range of social dimensions. This allows analysis of interrelationships in social circumstances and outcomes including the exploration of multiple advantage and disadvantage.

A *migrant* is a person who was born overseas and obtained permanent Australian resident status prior to or after their arrival.

Main English-speaking countries are the main countries from which Australia receives, or has received, significant numbers of overseas settlers who are likely to speak English. These countries comprise the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, the United States of America and South Africa.

People born in other countries refers to people who were not born in Australia or in a main English-speaking country. These people may or may not be proficient in spoken English.

For more information see: *General Social Survey: Summary of Results, 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0).

According to the 2006 General Social Survey, 37% of the migrant population were from main English-speaking countries (the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, the United States of America and South Africa). The remainder (63%) were born in other countries. Of those born in other countries, around 2 million (82%) were proficient in spoken English.

Over the last ten years, there has been an increased emphasis on skilled migration programs in Australia.[5] During this time, the pattern of migration has also changed. For example, while migrants from the United Kingdom and New Zealand remained the two largest overseas-born groups, the proportion of migrants coming to Australia who were born in China, India and South Africa increased considerably between 1996 and 2006. (See *Australian Social Trends 2007*, Migration: Permanent additions to Australia's population, pp 24–29.)

Participation in social activities

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises that some level of social and cultural participation is a fundamental human right and need.[1,6] Social participation is believed to have positive impacts on the health of individuals and on the strength of communities.[1]

...informal social activities

In 2006, the vast majority of migrants from main English-speaking countries (97%) and from other countries (92%) were involved in some form of informal social activity within the three months prior to being surveyed. People from main English-speaking countries were more likely than people who came from other countries to visit or be visited by friends (92% compared with 88%), and to go out with or meet a group of friends (85% compared with 75%).

...organised social groups

Involvement in organised social groups such as craft or hobby groups, or sport and recreation clubs, is another common form of social participation. In 2006, migrants from main English-speaking countries (34%) and people born in Australia (38%) were most likely to be involved in a sport or recreation group whereas people from other countries were most commonly involved in a religious or spiritual group (30%).

...sporting activities

In Australia, as in many other countries, attendance at sporting events or participation in sporting activities has been a common avenue for individuals to engage with the wider community.[7]

In 2006, participation in sporting activities (either formal or informal) through playing, coaching, refereeing or administrative roles, was a popular means of social interaction. Almost two-thirds (65%) of people from main English-speaking countries and just over half (53%) of people from other countries reported some form of participation in sport in the previous 12 months. The proportion of people born in Australia who participated in sporting activities (64%) was similar to that of people from main English-speaking countries.

Just over half of people from main English-speaking countries (52%) and just under one-third of people from other countries (31%) had attended a sports event in the previous 12 months, compared with 57% of people born in Australia.

Attendance at cultural venues

Attendance at cultural venues was high for both migrant groups in 2006. Around nine out of ten people from main English-speaking countries and about eight out of ten people from other countries reported that they had attended a culture or leisure venue in the previous twelve months. Similarly, almost nine out of ten Australians attended a culture or leisure venue in the same twelve month period.

The cinema was the most popular venue for both migrant groups, as well as for people born in Australia. People born in Australia and main English-speaking countries had higher rates of attendance (71% and 70%) than did people from other countries (57%). This was also the case for attendance at theatre performances (23%, 24% and 16% respectively). These differences in participation may reflect the cultural content and predominance of English language in many popular films and live performances shown in Australia.

Friendships

Friendships generally provide networks of trust, reciprocity and cooperation, and may contribute to an overall sense of belonging.[1]

People who were born in Australia or main English-speaking countries were more likely than people from other countries to report having three or more friends outside the

Attendance at selected cultural venues(a) by country of birth — 2006

	Born in main English-speaking countries	*Born in other countries*	*Born in Australia*
	%	%	%
Cinemas	70.2	57.2	71.1
Zoological gardens and aquariums	45.3	38.6	41.0
Popular music concerts	34.9	21.0	34.9
Theatre performances	23.6	15.6	23.2
Dance performances	16.6	16.5	15.5
Have attended culture/leisure venue	92.0	83.3	89.4

(a) Categories are not mutually exclusive.

Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

Friendships by country of birth: people aged 18 years and over — 2006

	Born in main English-speaking countries	*Born in other countries*	*Born in Australia*
	%	%	%
Number of friends living outside the household can confide in			
0 friends	13.5	22.5	11.0
1 or 2 friends	33.9	38.2	33.1
3 or more friends	52.6	39.3	56.0
Characteristics of friends(a)			
All or most friends are of similar age to self	66.0	62.9	66.3
All or most friends are of similar educational background to self	56.3	49.4	59.2
All or most friends are of similar ethnic background to self	66.7	50.8	78.7
Had face-to-face contact with family and friends living elsewhere at least once a month	94.5	90.2	94.8

(a) Refers to all friends, not only the ones the selected person can confide in.

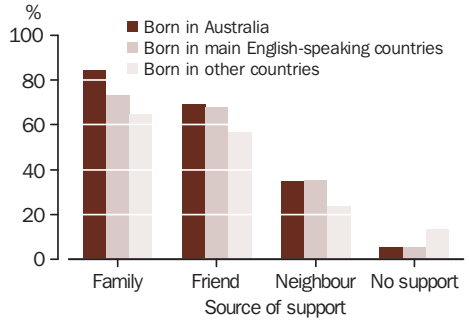
Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

household they could confide in (56% and 53% compared with 39%). A small proportion of people from main English-speaking countries (14%) and people born in Australia (11%) did not have any friends outside the household they could confide in, compared with over one in five (23%) people from other countries. This difference may reflect the fact that migrants to Australia, particularly those who have recently arrived, may not know as many people as those born in Australia and may not have had sufficient time to develop as many supportive friendships.

Sources of support

Research suggests that an individual's social support network can have a substantial impact on successful social and community adjustment. Strong supportive ties among family members are considered especially important.[8]

Source of support in time of crisis — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

Regardless of country of birth, the greatest source of support in a time of crisis was a family member. Over 80% of people born in Australia and around 75% of people born in main English-speaking countries could get support from family compared with 65% of people born in other countries. This difference will reflect whether or not migrants have family members in Australia.

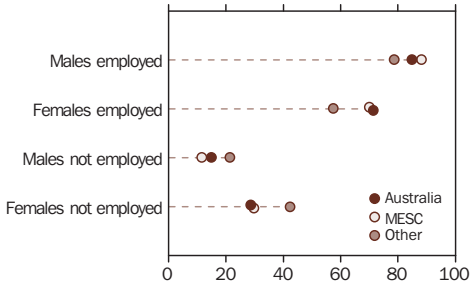
Friends were also a big source of support, with nearly 70% of both Australian-born and people born in main English-speaking countries, and over half (57%) of people born in other countries, reporting that they could ask friends for support during a time of crisis. Just over one-third of migrants from main English-speaking countries (35%) and people born in Australia (35%) reported that they could ask neighbours for support during a time of crisis, compared with just under one-quarter (24%) of migrants from other countries.

Almost one in seven people born in countries other than Australia or main English-speaking countries reported that they had no source of support during a time of crisis.

Voluntary work

Voluntary work provides opportunities for social participation through involvement in a variety of activities. Volunteering also provides benefits to the community, such as increased cohesion.[1] In 2006, people who were born in Australia were more likely than migrants to undertake voluntary work (36% compared with 29%). Migrants who were born in main English-speaking countries were more likely to be volunteers than were people born

Employed and not employed by sex and country of birth: people aged 18 to 64 years — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

in other countries (34% and 26% respectively).[9] For more information about people who volunteer regularly, see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Voluntary Work, pp. 42–45.

Labour force participation

Opportunities for social participation and interaction may also arise through paid employment. Social relationships may develop through interaction with colleagues and while conducting work-related business. Work also provides income, which facilitates participation in some social activities.

In 2006, people who were born in Australia and people who were born in main English-speaking countries were more likely than people born in other countries to be employed (78% and 80% compared with 68%).

Men were more likely to be employed than were women, within both the Australian-born population (85% and 71% respectively) and people who were born in main English-speaking countries (88% and 70% respectively). The difference between men and women was greatest among people born in other countries, with 79% of men and 57% of women employed in 2006.

People who are either unemployed or are not part of the labour force may have fewer opportunities to build social relationships. In 2006, around one in five people from Australia (22%) and main English-speaking countries (20%) were not employed, compared with almost one-third (32%) of people from other countries. A considerable proportion of women born in countries other than Australia or main English-speaking countries (43%) were not employed in 2006.

Conclusion

Both migrants and people born in Australia benefit from and contribute to Australian society through participation in social activities. Participation in the labour force and involvement in social activities provide people with opportunities to engage with the wider community and to build social support networks, which in turn contribute to an increased sense of community. People who were born in Australia or main English speaking countries generally had higher levels of social participation than did migrants from other countries.

Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004, *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and Indicators, 2004*, cat. no. 1378.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 Jupp, J 2002, *From White Australia to Woomera,* Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.

3 Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Fact sheet 4 – More than 60 years of post-war migration*, viewed 1 April 2008, <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm>.

4 Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, *Annual Report 2001–02*, viewed 17 March 2008, <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2001-02/report8.htm>.

5 Parliamentary Library, *Skilled migration to Australia E-brief*, viewed 9 April 2008, <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/INTGUIDE/SP/Skilled_migration.htm>.

6 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, viewed 16 April 2008, <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

7 Taylor, T 2003, 'Diversity Management in a Multi-cultural Society: An exploratory study of cultural diversity and team sport in Australia', *Annals of Leisure Research,* Vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 168–187.

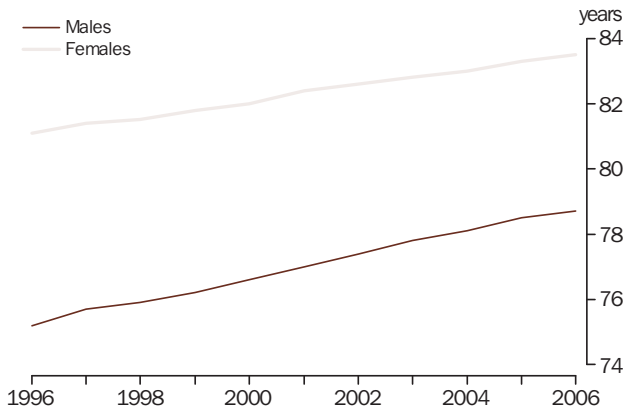
8 Froland, C, Brodsky, G, Olson, M, & Stewart, L 2000, 'Social Support and Social Adjustment: Implications for Mental Health Professionals', *Community Mental Health Journal*, vol 36 (1) pp. 61–75.

9 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Voluntary Work, Australia, 2006*, cat. no. 4441.0, ABS, Canberra.

Health

Health: national summary — key points

Life expectancy at birth(a)(b)



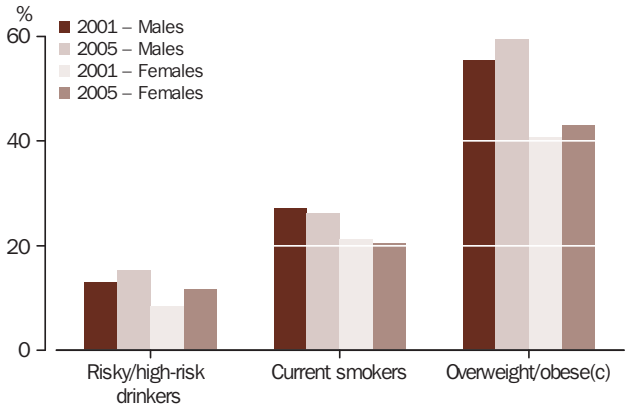
- Between 1996 and 2006, Australian life expectancy at birth increased for both males and females.
- Over this period, the life expectancy of boys improved by 3.5 years, with a boy born in 2006 expected to live to be 78.7 years of age.
- For girls, life expectancy improved by 2.4 years, with a girl born in 2006 expected to reach the age of 83.5.

(a) Based on three years of data ending in the years shown in the graph.
(b) Data for 1996 are from *Australian Social Trends 2007: Health, national summary,* page 62, indicators 1–2.

Source: Deaths, Australia (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: national summary*, page 54, indicators 1–2.

Risk behaviours(a)(b)



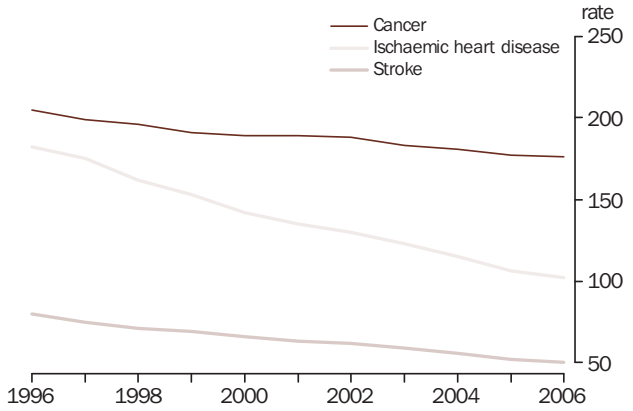
- Between 2001 and 2004–05, the proportion of both males and females who were overweight or obese increased.
- Rates of overweight/obesity were greater in men than in women in both 2001 and 2004–05. In 2001, 55% of males and 41% of females were either overweight or obese, compared with 59% of males and 43% of females in 2004–05.
- In 2004–05, 26% of men and 20% of women reported that they were current smokers. These are similar to the rates in 2001, when 27% of men and 21% of women reported that they were current smokers.
- In 2004–05, 15% of males and 12% of females reported consuming either risky or high risk levels of alcohol, up from 13% of men and 9% of women in 2001.

(a) Age standardised to the estimated resident population as at 30 June 2001.
(b) Risky/high risk drinkers and Current smokers are for the population aged 18 years and over, rates for Overweight/obesity are for the population 15 years and over.
(c) Excludes people for whom height and/or weight were not known.

Source: ABS 2001 and 2004–05 National Health Surveys.

For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: national summary*, page 55, indicators 50–55.

Main causes of death(a)(b)



- The main causes of death in 2006 were cancer, ischaemic heart disease and stroke.
- Between 1996 and 2006, the rates of all these main causes of death decreased.
- Cancer has consistently been the main cause of death throughout the decade, although rates have decreased over time. In 1996, 205 people in every 100,000 died of cancer. This decreased to 176 people in every 100,000 in 2006.
- Of the three main causes of death, the rate of ischaemic heart disease decreased the most over the decade. In 1996, 182 people in every 100,000 died of ischaemic heart disease. In 2006 this rate had fallen to 102 people in every 100,000.
- In 2006, 50 people in every 100,000 died of stroke, down from 80 people in every 100,000 in 1996.

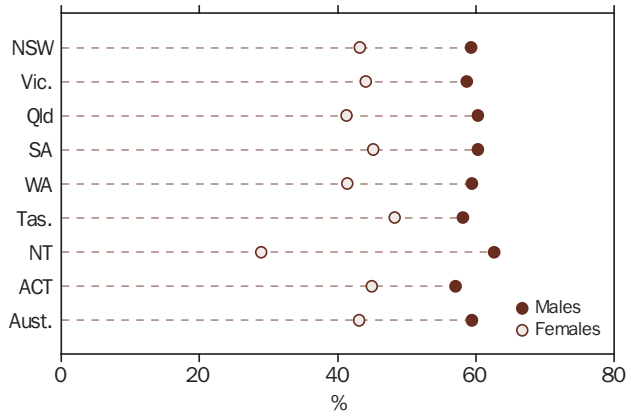
(a) Per 100,000 estimated resident population.
(b) Data for 1996 are from *Australian Social Trends 2007: Health, national summary,* page 62, indicators 26–28.

Source: ABS Causes of Death Collection.

For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: national summary*, page 54, indicators 25–27.

Health: state summary — key points

Overweight/obese adults aged 15 years and over(a)(b) — 2004–05

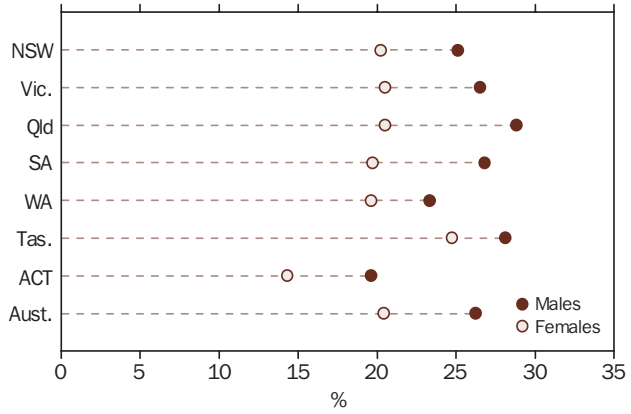


- In 2004–05, a larger proportion of males than females were overweight or obese across all Australian states and territories.
- Rates of overweight/obesity for males were similar among the states and territories (around 60%).
- Rates of overweight/obesity were also similar for females among the states and territories (around 45%), except for the Northern Territory where only 29% of females were overweight or obese.

(a) Excludes people for whom height and/or weight were not known.
(b) Age standardised to the estimated resident population as at 30 June 2001.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.
For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: state summary*, page 58, indicators 54–55.

Current smokers aged 18 years and over(a)(b) — 2004–05

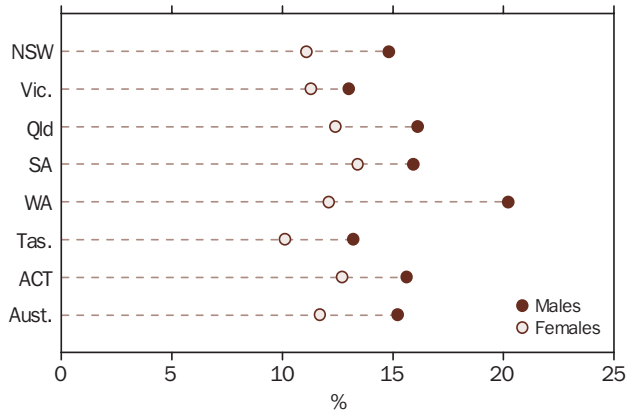


- In Australia in 2004–05, a greater proportion of men (26%) than women (20%) reported that they were current smokers.
- The proportion of men aged 18 years and over who reported currently smoking was greatest in Queensland (29%) and Tasmania (28%). For women, the proportion was greatest in Tasmania (25%).
- The proportion of both men (20%) and women (14%) who reported currently smoking was lowest in the Australian Capital Territory.

(a) Separate estimates for the Northern Territory are not available.
(b) Age standardised to the estimated resident population as at 30 June 2001.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.
For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: state summary*, page 58, indicators 52–53.

Alcohol consumption – Risky/high-risk levels, adults aged 18 years and over(a)(b) — 2004–05



- In Australia in 2004–05, a greater percentage of males (15%) than females (12%) reported drinking alcohol at risky or high-risk levels.
- One-fifth of males aged 18 years and over in Western Australia reported drinking alcohol at risky or high-risk levels. In Tasmania and Victoria around 13% reported a risky or high-risk intake of alcohol.
- The rate of risky or high-risk alcohol consumption for females was similar in South Australia (13%), the Australian Capital Territory (13%), Queensland (12%) and Western Australia (12%).

(a) Separate estimates for the Northern Territory are not available.
(b) Age standardised to the estimated resident population as at 30 June 2001.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.
For further information see *Australian Social Trends, Health: state summary*, page 58, indicators 50–51.

Health: national summary

	HEALTH STATUS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Life expectancy(a)												
1	Life expectancy at birth – males	years	75.7	75.9	76.2	76.6	77.0	77.4	77.8	78.1	78.5	78.7	n.y.a.
2	Life expectancy at birth – females	years	81.4	81.5	81.8	82.0	82.4	82.6	82.8	83.0	83.3	83.5	n.y.a.
3	Life expectancy at age 65 – males	years	16.2	16.3	16.6	16.8	17.2	17.4	17.6	17.8	18.1	18.3	n.y.a.
4	Life expectancy at age 65 – females	years	19.9	20.0	20.2	20.4	20.7	20.8	21.0	21.1	21.4	21.5	n.y.a.
5	Indigenous life expectancy at birth – males(b)	years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	59.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.y.a.	n.a.
6	Indigenous life expectancy at birth – females(b)	years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	64.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.y.a.	n.a.
7	Disability-free life expectancy at birth – males	years	n.a.	57.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	59.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
8	Disability-free life expectancy at birth – females	years	n.a.	62.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	62.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
9	Males surviving to age 85	%	28.0	28.6	29.9	31.2	32.9	34.0	35.2	36.2	37.7	38.5	n.y.a.
10	Females surviving to age 85	%	47.0	47.8	48.9	50.2	51.6	52.2	53.0	53.7	54.9	55.5	n.y.a.
	Mortality(c)												
11	Total number of deaths	'000	129.4	127.2	128.1	128.3	128.5	133.7	132.3	132.5	130.7	133.7	n.y.a.
12	Standardised death rate (per 1,000 population)(d)	rate	7.6	7.2	7.1	6.8	6.6	6.7	r6.5	6.3	r6.1	6.0	n.y.a.
13	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	rate	5.3	5.0	5.7	5.2	5.3	5.0	4.8	4.7	5.0	4.7	n.y.a.
14	Perinatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths combined)	rate	9.2	r8.4	r8.6	8.3	r8.5	8.0	8.0	r8.1	8.5	8.5	n.y.a.
	Morbidity and disability prevalence(d)												
15	Adults with one or more long-term conditions(e)(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	88.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	86.9	n.a.	n.a.
16	Cancer(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.	n.a.
17	Ischaemic heart disease(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	n.a.
18	Diabetes mellitus(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.5	n.a.	n.a.
19	Asthma(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	10.2	n.a.	n.a.
20	Recent injury(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18.5	n.a.	n.a.
21	High/very high levels of psychological distress – aged 18 years and over(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	12.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.0	n.a.	n.a.
22	Arthritis(f)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14.9	n.a.	n.a.
23	Persons with a disability(h)	%	n.a.	19.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	19.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
24	Persons with a profound/severe core activity restriction(h)	%	n.a.	6.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
	CAUSES OF DEATH	*Units*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
	Rates are per 100 000 population(c)												
	Main causes(d)												
25	Cancer	rate	199	196	191	189	189	188	183	181	177	176	n.y.a.
26	Ischaemic heart disease	rate	175	162	153	142	135	130	123	115	106	102	n.y.a.
27	Stroke	rate	75	71	69	66	63	62	59	56	52	50	n.y.a.
	Selected cancers(d)												
28	Lung cancer – males	rate	59	59	57	55	54	53	49	50	48	47	n.y.a.
29	Lung cancer – females	rate	22	21	21	22	23	24	22	22	23	23	n.y.a.
30	Breast cancer – females	rate	28	27	25	25	25	25	25	23	24	22	n.y.a.
31	Prostate cancer – males	rate	37	37	35	36	35	35	34	32	33	32	n.y.a.
32	Skin cancer	rate	7	7	7	7	8	7	7	7	8	8	n.y.a.
	Heart disease and diabetes(d)												
33	Ischaemic heart disease – males	rate	229	214	202	185	176	170	161	151	137	133	n.y.a.
34	Ischaemic heart disease – females	rate	132	122	115	108	102	98	93	86	81	77	n.y.a.
35	Diabetes mellitus	rate	18	16	16	16	16	17	16	17	16	16	n.y.a.
	Motor vehicle accidents												
36	Motor vehicle traffic accident(d)	rate	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	7	7	8	n.y.a.
37	Males aged 15–24 years	rate	28	27	27	28	27	24	23	20	20	22	n.y.a.
38	Females aged 15–24 years	rate	10	9	9	10	7	8	7	8	6	7	n.y.a.
	Suicide												
39	Suicide(d)	rate	15	14	13	12	13	12	11	10	10	9	n.y.a.
40	Males(d)	rate	24	23	22	20	20	19	18	17	16	14	n.y.a.
41	Females(d)	rate	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	n.y.a.
42	Males aged 15–24 years	rate	31	27	23	20	20	19	18	14	16	13	n.y.a.
43	Females aged 15–24 years	rate	7	6	6	6	5	4	4	5	4	4	n.y.a.
	Drug induced(d)												
44	Drug induced	rate	7	9	9	8	5	5	5	5	5	5	n.y.a.
45	Males	rate	10	12	13	11	7	6	6	6	6	5	n.y.a.
46	Females	rate	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	n.y.a.
	Avoidable deaths(d)												
47	Avoidable deaths	rate	211.4	200.6	193.4	183.3	177.5	170.1	159.7	151.8	144.9	n.y.a.	n.y.a.

Health: national summary continued

	RISK FACTORS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Immunisation status(i)												
48	Fully immunised children aged 12–15 months	%	n.a.	84.5	87.0	91.3	90.4	91.7	91.0	91.2	91.0	91.2	91.5
49	Fully immunised children aged 72–75 months	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	82.2	83.7	83.6	84.0	88.0	88.8
	Drinking and smoking(d)												
50	Risky/high-risk drinkers – of males aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	15.2	n.a.	n.a.
51	Risky/high-risk drinkers – of females aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.7	n.a.	n.a.
52	Current smokers – of males aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	27.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	26.2	n.a.	n.a.
53	Current smokers – of females aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	20.4	n.a.	n.a.
	Diet and exercise(d)												
54	Overweight/obesity – of males aged 15 years and over(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	55.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	59.4	n.a.	n.a.
55	Overweight/obesity – of females aged 15 years and over(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	43.1	n.a.	n.a.
56	Low usual intake of fruit – of males aged 15 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	53.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	52.4	n.a.	n.a.
57	Low usual intake of fruit – of females aged 15 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	41.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40.4	n.a.	n.a.
58	Sedentary or low exercise level – of males aged 15 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	63.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	65.8	n.a.	n.a.
59	Sedentary or low exercise level – of females aged 15 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	73.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	73.3	n.a.	n.a.
	High blood pressure(d)(f)												
60	Hypertension – of males aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.6	n.a.	n.a.
61	Hypertension – of females aged 18 years and over	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	13.8	n.a.	n.a.
	SERVICES	*Units*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
	Hospitals and aged care												
62	Hospital separations (per 1,000 population)(d)	rate	296	304	309	312	320	328	334	337	340	348	n.y.a.
63	Hospital beds (per 1,000 population)	rate	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	r4.0	4.0	n.y.a.
64	Average length of stay in hospital	days	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.3	n.y.a.
65	Doctors (per 100,000 population)(k)	rate	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	248	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	266	n.a.
66	Nurses (per 100,000 population)(k)	rate	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	884	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	968	n.a.
67	Residential aged care places (per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over)(l)	rate	89.2	87.1	r85.6	r83.6	r82.2	r81.7	r82.8	r84.2	r85.3	85.6	n.y.a.
	Medicare usage												
	Average Medicare services processed												
68	Per person	no.	10.7	10.8	10.9	10.9	11.0	11.2	11.1	r11.2	11.6	12.0	12.3
69	Per male	no.	8.7	8.8	8.9	8.9	9.0	9.2	9.1	9.3	9.6	r9.9	10.2
70	Per female	no.	12.8	12.8	12.9	13.0	13.0	13.3	r13.1	13.2	r13.5	r13.9	14.3
71	Proportion of Medicare services used by persons aged 65 years and over	%	23.6	24.2	24.6	25.3	25.8	26.4	27.4	28.3	29.0	29.3	29.7
	EXPENDITURE	*Units*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
72	Persons with private health insurance	%	31.9	30.6	30.6	43.0	44.9	44.3	43.5	42.9	r42.6	r42.7	43.5
73	Total health expenditure (current prices) per person per year(m)(n)	$	r2 286	r2 407	r2 577	r2 754	r3 023	r3 247	r3 485	r3 692	r4 001	4 226	n.y.a.
74	Total health expenditure (current prices) as a proportion of GDP	%	r7.8	r7.8	r8.0	r8.1	r8.5	r8.6	r8.8	r8.8	r9.0	9.0	n.y.a.

(a) Based on the three years of data ending in the year shown in the table heading.
(b) Expectation of life for the period 1996–2001, based on 2001 Census results. New life expectancy figures based on 2006 Census results and Indigenous deaths for 2001–2006 are expected to be published in the 2007 edition of *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0) scheduled for release in November 2008.
(c) Based on year of registration.
(d) Proportions and rates are age standardised to the Australian population as at 30 June 2001.
(e) Includes illness, injury or disability which has lasted at least six months, or which the respondent expects to last for six months or more.
(f) Caution should be used when comparing long-term conditions data from different National Health Surveys. For more details see: *National Health Survey, Users' Guide, 2004–05* Chapter 7 (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001).
(g) Differences between 2001 and 2004–05 are not statistically significant.
(h) Differences between 1998 and 2003 are not statistically significant.
(i) As a proportion of all children in that age group on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register.
(j) Excludes people for whom height and/or weight were not known.
(k) 2001 data uses ASCO occupation classification standard, 2006 uses ANZSCO.
(l) From 1999, these figures include places provided by Multi-Purpose Services and flexible funding under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy.
(m) Includes expenditure by governments, individuals, private health insurers and other non-government sources.
(n) Due to changes in methods, care must be taken comparing 2002–03 to 2003–04.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–4 and 9–10 are calculated using data for the three years ending in the year shown in the table heading.
Data for indicators 5–6 are for the period 1996–2001.
Data for indicators 7–8 are for the period June to November for 2003 and March to May for 1998.
Data for indicators 11–14 and 25–47 are for the calendar year.
Data for indicators 15–22 and 50–61 are according to the reference period for the most recent National Health Survey.
Data for indicators 23–24 are according to the reference period for the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.
Data for indicators 48–49 are at 31 December.
Data for indicators 62–64, 67–74 are for the financial year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 65–66 are at census night.

Health: state summary

	HEALTH STATUS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Life expectancy(a)											
1	Life expectancy at birth – males	years	2004–2006	78.6	79.3	78.5	78.6	79.1	77.4	72.1	80.0	78.7
2	Life expectancy at birth – females	years	2004–2006	83.4	83.7	83.4	83.6	83.8	82.3	78.1	83.9	83.5
3	Life expectancy at age 65 – males	years	2004–2006	18.1	18.5	18.3	18.3	18.6	17.4	16.3	18.9	18.3
4	Life expectancy at age 65 – females	years	2004–2006	21.4	21.6	21.5	21.6	21.9	20.6	19.0	21.7	21.5
9	Males surviving to age 85	%	2004–2006	37.8	39.8	38.2	38.4	39.9	34.1	25.8	42.2	38.5
10	Females surviving to age 85	%	2004–2006	55.1	56.2	55.5	56.3	57.3	51.2	41.1	57.0	55.5
	Mortality(b)											
11	Total number of deaths	'000	2006	46.0	33.3	24.5	11.9	11.6	3.9	0.9	1.5	133.7
12	Standardised death rate (per 1,000 population)(c)	rate	2006	6.1	5.9	6.0	6.0	5.8	6.8	8.7	5.5	6.0
13	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	rate	2006	4.9	4.3	5.3	3.2	4.9	3.9	8.9	5.1	4.7
14	Perinatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths combined)	rate	2005	7.4	9.9	8.8	7.3	7.7	8.5	14.6	10.4	8.5
	Morbidity and disability prevalence(c)											
15	Adults with one or more long-term condition(d)	%	2004–05	84.9	87.7	88.1	87.1	88.4	88.1	83.7	90.3	86.9
16	Cancer	%	2004–05	1.4	1.8	2.2	1.4	1.9	1.4	n.a.	1.9	1.7
17	Ischaemic and other heart disease	%	2004–05	1.7	1.5	2.0	1.7	1.9	2.1	n.a.	1.6	1.8
18	Diabetes mellitus	%	2004–05	3.7	3.0	3.3	3.7	4.2	2.8	n.a.	3.7	3.5
19	Asthma	%	2004–05	9.2	10.2	10.8	11.6	11.2	13.3	n.a.	10.2	10.2
20	Recent injury	%	2004–05	17.2	18.7	19.3	21.1	19.4	17.5	n.a.	17.6	18.5
21	High/very high levels of psychological distress – aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	12.6	13.1	14.4	12.3	11.7	12.8	n.a.	11.9	13.0
22	Arthritis	%	2004–05	14.5	14.2	16.1	16.4	13.7	18.9	n.a.	14.2	14.9
23	Persons with a disability(e)	%	2003	17.5	19.7	22.2	22.4	21.2	22.4	n.p.	19.8	19.8
24	Persons with a profound/severe core activity restriction(e)	%	2003	5.4	6.4	7.5	6.4	6.2	7.3	n.p.	6.2	6.2

	CAUSES OF DEATH	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Rates are per 100,000 population(b)(f)											
	Main causes(c)											
25	Cancer	rate	2004–2006	177	179	180	179	177	204	200	187	179
26	Ischaemic heart disease	rate	2004–2006	109	102	120	108	102	117	136	90	109
27	Stroke	rate	2004–2006	57	49	58	52	46	45	47	61	53
	Selected cancers(c)											
28	Lung cancer – males	rate	2004–2006	48	48	51	48	51	58	55	41	49
29	Lung cancer – females	rate	2004–2006	22	22	24	22	24	27	29	21	23
30	Breast cancer – females	rate	2004–2006	24	23	22	24	21	26	17	28	23
31	Prostate cancer – males	rate	2004–2006	32	34	35	31	30	36	26	35	33
32	Skin cancer	rate	2004–2006	8	6	10	5	9	8	6	8	8
	Heart disease and diabetes(c)											
33	Ischaemic heart disease – males	rate	2004–2006	142	132	152	145	136	155	161	125	142
34	Ischaemic heart disease – females	rate	2004–2006	82	78	92	79	74	86	106	62	82
35	Diabetes mellitus	rate	2004–2006	13	19	16	16	18	28	42	18	17
	Motor vehicle accidents											
36	Motor vehicle traffic accident(c)	rate	2004–2006	6	7	8	10	9	13	23	6	8
37	Males aged 15–24 years	rate	2004–2006	16	20	24	29	30	38	59	10	22
38	Females aged 15–24 years	rate	2004–2006	5	7	7	9	10	14	11	3	7
	Suicide											
39	Suicide(c)	rate	2004–2006	8	9	11	12	10	16	20	9	10
40	Males(c)	rate	2004–2006	13	15	17	20	16	25	32	14	16
41	Females(c)	rate	2004–2006	3	4	4	5	4	8	6	5	4
42	Males aged 15–24 years	rate	2004–2006	11	13	15	19	15	21	57	16	14
43	Females aged 15–24 years	rate	2004–2006	3	5	5	7	4	5	13	1	4
	Drug induced(c)											
44	Drug induced	rate	2004–2006	5	5	4	6	4	7	7	5	5
45	Males	rate	2004–2006	7	7	5	7	6	7	8	6	6
46	Females	rate	2004–2006	4	4	3	4	3	7	7	4	4

Health: state summary continued

	RISK FACTORS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Immunisation status(g)											
48	Fully immunised children aged 12–15 months	%	2007	91.7	92.2	91.4	91.6	88.8	93.5	90.6	92.8	91.5
49	Fully immunised children aged 72–75 months	%	2007	89.1	91.4	87.6	87.6	85.2	88.2	88.4	88.8	88.8
	Drinking and smoking(c)											
50	Risky/high-risk drinkers – of males aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	14.8	13.0	16.1	15.9	20.2	13.2	n.p.	15.6	15.2
51	Risky/high-risk drinkers – of females aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	11.1	11.3	12.4	13.4	12.1	10.1	n.p.	12.7	11.7
52	Current smokers – of males aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	25.1	26.5	28.8	26.8	23.3	28.1	n.p.	19.6	26.2
53	Current smokers – of females aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	20.2	20.5	20.5	19.7	19.6	24.7	n.p.	14.3	20.4
	Diet and exercise(c)											
54	Overweight/obesity – of males aged 15 years and over(h)	%	2004–05	59.3	58.6	60.3	60.2	59.4	58.1	62.6	57.0	59.4
55	Overweight/obesity – of females aged 15 years and over(h)	%	2004–05	43.2	44.1	41.3	45.1	41.4	48.2	28.9	44.9	43.1
56	Low usual intake of fruit – of males aged 15 years and over	%	2004–05	51.8	50.5	55.0	56.7	49.5	53.1	66.6	52.7	52.4
57	Low usual intake of fruit – of females aged 15 years and over	%	2004–05	40.9	38.1	40.8	45.2	39.1	42.1	52.2	39.3	40.4
58	Sedentary or low exercise level – of males aged 15 years and over	%	2004–05	65.9	64.5	67.7	67.6	63.8	67.7	59.5	58.5	65.8
59	Sedentary or low exercise level – of females aged 15 years and over	%	2004–05	75.1	72.4	72.4	76.2	70.3	69.3	72.4	69.1	73.3
	High blood pressure(c)											
60	Hypertension – of males aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	13.3	13.5	13.1	13.5	15.7	14.1	n.p.	13.1	13.6
61	Hypertension – of females aged 18 years and over	%	2004–05	13.4	14.2	13.6	13.9	14.0	17.0	n.p.	16.2	13.8

	SERVICES	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Hospitals and aged care											
62	Hospital separations (per 1,000 population)(c)	rate	2005–06	309	380	364	360	354	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	348
63	Hospital beds (per 1,000 population)	rate	2005–06	3.9	3.7	4.1	4.6	4.2	4.6	3.5	3.4	4.0
64	Average length of stay in hospital	days	2005–06	3.6	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.2	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	3.3
65	Doctors (per 100,000 population)	rate	2006	273	271	245	294	246	264	254	296	266
66	Nurses (per 100,000 population)	rate	2006	927	1 061	906	1 100	900	1 062	887	830	968
67	Residential aged care places (per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over)(i)	rate	2006	83.7	86.1	86.3	92.2	84.5	88.0	91.9	72.1	85.6
	Medicare usage											
	Average Medicare services processed											
68	Per person	no.	2006–07	13.3	12.3	12.0	12.2	10.6	11.2	6.9	10.0	12.3
69	Per male	no.	2006–07	11.3	10.2	10.0	10.2	8.5	9.1	5.4	8.0	10.2
70	Per female	no.	2006–07	15.3	14.4	14.0	14.1	12.8	13.1	8.7	12.1	14.3
71	Proportion of Medicare services used by persons aged 65 years and over	%	2006–07	29.9	30.6	28.5	32.8	27.8	31.0	12.0	23.0	29.7

	EXPENDITURE	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(j)	ACT	Aust.
72	Persons with private health insurance	%	2007	45.0	42.4	40.8	43.9	47.8	42.5	32.3	(k)	43.5
73	Total health expenditure (current prices) per person per year (1999–2000 reference year)(l)	$	2005–06	4 231	4 246	4 019	4 272	4 325	4 123	5 348	4 987	4 226

(a) Expectation of life is based on three years of data ending in the year shown in the table heading.
(b) Based on year of registration.
(c) Proportions and rates are age standardised to the Australian population as at 30 June 2001.
(d) Includes illness, injury or disability which has lasted at least six months, or which the respondent expects to last for six months or more.
(e) Disability estimates for Northern Territory relate mainly to urban areas only.
(f) Rates are calculated for the three year period 2004 to 2006.
(g) As a proportion of all children in that age group on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register.
(h) Excludes people for whom height and/or weight were not known.
(i) From 1999, these figures include places provided by Multi-Purpose services and flexible funding under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy.
(j) Northern Territory Membership and coverage is understated as some funds report Northern Territory members in other states.
(k) The Australian Capital Territory is included in New South Wales.
(l) Includes expenditure by governments, individuals, private health insurers and other non-government sources.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–4, 9–10 and 25–46 are calculated using the average of three years of data.
Data for indicators 11–14 are for the calendar year.
Data for indicators 15–22 and 50–61 are according to the reference period for the most recent National Health Survey.
Data for indicators 23–24 are according to the reference period for the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.
Data for indicators 48–49 are at 31 December.
Data for indicators 63–64, 67–73 are for the financial year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 65–66 are at Census Night.

Health: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–6, 9–13	*Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).
7–8	ABS 1998 and 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.
14	*Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).
15–22, 50–61	2001 and 2004–05 National Health Survey.
23–24	*Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings*, 1998 and 2003 (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).
25–46	ABS Causes of Death Collection.
47	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (unpublished data).
48–49	Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, viewed 12 June 2008, <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/providers/health_statistics/statistical_reporting/acir.htm>.
62–64	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Australian Hospital Statistics,* (AIHW cat. no. HSE 50).
65–66	2006 Census of Population and Housing.
67	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Residential Aged Care in Australia: A Statistical Overview* (AIHW cat. no. AGE 45).
68–71	Department of Health and Ageing, Medicare Statistics 2007, viewed 12 June 2008, <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/ publishing.nsf/Content/medstat-sep07-tables-d>.
72	Private Health Insurance Administration Council, viewed 12 June 2008, <http://www.phiac.gov.au/statistics/membershipcoverage/table1a.htm>.
73–74	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Health Expenditure Australia* (AIHW cat. no. HWE 37).

Health: definitions

Arthritis (prevalence)

based on people reporting arthritis as a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more), including osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, other arthritis and arthritis type unknown.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Asthma (prevalence)

based on people reporting having asthma. Asthma was assumed to be a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more).

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Average length of stay in hospital

the total number of occupied bed days in both public and private hospitals divided by the total number of separations.

Reference: *Australian Hospital Statistics, 2004–05* (AIHW cat. no. HSE 41).

Average Medicare services processed

average number of services processed per Australian resident per year.

Reference: Department of Health and Ageing, *Medicare Statistics 1984/85 to September Quarter 2006.*

Avoidable deaths

avoidable mortality comprises those deaths that are potentially avoidable at the present time, given available knowledge about social and economic policy impacts and health behaviours.

Reference: *Australian and New Zealand Atlas of Avoidable Mortality.*

Breast cancer deaths

deaths where malignant neoplasm of the breast is identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, code C50).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Cancer (prevalence)

based on people reporting a malignant neoplasm (cancer). Cancer was assumed to be a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more).

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Cancer deaths

deaths where malignant neoplasms are identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases-10th revision codes C00–C97).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Causes of death

underlying causes of death are classified to the International Classification of Diseases 9th and 10th Revision.

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Current smokers

people aged 18 years and over who reported being current smokers (includes current daily smokers and other current smokers). Smoking included manufactured (packet) cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars or pipes. Smoking excludes chewing tobacco and smoking of non-tobacco products.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Deaths

based on the year in which the death was registered. Death is the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life after birth has taken place. The definition excludes deaths prior to live birth. For the purposes of the Deaths and Causes of Death collections conducted by the ABS, a death refers to any death which occurs in, or en route to Australia and is registered with a state or territory Registry of Births, Deaths or Marriages.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

Health: definitions continued

Diabetes mellitus (prevalence)

based on people reporting diabetes mellitus as a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more). Where diabetes mellitus Type 1 and 2 were current they were assumed to be long-term conditions.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 2004–05* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001).

Diabetes mellitus deaths

deaths where diabetes mellitus was identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes E10–E14).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Disability

is an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. Disability (as collected) is the presence of a limitation, restriction or impairment due to a physical, emotional or nervous condition which had lasted or was likely to last six months or more.

Reference: World Health Organisation, *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, 2001* and *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2003: Summary of Findings* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

Disability-free life expectancy

the average number of years at birth a person might expect to live free of disability.

Reference: *Australian Health Trends, 2001* (AIHW cat. no. PHE–24).

Doctors per 100,000 population

the number of practising general and specialist medical practitioners per 100,000 estimated resident population on Census night of that year.

Reference: *Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing: Nature and Content, 2001* (ABS cat. no. 2008.0).

Drug induced deaths

any death directly caused by an acute episode of poisoning or toxicity to drugs, including deaths from accidental overdoses, suicide and assault, and any death from an acute condition caused by habitual drug use. The term 'drug' refers to substances classified as drugs that may be used for medicinal or therapeutic purposes and those that produce a psychoactive effect excluding alcohol, tobacco and volatile solvents (e.g. petrol).

Reference: *Information paper: Drug-Induced Deaths – A Guide to ABS Causes of Death Data* (ABS cat. no. 4809.0.55.001).

Fetal death

the delivery of a child weighing at least 400 grams at delivery (or, when birthweight is unavailable, of at least 20 weeks gestation) which did not, at any time after delivery, breathe or show any other evidence of life such as a heartbeat.

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Fully immunised children

children recorded as having received all the required vaccinations scheduled for their age, or who are following a prescribed catch-up schedule, as a proportion of all children on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. The required vaccinations are based on the Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule funded vaccines recommended under the National Immunisation Program.

Reference: Australian Childhood Immunisation Register.

Health expenditure

expenditure on health goods and services, health-related services and health-related investment. Health goods expenditure includes expenditure on pharmaceuticals, aids and appliances; health services expenditure includes expenditure on clinical interventions. Health-related services expenditure includes expenditure on public health, research and administration. Health-related investment includes expenditure on capital formation. Health expenditure does not include: expenditure that may have a health related outcome but which is undertaken outside the health sector (such as expenditure on building safe transport systems or the education of health professionals); expenditure on personal activities not directly related to maintaining or improving personal health; and expenditure that does not have health as the main area of expected national benefit.

Reference: *Health and Welfare Expenditure Series, Number 28: Health Expenditure Australia 2004–05* (AIHW cat. no. HWE 35).

Hospital beds (per 1,000 population)

the total number of beds in all hospitals providing acute care services per 1,000 population averaged over each month of the financial year. Hospitals providing acute care services are those in which the treatments typically require short durations of stay.

Reference: *Australian Hospital Statistics, 2004–05* (AIHW cat. no. HWE 41).

Hospital separations (per 1,000 population)

the total number of separations in all hospitals (public and private) providing acute care services per 1,000 estimated resident population at 31 December of the reference year. A separation is an episode of care which can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death) or a portion of a hospital stay ending in a change of status (for example from acute care to rehabilitation). The inclusion of status changes has been progressively introduced since 1995–96. Hospitals providing acute care services are those in which the treatments typically require short durations of stay.

Reference: *Australian Hospital Statistics, 2004–05* (AIHW cat. no. HSE 41).

Hypertension (prevalence)

based on people reporting hypertension (high blood pressure) as a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more), whether or not controlled by medication.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 2004–05* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001).

Infant mortality rate

the number of deaths of children under one year of age in one calendar year per 1,000 live births in the same calendar year.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

Ischaemic and other heart disease (prevalence)

based on people reporting ischaemic or other heart disease as a long-term condition (lasting or expecting to last six months or more), including heart attack, angina and other heart disease, whether or not controlled by medication.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 2004–05* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001).

Ischaemic heart disease deaths

deaths where coronary heart diseases, including heart attack (acute myocardial infarction, coronary occlusion) and angina (angina pectoris), are identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes I20–I25).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Health: definitions continued

Life expectancy

refers to the average number of additional years a person of a given age and sex might expect to live if the age specific death rates of the given period continue throughout his/her life time. Life expectancies are calculated from life tables which are statistical models of levels of mortality in a population of different ages. Life tables are based on three years ending in the reference year of the table.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

Live birth

the birth of a child, who, after delivery, breathes or shows any other evidence of life such as a heartbeat.

Reference: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

Low usual intake of fruit

includes people who reported usually eating one serve or less of fruit (excluding drinks and beverages) each day and people who do not eat fruit. Fruit includes fresh, dried, frozen and tinned. A serve of fruit is approximately 150 grams of fresh fruit or 50 grams of dried fruit.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Lung cancer deaths

deaths where malignant neoplasm of the trachea, bronchus and lung are identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes C33–C34).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Medicare services

Medicare is Australia's universal health insurance scheme. Services include access to free treatment as a public (Medicare) patient in a public hospital, and free or subsidised treatment by medical practitioners including general practitioners, specialists, participating optometrists or dentists (specified services only).

Reference: *Medicare Australia*, viewed 8 December 2006, <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au>.

Morbidity

refers to ill health in an individual and to levels of ill health in a population or group.

Reference: *Australia's Health 2008* (AIHW cat. no. AUS 99).

Motor vehicle traffic accident deaths

deaths where motor traffic accidents are identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, relevant codes selected from V01–V89).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Neonatal deaths

deaths of any child weighing at least 400 grams at delivery (or, when birthweight is unavailable, of at least 20 weeks gestation) who was born alive (as defined under live birth) and who died within 28 days of birth.

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Nurses per 100,000 population

the number of midwifery and nursing professionals per 100,000 estimated resident population on census night of that year.

Reference: *Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing*: *Nature and Content, 2001* (ABS cat. no. 2008.0).

Overweight or obese adults

overweight is defined by a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 25 and less than 30, while obesity is defined by a BMI greater than or equal to 30. BMI is body weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres. Calculations are based on self-reported height and weight and exclude persons for whom height and/or weight are unknown.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Perinatal mortality rate

the annual number of fetal and neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths combined (where birthweight was at least 400 grams).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Persons with private health insurance

proportion of the total population with private health insurance.

Reference: Private Health Insurance Administration Council, *Membership Statistics*, Canberra, viewed 8 December 2006, <http://www.phiac.gov.au/statistics/>.

Private health insurance

provides cover against all or part of hospital theatre and accommodation costs in either a public or private hospital, medical costs in hospital, and costs associated with a range of services not covered under Medicare including private dental services, optical, chiropractic, home nursing, ambulance, natural therapies and other ancillary services.

Reference: Private Health Insurance Administration Council, *Insure? Not Sure?* viewed 23 June 2008, <http://www.phiac.gov.au/insurenotsure/pdf/insure.pdf>.

Profound/severe core activity restriction

the person: is unable to do, or needs help with, a core activity task (communication, mobility or self-care); or has difficulty understanding or being understood by family or friends; or can communicate more easily using sign language or other non-spoken forms of communication.

Reference: *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0).

Prostate cancer deaths

deaths where malignant neoplasm of the prostate gland is identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, code C61).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Psychological distress

derived from the Kessler 10 Scale (K10). This is a scale of non-specific psychological distress based on 10 questions about negative emotional states in the four weeks prior to interview. The K10 is scored from 10 to 50, with high scores indicating a high level of distress, and low scores indicating a low level of distress. Scores are grouped as follows:

- Low (10–15)
- Moderate (16–21)
- High (22–29)
- Very High (30–50).

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Recent injury

proportion of people reporting injury (as a result of selected event(s) occurring in the 4 weeks prior to interview) which resulted in medical consultation or treatment, or a reduction in usual activities. Injuries included cuts, fractures, dislocations, sprains, wounds, bruising, concussion, burns and poisoning (other than food poisoning) as well as a range of other injuries.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 2004–05* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001).

Residential aged care places (per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over)

the number of beds which are provided for long-term nursing care to chronically ill, frail or disabled people, and beds provided for people who are unable to live wholly independently but do not require nursing care, per 1,000 of the population aged 70 years and over, averaged over each month of the financial year.

Reference: *Residential Aged Care in Australia 2004–05: A statistical overview* (AIHW cat. no. AGE 45).

Health: definitions continued

Risky/high-risk drinkers

men aged 18 years and over who reported drinking more than 50 ml and up to and including 75 ml of absolute alcohol (risky) or more than 75 ml (high-risk) on average per day, and women aged 18 years and over who reported drinking more than 25 ml and up to and including 50 ml of absolute alcohol (risky) and more than 50 ml (high-risk) on average per day.

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Sedentary

includes people who reported that they did not undertake any, or very low levels of exercise for recreation, sport or fitness within the two week reference period (sedentary exercise level).

Reference: *National Health Survey: Summary of Results,* 2001 and 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Skin cancer deaths

deaths where malignant neoplasm of the skin, including both melanoma and non-melanocytic skin cancer is identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes C43–C44).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Standardised rates

these enable the comparison of rates between populations with differing age structures by relating them to a standard population. These rates are the overall rates that would have prevailed in the standard population if it had experienced at each age the rates of the population being studied. The standard population used is the estimated resident population for Australia (persons) at 30 June, 2001. Age standardised rates may vary from those published previously because of different standard populations used and different age groups used for standardisation. Age groups (0–4, then 10 year age groups to 75 years and over), were used in the calculation of age standardised rates from the National Health Survey and the Survey of Disability and Ageing. Five-year age groups (0–4, 5–9,... 80–84, 85 years and over) were used for age standardisation for ABS Deaths data.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0) and *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2004–05* (ABS cat. no. 4364.0).

Stroke deaths

deaths where cerebrovascular disease (causing a blockage (embolism) or rupture (haemorrhage) of blood vessels within or leading to the brain) is identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes I60–I69).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Suicide deaths

deaths where suicide is identified as the underlying cause (International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision, codes X60–X84).

Reference: *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0).

Survival to 85 years

the probability of survival to 85 years represents the proportion of survivors from birth to 85 years in a life table. Life tables are based on three years ending in the reference year of the table.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

Total number of deaths

based on the year in which the death was registered. Estimates may differ from estimates given in the Population chapter of this publication, which are based on the year in which the death occurred.

Reference: *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

Risk taking by young people

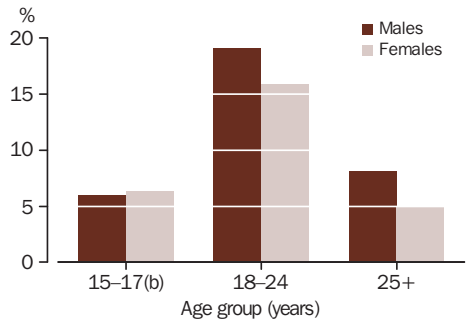
In 2007, 19% of men and 16% of women aged 18–24 years reported drinking alcohol at risky or high risk levels at least once a week during the previous year.

Youth is a period characterised by rapid psychological and physical transition, where young people progress from being dependent children to independent adults. This transition period has been made more complex by the social, economic and technological changes that have occurred in Australia over recent decades.[1]

In this stage of life, people may be vulnerable to the influences of peer pressure and popular culture, and may be inclined to experiment, push boundaries and take risks that could impact on their immediate and longer term health and wellbeing. Patterns and levels of some risky behaviours differ between young men and young women, with prevalence often being higher among young men.

In 2007, there were 2.9 million people aged 15–24 years, making up 14% of the total population. This article examines the risky behaviours of this population, focusing on risks where the potential harm is immediate, such as short term risky or high risk drinking, illicit drug use and dangerous driving. While not all young people engage in these risky behaviours, the consequences for those who do, and for those around them, can be serious. This article also examines some of the potential consequences: being charged with criminal offences, hospitalisation and, in some cases, death.

Risky/high risk drinking(a) at least once a week — 2007



(a) Risk of harm over the short term. 'Risky drinking' is seven or more standard drinks in one day for males and five or more for females. 'High risk drinking' is eleven or more standard drinks in one day for males and seven or more for females.
(b) Estimate for males has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Source: AIHW 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey.

Data sources and definitions

This article draws on data from a number of ABS sources, including: the Criminal Courts collection; the 2005 Personal Safety Survey; the Causes of Death collection; and the 2004–05 National Health Survey. Also used are data from the AIHW 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) and the AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

While data from different sources have been drawn together to paint a picture of young people and risk taking behaviour, it is not advisable to compare directly between these collections. The different collection methods used mean that the data are not necessarily comparable. Data on use of alcohol and other drugs may be affected by under-reporting, as respondents may be uncomfortable answering questions on this topic, or may not accurately recall their levels of consumption. The response rate for the 2007 NDSHS was 49%.

Young people for the purposes of this article (where data sources permit) are those aged between 15 and 24 years.

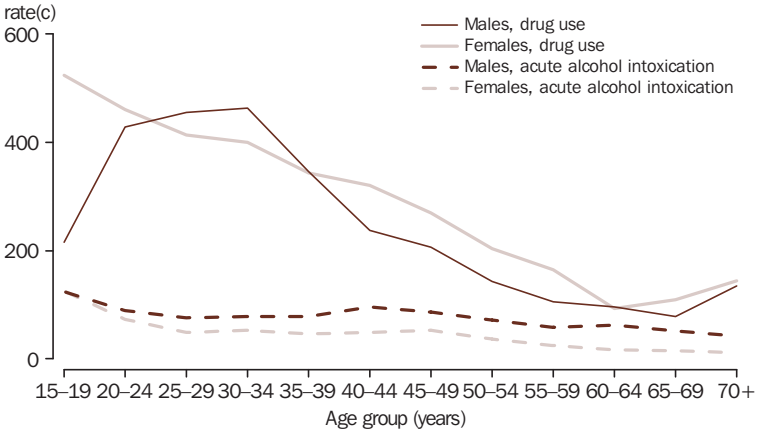
Risky/high risk drinking is a term used to describe consumption of alcohol over a short period of time (for example on any one occasion) at levels for which the risk of harm over the short term is considered 'risky' or 'high risk'. These levels of drinking are based on guidelines set by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in 2001. In the 2007 NDSHS, respondents were asked how often in the last 12 months they had consumed certain numbers of standard drinks. Risky drinking refers to seven or more standard drinks in one day for males, or five or more standard drinks in one day for females. High risk drinking refers to eleven or more standard drinks in one day for males, or seven or more standard drinks in one day for females. The 2001 NHMRC guidelines are currently under review to take account of current research. It is anticipated that revised guidelines will be released in July 2008.

Adjudication is a case where the defendant has been found guilty or innocent of at least one of the charges laid against them. Multiple charges relating to the same criminal incident are usually heard together as one case. However, a person involved in more than one criminal incident during the reference period may be adjudicated more than once that year.

Drinking at risky levels

Youth is often the stage of life when people begin to experiment with alcohol and other drugs. Although it is illegal to sell alcohol to people under 18 years of age, many young people have access to alcohol before they turn 18. In 2007, the average age at which young men aged 15–24 years said they first

Hospitalisation due to drug use(a) and acute alcohol intoxication(b) — 2005–06



(a) Includes a combination of principal diagnosis codes from Chapter V and external causes codes from Chapter XX of the 10th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Australian modification (ICD-10-AM).
(b) Principal diagnosis.
(c) Hospital separations per 100,000 population.

Source: AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

consumed alcohol was around 15 years. For young women, the average age for first use of alcohol was around 17 years.

Short term risky/high risk drinking – often referred to as binge drinking – leads to immediate and severe intoxication. In addition to its potential health consequences, risky/high risk drinking can increase the likelihood of a person falling, or being involved in an accident or violence.[2]

In the 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, 19% of young men aged 18–24 years reported that they had engaged in risky/high risk drinking at least once a week during the last 12 months. This was double the comparable rate of regular risky/high risk drinking among men aged 25 years and over (8%). Among young women, 16% reported risky/high risk drinking on a regular basis, around three times as high as the proportion of women aged 25 years and over (5%).

Based on information from the National Hospital Morbidity Database, there were almost 3,000 hospital separations among young people aged 15–24 years due to acute intoxication with alcohol in 2005–06. For young men, the hospital separation rate for acute alcohol intoxication increased from 66 to 107 per 100,000 from 1998–99 to 2005–06. For young women, the rate doubled over this time from 46 to 99 separations per 100,000.

In 2005–06, male and female teenagers aged 15–19 years had the highest hospital separation rates for acute intoxication from alcohol among all age groups (124 and 126 per 100,000). Men and women aged 20–24 years had the next highest rates (89 and 74 per 100,000).

Hospital separations

'Separation' is the term used in hospitals to refer to the process by which an episode of care for an admitted patient ends. An episode of care can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death), or a portion of a hospital stay beginning or ending in a change of type of care (for example, moving from intensive care to rehabilitation). The same person may undergo more than one separation during the reference period.

Separations data used throughout this article exclude those separations which resulted in death and those where the mode of admission was transfer from another acute-care hospital.

The burden of disease and injury

Levels of death and disability from diseases, injuries and risks to health (known as the burden of disease and injury) are measured using disability-adjusted life years (DALYs). The potential years of life lost due to premature death are combined with the potential years of 'healthy life' lost due to disease, disability or injury – one DALY is equal to one lost year of healthy life. In 2003, the total burden of disease and injury among young people aged 15–24 years was an estimated 197,000 DALYs. Illicit drugs and alcohol were the largest individual contributing risk factors for young males (12% and 11% of these DALYs). For young women, illicit drugs accounted for 5% of the burden, and alcohol 2%.[1, 3]

Use of illicit drugs

Substances other than alcohol that can have harmful effects are illicit drugs such as amphetamines, and legal drugs such as pain-killers that are used inappropriately. Drug-related health problems vary according to the type of drug, how much is used and the duration of use. These problems range from psychological and behavioural effects such as delusions, hallucinations, and aggressive or erratic behaviour, to high blood pressure, respiratory problems and kidney, liver and brain damage.[1]

The 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey found that 23% of people aged 15–24 years reported using illicit drugs during the last 12 months, around twice as high as the proportion of people aged 25 years and over (11%). Marijuana/cannabis was the most common drug used by 15–24 year olds (18%). Ecstasy (9%), meth/amphetamines and pharmaceuticals (both 4%) were the next most common drugs used by this age group during the last 12 months.

Young people who use drugs may begin their experimentation with substances such as alcohol or marijuana, then move on to use

Use of selected illicit drugs(a) — 2007

	Age group (years)	
	15–24	*25 and over*
Type of drug	%	%
Marijuana/cannabis	18	7
Ecstasy	9	2
Meth/amphetamines	4	2
Pharmaceuticals(b)	4	4
Cocaine	3	1
Heroin, methadone and other opioids(c)	*1	—
Use of any illicit drug(d)	**23**	**11**
	'000	'000
Use of any illicit drug	**683.5**	**1 595.9**

(a) In the last 12 months.
(b) Use of pain-killers, tranquillisers, barbiturates and/or steroids for non-medical purposes.
(c) Refers to non-maintenance use of methadone.
(d) Also includes LSD/synthetic hallucinogens; natural hallucinogens; ketamine; GHB and any injected drugs that were not medically prescribed. Components do not add to total as respondents may have used more than one illicit drug.

Source: AIHW 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey.

harder drugs such as meth/amphetamines.[4] In 2007, the average age among 15–24 year olds for first use of marijuana/cannabis was around 19 years. The average age of first use of meth/amphetamines was around 21 years, and for ecstasy was around 23 years.

In 2005–06, there were 11,700 hospital separations related to drug use for young people aged 15–24 years.[5] Nearly 60% of the hospital separations were for young women. Intentional self-harm by drugs or medications was involved in three out of five hospital separations for young women.

The drug-related hospitalisation rate for young men in 2005–06 was 324 separations per 100,000, lower than in 1998–99 (465 per 100,000). For young women, the rate was also slightly lower in 2005–06 than in 1998–99 (491 compared with 531 per 100,000).

In 2005–06, male teenagers aged 15–19 years had one of the lowest drug-related hospitalisation rates among all male age groups (216 separations per 100,000), while men aged 20–24 years had one of the highest rates (428 per 100,000). For women, those aged 15–19 and 20–24 years had the highest drug-related hospital separation rates among all age groups (523 and 460 per 100,000 respectively). This reflects young women's relatively high rates of drug-related intentional self-harm and accidental poisoning (294 and 56 per 100,000 women aged 15–24 years).

In a small number of cases, drug use leads to death. Based on information from the Causes of Death collection, in the three year period of 2004–2006 the annual average number of drug-induced deaths was 78.[6] This accounted for 6% of all deaths among young people aged 15–24 years.

The drug-induced death rate for men aged 20–24 years was double that for women in this age group (6 compared with 3 per 100,000). Rates for male and female teenagers aged 15–19 years were lower (1 per 100,000). The rate of drug-induced deaths was 12 per 100,000 for men aged 30–34 years, and 6 per 100,000 for women aged 40–44 and 45–49 years.

Dangerous driving

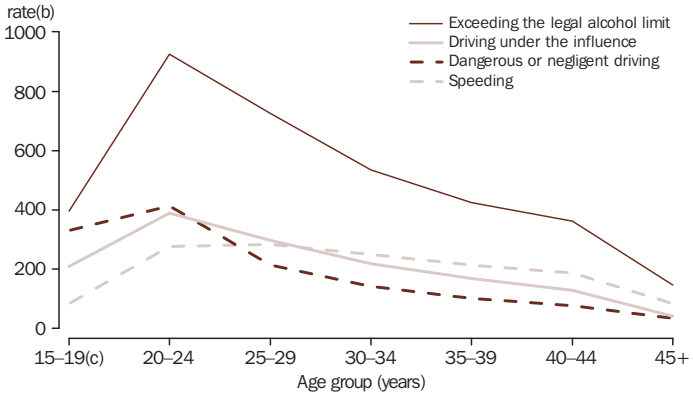
Driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, driving when fatigued and speeding are often implicated in transport accidents involving young people.[7] Based on information from the Criminal Courts collection, young people aged 20–24 years were more likely than people in the other age groups to appear in court in 2006–07 charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. This offence refers to cases where the driver of a vehicle is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and their driving is impaired. There were 626 adjudications per 100,000 men and 134 per 100,000 women aged 20–24 years. Adjudications for the less serious offence of exceeding the legal alcohol limit followed similar age and sex patterns but were far more common.

Mental health and psychological distress

Young people who experience mental health problems and disorders are at a greater risk of poor health and wellbeing outcomes than other young people.[1] Mental health problems and disorders may lead to increased substance use and antisocial behaviours.

The 2004–05 National Health Survey collected information on mental health from people aged 18 years and over using the Kessler-10 Scale, a 10 item scale of current psychological distress. Respondents were asked about negative emotional states in the five weeks prior to interview. The proportion of young women aged 18–24 years who reported high to very high levels of psychological distress (19%) was higher than the comparable proportion of men in this age group (12%). The prevalence of risky/high risk drinking (at least once a week during the 12 months prior to interview) among young women who had reported high to very high levels of psychological distress was significantly higher than among those who reported low to moderate levels (18% compared with 9%). Among young men, the prevalence of risky/high risk drinking was the same (19%) for those who reported high to very high levels of psychological distress and those who reported low to moderate levels.

Adjudications for dangerous driving related offences(a) — 2006–07



(a) Principal offence.
(b) Higher, Magistrates and Childrens Courts adjudications per 100,000 people.
(c) May include some Queensland Magistrates Courts defendants aged less than 15 years.

Source: ABS Criminal Courts Collection.

People aged 20–24 years also had the highest adjudication rate of all age groups for dangerous or negligent driving. The rate for men of this age (712 adjudications per 100,000) was about seven times higher than that for women (97 per 100,000).

The likelihood of being adjudicated for exceeding the legal speed limit was more evenly spread across age groups. For this offence there were 412 adjudications per 100,000 men and 136 per 100,000 women aged 20–24 years.

...injury and death from transport accidents

In 2005–06, there were 15,100 hospital separations for transport accidents among young people (aged 15–24 years). Young men had a transport accident hospital separation rate (720 per 100,000) that was over twice as high as that for young women (318 per 100,000). The 2005–06 separation rate was similar to the 1998–99 rate for both young men and women (707 and 295 per 100,000).

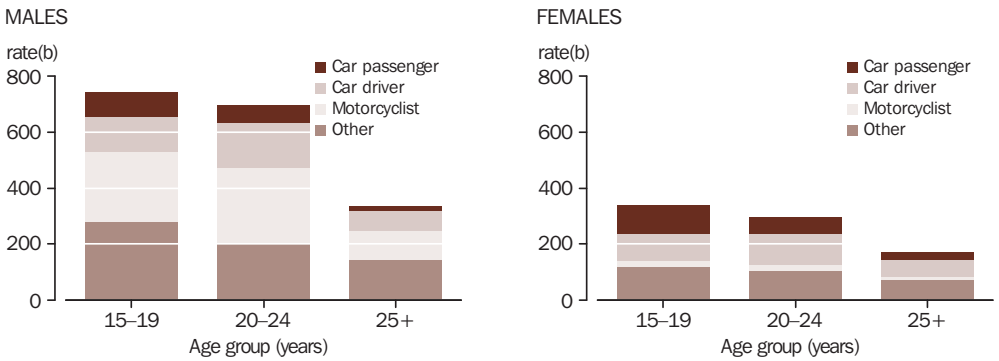
Over one-third (36%) of transport accident hospitalisations among 15–24 year old men in 2005–06 were for motorcyclists while 20% were for car drivers and 11% were for car passengers. For young women in this age group the leading accident groups were car drivers (33%) and car passengers (25%). Among all age groups, male and female teenagers aged 15–19 years had the highest car passenger hospital separation rates and 20–24 year old men and women had the highest car driver hospitalisation rates.

Over the period 2004–2006, the average number of transport accident deaths of young people aged 15–24 years was 418 per year. Transport accidents made up a much higher proportion of all deaths among young people (31%) than among people aged 25 years and over (1% of deaths). For male teenagers aged 15–19 years the rate was 19 deaths per 100,000 and for men aged 20–24 years it was 25 deaths per 100,000. For female teenagers aged 15–19 years, the death rate for all transport accidents was 8 per 100,000, similar to that for 20–24 year old women (7 per 100,000).

Violence

Young people, especially young men, are at a greater risk than other age groups of experiencing violence (see *Australian Social Trends 2007,* Interpersonal violence, pp. 195–199). In the 2005 Personal Safety Survey, 12% of people aged 18–24 years reported being physically assaulted by a man during the last 12 months, and 3% reported

Hospitalisation due to transport accidents(a) — 2005–06



(a) External causes codes from Chapter XX of the 10th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Australian modification (ICD-10-AM).
(b) Hospital separations per 100,000 population.

Source: AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

Causes of death

Over the period 2004–2006, the average number of deaths registered of young men (aged 15–24 years) was 955 per year, and of young women was 389 (equivalent to rates of 66 and 28 deaths per 100,000). 'External causes' was the main underlying cause of death for young people, and was much more common (70% of all deaths in this age group) than among people aged 25 years and over (5%).

People aged 15–24 years: underlying causes of death — 2004–2006

	Males	*Females*
	%	%
External causes		
Transport accidents	33.5	25.2
Intentional self-harm	21.6	15.4
Accidental poisoning	5.0	5.0
Accidental drowning and submersion	2.0	0.6
Assault	1.8	2.3
Falls	1.4	0.6
Other external cause	10.0	9.1
All external causes	75.4	58.1
Drug-induced deaths(a)	5.3	7.2
Neoplasms	6.6	12.9
Other	18.0	28.9
All causes of death	**100.0**	**100.0**
	no.	no.
All causes of death(b)	**955**	**389**

(a) Proportion excluded from total as includes codes from multiple chapters of the 10th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10).
(b) Three year average.

Source: ABS Causes of Death Collection.

physical assault by a woman. The proportion of men aged 18–24 years (19%) who reported experiencing physical assault by a male was almost five times as high as the rate for men aged 25 years and over (4%). A higher proportion of men aged 18–19 years reported this type of violence than did men aged 20–24 years (29% and 15% respectively). Overall, the proportion of young women who were physically assaulted by a man was smaller (5%) and similar for the 18–19 years and 20–24 years age groups.

Of men aged 18–24 years who were physically assaulted by a male, most (77%) reported being attacked by a stranger. In contrast, women in this age group who were physically assaulted by a male were likely to be assaulted by a man known to them (82%).

Experience of physical assault by a male perpetrator(a) — 2005

	Males		*Females*	
	'000	%	'000	%
18–19	82.1	29.5	*18.1	*6.3
20–24	109.1	15.5	29.7	4.5
25 and over	238.7	3.7	147.4	2.2
Total persons aged 18 years and over	**429.9**	**5.7**	**195.3**	**2.5**

(a) During the last 12 months.

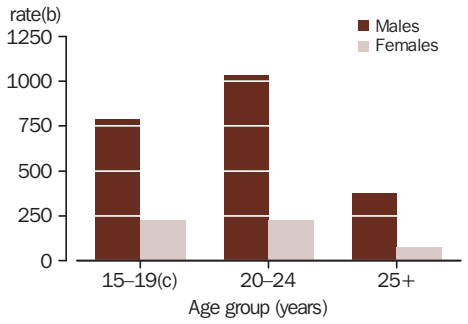
Source: ABS 2005 Personal Safety Survey.

Young men (aged 18–24 years) most frequently reported that the physical assault occurred at licensed premises (44%) or in the open (34%). For young women, the most common location of physical assault was in their or another person's home (49%).

The majority (79%) of 18–24 year old men who were physically assaulted by another male said that the perpetrator had been drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Just over one-third (34%) also said that they themselves had been drinking or taking drugs. Alcohol and drugs were less frequently reported by women as involved in the assault. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion (37%) of women aged 18–24 years who had been physically assaulted by a man reported that the perpetrator's consumption of alcohol or drugs had contributed to the incident.

'Acts intended to cause injury' are a set of offences (excluding murder and those resulting in death) where there has been an

Adjudications for acts intended to cause injury(a) — 2006–07



(a) Principal offence.
(b) Higher, Magistrates and Childrens Courts adjudications per 100,000 population.
(c) May include some Queensland Magistrates Courts defendants aged less than 15 years.

Source: ABS Criminal Courts Collection.

intention to cause non-fatal injury or harm to another person and where there is no sexual or acquisitive element. Among 20–24 year olds in 2006–07, the adjudication rate for acts intended to cause injury was higher than for all other age groups, with the next highest rate being for 25–29 year olds. Men aged 20–24 years were around five times as likely as women in this age group to be adjudicated for this offence (1,034 compared with 225 adjudications per 100,000).

Homicide and related offences refers to killing, trying to kill or conspiracy to kill another person. Compared with most other criminal offences, these offences are relatively rare. In 2006–07, the rate of adjudication for homicide among young people aged 20–24 years was 8 per 100,000.

Endnotes

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007, *Young Australians: their health and wellbeing* 2007, cat. no. PHE 87, AIHW, Canberra, viewed 6 September 2007,<http://www.aihw.gov.au>.

2 National Health & Medical Research Council 2001, *Australian Alcohol Guidelines: Health Risks and Benefits,* NHMRC, Canberra, viewed 22 October 2007, <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>.

3 Begg, S Vos, T Barker, B Stevenson, C Stanley, L and Lopez, A D, 2007 *The burden of disease and injury in Australia 2003,* cat. no. PHE 82, AIHW, Canberra, viewed 22 April 2008, <http://www.aihw.gov.au>.

4 Kandel, D Yamaguchi, K and Chen, K 1992, 'Stages of progression in drug involvement from adolescence to adulthood: Further evidence for the gateway theory', *Journal of Alcohol Studies*, Sep. 1992, pp. 447–457.

5 Hospital separations due to drug use include cases where the person was hospitalised due to an accidental or intentional overdose of illicit drugs or medications; an acute episode of poisoning or toxicity due to drugs, or an acute condition caused by drug use where the hospitalised person was identified as drug dependent.

6 Drug-induced deaths include accidental overdoses of illicit drugs or medications, suicide, assault and deaths of undetermined intent. (Deaths from alcohol, tobacco and volatile solvents like petrol are excluded, as are deaths from accidents involving drug-affected people.)

7 Smart, D and Vassallo, S 2005, *In the driver's seat: understanding young adults' driving behaviour*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, viewed 28 August 2007, <http://www.aifs.gov.au>.

8 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Information Paper: External Causes of Death, Data Quality, 2005,* cat. no. 3317.0.55.001, ABS, Canberra.

Intentional self-harm and suicide

Intentional self-harm refers to a range of behaviours including cutting, poisoning and attempted suicide. It is likely that only a small number of young people who harm themselves will seek medical treatment.[1] In 2005–06, there were 8,040 hospital separations for intentional self-harm among people aged 15–24 years. The 2005–06 hospital separation rate for young women (392 per 100,000) was higher than in 1998–99 (294 per 100,000). The rate for young men was similar in both 2005–06 (171) and 1998–99 (165).

In 2005–06, female teenagers aged 15–19 years had the highest hospital separation rate for intentional self-harm of all age groups (481 per 100,000), three times that of 15–19 year old teenage males (148 per 100,000). Women aged 20–24 years had the next highest rate with 307 hospital separations per 100,000, while the rate for men in this age group was lower (193 per 100,000).

Deaths attributed to suicide

In 2004–2006, there was an average of 266 deaths per year attributed to suicide among people aged 15–24 years, accounting for 20% of deaths in this age group. In comparison, suicide accounted for 1% of deaths among people aged 25 years and over. The suicide rate for young people aged 15–24 years was 9 deaths per 100,000, lower than most of the other age groups. For a death to be classified a suicide, there must be a coronial enquiry to establish evidence of suicidal intent. The quality of suicides data can be affected by delays in completion of coroners' cases, and there can be difficulty in determining suicidal intent for some causes of death, for example in cases of single vehicle accidents.[8] For these reasons it is unclear whether the number of suicides could be an undercount. For more information see *Suicides, Australia, 2005* (ABS cat. no. 3309.0).

People with a need for assistance

In 2006, less than one-fifth of people aged 15–64 years with a need for assistance were participating in the labour force.

Some people within the community require assistance with tasks associated with daily life, such as caring for themselves, household chores and transportation. There are a number of reasons why an individual may need assistance, including congenital conditions, disability from accidents and injuries, old age or chronic ill health.

Due to a growing and ageing population, increases in life expectancy and continued medical advances, the number of people with a need for assistance is expected to increase in the future. It is important, therefore, to understand the rates of need for assistance throughout the population as this can help identify where additional resources and services may be required. There are also important policy implications related to the social arrangements and conditions in which people with a need for assistance live. These concern the levels of care provided by families, availability of institutional care, and the extent of participation by people with a need for assistance in education, employment and the wider community.

In 2006, 822,000 Australians were reported as needing some assistance with core activities such as self-care, communication or mobility, due to a long-term health condition, disability or old age. This was equivalent to 4.4% of the population for whom the question was answered in the 2006 Census.

Data sources and definitions

The data in this article are drawn from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

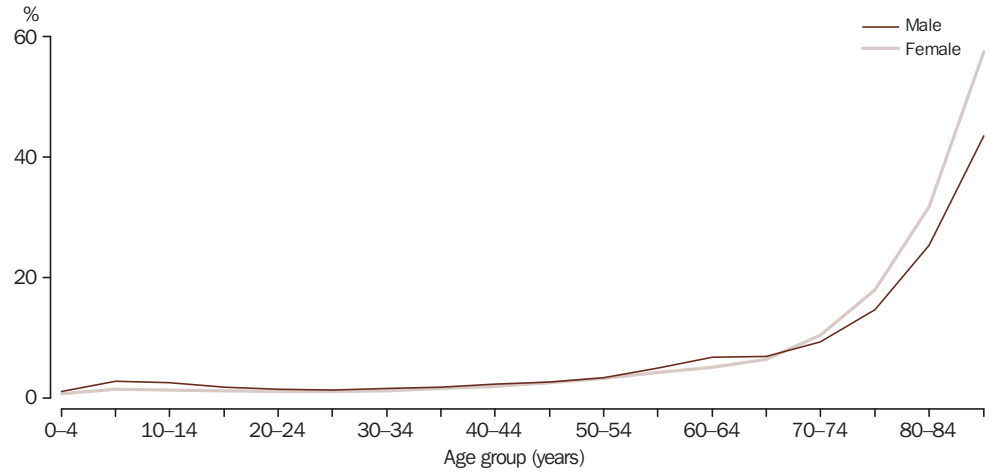
People with a *need for assistance* are those with a profound or severe disability. They need help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a long-term health condition or disability (lasting six months or more), or old age. This population is a subset of the broader population with a disability. For more information see the *2006 Census Dictionary* (ABS cat. no. 2901.0).

Remoteness Area (RA) is a structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). It classifies areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into six broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. As remoteness is measured nationally, not all Remoteness Areas are represented in each state or territory. The six Remoteness Areas are: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia; and Migratory. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these names with 'Australia' omitted. For further information see *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) – July 2007* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0) and *ABS Views on Remoteness: Information Paper, 2001* (ABS cat. no. 1244.0).

Age and sex

Overall, children and much of the adult population tend to have low rates of disability. As people age, the proportion of

People with a need for assistance, age and sex — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

people needing assistance becomes much higher. Among all people aged less than 65 years, the rate of need for assistance was 2.3%. This ranged from 1.0% among children aged less than five years to 6.0% for those aged 60–64 years. The rates of need for assistance increased sharply from around age 70–74 years, where 10% required some assistance. By age 80–84 years the rate was 29%, and among people aged 90 years and over, around 68% were in need of assistance. The higher rates among older people resulted in a disproportionate share of disability being in older age groups – 55% of all people with a need for assistance were aged 65 years and over, yet people that age made up just 13% of the population.

At younger ages, males have higher rates of need for assistance than females. For children aged 5–14 years, 2.7% of boys had a need for assistance but the rate in girls was only 1.4%. This difference reflects the higher incidence of birth and intellectual/learning disorders in boys.[1] However, females required more assistance in old age – 21% of women aged 65 years and over reported a need for assistance compared with 15% of men in the same age group. This reflects the fact that older men are more likely to experience acute illnesses followed by a short period of ill health before death, whereas older women are more likely to have a longer period of chronic ill health before death.[2]

Regional differences

Because of the strong association between age and disability, the most important factor in determining an area's overall rate of need for assistance is the age structure of the population. Differences in rates of need for assistance among the states and territories therefore reflect the differences in age structure. Tasmania and South Australia each had 15% of their populations aged 65 years or over in 2006, compared to 13% nationally. The rates of need for assistance in these states were 5.2% in Tasmania and 5.1% in South Australia, compared with 4.4% nationally.

Measuring disability prevalence

In addition to the 2006 Census, estimates of the prevalence of disability are also available from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC). The conceptual basis for identifying people with a core activity need for assistance in the census closely matched that for identifying people with a profound or severe core activity limitation in the SDAC. Both the census and SDAC aimed to identify people who, due to a health condition or disability lasting or likely to last for six months or more, always or sometimes need help in at least one of the core activities of daily living – self-care, mobility or communication.

While the prevalence rate measured in the 2006 Census for people with a need for assistance was 4.4%, the 2003 SDAC found 6.3% of the population had a profound or severe core activity limitation. This discrepancy can be mostly attributed to the different collection methods of the two collections, particularly the SDAC's use of a larger number of screening questions which more accurately identify people with a disability and their level of restriction. For more information on the differences between census data and data derived from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, refer to the *2006 Census Dictionary* (ABS cat. no. 2901.0) and the *Disability, Ageing and Carers: User Guide* (ABS cat. no. 4431.0.55.001).

Need for assistance by state/territory and Remoteness Area

State	*Major Cities* %	*Inner Regional* %	*Outer Regional* %	*Remote* %	*Very Remote* %	*Total* %
New South Wales	4.3	5.2	5.1	4.1	3.6	4.6
Victoria	4.4	4.9	4.9	5.8	. .	4.5
Queensland	4.1	5.1	4.1	3.3	2.6	4.2
South Australia	5.2	4.8	5.3	4.0	3.6	5.1
Western Australia	3.9	4.0	3.7	2.5	2.4	3.8
Tasmania(a)	. .	5.3	5.1	4.9	3.5	5.2
Northern Territory(b)	. .	. .	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.7
Australian Capital Territory	3.4	. .	. .	. .	. .	3.4
Australia	**4.3**	**5.0**	**4.5**	**3.3**	**2.6**	**4.4**

(a) Hobart is classified as Inner Regional.
(b) Darwin is classified as Outer Regional.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

In contrast, the younger jurisdictions of the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory had 2.7% and 3.4% of their respective populations requiring assistance.

In general, the populations of areas outside Major Cities such as Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas have older age structures than the Major Cities and Remote/Very Remote areas (see *Australian Social Trends 2008,* Population distribution, pp. 9–12). This is associated with people's migration patterns upon retirement, and the migration of younger people to Major Cities for educational and work opportunities. The higher proportions of older people in Inner and Outer Regional Australia give these areas the greater relative need for assistance. Inner Regional areas had the highest rate of need at 5.0%, followed by Outer Regional (4.5%). People in Remote and Very Remote areas had rates of 3.3% and 2.6% respectively, reflecting the younger age structure of these areas. The national pattern of need for assistance by Remoteness Area was generally reflected at the state and territory level.

Living arrangements

As with the wider population, the living arrangements of people with a need for assistance vary with their age group and life cycle stage. Living arrangements may also be influenced by the age of onset, for example whether this occurs at a young age or later in life after partnering, and the severity of the condition leading to a need for assitance. Within age groups, there were some notable differences in living arrangements between people with and without a need for assistance.

...children and young people

While a majority (68%) of children aged less than 15 years with a need for assistance lived with two parents, they were considerably

Relationship in household and family composition: persons with and without a need for assistance — 2006

	Age group of person (years)					
	0–14	*15–24*	*25–44*	*45–64*	*65 and over*	*Total*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Has need for assistance						
Child living in couple family	68.3	52.2	14.4	0.9	—	9.3
Child living in one-parent family	28.8	25.7	8.9	2.1	—	4.8
Partner living in a couple family without children	—	2.2	8.6	33.6	26.5	23.1
Partner living in couple family with children	—	1.3	23.8	21.7	4.8	10.1
Lone parent	—	1.0	7.3	6.5	6.9	6.1
Parent living with adult child in couple or one-parent family	—	—	0.1	1.5	7.1	4.2
Lone person household	—	3.1	13.9	14.7	19.4	15.6
Group household	—	4.5	8.6	4.9	1.2	2.9
Resident in a non-private dwelling	1.4	3.5	7.4	7.8	30.5	19.5
Total(a)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Does not have need for assistance						
Child living in couple family	79.1	47.8	4.9	0.4	—	24.3
Child living in one-parent family	18.2	14.1	2.3	1.2	0.2	6.7
Partner living in a couple family without children	—	7.8	16.9	32.6	50.7	20.0
Partner living in couple family with children	—	3.1	48.4	38.7	7.2	25.1
Lone parent	—	1.6	6.9	6.4	3.6	4.2
Parent living with adult child in couple or one-parent family	—	—	—	0.6	2.2	0.4
Lone person household	—	3.4	8.5	11.9	26.7	9.0
Group household	—	8.0	4.5	1.8	1.5	3.1
Resident in a non-private dwelling	0.8	3.4	1.9	1.8	2.3	1.9
Total(a)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

(a) Total includes persons from households who were otherwise related or unrelated within the household.

Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

more likely to live in one-parent families (29%) than those without a need for assistance (18%). This is consistent with studies suggesting that caring for a child with a disability may have a negative impact on couple relationships.[3] Consequently, the rate of need for assistance was higher for children in one-parent families (2.7%) compared with couple families (1.5%). For more information see *Australian Social Trends 2008,* Families with a young child with a disability, pp. 37–41.

Young people (aged 15–24 years) with a need for assistance were also more likely to be living with one parent (26%) than young people without a need for assistance (14%). Nine out of ten of the one-parent families where the person needing assistance was aged less than 25 years were lone mother families.

Young people needing assistance were less likely to be living with a partner than those without a need for assistance (3% and 11% respectively) and only 4% lived in group households. This compares with 8% living in group households for those without a need for assistance.

...people aged 25–44

People in this age group with a need for assistance were around half as likely to be living with a partner as those without a need for assistance (32% compared with 65%). Around 23% of 25–44 year olds with a need for assistance lived with their parent(s), over three times the proportion (7%) for those not needing assistance. A higher proportion were also living alone (14%) compared with people that age without a need for assistance (8%).

In contrast to the younger people (aged 15–24 years), the 25–44 year olds who had a need for assistance were twice as likely to be living in a group household as people without a need for assistance (9% compared with 4%). This may reflect the provision of group home accommodation (with supervision by disability workers) by government and private agencies, to promote opportunities for people with disabilities to live independently in the community.[4]

Non-private dwellings, which include nursing homes and hostels, housed 7% of 25–44 year olds with a need for assistance.

...people aged 45–64

The majority (55%) of people aged 45–64 years with a need for assistance were partners in a couple family, higher than any of the other age groups. However, this was still a smaller proportion than people without a need for assistance (71%). The proportion of those with a need for assistance who were living alone (15%) was slightly greater than those without a need for assistance (12%). A further 8% of people this age who had a need for assistance were living in non-private dwellings.

...people aged 65 and over

Of people aged 65 years and over with a need for assistance, 31% lived with their partner – just over half the rate of those without a need for assistance (58%). On the other hand, single older people with a need for assistance were over twice as likely to live with their child (either as a lone parent, or with that child's family) as those without a need for assistance (14% and 6% respectively).

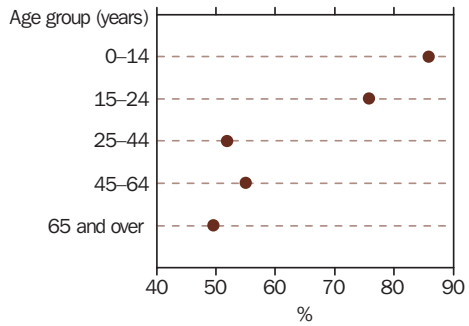
Nearly one in five (19%) people this age with a need for assistance lived alone, and 30% were residents in non-private dwellings. Older women had higher rates of residency in non-private dwellings (34%) than older men (24%).

...carers in the household

Carers play a key role in the lives of many people with a need for assistance, as they may provide help for tasks such as bathing, dressing, moving around and communication with others. Depending on the severity of disability, people living outside institutions and without a carer in their household may be more reliant on government and non-government providers and may be at greater risk of having an unmet need for care.

In 2006, 56% of people who needed assistance and who lived in a household had someone in their household who provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability (although the recipient of that assistance was not necessarily the person with a need for assistance in that household as the link between recipient and carer was not explicitly collected in the census).

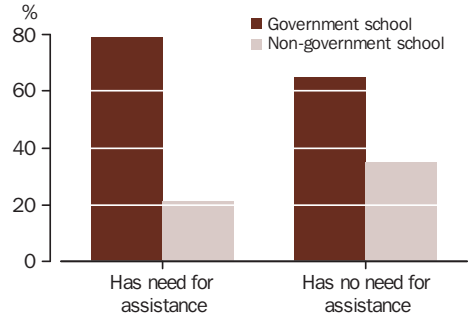
People with a need for assistance: had a carer in their household(a) — 2006



(a) Excludes people not living in households.

Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Type of school attended by children aged 5–17 years(a) — 2006



(a) Of children attending school.

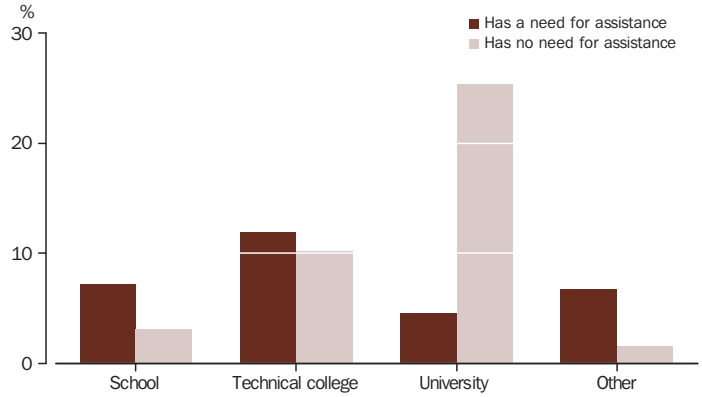
Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

The proportion of people with a need for assistance who had a carer in their household varied by their age group and largely reflected their living arrangements. Those most likely to have a carer in the household were children aged less than 15 years (86%) and young people aged 15–24 years (76%). Around 50–60% of the household population with a need for assistance in each of the ten-year age groups from 25–34 years to 75–84 years lived with someone who was a carer. There was a lower proportion among those aged 85 years and over (43%), reflecting the high likelihood of people of this age to live alone (42% of people with a need for assistance).

Participation in education

In 2006, 97% of children aged 5–17 years with a need for assistance attended an educational institution. Government schools were attended by 79% of children with a need for assistance who went to school.

Type of educational institution attended, 18–24 years(a) — 2006



a) Persons not attending any educational institution are not shown.

Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

In comparison, 65% of the children attending school without a need for assistance were at a government school. This may in part be due to education costs and differences in incomes between families with and without children who have a disability (for more information, see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Families with a young child with a disability, pp. 37–41). However, even after adjusting for differences in household income, children with a need for assistance were significantly more likely to attend a government school. This may reflect a structural difference between the school sectors, with selected government schools being resourced to cater for children with disabilities.

For young adults (aged 18–24 years) with a need for assistance, 31% were attending an educational institution in 2006, compared with 40% of people that age without a need for assistance. The most commonly attended institution type for young adults with a need for assistance was technical colleges (12%), slightly higher than for those without a need for assistance (10%). By contrast, people with a need for assistance were only one-fifth as likely to be currently attending university as those without a need for assistance (5% and 25% respectively).

...non-school qualifications

Reflecting the lower rate of educational participation of young adults with a need for assistance, people with a need for assistance aged 25–64 years were around half as likely to have a non-school qualification (28%) as those without a need for assistance (54%).

Labour force characteristics

In 2006, the majority (81%) of people of working age (15–64 years) with a need for assistance did not participate in the labour force. This proportion was similar for males (80%) and females (82%). In contrast, 23% of people of the same age without a need for assistance did not participate in the labour force.

Of the 19% (or 57,000) people aged 15–64 years with a need for assistance who were participating in the labour force, 49,000 were in paid employment. There was a significant number of employed people with a need for assistance who were away from work in the week prior to the 2006 Census (12%), double the rate for people without a need for assistance (6%). Nearly 8,000 people with a need for assistance were unemployed, which was equivalent to an unemployment rate for this group of 13.4%.

Labour force characteristics, persons with and without a need for assistance aged 15–64 years — 2006

	People aged 15–64 years	
	Has need for assistance	*Does not have need for assistance*
	%	%
In the labour force	18.9	76.7
Unemployment rate(a)	13.4	5.3
Absent from work in reference week(b)	12.3	6.0
Working less than 20 hours per week(c)	41.9	17.1
Working more than 40 hours per week(c)	20.6	49.0
	'000	'000
Total persons	**308.8**	**12 155.6**

(a) The number of unemployed persons as a proportion of all persons in the labour force.
(b) Of employed persons.
(c) Of those people who worked in the reference week.

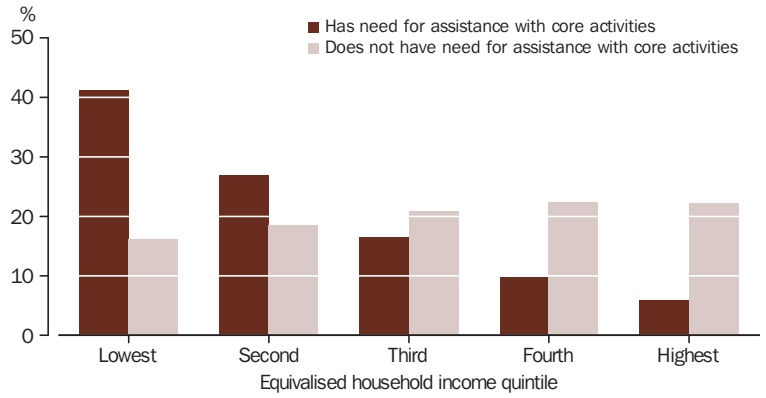
Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

People with a need for assistance who did work were more likely to work shorter hours: 42% worked less than 20 hours per week, compared with 17% of workers without a need for assistance. Similarly, just 21% of workers with a need for assistance worked more than 40 hours per week, compared with 49% of all other workers.

Income

Overall, people with a need for assistance are more likely to have lower household incomes than people without a need for assistance. This is influenced by the fact that over half (55%) of all people with a need for assistance were aged 65 years or over, compared with 11% of the population without a need for assistance.

Distribution of persons aged less than 65 years by equivalised household income quintile — 2006



Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

For people aged less than 65 years, the lower levels of labour force participation and higher proportion of one-parent families among those with a need for assistance results in their household incomes being markedly lower. Taking account of differing household size and household composition (through equivalising), the average household income of people with a need for assistance was 29% lower than that of people without a need for assistance.

Around two-thirds (68%) of people with a need for assistance aged less than 65 years were in the bottom two quintiles (or bottom 40%) of households ordered by equivalised income. This was almost double the proportion (35%) of people without a need for assistance.

Indigenous peoples

While the overall rate of need for assistance in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (4.6%) was similar to that of the non-Indigenous population (4.4%), the younger age structure of the Indigenous population obscured a more marked difference. The age standardised rate ratio shows the need for assistance among the Indigenous population to be twice that of the non-Indigenous population in 2006.

Conclusion

People with a need for assistance are at risk of disadvantage in a number of areas. This group of people is less likely to have non-school qualifications and to participate in the labour force than other people. People with a need for assistance are also more likely to be unemployed, and to have relatively low household income, than people without a need for assistance.

Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Year Book Australia, 2002*, cat. no. 1301.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 South Australian Department of Human Services and the South Australian Network for Research on Ageing, 1999, 'Fact Sheets on older South Australians: Gender Differences', viewed 7 February 2008, <http://www.cas.flinders.edu.au/ sanra/FactSheets/ facts.pdf>.

3 Edwards, B, Higgins, DJ and Zmijewski, N, 2007, 'The Families Caring for a Person with a Disability Study and the Social Lives of Carers', *Family Matters*, no. 76, pp.8–17.

4 New South Wales Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, 2008, *Accommodation: Group Homes,* viewed 7 February 2008, <http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/ dadhc/People+with+a+disability/ Accommodation.htm>.

Complementary therapies

In 2004–05, 748,000 people consulted one of seven common types of complementary health therapists in a two week period.

Complementary therapies – such as those practised by naturopaths, chiropractors and acupuncturists – have become increasingly popular in Australia over the last few decades. Interest initially coincided with enthusiasm for alternative lifestyles,[1,2] while immigration and increased contact and trade with China have also had an influence.[3] The status of complementary therapies is being re-visited in a number of areas: legal regulation; the stances of doctors' associations; their inclusion in medical education; and scientific research into their efficacy.[3,4,5] With the exception of acupuncture, complementary therapies are not routinely funded through Medicare, so there is little administrative data regarding their use. However, the ABS has some data about the use of complementary therapies which can help inform discussion.

Increase in practitioners

According to the census, 8,600 people were employed as complementary health therapists in 2006. This was 80% higher than the number in 1996 (although some of the increase was due to classification changes). The leading occupations were naturopaths (2,980) and chiropractors (2,490), up 56% and 45% respectively from 1996. The fastest growing group was osteopaths, tripling in number between 1996 and 2006. Over the same period, the Australian population increased by 12% and the total number of health professionals rose by 31%.

Data sources and definitions

This article draws on data from recent Censuses of Population and Housing and from the ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.

The term 'complementary therapy' is used to cover a wide range of health treatment methods. This article covers visits to selected, common types of complementary therapist only and the therapists covered vary between the two data sources used.

Data are available from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing on the characteristics of people employed as: *Chiropractors; Osteopaths; Acupuncturists; Homeopaths; Naturopaths; and Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner*s (and other occupations not elsewhere classified or not further defined). See *ANZSCO – Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, First edition 2006* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0) for details. While there is an occupation group within ANZSCO termed 'complementary health therapists' this article has a wider scope, covering in addition chiropractors and osteopaths, historically part of the natural therapies movement and commonly regarded as complementary therapists.[2,6]

In the 2004–05 National Health Survey people living in private dwellings (i.e. excluding hospitals and cared accommodation) were asked about their visits in the previous two weeks to 23 selected types of health professional. These included: *Chiropractor; Osteopath; Naturopath; Acupuncturist; Herbalist; Traditional healer; and Hypnotherapist.* See *ABS National Health Survey 2004–05: Users' Guide – Electronic* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001) for definitions.

Some people in these occupations may not regard themselves as complementary therapists, and, likewise, some people in other health occupations may use complementary therapy techniques.

Complementary health therapists

	1996	*2001*	*2006*	*Change 1996–2006*
	no.	no.	no.	%
Chiropractor	1 711	2 073	2 488	45.4
Naturopath	1 910	2 514	2 982	56.1
Acupuncturist	460	675	948	106.1
Osteopath	257	429	776	201.9
Traditional Chinese medicine practitioner	n.a.	n.a.	480	n.a.
Homeopath	n.a.	n.a.	236	n.a.
Total(a)	**4 787**	**6 343**	**8 595**	**79.5**

(a) Includes other complementary health professionals whose occupations were not elsewhere classified or not further defined. In 1996 and 2001 homeopaths and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners were among these occupations. In 2006, some additional occupations were moved into this category, contributing 485 people (or 10 percentage points) to the increase in 2006. These were hypnotherapists and dance, drama and music therapists.

Source: ABS 1996 to 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Complementary health therapists — 2006

	Female	Median age(a)	Overseas born	Bachelor degree or higher qualification(b)	Employed part-time(c)	Owner managers(d)
	%	years	%	%	%	%
Chiropractor	32.6	38	26.1	92.3	43.2	84.1
Osteopath	48.7	33	21.8	86.9	38.6	88.2
Acupuncturist	49.5	44	53.7	72.9	49.9	86.0
Homeopath	75.8	50	34.9	43.3	74.5	90.7
Naturopath	79.0	43	27.8	43.1	59.8	72.3
Traditional Chinese medicine practitioner	41.7	47	71.9	72.1	40.1	84.7
Total(e)	**56.9**	**42**	**32.4**	**67.8**	**51.8**	**79.4**
All employed people	46.1	40	25.4	23.3	31.5	16.6

(a) Age reported in whole years.
(b) In any field of study.
(c) Of those who had worked in the week prior to census.
(d) Of incorporated and unincorporated enterprises.
(e) Includes other complementary health therapists whose occupations were not elsewhere classified or not further defined.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Characteristics of therapists

Women predominated among naturopaths (79%) and homeopaths (76%). They accounted for almost half of acupuncturists and osteopaths (about 49% in each case). They were least prominent among traditional Chinese medicine practitioners (42%) and chiropractors (33%).

Just over one-half (54%) of acupuncturists, and 72% of traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, were born overseas. Most overseas-born acupuncturists and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners were born in North-East Asia (60% and 76% respectively). Among the other types of complementary health therapist, the proportion born overseas ranged from 22% (osteopaths) to 35% (homeopaths).

The proportion who reported having a bachelor degree or higher qualification (in any field of study) was highest for chiropractors and osteopaths (92% and 87% respectively); around 72% for acupuncturists and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners; and lowest for naturopaths and homeopaths (both 43%).

Part-time work was relatively common among complementary health therapists, especially homeopaths (75% worked part-time) and naturopaths (60% worked part-time), in keeping with the higher proportion of women in these occupations. Traditional Chinese medicine practitioners were the least likely to be working part-time (40%).

The majority of each type of complementary health therapist were owner managers, ranging from 91% of homeopaths to 72% of naturopaths.

Visits to therapists

According to the National Health Survey, in 2004–05, 3.8% of the population (748,000 people) had consulted one of seven selected complementary health therapists in the previous two weeks, compared with about 2.8% in 1995. The most commonly consulted were chiropractors (433,000 visitors), naturopaths (134,000 visitors) and acupuncturists (90,600 visitors). Also consulted were osteopaths, herbalists, traditional healers (identified for the first time in 2004–05) and hypnotherapists. The number of people visiting osteopaths increased by 88% to 60,000 over the period.

In comparison, in 2004–05, 32% of the population (6.4 million people) had consulted a doctor, dentist, chemist or one of 13 other commonly used health professionals such as a physiotherapist, psychologist or audiologist, the same proportion as in 1995.

...demographic characteristics

While females comprised half the population in 2004–05, they accounted for 62% of people who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks and 56% of people who had visited other health professionals.

People who had visited complementary health therapists in the previous two weeks

	1995	2004–05	2004–05
	'000	'000	%(a)
Chiropractor	286.3	432.6	2.2
Naturopath	112.9	133.6	0.7
Acupuncturist	54.2	90.6	0.5
Osteopath	32.1	60.3	0.3
Herbalist	41.3	56.7	0.3
Traditional healer	—	32.6	0.2
Hypnotherapist	*4.8	*9.7	—
Any of the above(b)	**497.0**	**748.4**	**3.8**
Other health professional(b)(c)	*5 725.4*	*6 367.1*	*32.4*
Total people in private dwellings	*18 061.1*	*19 681.5*	*100.0*

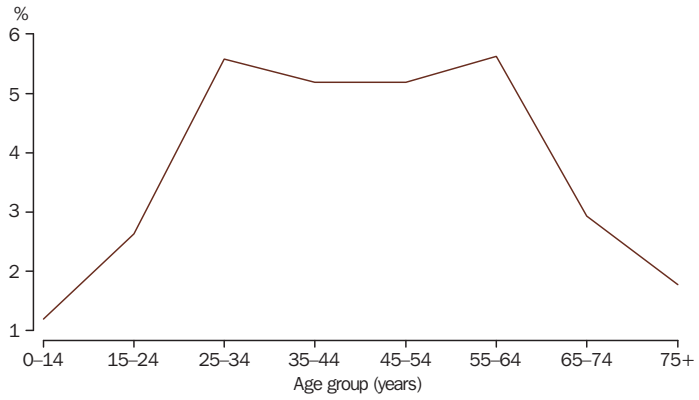
(a) People in private dwellings who visited health professionals in the previous two weeks as a proportion of the population living in private dwellings.
(b) People who had consulted a complementary health professional may also have consulted other types of health professional in the previous two weeks.
(c) People who had consulted any of 16 other types of health professionals in 2004–05. Three additional types were included in 2004–05 compared with 1995. A total of 97,500 people consulted one of the three types of health professional added in 2004–05.

Source: ABS 1995 and 2004–05 National Health Surveys.

People who visit health professionals tend to be older than the general population, because illness increases with age. However, the proportion of the population who visited complementary health therapists was highest between the ages 25 and 64 years. The lower rates for people aged 65 years and over contrasted with the rate of visits to other health professionals which increased steadily with increasing age. The reasons for this difference might include lower levels of acceptance of complementary therapies by older people. Alternatively, older people may have different treatment priorities than do younger people because their health on average is worse while their incomes are generally lower.

People aged less than 18 years accounted for 9% of those who had consulted a complementary health therapist. These 66,000 people aged less than 18 years included 46,000 who had consulted a chiropractor or osteopath and 21,000 who had consulted a naturopath, acupuncturist, herbalist or traditional healer.

People who consulted complementary health therapists(a) — 2004–05



(a) As a proportion of the population of each age group.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.

...health-related characteristics

People with certain serious health conditions are known to use complementary therapies. For example, some cancer patients make use of relaxation, diet, vitamins, positive imagery and faith healing.[7] The 2004–05 National Health Survey collected information about whether or not people had a condition from one of Australia's national health priority areas: arthritis; asthma; diabetes; cardiovascular disease; injuries; cancer; and mental and behavioural problems. These seven broad health areas – together with the risk factor obesity – have been prioritised by Australian Health Ministers because they add significantly to the burden of disease while having potential for improvement.[8]

Of people who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks, 42% reported that they had one of the priority health conditions. This was higher than the rate for the total population (33%) but lower than the rate for people who had consulted other types of health professional (46%). Of these conditions, arthritis (20%), asthma (14%) and mental or behavioural disorders (13%) were the ones most commonly reported by people who had visited a complementary health therapist. These were also the leading three conditions for the total population.

Self rating of health has been found to be a good general indicator of mental and physical condition. Close to one-fifth (18%) of people who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks rated their own health as 'fair' or 'poor'. This was about the same as for the total population (16%), but lower than the rate of self-reported fair or poor health among people who had consulted other types of health professional in the previous two weeks (26%).

The lower rates of illness and self-assessed fair or poor health among people who had visited a complementary health therapist compared with those who had visited other types of health professional in part reflects the younger age profile of the former group.

People who had visited complementary health therapists in the previous two weeks — 2004–05

Type of practitioner	*Had a selected health condition(a)* %	*Assessed own health as fair/poor(b)* %	*High/Very high levels of psychological distress(c)* %	*Had visited a GP or specialist in the previous two weeks* %	*Had been admitted to hospital in previous 12 months* %	*With private health insurance ancillary cover* %
Chiropractor	40.8	15.1	11.6	27.3	18.9	66.3
Naturopath	41.6	19.0	19.7	30.2	23.0	57.3
Acupuncturist	45.7	26.1	19.2	45.1	17.5	59.6
Complementary health therapist(d)	**42.0**	**18.1**	**15.3**	**31.6**	**18.4**	**60.6**
Other health professional(e)	46.5	25.8	19.3	70.6	21.8	43.2
Total population	32.9	15.9	13.0	22.9	14.8	41.8

(a) Arthritis; asthma; diabetes; cardiovascular disease; injuries; cancer; and mental and behavioural problems.
(b) Restricted to people aged 15 years and over.
(c) Restricted to people aged 18 years and over.
(d) Chiropractor, naturopath, acupuncturist, osteopath, herbalist, traditional healer or hypnotherapist.
(e) People who had consulted any of 16 other types of health professionals in 2004–05. People who had consulted a complementary health professional may also have consulted other types of health professional in the previous two weeks.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.

Of those who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks, 15% were assessed as having high/very high levels of psychological distress according to the Kessler scale – based on information supplied by the respondent about negative emotional states experienced in the previous four weeks. This was similar to the rate of high/very high psychological distress scores in the total population (13%) but lower than the rate for people who had consulted other types of health professional (19%). People who had visited a complementary health therapist, however, were more likely to be taking medication for mental wellbeing (35%) than either the total population (19%) or people who had consulted other types of health professional (28%).

Of people who had consulted a complementary health therapist, 18% had been admitted to hospital in the previous 12 months. This was higher than the rate for the total population (15%) but it was not significantly different to the rate for people who had consulted other types of health professional (22%).

...did they also visit doctors?

One of the concerns regarding complementary therapies is that people may undergo risky treatments, or fail to access proven treatments from the mainstream health system.[3] It is therefore of interest to know whether people used complementary therapists together with, or as an alternative to, the health care offered by general practitioners or specialists. Just under one-third (32%) of people who had visited a complementary health therapist had also visited a doctor in the previous two weeks, rising to 63% who had visited a doctor in the previous three months. Of people who had visited an acupuncturist during the last two weeks, 45% reported that they had also seen a doctor during this time. While these people may have discussed either the same or different conditions with their doctor and complementary therapist, they were nevertheless in touch with mainstream medicine.

...private health insurance

Private health insurance ancillary cover often includes chiropractic and osteopathy, and sometimes other complementary therapies. In 2004–05, 61% of people who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks had ancillary coverage, including 66% of those who had visited a chiropractor and 60% of those who had visited an acupuncturist. These rates were higher than the rates of ancillary coverage for the total population (42%) or for people who had consulted other types of health professional in the previous two weeks (43%).

...healthy lifestyles?

People who had visited a complementary health therapist in the previous two weeks were more likely to have certain healthy behaviours than were either the total population, or people who had consulted any other health professional. These behaviours included eating the recommended minimum

People(a) who had visited complementary health therapists in the previous two weeks — 2004–05

Type of practitioner	Not current daily smokers %	Exercised at moderate to high level %	Normal weight(b) %	Ate two or more serves of fruit per day %	Ate five or more serves of vegetables per day %	Did not have risky or high risk alcohol consumption(c) %
Chiropractor	84.7	33.6	44.3	58.6	20.5	83.5
Naturopath	87.2	44.2	49.6	72.7	26.5	86.5
Acupuncturist	91.3	34.4	50.6	58.6	25.5	86.1
Complementary health therapist(d)	**84.8**	**35.8**	**45.6**	**63.3**	**21.3**	**84.4**
Other health professional(e)	*80.7*	*28.2*	*42.1*	*56.8*	*15.2*	*87.9*
Total population	*78.7*	*29.6*	*43.9*	*54.0*	*14.4*	*86.5*

(a) Restricted to those aged 18 years and over.
(b) Body Mass Index from 18.5 to less than 25.0, based on self-reported weight and height.
(c) Based on reported alcohol consumption previous week (see *ABS National Health Survey 2004–05: Users' Guide – Electronic* (ABS cat. no. 4363.0.55.001)).
(d) Chiropractor, naturopath, acupuncturist, osteopath, herbalist, traditional healer or hypnotherapist.
(e) People who had consulted any of 16 other types of health professionals in the previous two weeks. People who had consulted a complementary health therapist may also have consulted other types of health professional in the previous two weeks.

Source: ABS 2004–05 National Health Survey.

serves of fruit and vegetables, exercising at high or moderate level, and not smoking regularly. As an example, almost three-quarters (73%) of people who had consulted a naturopath during the last two weeks reported eating at least two serves of fruit a day, compared with 54% of the total population. There was little difference among the three groups with regard to risky alcohol consumption over a seven-day period, with 84% of people who had visited a complementary health therapist in the low risk category, compared with 87% of the total population and 88% of people who had visited any other type of health professional.

Looking ahead

An issue related to the use of complementary therapists is people's use of vitamins and minerals and herbal or natural substances. See *2004–05 National Health Survey: Summary of Results, Australia* (cat. no. 4364.0) for some information on people's use of these in treating National Health Priority Area conditions.

In addition to the therapies described in this article, there is a vast array of other therapies described as 'complementary, 'alternative' or 'natural' (one Australian natural therapy site lists close to 100 types).[9] There are practical limits on collecting statistical data on less commonly used therapies. If some of these become more popular, statistical collections will reflect this, for example by separately identifying additional types of therapist in the census and in surveys.

Endnotes

1 Webb EC et al 1977, *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Chiropractic, Osteopathy, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy*. Canberra: AGPS.

2 Jacka J 'Fifty Years of Change' viewed 20 December 2007, <www.anta.com.au>.

3 Benoussen A and Myers SP 1996, *Towards a safer choice: The Practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Australia*, Faculty of Health, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur, viewed 20 June 2008, <www.health.vic.gov.au/archive2006/chinese/report/contents.html>.

4 Vivian Lin et al (2006) *The Practice and Regulatory requirements of Naturopathy and Western Herbal Medicine,* La Trobe University School of Public Health, Bundoora viewed 20 February 2008, <www.health.vicgov.au/pracreg/naturopathy.htm>.

5 'Complementary medicine gets a boost', Press release 30 March 2008 by Senator the Hon. Jan McLucas, viewed 6 May 2008, <www.health.gov.au>.

6 Devereux E P 1998, History of Chiropractic from a New South Wales Perspective (1969–1982) *Australasian Chiropractic and Osteopathy* (ACO) Vol. 7 No. 2, pp 68–79.

7 Cancer Institute NSW, 'Frequently asked questions about complementary therapies', viewed 13 May 2008, <http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au/profes/comp_therapies_faq.html>.

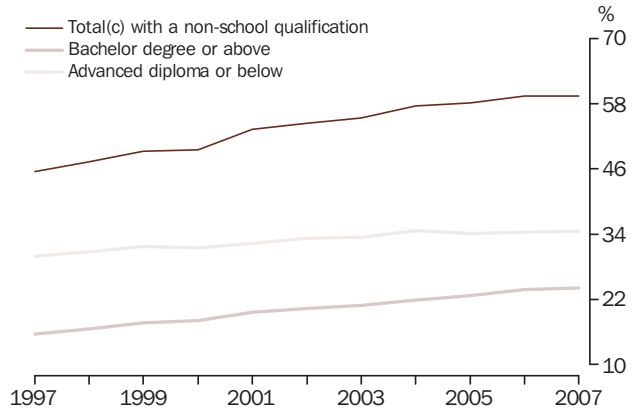
8 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 'National Health Priorities' and 'Risk factors' viewed 15 May 2008, <www.aihw.gov.au/nhpa/index.cfm>.

9 Natural Therapy Pages, viewed 5 April 2008, <www.naturaltherapypages.com.au>.

Education and training

Education and training: national summary — key points

Proportion of population(a) with non-school educational qualifications(b)

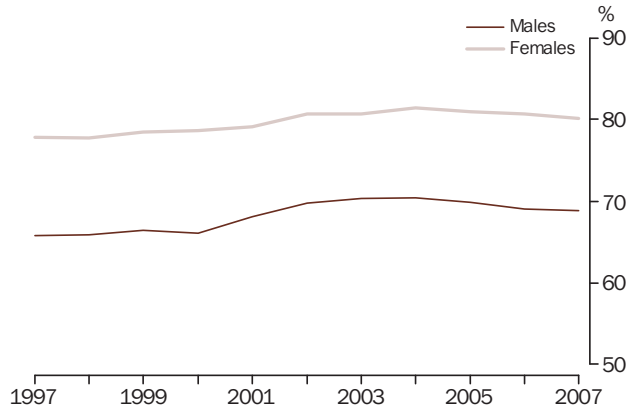


- The proportion of people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification increased from 46% in 1997 to 59% in 2007.
- The increase in the level of educational attainment over the past decade mostly reflects an increase in the proportion of people whose highest non-school qualification was a Bachelor or higher degree. Between 1997 and 2007, this proportion increased from 16% to 24%.

(a) Aged 25–64 years.
(b) At May.
(c) Includes people whose qualification level could not be determined.

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Work.
For further information see *Education: national summary*, page 86, indicators 23 and 26–27.

Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rates(a)

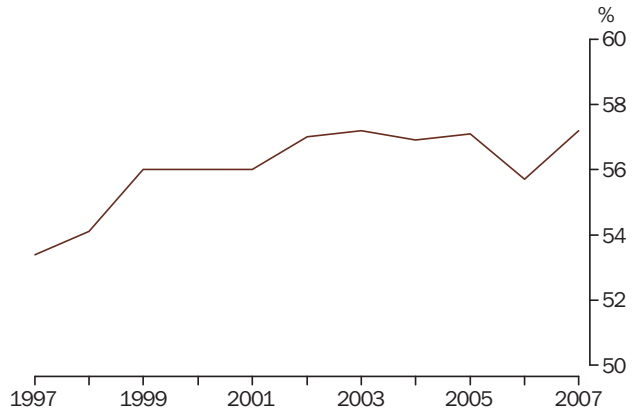


- Apparent retention rates are an indicator of the degree to which young people continue their participation in secondary schooling beyond the compulsory school years.
- Between 1997 and 2007, Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rates increased slightly, from 66% to 69% for males and from 78% to 80% for females.

(a) At August.

Source: National Schools Statistics Collection.
For further information see *Education: national summary*, page 86, indicators 4 and 5.

Education participation rate of persons aged 15–24 years(a)



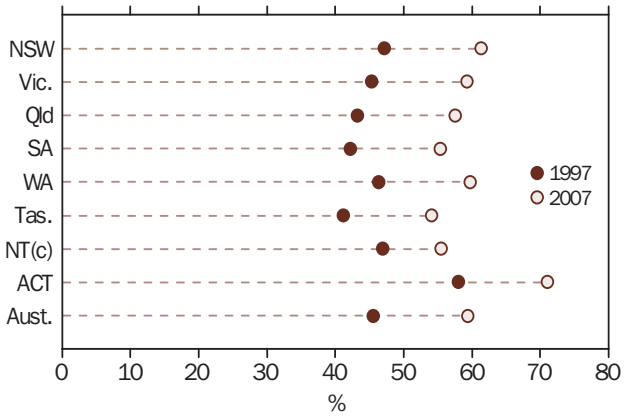
- The education participation rate is an indicator of the degree to which young people continue their participation in education beyond school.
- Between 1997 and 2007, the education participation rate of people aged 15–24 years increased from 53% to 57%.

(a) At May.

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Work.
For further information see *Education: national summary*, page 86, indicator 9.

Education and training: state summary — key points

Proportion of population(a) with non-school educational qualifications(b)



(a) Aged 25–64 years.
(b) At May.
(c) Refers to mainly urban areas only.

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Work.

For further information see *Education: state summary*, page 89, indicator 23.

- The proportion of people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification increased in all states and territories over the past decade.
- In 2007, the proportion of people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification was highest in the Australian Capital Territory (71%) and lowest in Tasmania (54%).

Education and training: national summary

	PARTICIPANTS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1	School students(a)	'000	3 172	3 199	3 227	3 247	3 268	3 302	3 319	3 332	3 348	r3 369	3 417
2	Students in government schools(a)	%	70.3	70.0	69.7	69.2	68.8	68.4	67.9	67.5	67.1	r66.7	66.4
3	Female school students – of all Year 11 and 12 students(a)	%	51.8	52.0	52.1	52.1	51.8	51.5	51.4	51.6	51.8	r51.7	51.7
4	Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – males(b)	%	r65.8	65.9	66.4	66.1	68.1	69.8	70.3	70.4	69.9	69.0	68.8
5	Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – females(b)	%	77.8	77.7	78.5	78.7	79.1	80.7	80.7	r81.4	81.0	r80.7	80.1
6	Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – all students(b)	%	71.6	71.6	72.3	72.3	73.2	75.1	75.4	75.7	75.3	74.7	74.3
7	Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – Indigenous(b)	%	30.9	32.1	34.7	36.4	35.7	38.0	r39.2	39.5	39.5	40.1	42.9
8	Vocational Education and Training (VET) students in schools	'000	94.1	117.0	139.4	153.6	169.8	185.5	202.9	211.9	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	n.y.a.
9	Education participation – of all aged 15–24 years	%	53.4	54.1	56.0	56.0	56.0	57.0	57.2	56.9	57.1	55.7	57.2
10	Vocational Education and Training (VET) students	'000	r1 452	r1 519	r1 627	r1 721	r1 694	r1 695	r1 728	r1 606	r1 651	1 676	n.y.a.
11	Female VET students – of all VET students	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	r48.2	48.6	r47.4	48.1	47.5	n.y.a.
12	Higher education students(c)	'000	658.8	671.9	686.3	695.5	842.2	896.6	930.0	945.0	957.2	984.1	n.y.a.
13	Female higher education students – of all higher education students(c)	%	54.4	54.7	55.0	55.2	54.4	54.4	54.4	54.3	54.5	54.8	n.y.a.
14	Overseas students – of all higher education students(c)	%	9.6	10.7	12.1	13.7	18.7	20.6	22.6	24.2	25.0	26.0	n.y.a.
	NON-PARTICIPANTS	*Units*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
15	Unmet demand: study at TAFE	'000	35.3	35.2	45.8	40.5	34.6	39.6	42.8	30.0	29.9	24.9	24.0
16	Unmet demand: study at a Higher education institution	'000	18.3	22.9	20.0	18.8	21.4	23.1	26.0	27.5	23.9	20.6	15.9
17	School leavers aged 15–19 years not fully engaged in education and/or employment – of all school leavers aged 15–19 years	%	27.8	31.4	26.0	26.4	28.4	26.1	28.7	30.6	30.8	29.9	28.4
18	Persons aged 15–19 years not fully engaged in education and/or employment – of all persons aged 15–19 years	%	13.4	14.1	13.1	12.5	13.4	12.9	13.2	14.1	13.9	13.1	12.8
	OUTCOMES	*Units*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
19	Persons aged 20–24 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all aged 20–24 years(d)(e)(f)	%	38.3	38.9	40.9	40.5	42.8	43.1	44.0	43.4	44.8	43.6	45.2
20	Indigenous persons aged 20–24 years with non-school educational qualifications – of all Indigenous aged 20–24 years(d)(e)(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	16.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	23.7	n.a.
21	Persons aged 20–24 years with Year 12 and/or Certificate II and above – of all aged 20–24 years(d)(e)	%	76.3	79.4	80.1	80.3	79.1	80.0	80.4	81.3	81.2	81.9	83.4
22	Persons aged 25–29 years with Certificate III and above – of all aged 25–29 years(d)(e)	%	39.1	42.7	45.5	45.9	49.0	51.6	52.0	53.6	55.7	55.7	59.0
23	Persons aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all aged 25–64 years(d)(e)(f)	%	45.5	47.3	49.3	49.5	53.3	54.4	55.3	57.5	58.1	59.4	59.4
24	Persons in capital cities aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all in capital cities aged 25–64 years(d)(e)(f)	%	47.9	49.5	51.7	52.2	55.6	56.9	57.6	59.6	60.7	61.6	61.3
25	Persons in balance of state aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all in balance of state aged 25–64 years(d)(e)(f)	%	41.6	43.6	45.3	44.9	49.3	50.0	51.3	53.9	53.7	55.6	56.3
26	Persons aged 25–64 years with a Bachelor degree or above – of all aged 25–64 years(d)(e)	%	15.6	16.6	17.7	18.1	19.7	20.4	20.9	21.9	22.7	23.8	24.1
27	Persons aged 25–64 years with an Advanced diploma and diploma or below – of all aged 25–64 years(d)(e)	%	29.9	30.7	31.7	31.4	32.3	33.2	33.4	34.7	34.1	34.4	34.5

Education and training: national summary cont.

OUTCOMES CONT.	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
28 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – males(h)	%	n.a.	n.a.	83.4	85.2	87.8	87.2	86.8	86.6	85.1	86.0	n.y.a.
29 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – females(h)	%	n.a.	n.a.	88.4	89.6	92.0	91.5	91.6	90.9	90.1	90.8	n.y.a.
30 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks(h)	%	n.a.	n.a.	85.6	87.4	89.8	89.3	89.0	88.7	87.5	88.4	n.y.a.
31 Reading – proportion of Year 5 Indigenous students reaching national benchmarks(h)	%	n.a.	n.a.	58.7	62.0	66.9	68.0	67.7	69.4	62.8	66.3	n.y.a.
32 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – males	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	89.4	89.5	89.9	90.3	91.0	90.5	90.0	n.y.a.
33 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – females	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	89.8	89.8	90.2	91.4	91.5	91.2	90.6	n.y.a.
34 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	89.6	89.6	90.0	90.8	91.2	90.8	90.3	n.y.a.
35 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 Indigenous students reaching national benchmarks	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	62.8	63.2	65.6	67.6	69.4	66.5	66.0	n.y.a
Labour force participation rate (of all persons aged 15–64 years)												
Highest level of schooling completed												
36 Persons with Year 12 or equivalent	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	83.1	82.6	83.1	83.0	83.6	83.8	83.9
37 Persons with Year 11 or below	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	68.9	68.7	69.3	68.9	70.7	70.8	70.9
38 Indigenous persons who have not completed Year 12 or equivalent	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	54.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	54.8	n.a.
Non-school qualifications												
39 Persons with Bachelor degree or above	%	88.6	88.6	86.9	88.4	87.3	87.9	87.0	87.1	87.9	87.6	87.7
40 Persons with Advanced diploma or below	%	83.7	84.2	83.0	83.2	83.0	83.0	83.5	83.1	83.5	84.8	84.6
41 Indigenous persons with a non–school qualification(g)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	80.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	81.3	n.a.
42 All persons without non–school qualifications	%	66.5	66.0	65.6	66.8	66.5	65.8	66.9	66.2	68.4	68.0	68.5

(a) Refers to full-time students only.

(b) Refers to the number of full-time students in Year 12 divided by the number of full-time students in the first year of secondary school (secondary school commenced at Year 7 in NSW, the ACT, Vic. and Tas; Year 8 in Qld, SA, the NT and WA) when the Year 12 cohort began secondary school. Care should be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates as they do not account for students repeating a year or migrating into or out of the relevant school student population.

(c) The scope of the data from 2002 is different to that used for reporting students in previous years. Data for 2001 have been recalculated by the Department of Education, Science and Training to align with the change in scope. Refer to *Students 2002: Selected Higher Education Statistics* for more detail.

(d) There was a major break in the series at 2001, when the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications* (ABSCQ) was replaced by the *Australian Standard Classification of Education* (ASCED) (cat. no. 1272.0).

(e) Estimates refer to recognised qualifications only.

(f) Includes people who have a qualification where the level can not be determined.

(g) Excludes people who did not state the type or inadequately described the level of qualification.

(h) In 1999, data do not include a number of Queensland students, who were formally exempt from testing.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–7, 20, 38 and 41 are at August.
Data for indicators 8 and 10–11 are at 30 June.
Data for indicators 9, 15–19, 21–27, 36–37, 39–40 and 42 are at May.
Data for indicators 12–14 are at 31 August from 2002 and 31 March prior to 2002.
Data for indicators 28–35 are for the calendar year.

Education and training: national summary cont.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
43 Government operating expenses on Primary and Secondary education(i)	$b	13.9	14.7	17.3	18.1	19.4	21.0	22.5	23.9	25.8	27.4	28.7
44 Government operating expenses on Tertiary education(i)	$b	8.1	8.0	11.8	12.2	13.1	14.2	15.1	16.0	17.1	18.4	19.2
45 Total government operating expenses on education(i)	$b	n.a.	n.a.	31.3	32.5	35.3	38.1	40.8	43.3	46.7	49.8	51.9
46 Total government operating expenses on education as proportion of GDP(i)	%	4.5	4.4	5.2	r5.0	5.1	5.2	5.2	r5.1	r5.2	5.1	5.0
47 Final education expenditure(i)	$b	31.4	33.5	36.8	38.3	40.2	42.4	46.0	49.8	54.0	57.9	63.4
48 Final education expenditure as a proportion of GDP(i)	%	5.8	5.8	6.0	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.9	5.9	6.0	6.0	6.1

HUMAN RESOURCES	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
49 School teachers	'000	227	231	239	244	250	255	260	265	266	270	277
50 Female school teachers – of all school teachers	%	67.1	67.6	68.3	68.6	69.1	69.4	69.6	69.9	69.9	70.2	70.6
51 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Government primary schools	ratio	17.6	17.7	17.0	17.1	16.7	16.7	16.4	16.2	16.1	15.8	15.7
52 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Non-government primary schools	ratio	18.7	18.6	18.2	17.9	17.6	17.3	17.1	16.9	16.6	16.4	16.5
53 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Government secondary schools	ratio	12.9	12.8	12.7	12.6	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.4	12.4	12.4	12.3
54 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Non-government secondary schools	ratio	12.8	12.8	12.6	12.5	12.4	12.3	12.1	12.0	11.9	11.8	11.9
55 VET teachers	'000	19.0	16.2	15.8	15.9	11.3	13.9	16.9	16.5	12.9	13.8	20.5
56 Higher education academic staff	'000	28.9	28.4	27.5	28.9	29.8	30.4	30.6	31.2	31.8	31.7	n.y.a.
57 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Higher education	ratio	17.7	18.5	18.7	19.2	18.7	19.5	20.1	19.8	19.6	20.0	n.y.a.

(i) Data for the 1998–99 financial year onwards are not comparable with estimates in previous financial years. Prior to 1998–99, this indicator refers to cash outlays on education including capital outlays. From 1998–99 onwards, when accrual accounting was implemented in Government Finance Statistics (GFS), this indicator refers to Operating Expenses and does not include a capital component.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 43–48 are for the financial year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 49–54 are at August.
Data for indicator 55 are at May.
Data for indicators 56–57 are at 31 August from 2002 and 31 March prior to 2002.

Education and training: state summary

PARTICIPANTS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
1 School students(b)	'000	2007	1 109	834	698	251	345	82	38	59	3 417
2 Students in government schools(b)	%	2007	66.5	64.3	68.6	65.2	66.6	72.0	75.6	58.3	66.4
3 Female school students – of all Year 11 and 12 students(b)	%	2007	52.0	52.1	51.3	51.2	51.7	52.6	51.0	49.5	51.7
4 Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – males(c)	%	2007	64.7	73.3	73.9	66.2	64.5	57.4	62.1	84.0	68.8
5 Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – females(c)	%	2007	74.9	87.4	83.3	79.5	76.4	73.9	61.3	86.5	80.1
6 Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate – all students(c)	%	2007	69.7	80.1	78.5	72.7	70.3	65.4	61.7	85.2	74.3
8 Vocational Education and Training (VET) students in schools	'000	2004	69.6	33.0	58.0	24.4	18.4	2.9	1.9	3.7	211.9
9 Education participation – of all aged 15–24 years	%	2007	58.2	61.9	52.1	57.7	52.0	58.0	39.5	62.6	57.2
10 Vocational Education and Training (VET) students	'000	2006	565.3	471.1	293.3	121.7	137.2	41.8	21.9	23.6	1 676.0
11 Female VET students – of all VET students	%	2006	49.3	47.0	45.2	50.7	44.6	43.1	46.1	51.7	47.5
12 Higher education students(d)	'000	2006	302.9	251.7	190.0	69.4	100.9	18.8	6.1	27.9	984.1
13 Female higher education students – of all higher education students	%	2006	54.9	53.8	54.5	56.2	55.8	53.0	66.1	50.1	54.8
14 Overseas students – of all higher education students	%	2006	22.4	30.6	26.6	25.6	27.9	21.6	5.3	21.9	26.0

NON-PARTICIPANTS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
17 School leavers aged 15–19 years not fully engaged in education and/or employment – of all school leavers aged 15–19 years	%	2007	34.8	18.7	23.2	37.5	31.2	44.9	51.1	20.7	28.4
18 Persons aged 15–19 years not fully engaged in education and/or employment – of all persons aged 15–19 years	%	2007	15.1	8.8	12.8	13.8	13.9	15.4	20.3	8.2	12.8

OUTCOMES	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
19 Persons aged 20–24 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all aged 20–24 years(e)(f)	%	2007	45.5	45.9	44.3	42.9	47.2	43.0	32.0	47.8	45.2
21 Persons aged 20–24 years with Year 12 and/or Certificate II and above – of all aged 20–24 years(e)	%	2007	82.6	86.1	86.0	78.2	79.0	75.1	65.1	93.1	83.4
22 Persons aged 25–29 years with Certificate III and above – of all aged 25–29 years(e)	%	2007	59.2	63.2	57.3	55.6	55.0	47.2	*48.7	65.5	59.0
23 Persons aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all aged 25–64 years(e)(f)	%	2007	61.4	59.3	57.6	55.3	59.7	54.1	55.5	71.0	59.4
24 Persons in capital cities aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all in capital cities aged 25–64 years(e)(f)	%	2007	63.5	60.4	60.5	57.2	61.9	57.8	. .	. .	61.3
25 Persons in balance of state aged 25–64 years with a non-school educational qualification – of all in balance of state aged 25–64 years(e)(f)	%	2007	57.5	56.2	55.1	49.8	53.1	51.6	55.5	71.0	56.3
26 Persons aged 25–64 years with a Bachelor degree or above – of all aged 25–64 years(e)	%	2007	24.9	26.6	20.7	21.4	22.3	17.5	22.5	41.9	24.1
27 Persons aged 25–64 years with an Advanced diploma and diploma or below – of all aged 25–64 years(e)	%	2007	35.5	31.9	36.4	33.0	36.3	35.7	32.0	28.2	34.5

Education and training: state summary cont.

OUTCOMES cont.	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
28 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – males	%	2006	87.9	87.7	78.5	85.4	91.1	92.6	71.7	94.2	86.0
29 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – females	%	2006	92.8	92.1	84.3	90.8	94.1	95.6	77.6	96.9	90.8
30 Reading – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks	%	2006	90.3	89.9	81.2	88.0	92.6	94.1	74.5	95.6	88.4
32 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – males	%	2006	92.4	94.5	85.2	88.5	86.0	88.0	69.4	92.6	90.0
33 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks – females	%	2006	92.9	95.3	85.7	88.1	86.1	89.5	70.6	93.4	90.6
34 Numeracy – proportion of Year 5 students reaching national benchmarks	%	2006	92.6	94.9	85.4	88.3	86.0	88.7	70.0	93.0	90.3
Labour force participation (of all aged 15–64 years)											
Highest level of schooling completed											
36 Persons with Year 12 or equivalent	%	2007	84.0	83.6	84.2	82.4	84.7	82.3	86.6	85.4	83.9
37 Persons with Year 11 or below	%	2007	69.2	70.0	73.5	69.9	73.1	68.3	81.4	75.5	70.9
38 Indigenous persons who have not completed Year 12 or equivalent	%	2006	54.7	56.0	59.0	51.9	55.4	61.1	45.0	63.4	54.8
Non-school qualifications											
39 Persons with Bachelor degree or above	%	2007	88.0	87.6	86.6	88.2	88.6	84.9	88.9	87.3	87.7
40 Persons with Advanced diploma or below	%	2007	83.6	85.4	85.8	83.8	83.9	83.2	91.9	86.3	84.6
41 Indigenous persons with a non-school qualification(g)	%	2006	80.4	80.8	82.8	77.3	80.4	82.9	81.0	90.0	81.3
42 All persons without non-school qualifications	%	2007	66.9	67.6	71.6	66.2	71.2	64.3	76.8	75.7	68.5

HUMAN RESOURCES	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
49 School teachers	'000	2007	85.7	70.3	56.9	20.1	28.9	6.9	3.3	4.7	276.8
50 Female school teachers – of all school teachers	%	2007	70.2	70.0	72.2	68.3	71.1	70.0	74.0	72.3	70.6
51 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Government primary schools	ratio	2007	16.2	15.7	15.5	15.6	15.4	15.6	13.7	13.6	15.7
52 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Non-government primary schools	ratio	2007	16.8	15.2	17.4	16.5	17.1	16.6	17.0	17.3	16.5
53 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Government secondary schools	ratio	2007	12.5	11.8	12.9	12.7	11.7	13.1	10.9	12.2	12.3
54 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Non-government secondary schools	ratio	2007	11.7	11.3	12.2	11.7	12.0	12.1	10.6	12.8	11.9
55 VET teachers	'000	2007	*4.8	*4.8	5.2	*1.6	*2.6	*0.9	*0.1	*0.5	20.5
56 Higher education academic staff(d)	'000	2006	9.1	8.7	5.9	3.2	2.4	0.7	0.2	1.2	31.7
57 FTE Student/teaching staff ratio: Higher education	ratio	2006	21.0	19.1	21.4	19.8	18.5	18.6	18.8	16.1	20.0

(a) Estimates for Northern Territory refer mainly to urban areas only for indicators 9, 17–27, 36–37, 39–40, and 42.

(b) Refers to full-time students only.

(c) Refers to the number of full-time students in Year 12 divided by the number of full-time students in the first year of secondary school (Year 7 in NSW, the ACT, Vic. and Tas.; Year 8 in Qld, SA, the NT and WA) when the Year 12 cohort began secondary school. Care should be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates as they do not account for students repeating a year or migrating into or out of the relevant school student population.

(d) State and territory totals exclude students of the Australian Catholic University which has campuses in more than one state or territory.

(e) Estimates refer to recognised qualifications only.

(f) Includes people who have a qualification where the level can not be determined.

(g) Excludes people who did not state the type or inadequately described the level of qualification.

Reference periods: Data for indicators 1–6 are for August.
Data for indicators 8 and 10–11 are at 30 June.
Data for indicators 9, 17–27, 36–37, 39–40, 42 and 55 are at May.
Data for indicators 12–14 and 56–57 are at 31 August from 2002 and 31 March prior to 2002.
Data for indicators 28–34 are for the calendar year.

Education and training: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–7, 49–54	*Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0)
8	National Centre for Vocational Education Research, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Students and Courses;* Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.
9, 15–19, 21–27, 36–37, 39–40 and 42	ABS Survey of Education and Work
10–11	National Centre for Vocational Education Research, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Students and Courses.*
12–14, 56–57	Department of Education, Science and Training, *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics.*
20, 38 and 41	ABS Census of Population and Housing.
28–35	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), *National Report on Schooling in Australia.*
43–46	*Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia* – Electronic delivery (ABS cat. no. 5518.0.55.001).
47–48	*Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).
55	*Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003).

Education and training: definitions

Academic staff

those appointed wholly or principally to undertake a teaching-only function or a research-only function or a teaching-and-research function in an educational institution, or those appointed by an educational institution to be responsible for such people.

Reference: Department of Education, Science and Training, *Staff: Selected Higher Education Statistics.*

Advanced diploma and diploma or below

includes qualifications at the Advanced Diploma Level, Associate Degree Level, Diploma Level, Certificate IV Level, Certificate III Level, Certificate II Level, or Certificate I Level.

Reference: *Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)* (ABS cat. no. 1272.0).

Apparent retention rate

the number of school students in a designated level/year of education expressed as a percentage of their respective cohort group (which is either at the commencement of their secondary schooling or Year 10). Care should be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates as they do not account for students repeating a year or migrating into or out of the relevant school student population.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Apprentices and trainees

persons undertaking vocational training through contract of training arrangements. Contracts of training are legal agreements entered into by employers and trainees who are engaged in employment-based training.

Reference: National Centre for Vocational Education Research, *Australian Apprentice and Trainee Statistics.*

Bachelor degree or above

includes qualifications at the Bachelor Degree Level (including Honours), Graduate Certificate Level, Graduate Diploma Level, Master Degree Level or Doctorate Degree Level.

Reference: *Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)* (ABS cat. no. 1272.0).

Education participation

all persons enrolled for a course of study in the survey month at any institution whose primary role is education. Included are schools, higher education establishments, Technical and Further Education colleges (TAFEs) and any other educational institutions.

Reference: *Education and Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6227.0).

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) teaching staff

a measure of the total level of staff resources used. The FTE of a full-time staff member is equal to 1.0. The calculation of FTE for part-time staff is based on the proportion of time worked compared with that worked by full-time staff performing similar duties. Casual staff are excluded.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) student

a full-time student is one who undertakes a workload equivalent to, or greater than, that prescribed for a full-time student of that year level. This may vary between states and territories and from year to year. The FTE of a full-time student is equal to 1.0. The FTE of a part-time student is calculated by dividing the student's workload by that which is considered to be a full workload by that state or territory, resulting in an estimate in the range 0 to 1.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

FTE student/teaching staff ratios

are calculated by dividing the number of FTE students by the number of FTE teaching staff. Student/teaching staff ratios should not be used as a measure of class size. They do not take account of teacher aides and other non-teaching staff who may also assist in the delivery of school education.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

total market value of goods and services produced in Australia within a given period after deducting the cost of goods used up in the process of production, but before deducting allowances for the consumption of fixed capital (depreciation).

Reference: *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia – Electronic delivery* (ABS cat. no. 5518.0.55.001).

Government expenses on education

total government final expenditure on education services and facilities; government transfer payments paid for the purpose of facilitating education but not intended to be spent directly on educational services (such as personal benefit payments to students and advances to persons for the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS)); and other miscellaneous expenditure on education by government.

Reference: *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia – Electronic delivery* (ABS cat. no. 5518.0.55.001).

Education and training: definitions continued

Government school

one administered by the Department of Education under the Director-General of Education (or equivalent) in each state or territory.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Higher education student

a person who has been admitted to a higher education provider and who is enrolled and undertaking units of study in a higher education award course, an enabling course or a non-award course in the reference period.

Reference: Department of Education, Science and Training, *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics 2005*.

Labour force

the labour force is the labour supply available for the production of economic goods and services in a given period, and is the most widely used measure of the economically active population. People in the labour force are classified as either employed or unemployed according to their activities during the reference period by using a specific set of priority rules.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Non-government school

any school not administered by a Department of Education, but including special schools administered by government authorities other than the state and territory education departments.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Non-school educational qualification

an award for attainment as a result of formal learning from an accredited non-school institution. From 2001, with the implementation of the *Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)* (ABS cat. no. 1262.0), non-school qualifications are awarded for educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education. This includes qualifications at the Post Graduate Degree Level, Master Degree Level, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate Level, Bachelor Degree Level, Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level, and Certificates I, II, III and IV Levels. Non-school qualifications may be attained concurrently with school qualifications.
Prior to 2001, educational qualifications were classified according to the *ABS Classification of Qualifications (ABSCQ)* (ABS cat. no. 1262.0). The level of attainment included higher degrees, postgraduate diplomas, bachelor degrees, undergraduate and associate diplomas, and skilled and basic vocational qualifications.

Reference: *Education and Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6227.0).

Not fully engaged in education and/or employment

those not fully engaged in education and/or employment are those who in the survey reference week were: not studying or working (and therefore unemployed or not in the labour force); or were studying part-time and not working (therefore unemployed or not in the labour force); or not studying but in part-time work.

Reference: *Education and Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6227.0).

Numeracy — national benchmarks

the numeracy benchmarks describe nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for numeracy at particular school year levels. They represent the minimum acceptable standard of numeracy without which a student will have difficulty making sufficient progress at school.

Reference: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, *National Report on Schooling, 2000*.

Overseas higher education student

a higher education student who is not an Australian citizen, is not a New Zealand citizen and does not have Permanent Residence status.

Reference: Department of Education, Science and Training, *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics*.

Primary education

full-time education which typically commences around age five years and lasts for seven to eight years. It does not include sessional education such as preschool education.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Reading — national benchmarks

the reading benchmarks describe nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for literacy at particular school year levels. They represent the minimum acceptable standard of literacy without which a student will have difficulty making sufficient progress at school.

Reference: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, *National Report on Schooling in Australia, 2000*.

School

an educational institution which provides primary or secondary education on a full-time daily basis, or the provision of primary or secondary distance education.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

School student

a person who is formally enrolled in a school and active in a course of study, other than preschool or Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Secondary education

education which typically commences after completion of primary education, at around age 12 years, and lasts for five or six years.

Reference: *Schools, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4221.0).

Tertiary education

for finance statistics used in this publication, tertiary education refers to formal education beyond secondary education, including higher education, vocational education and training, or other specialist post-secondary education or training. Also called post-secondary education or further education.

Reference: *Education and Training Indicators, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4230.0).

Unmet educational demand

people who applied to enrol for a course of study in an educational institution and who were unable to gain placement. Excludes people who were studying at the time of the survey.

Reference: *Education and Work, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6227.0).

Vocational Education and Training (VET) student

a person for whom there is a full-time or part-time vocational stream enrolment in a TAFE college or agricultural college or state-recognised Adult and Community Education (ACE) provider, or a publicly-funded vocational course enrolment in a registered private training organisation during the reference year. People enrolled in non-vocational courses given by TAFE and ACE are excluded.

Reference: National Centre for Vocational Education Research, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Students and Outcomes*.

Education across Australia

In 2006, the proportion of Indigenous people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification (29%) was nearly double that in 1996 (15%).

Education contributes to economic growth and improves individual wellbeing. It also plays an important role in fostering and maintaining a positive and cohesive social environment. Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with increased employment opportunities and higher wages, and contribute to improving Australia's economic standing. The changing structure and growth of the Australian economy has increased the demand for a diverse, skilled workforce, with higher levels of educational attainment required to meet this demand.

Today, Australians are more highly educated than ever before. However, despite increases in the levels of educational attainment, some groups in society still experience difficulty in gaining education beyond compulsory schooling. The range of subjects and levels of study available to students living in rural and remote areas is often more limited than for those living in the city. In addition, people living in rural and remote areas may encounter considerable difficulties in accessing educational institutions (see also *Australian Social Trends 2003*, Regional differences in education and outcomes, pp. 91–95).

Qualifications across Remoteness Areas

According to the Survey of Education and Work, in 2006, 59% of Australians aged 25–64 years had a non-school qualification, up from 46% in 1990. This was largely due to an increase in the proportion of people in this age group whose highest non-school qualification was a Bachelor degree or above, from 10% in 1990 to 24% in 2006.

Despite the overall increase in the proportion of the Australian population with a non-school qualification, improvements in educational attainment have not been evenly distributed across different geographic regions. While there was an increase between 1996 and 2006 in the proportion of people with a non-school qualification across all geographic regions, the gains were greatest in Major Cities (from 44% in 1996 to 57% in 2006) and smallest in Very Remote areas (from 30% in 1996 to 36% in 2006). In 2006, the proportion of people with a non-school qualification declined with increasing levels of remoteness.

The relatively low proportion of the population with non-school qualifications in Remote (43%) and Very Remote (36%) areas

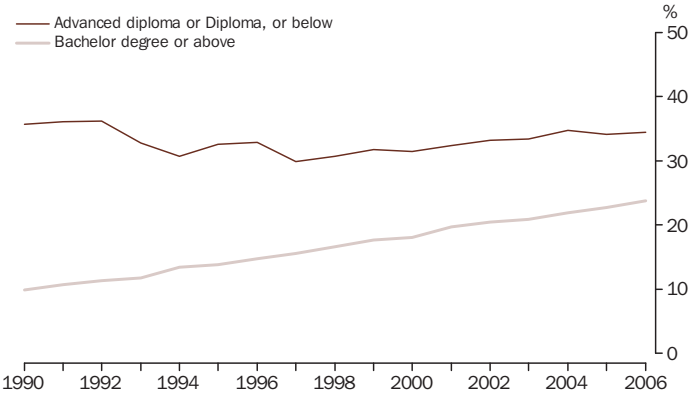
Data sources and definitions

Data presented in this article are mainly drawn from the 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing in order to describe participation in education and education outcomes across Australia, and how they vary with remoteness and Indigenous status.

Remoteness Area (RA) is a structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), covering the whole of Australia. It is intended to classify areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. As remoteness is measured nationally, not all Remoteness Areas are represented in each state or territory. There are six RAs in the structure: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia; and Migratory Australia. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these official terms, with 'Australia' omitted. For further information see *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), 2006* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0).

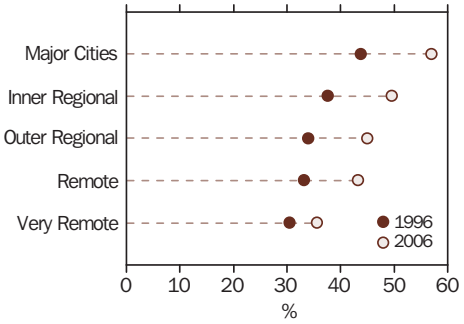
Non-school qualifications are those awarded for educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education. Non-school qualifications collected in the census include: Postgraduate Degree, Master degree level, Graduate diploma and Graduate certificate, Bachelor Degree, Advanced diploma and Diploma level, and Certificate I, II, III & IV levels. For further information see *Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)* (ABS cat. no. 1272.0).

People aged 25–64 years: highest non-school qualification



Source: ABS 1990–2006 Surveys of Education and Work.

People aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification(a) by Remoteness Area



(a) People who stated they had a non-school qualification but did not state the type or inadequately described the level of education were excluded prior to the calculation of percentages.

Source: ABS 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

is in part due to the higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in these areas (see *Australian Social Trends 2008,* Population distribution, pp. 9–12) and their lower levels of educational attainment. The lower rates of the population with a non-school qualification outside of Major Cities may also be related to post secondary education being perceived as less relevant to life and career opportunities by some people living in rural and remote areas.[1]

Census and the Survey of Education and Work

Data on people with non-school qualifications are available from both the Census of Population and Housing and the Survey of Education and Work (SEW). Both the census and the SEW aim to identify the highest level of non-school qualification that a person has completed.

In the 2006 Census, the proportion of people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification was 54%, compared with 59% in the 2006 SEW.

This difference can be attributed to the different scope, coverage and collection methods of the two collections. In particular, the SEW collects detailed information using trained interviewers, either face-to-face or by telephone. This allows for clarification of concepts and more accurate responses to questions.

Unlike sample surveys, the census is distributed to all households in Australia. As such, census data can be used to examine population characteristics in smaller geographic areas and for smaller sub-populations than would otherwise be reliably available from surveys. The SEW, while conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, excludes people living in very remote parts of Australia.

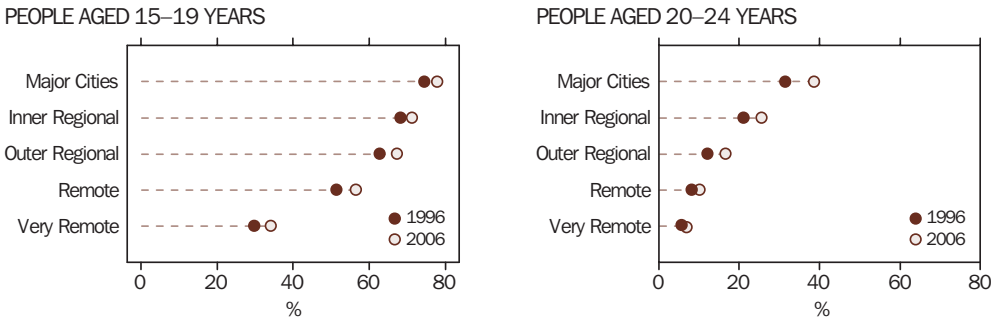
People aged 25–64 years: level of highest non-school qualification by Remoteness Area — 2006

Level of highest non-school qualification	*Major Cities* %	*Inner Regional* %	*Outer Regional* %	*Remote* %	*Very Remote* %	*Total(d)* %
Above Bachelor degree(a)	7.5	3.9	2.9	2.7	2.2	6.2
Bachelor degree	19.1	11.3	9.9	9.7	7.8	16.5
Advanced diploma and Diploma	10.3	8.5	7.6	7.2	5.8	9.7
Certificate III and IV	16.7	22.0	21.2	20.3	16.3	18.2
Certificate I and II	1.2	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.3
Total with non-school qualification(b)	**56.9**	**49.5**	**45.0**	**43.2**	**35.6**	**54.0**
Total non-Indigenous(c) with non-school qualification(b)	*57.1*	*49.9*	*45.8*	*45.6*	*47.8*	*54.5*
Total Indigenous(c) with non-school qualification(b)	*37.8*	*33.0*	*27.5*	*21.9*	*14.5*	*29.4*

(a) Includes Postgraduate Degree and Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate.
(b) People who stated they had a non-school qualification but did not state the type of qualification, or for whom the type or level of qualification was inadequately described, were excluded prior to the calculation of percentages. Includes certificate not further defined.
(c) Excludes those who have not stated their Indigenous status.
(d) Includes those in Migratory Australia and those who had no usual address.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

People attending an educational institution(a) by Remoteness Area



(a) People who did not state whether or not they were attending an educational institution, or did not state the type of educational institution they were attending, were excluded prior to the calculation of percentages.

Source: ABS 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

Despite this, in 2006 almost half (48%) of the non-Indigenous population living in Very Remote areas had a non-school qualification.

The highest level of non-school qualification attained varies with remoteness. In 2006 in Major Cities, 27% of people aged 25–64 years had a Bachelor degree or higher qualification compared with 15% in Inner Regional areas and even lower rates in the other remoteness categories. A Certificate III/IV was the highest level of qualification for about one in five people of this age in Inner Regional (22%), Outer Regional (21%) and Remote (20%) areas.

Staying in education

Post compulsory education and training is important for building the stock of skills in the labour market and is a key determinant of economic and social wellbeing.[2] For young people aged between 15 and 24 years, participation in education has increased over the past decade. Reflecting the location of educational institutions, the gains in participation for 20–24 year olds occurred in the more accessible areas. Among 15–19 year olds, the gains, although modest, were greater in Outer Regional and more remote areas.

According to the census, three-quarters (75%) of 15–19 year olds were attending an educational institution in 2006 (compared with 71% in 1996), with most (72%) of the students in this age group attending a secondary school. Some of this increase reflects changes in the education system in recent years whereby a number of state governments have increased the minimum school leaving age.[3]

Small increases in participation were recorded for this age group across all Remoteness Areas and especially in Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote areas. Nevertheless, in 2006, participation in education for 15–19 year olds decreased with increasing remoteness, from 78% in Major Cities to less than half that rate (34%) in Very Remote areas.

Among young people aged 20–24 years, around one-third (34%) were attending an educational institution in 2006, up from 27% in 1996. Increases in participation in education for this age group were observed in Major Cities (from 32% in 1996 to 39% in 2006), Inner Regional areas (from 21% to 26%) and Outer Regional areas (from 12% to 17%).

The high proportion of 20–24 year olds attending an educational institution in Major Cities includes young people who have moved from regional and remote areas to participate in higher education. In 2004, the Longitudinal Study of Australian Youth found that over one-quarter of 23 year olds who had been living in non-metropolitan areas at age 16 (in 1997) had moved to metropolitan areas since that time, with the move most often associated with university study.[4] The five percentage point increase in the proportion of 20–24 year olds attending an educational institution in Outer Regional areas (from 12% in 1996 to 17% in 2006) represents a relatively dramatic change in relative terms, due in part to the smaller population bases of these areas.

...school completion and further education

School completion is an important social goal as early school leavers face the risks of restricted social and labour market opportunities and financial insecurity.[5] Nevertheless, alternative pathways through education increasingly exist to improve the transition from education to work for those who have not completed Year 12, nor obtained an apprenticeship.[2]

Virtually all 19 year olds have left school (98% in 2006). In 2006, among this group, 72% had completed Year 12 or equivalent,

People aged 15–19 years who had left school(a): selected indicators by Remoteness Area — 2006

					% attending educational institution	
	Did not complete year 10(a)	*Completed year 10/11*	*Completed year 12*	*Total(b)*	*Of those who completed year 12*	*Of those who did not complete year 12(a)*
Remoteness Area	%	%	%	%	%	%
Major Cities	5.9	28.5	63.4	100.0	66.2	27.0
Inner Regional	9.4	42.4	46.0	100.0	47.4	26.8
Outer Regional	9.7	45.8	42.0	100.0	37.2	21.9
Remote	13.6	47.1	36.0	100.0	22.8	15.0
Very Remote	35.9	36.1	21.8	100.0	16.0	5.9
Australia(c)(d)	**7.4**	**33.2**	**57.1**	**100.0**	**60.6**	**25.6**

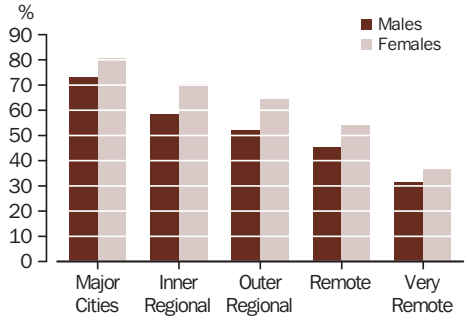
(a) Excludes those who did not state whether or not they were attending an educational institution or did not state the type of educational institution they were attending.
(b) Includes those who stated they did not attend school.
(c) Includes those who stated they had left school but had not stated the highest year of schooling completed.
(d) Includes people in Migratory Australia and those who had no usual address.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

with higher rates of completion among females than males (77% compared with 68%). The proportion who had completed Year 12 declined with increasing remoteness, with a consistent pattern of higher rates of completion among females than males. To some extent, differences by remoteness are influenced by people moving location after leaving school for study or work.

A potentially 'at risk' group are those young people who have left secondary school without completing Year 10. In 2006, 7% of 15–19 year olds who were no longer attending high school had not completed Year 10. This proportion was considerably higher in Remote (14%) and Very Remote areas (36%).

People aged 19 years who had completed Year 12(a) — 2006



(a) Excludes those people who were still attending school.

Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Some young people who did not complete all years of school are participating in education and training at other educational institutions. In 2006, around one-quarter (26%) of young people aged 15–19 years who had left school without completing Year 12 were attending an educational institution. Lower rates of participation were observed in Remote (15%) and Very Remote (6%) areas.

Not surprisingly, the rate of participation in education beyond secondary school was much higher for those young people who had completed Year 12 (61%), than for those who had not (26%). Across Remoteness Areas, there were differences in participation in further education for young people who had completed Year 12. In 2006, almost two-thirds (66%) of 15–19 year olds in Major Cities and almost half of those in Inner Regional areas (47%), were undertaking further study having completed Year 12, compared with 16% in Very Remote areas.

Indigenous people in education

Although there remains a marked difference in Year 12 completion rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, there have been improvements in educational participation and attainment for Indigenous people across Australia in the past decade.

In 2006, just over half (51%) of all Indigenous 15–19 year olds were participating in education, up from 43% in 1996. This increase occurred in Major Cities as well as regional and remote areas. The biggest proportional change occurred in Very Remote areas, increasing from 22% in 1996 to 28% in

2006 (representing a 27% increase). Substantial increases also occurred in Major Cities, Outer Regional and Remote areas.

There was also an increase in participation in education for Indigenous people aged 20–24 years (from 11% in 1996 to 13% in 2006), although this increase was mostly confined to Major Cities and Inner Regional areas.

In 2006, Indigenous young people aged 19 years had lower rates of Year 12 completion than non-Indigenous young people of the same age overall (37% compared with 74%) and across all Remoteness Areas.

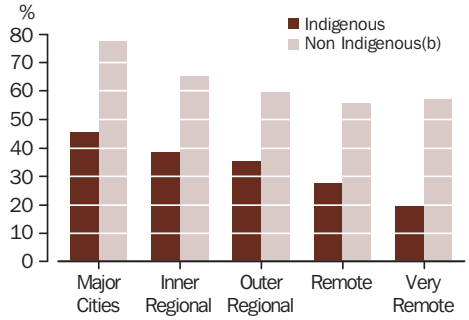
...non-school qualifications

Between 1996 and 2006, increases in educational attainment among Indigenous people corresponded with increased levels of participation in education. In 2006, the proportion of Indigenous people aged 25–64 years with a non-school qualification (29%) had nearly doubled from that in 1996 (15%).

This increase in educational attainment was mostly due to a marked increase in the proportion of Indigenous people whose highest qualification was a Certificate or Advanced Diploma, from 12% in 1996 to 23% in 2006. The proportion of the Indigenous population whose highest qualification was a Bachelor degree or above was relatively small (compared with the non-Indigenous population) but doubled in the ten years to 2006 (from 3% in 1996 to 6% in 2006).

Increases in the proportion of Indigenous people with a non-school qualification occurred across all geographic regions, with the largest rises seen in Major Cities and Inner Regional areas, where there were increases of close to 15 percentage points in both areas between 1996 and 2006.

People aged 19 years who had completed Year 12(a) — 2006



(a) Excludes those who were attending school.
(b) Excludes those who did not state their Indigenous status.

Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Endnotes

1 James, R 2000, *TAFE, University or Work? The early preferences and choices of students in Years 10, 11 and 12*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

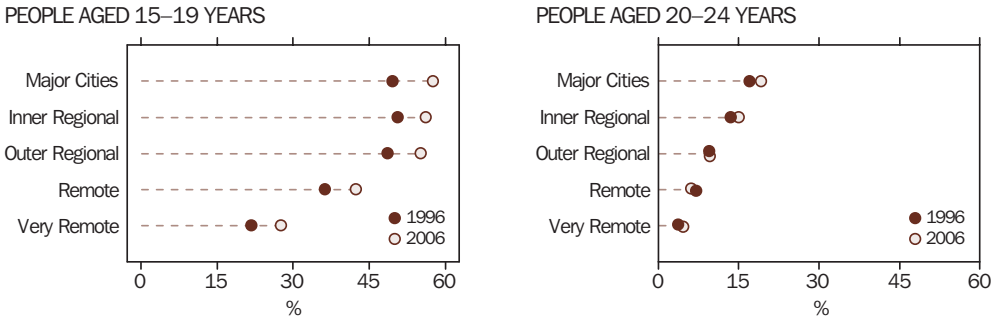
2 Kilpatrick, S Abbot-Chapman, J and Bayes, H 2002, *Youth Participation in Education: a review of trends, targets and influencing factors*, viewed 25 June 2008, <http://www.crlra.utas.edu.au>.

3 The government of South Australia increased the minimum school leaving age from 15 years to 16 years effective from 2003. The Queensland Government increased the minimum school leaving age from 15 to 16 years, or on finishing Year 10 in 2003. The government of Western Australia increased the minimum school leaving age from 15 to 16 years of age in 2006, and from 16 to 17 years of age in 2008, effective from 2006. The government of Victoria increased the minimum school leaving age to 16 years in 2007.

4 Hillman, K and Rothman, S 2007, 'Movement of Non-Metropolitan youth towards the cities', Longitudinal Study of Australian Youth Research Report 50, Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

5 National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM), 1999, *The Cost to Australia of Early School-Leaving*, viewed 25 June 2008, <http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/50.htm>.

Indigenous people attending an educational institution(a) by Remoteness Area



(a) Excludes those people who did not state whether or not they were attending an educational institution or did not indicate the type of educational institution they were attending.

Source: ABS 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

Adult literacy

Just over half of Australians aged 15–74 years had adequate or better prose (54%) and document (53%) literacy skills in 2006.

Good literacy is an essential skill for coping with the many demands of life in contemporary Australian society. Tasks ranging from reading the directions on a bottle of medicine, completing a tax return, or accessing information on the Internet, all require a reasonably high level of English literacy. People who are unable to complete such tasks independently are at a considerable disadvantage.

Like many other developed countries, Australia is facing a shortage of skilled labour. While literacy represents only part of an individual's overall skills and abilities, the growing share of skilled and knowledge-based jobs in the economy has increased the importance of good literacy skills among adults in Australia.

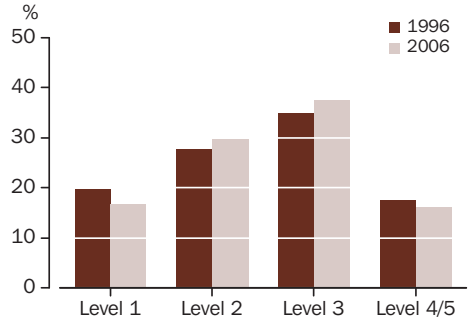
Literacy in Australia

The 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALLS) measured literacy competence in four domains: prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem solving. The results were ranked on a scale from level 1 (lowest) to level 5 (highest). Level 3 was considered the minimum level required to meet the increasingly complex demands of a knowledge society.[1]

Almost half of all Australians aged 15–74 years had literacy skills below level 3 (46% had prose literacy skills below level 3 and 47% had document literacy skills below this level) and more than half (53%) had numeracy skills below level 3.

While three-quarters of people surveyed scored below level 3 in at least one domain, just over one-third (36%) were below level 3 in all four domains. One-quarter of people scored level 3 or above in all four domains.

Prose skill levels



Source: Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results, 2006 (ABS cat. no. 4228.0).

Data sources and definitions

The ABS *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey* (ALLS) was conducted from July 2006 to January 2007 and aimed to measure the literacy skills of Australians aged 15–74 years. Four domains of literacy were measured including prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem solving. Health literacy, using information from all four domains, was also derived.

Prose literacy is the ability to understand and use information from various kinds of narrative texts, including texts from newspapers, magazines and brochures.

Document literacy measures the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats including job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables and charts.

Numeracy is the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and respond to the mathematical demands of diverse situations.

Problem solving is goal-directed thinking and action in situations for which no routine solution is available.

For each domain, proficiency was measured on a scale ranging from 0 to 500 points and has been grouped into 5 skill levels (except for problem solving, where only 4 levels were defined). Level 1 is the lowest measured level of literacy for each domain.

For more information, see *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Australia: User Guide* (ABS cat. no. 4228.0.55.002).

A similar survey, the ABS *Survey of Aspects of Literacy*, was conducted in 1996, enabling comparisons of some aspects of literacy (prose and document literacy) between 1996 and 2006.

There have been some small improvements in literacy in the ten years to 2006. According to the survey, there has been a small but significant decline in the proportion of people with prose and document literacy skills at level 1 (three percentage points and two percentage points respectively) between 1996 and 2006. The fall in those at prose literacy level 1 was partially offset by a two percentage point increase for level 2 and level 3 over the 10 years. There was no significant change in the proportion of the population scoring level 2, 3 or 4/5 for document literacy.[2]

Literacy and skill levels

	Literacy skill level				
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4/5*	*Total*
Skill domains	%	%	%	%	%
2006					
Prose	16.7	29.7	37.4	16.2	100.0
Document	18.0	28.8	35.5	17.7	100.0
Numerical	22.0	30.5	31.3	16.1	100.0
Problem solving	34.9	35.2	24.5	5.4	100.0
1996(a)					
Prose	19.7	27.7	35.0	17.6	100.0
Document	19.6	28.3	35.5	16.5	100.0

(a) Prose and document literacy were the only domains of literacy directly comparable with the 1996 survey.

Source: Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results, 2006 (cat. no. 4228.0).

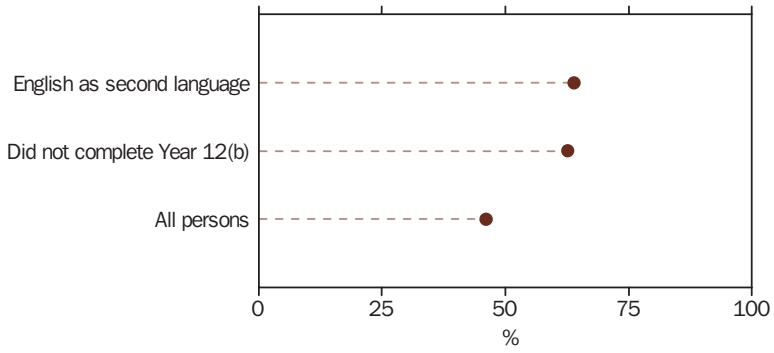
Prose and document literacy were the only domains of literacy directly comparable to the 1996 survey.

Most of the improvements in literacy over the period 1996 to 2006 (particularly the decline in the proportion of people with prose literacy level 1) occurred in the age group 50–74 years.

Who has poor literacy?

A number of factors, including educational attainment, whether English is a person's first or second language, age and labour force activity are related to literacy skills. People who either did not complete schooling to Year 12 (or equivalent) or spoke English as a second language comprised 83% of those with poor prose literacy skills (level 1 and 2).

Proportion of people with poor prose literacy(a) — 2006



(a) Prose literacy skill levels 1 and 2.
(b) Excludes people still at school.

Source: ABS 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

Skill levels for prose and document literacy

Someone with *skill level 1* may have trouble using a bus timetable or completing basic forms. People at this skill level may be able to locate some information on a medicine label, however skill level 1 includes people who could not complete such tasks.

At *skill level 2* a person may be able to complete the tasks mentioned above, but may not be able to interpret a weather map or summarise a piece of text.

At *skill level 3* people may not be able to compare and contrast written information, extract information from a pamphlet or interpret pie charts.

Level 3 is regarded by experts as a suitable minimum for 'coping with the increasing demands of the emerging knowledge society and information economy'.[1]

Skill level 4 and 5 are the highest skill levels. As the numbers of people in these groups are small, they have been combined for the purposes of this article.

...level of school completed

An individual's literacy skills are related to the number of years of schooling completed. In 2006, after excluding those still at school, just over half of Australians aged 15–74 years had not completed school to Year 12 (or equivalent). This group was more than twice as likely to have poor prose literacy skills than were those who had completed Year 12 (63% compared with 29%).

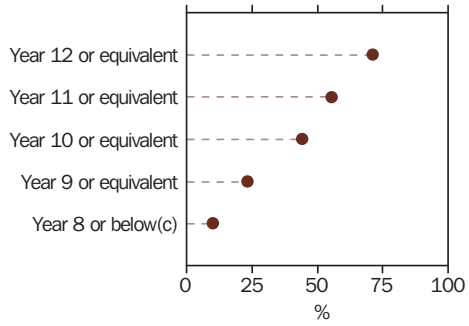
On average, literacy skills increase with each additional year of school completed. For example, 71% of those who had completed school at Year 12 (or equivalent) had adequate or better prose literacy skills compared with 56% of those who only completed Year 11, and 10% of those who finished school at Year 8 or below.

...English as a second language

One factor affecting an individual's English literacy skills is whether their first language was English. Native English speakers are likely to have better English literacy skills than those who first spoke a language other than English. In 2006, one in five Australians aged 15–74 years spoke English as a second language.

Those who first spoke a language other than English were more likely to have poor prose literacy skills (64%) than those whose first language was English (42%).

Highest level of school completed(a): proportion with adequate or better prose literacy(b) — 2006



(a) Excludes people still at school.
(b) Prose literacy skill levels 3, 4 and 5.
(c) Includes those who never attended school.

Source: ABS 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

Literacy and age

The relationship between age and literacy levels is complex. While skills can be acquired, developed and maintained over the life span, they can also be lost.[1]

Declining levels of literacy skills with increasing age may be associated with the onset of certain health conditions. As time passes, people may experience a decline in cognitive abilities due to ageing effects and declining health. Processing speed and memory can be affected by age-related health problems. For people aged 25 years and over, those who report their health as being good or better tend to have higher levels of literacy skills than those reporting fair or poor health.

Fair or poor health may also prevent people from engaging in ongoing education programs which may help them maintain their literacy skills. A higher proportion (47%) of people reporting good or better health, compared with those reporting fair or poor health (29%), had undertaken a course in the past 12 months.

A number of factors are related to age and literacy, including years of schooling completed and attainment of qualifications, labour force activity, and health status. Literacy skills across the life course are not only related to the capacity and opportunity to develop these skills, but also to the need for a particular level of skill according to an individual's job, family, caring or study activities.

In both 1996 and 2006, the proportion of people with an adequate or higher level of prose literacy was highest among those aged 25–44 years and then declined with increasing age.

The literacy of a population or groups within a population may vary over time according to changes in access to education opportunities. In more recent times, there have been improvements in educational attainment, particularly for younger people. In 2006, 70% of those aged 25–34 years had completed year 12, compared with only 18% of 65–74 year olds. This factor contributed to higher levels of literacy skills in younger age groups compared with older age groups.

The literacy skill levels of the group aged 55 years and over rose between 1996 and 2006. In 2006, 45% of people aged 55–64 years had adequate or better levels of prose literacy compared with 35% in 1996.

Participation in continuing education throughout life is associated with good literacy skills. However, it is also likely that those with better literacy skills are more attracted to participation in adult learning. This is supported by the results of the ALLS survey. In 2006, those with adequate or better prose literacy skills were more likely than those with poor literacy skills to undertake a course (57% compared with 30%).

Although the proportion of people undertaking further study tends to decline with age, those who had undertaken a course of study in the past 12 months, whether the course counted towards a qualification or not, had higher levels of prose literacy skills than those who had not undertaken further study.

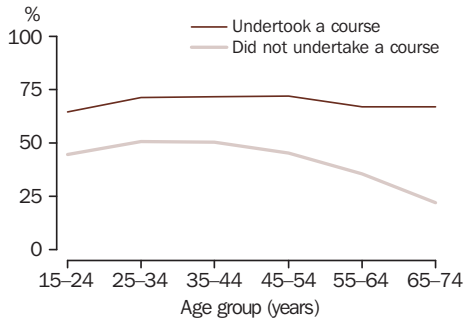
Proportion with adequate or better prose literacy(a) by age group

	1996	*2006*
Age group (years)	%	%
15–24	59.1	55.4
25–34	61.3	61.5
35–44	62.0	60.7
45–54	51.2	56.7
55–64	34.5	44.9
65–74	22.6	27.3
Total	**52.5**	**53.6**

(a) Literacy skill levels 3, 4 and 5.

Source: ABS Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, 2006; ABS Survey of Aspects of Literacy, 1996.

Whether took a course(a) in the past 12 months: with adequate or better prose literacy(b) — 2006



(a) Includes study for qualification and non-qualification courses.
(b) Prose literacy skills 3, 4 and 5.

Source: ABS 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

The level of literacy of those people who had undertaken study in the past year remained relatively high across all broad age groups with 72% of 35–54 year olds and 67% of 55–74 year olds having adequate or better prose literacy skills.

Developing and maintaining literacy skills

In addition to educational attainment, other life experiences, such as labour force participation and participation in formal and informal learning, may contribute to maintaining or enhancing literacy skills.

...non-school qualifications

Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with higher levels of literacy skills. In 2006, 55% of the adult population aged 15–74 years had a non-school qualification. The vast majority (85%) of people with a Postgraduate degree had adequate or better prose literacy skills compared with 79% of those whose highest qualification was a Bachelor degree, and 49% whose highest qualification was a Certificate.

...adult learning

In 2006, 44% of people aged 15–74 years who were not at school had undertaken a course in the previous 12 months. Around seven in ten people who had undertaken a course in the past 12 months had adequate or better prose literacy skills. In contrast, around four in ten of those who had not undertaken a course had adequate or better literacy skills. Those who undertook a course in the past 12 months had higher literacy skills than those who had not, regardless of the educational attainment of individuals in either group.

Other than undertaking courses, there are a variety of other ways in which people learn. Informal learning activities include reading; watching TV; using the Internet in order to learn; attending seminars; visiting museums; and learning by watching and getting advice from others. In 2006, 87% of people aged 15–74 years had participated in some kind of informal learning activity.

Many of the 13% of the population who did not participate in any informal learning activities had fair or poor health or spoke English as a second language.

International comparison

In 2006, the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey was conducted as part of an international survey in seven Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries for people aged 16–64 years.

Australia had similar literacy levels to Canada, and scored higher across each of the top three prose literacy levels than Italy and the United States. Compared with Australia, Norway had a lower proportion of the population scoring level 1 for prose literacy, and a higher proportion scoring level 4 or 5.

Different levels of non-response to the survey in different countries may affect the capacity to make comparisons. For example, response rates in different countries ranged from 82% in Bermuda and 81% in Australia, to 40% in Switzerland and 44% in Italy.[2]

Prose skill level: selected countries and Australia — 2006

	Prose literacy level			
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4/5*
Country	%	%	%	%
Australia	14.5	29.0	38.8	17.7
Bermuda	12.5	25.6	35.6	26.3
Canada	14.6	27.3	38.6	19.5
Italy	47.0	32.5	17.0	3.5
Norway	7.9	26.2	45.3	20.6
Switzerland	15.9	36.3	35.7	12.1
United States	20.0	32.6	34.6	12.8

Source: *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results* (ABS cat. no. 4228.0), datacubes, table 5.

Proportion of people with adequate or better prose literacy(a) by selected occupations — 2006

(a) Skill levels 3, 4 and 5 are considered to represent adequate or better prose literacy.
(b) Includes other occupations.

Source: ABS 2006 Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

...work

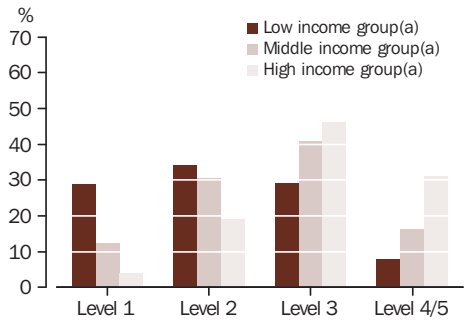
Changes in the structure of the economy are driving changes in the composition of the labour force. In the decade to 2006 the proportion of those employed who were managers and administrators, or professionals or associate professionals, rose from 35% to 40%, and the proportion working as tradespeople, labourers and related workers fell from 24% to 21%.[3] This reflects a shift towards a knowledge-based economy and an increasing demand for literacy skills.

Poor literacy skills may restrict the types of employment a person can do, or affect whether they are able to find employment. The type of literacy and life skill competencies required of a person at work also influence literacy skills.

In general, those who are working have higher levels of literacy skills than those not working. Six in ten people who were employed in 2006 had adequate or better prose literacy skills compared with around four in ten of those who were not working.

Of all occupation groups, Professionals had the highest proportion of people with adequate or better prose literacy skills (82%), followed by managers (70%). These proportions were similar to 1996.

Prose literacy levels: income groups — 2006



(a) The low income group consists of people in the 2nd and 3rd income deciles, when all people are ranked, from lowest to highest income; the middle income group consists of people in the 5th and 6th deciles and the high income group consists of those in the 9th and 10th income deciles.

Source: ABS 2006 Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

Income

While literacy represents only part of a person's overall skills and abilities, those with higher levels of literacy tended to have higher income. In 2006, 77% of people with high income had adequate or better prose literacy skills, compared with 57% of those in the middle income group and 37% of those with low income.

Conclusion

Literacy skills in the population are strongly linked to educational attainment and labour force participation. Other factors such as type of occupation, whether English was a second language, age, health and participation in formal and informal learning also affect literacy skill levels.

There are a range of organisations and activities in Australia that support and promote adult learning and literacy. Organisations such as the Australian Council for Adult Literacy provide leadership in debate on adult literacy and numeracy policy and practices, while activities such as Adult Learner's week, held annually around Australia, aim to promote adult learning and highlight the range of learning options available.

Endnotes

1 Statistics Canada and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2005, *Learning a Living: First Results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*, OECD, Paris.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results, Australia*, ABS cat. no. 4228.0, ABS, Canberra.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2008*, ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003, viewed 21 April, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6291.0.55.003>.

Adult learning

In 2006–07, four out of five Australian adults engaged in some form of learning.

Fostering 'lifelong learning' has become increasingly important as Australia's population ages. Governments and workplaces alike have identified a need to boost labour force participation in order to increase economic growth. Learning is one way of increasing people's capacity to work by providing the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to successfully enter, remain in, or return to work. Differences in skill sets tend to be reflected in access to job opportunities and in people's pay.

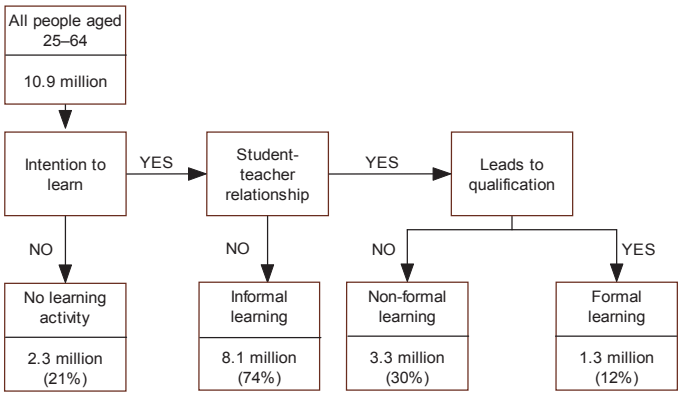
Access to learning contributes to a socially inclusive Australia. Informal learning (which may include using a library or accessing reference material on the Internet) is particularly important to support disadvantaged adults who may face barriers in accessing more structured learning opportunities.[1] People may choose to learn out of interest in a particular subject or to help achieve a goal such as finding a job or being promoted.

Types of learning

Almost three-quarters (74%) of 25–64 year olds did some type of informal learning in the 12 months prior to interview in 2006–07. This was a much higher rate than participation in non-formal learning (30%) or formal learning (12%). One in five adults did not participate in any of these forms of learning.

All three types of learning are increasingly facilitated by information technology. Almost half (48%) of the 25–64 year olds who had accessed the Internet at home in the 12 months prior to 2006–07 had done so for educational or study purposes, up nine percentage points from 2004–05. Using computers or the Internet was the second most common type of informal learning (after reading reference material), with 5.8 million 25–64 year olds using this method to learn. (See also *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Internet access at home, pp. 201–206.)

Classification of learning(a) — 2006–07



(a) Categories are not mutually exclusive so components do not add to totals.

Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

Data sources and definitions

This article uses data from the topic on adult learning included in the 2006–07 Multi-Purpose Household Survey. It also draws on data from the 2005 Survey of Education and Training. The article focuses on people aged 25–64 years. Unless otherwise stated, the data relate to the 12 months prior to interview in 2006–07.

Adult learning includes formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Formal learning is structured, taught learning in institutions and organisations (including workplaces) which leads to a recognised qualification.

Non-formal learning also refers to structured, taught learning. It differs from formal learning in that it does not lead to a recognised qualification. Examples include work-related courses and private lessons.

Informal learning refers to unstructured, non-institutionalised learning activities that are related to work, family, community or leisure, such as using the Internet.

Larger households need more income to finance the same standard of living as smaller households but there are economic advantages for larger households since household resources, especially housing, can be shared. *Equivalising* adjusts actual income to take account of the different needs of households of different size and composition, resulting in *equivalised household income.*

Who is most likely to participate in learning?

...young men and women

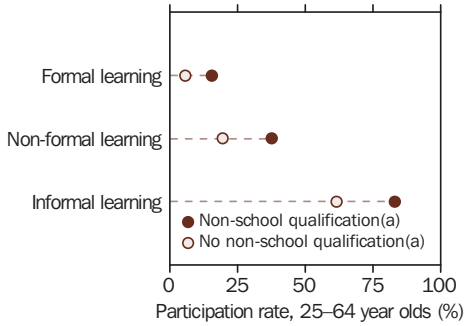
Younger people were more likely to participate in formal learning, with those aged 25–29 years reporting the highest formal learning participation rate (25%). There was a noticeable decline after age 29, with a participation rate of 16% for 30–34 year olds. Not surprisingly, people aged 60–64 years (the oldest group surveyed) had the lowest rate of participation in formal learning (3%).

Participation in learning by age groups — 2006–07

	Participation in the 12 months prior to the survey			
	Participated in formal learning	*Participated in non-formal learning*	*Participated in informal learning*	*Did not participate in learning*
Age group (years)	%	%	%	%
25–29	24.9	30.9	77.3	16.3
30–34	15.7	33.5	75.2	18.0
35–39	13.1	33.2	76.1	18.3
40–44	9.9	32.0	74.3	20.8
45–49	11.3	32.2	77.6	18.7
50–54	8.8	32.1	74.6	21.7
55–59	4.5	26.9	72.1	24.2
60–64	2.6	18.7	64.2	34.0

Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

Participation in learning by education, 12 months prior to survey in 2006–07



(a) Non-school qualifications include, for example, a degree, diploma or certificate. People whose level of highest non-school qualification could not be determined have been excluded from the calculations.

Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

There was much less variation across age groups in non-formal learning, however participation did decline for people aged 55–64 years. Older people were much more likely to continue to participate in informal learning than in other forms of learning, with the rates of participation only slightly lower than younger people. The exception was people aged 60–64, who had noticeably lower participation rates in informal learning compared with other age groups.

Women were slightly more likely to participate in formal learning (12% of women compared with 11% of men). While participation in formal learning generally declined with age, the exception was people aged 45–49 years, who had a higher participation rate than those aged 40–44. The participation rate for women aged 45–49 years (13%) was noticeably higher than for men of this age (9%), in contrast to the other age groups where there was little difference between the participation rates of the two sexes. This increase for the 45–49 age group may reflect women preparing to return to the workforce, or to increase their responsibilities at work, after absences due to family commitments.

A higher proportion of men (32%) than women (29%) participated in non-formal learning. Men were more likely to participate in non-formal learning in all age groups except in the 55–64 year age group. Men were also slightly more likely than women to participate in informal learning (76% compared with 73%).

...those who already have educational qualifications

People aged 25–64 with higher education qualifications are likely to participate in all forms of learning, particularly formal and non-formal learning. Over half (55%) of those who had a Bachelor degree or higher had participated in formal or non-formal learning in the 12 months prior to survey in 2006–07, compared with 42% of those who had an Advanced diploma or below, and 24% of those without a non-school qualification.

The differences were less marked, but still apparent, for informal learning – 89% of people with a Bachelor degree or higher had done some informal learning, compared with 79% of those who had an Advanced diploma or below and 62% of those who did not have a non-school qualification.

...people with high incomes

People aged 25–64 with high incomes were more likely than those on lower incomes to participate in non-formal and informal learning. Almost half (46%) of the people in the highest quintile of equivalised weekly household income participated in non-formal learning in the 12 months prior to interview in 2006–07, compared with 15% of those in the lowest quintile. About 84% of people in the highest quintile participated in informal learning compared with 60% of those in the lowest quintile.

There was no significant difference in participation in formal learning between people in the highest income quintile and those in the lowest, although the reasons for recent participation varied. People in the highest income quintile most commonly participated in formal learning to try to get a better job, while for those in the lowest quintile the most common reason for participation was to try to find a job.

...people born in Australia

The rate of participation in formal learning was the same (12%) for people born in Australia and those born overseas. People born in Australia had higher participation rates in non-formal learning (32% for Australian born and 27% for overseas born) and similar rates of participation in informal learning (75% and 72% respectively).

Labour force status

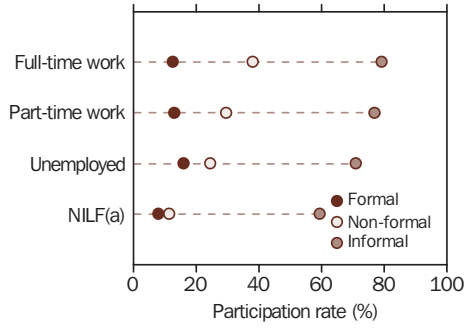
People who were already employed were more likely than unemployed people or those not in the labour force to have participated in some type of learning. Participation rates were similar for full-time and part-time workers (84% and 82% respectively) while people not in the labour force were the least likely to participate in learning (62%). Participation in non-formal learning was particularly low (11%) for people who were not in the labour force, who would not have had the opportunity to participate in the types of non-formal training courses offered in the workplace.

About three-quarters (76%) of unemployed people participated in some form of learning. Interestingly, unemployed people and employed people had similar levels of participation in formal learning (16% and 13% respectively). Half (50%) of the unemployed people who had participated in formal learning in the previous 12 months had done so in order to get a job.

Not surprisingly, participation in formal learning for employed people generally declined with age, with 23% of 25–29 year olds participating (the youngest group surveyed) compared with 4% of 60–64 year olds (the oldest group surveyed). However, for other types of learning there was much less difference in participation between the youngest age groups and the oldest, suggesting that non-formal and informal learning are particularly important in fostering lifelong learning among employed people, potentially helping to maintain the skills and employability of older workers. Participation in non-formal learning by employed people varied from 34% to 39% for all the age groups from 25 to 59 years, falling to 27% for 60–64 year olds. Participation in informal learning by employed people was close to 80% for all age groups in the 25–59 year range, falling to 73% for 60–64 year olds.

Of the 3.3 million employed people who participated in formal or non-formal learning in the 12 months prior to survey in

Participation in learning by labour force status, people aged 25–64



(a) Not in the labour force.

Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

International comparisons

A survey on lifelong learning was conducted in a number of European countries in 2003. The 2006–07 Australian survey is similar to the European survey.

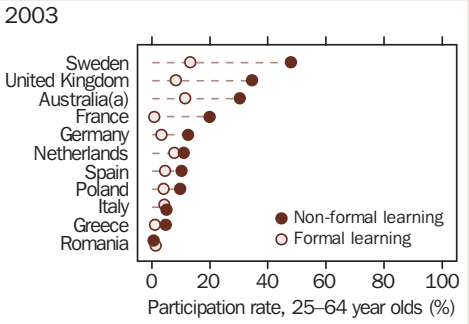
Participation rates for adult learning in Australia are relatively high compared with selected European countries, although Australia's participation rates are not as high as those in Sweden.

Sweden had the highest reported participation rate for formal learning (13% in 2003). The participation rate for the United Kingdom was 8%. Australia's participation rate for formal learning was 12% in 2006–07.

Almost half (48%) of Sweden's population had participated in non-formal learning in 2003. The next highest participation rate was for the United Kingdom (35%). Australia's participation rate was 30% in 2006–07.

Different levels of non-response to the survey in different countries may affect the capacity to make comparisons.

Participation in learning, selected European countries and Australia



(a) 2006–07 for Australia.

Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

2006–07, and whose occupation was known, 31% were professionals, 16% were clerical and administrative workers and 15% were managers, partly reflecting the occupations in which people are concentrated. Professionals was the most common occupation for employed people in 2006–07 (accounting for 20% of employed people), followed by clerical and administrative workers (16%) and technicians and tradesworkers (15%). Managers was the fourth most common occupation for employed people (13%).

The most common industries for these participants to be employed in were health care and social assistance (16%), education and training (12%) and public administration and safety (10%).

Why do people participate in learning?

Technological innovation and changes in consumer demand, as well as new work practices, have led to changes over the last 20 years in the types of jobs that are available (a shift from goods-producing industries to service industries is one example) and in the skills required by workers. Work-related reasons were the most common reasons for people to undertake either formal or non-formal learning.

The main reasons that people aged 25–44 years gave for most recently taking part in formal learning were to get a better job or promotion (32%), to get extra skills for their job (19%) or to get a job (14%). Work also played a big part in reasons for participating for people aged 45–64 years, but this group was more focused on increasing their skills than on gaining promotion. Over one-quarter (26%) of 45–64 year olds said the main reason they had most recently undertaken formal learning was to get extra skills for their job, followed by the training being a requirement of the job (17%) and getting a better job/promotion (17%).

There was little variation between the two age groups in the main reasons they had recently participated in non-formal learning. The fact that it was a requirement of the job was the most common reason for both age groups (38% for those aged 25–44 years and 34% for those aged 45–64 years), followed by gaining extra skills for the job (25% for each age group).

While work-related reasons were by far the most common for both formal and non-formal learning, personal reasons played more of a role in the decision to take part in non-formal learning. For both age groups, personal interest and personal development were ranked in the top five reasons for participation in non-formal learning. The fact that gaining a better job or promotion was the most common main reason for formal education but not the other types of learning suggests that formal qualifications were seen as important for promotion.

The Survey of Education and Training provides some information on the outcomes of work-related training. In 2005, 48% of employees[2] who had completed work-related training courses at some time in the past while they were not working, said that this training had helped them to get a job. Adult employees[2] reported that the skills they acquired through almost 90% of the work related training courses completed in the year prior to the survey were transferable to jobs other than the one they were in at the time of training and that 7% of the courses had helped them get a pay rise or promotion.

What do people study?

Consistent with the prominence of work-related reasons for undertaking learning, management and commerce was the

Main reason for participating in most recent formal learning, 2006–07

Main reason for participating in most recent non-formal learning, 2006–07

Source: ABS 2006–07 Adult Learning Survey.

most popular field of study for those who participated in either formal or non-formal learning in the 12 months prior to interview in 2006–07. Over one in four (29%) adults who had participated in formal learning studied management and commerce, followed by society and culture (22%) and health (12%). Similarly, the main fields of the most recent non-formal learning were management and commerce (26%) and health (24%).

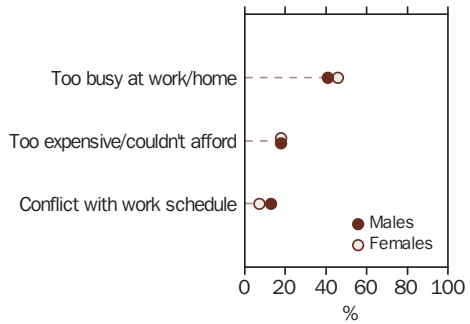
Obstacles to learning

While all informal learning is based on the person having an intention to learn, it covers a wide range of activities including reading; using computers or the Internet; watching television; visiting libraries; and learning from family, friends and colleagues. This means that informal learning can have advantages in that it offers learning opportunities that are flexible, convenient and suit people's lifestyles. Many of the activities done as part of informal learning are also either free or relatively cheap. Non-formal and formal learning, on the other hand, may present obstacles in terms of time spent, the timing and location of classes and cost.

Almost one in five people who participated in formal or non-formal learning in the 12 months prior to survey in 2006–07 experienced difficulties undertaking training. More women (22%) than men (17%) had difficulties. Of those who participated but experienced difficulties, the most common main difficulty for men was that they were too busy at work (44%), while the most common difficulty for women was that they were too busy at home (29%). Other difficulties included the cost and timing of courses. There were one million Australians who wanted to participate in formal or non-formal learning but did not. Their reasons for not participating were similar to the difficulties cited by those who did participate.

The cost and time required to study may be a factor in the choice to study part-time. Almost three-quarters (74%) of the one million adults who were studying for a non-school qualification in 2005 were doing so part-time.

People aged 25–64 who wanted to do formal/non-formal learning: main reason did not participate, 2006–07



Source: Adult Learning, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 4229.0).

Are we participating in learning more than we used to?

The proportion of people aged 25–64 years who were enrolled to study for a non-school qualification increased from 8% in 1997 to 10% in 2005.

The proportion of 25–64 year olds who were in, or marginally attached to[3], the labour force and who participated in work-related training also rose, up from 35% in 1997 to 40% in 2005.

Conclusion

Learning is a key aspect of social and economic development. There are some differences in the characteristics of people who participate in learning, such as higher income and higher initial qualifications, compared with those who do not. Older people are much more likely to participate in non-formal and informal learning than formal learning. With an ageing workforce, non-formal and informal types of learning assume greater significance in maintaining the skills and employability of older workers.

Endnotes

1 Kearns, P 2005, *Achieving Australia as an inclusive learning society: a report on future directions for lifelong learning in Australia,* viewed 25 March 2008, <http://www.ala.asn.au/members/Kearns_Report_Achieving%20Australia%202005.pdf>.

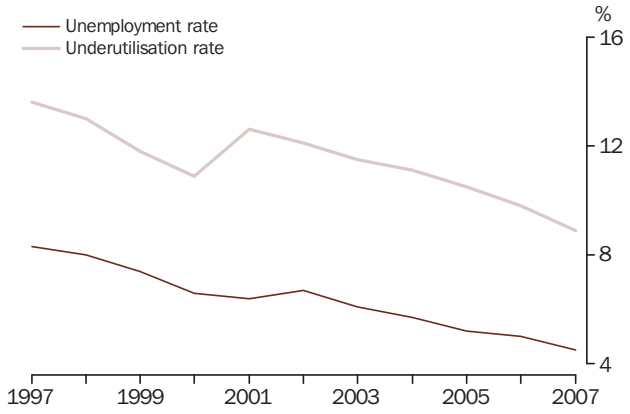
2 Excluding owner managers of incorporated enterprises. These are people who work in their own incorporated enterprise, that is, a business entity to its members or owners (a limited liability company). They are technically employees although they are more similar in characteristics to self-employed people.

3 People who are marginally attached to the labour force are those who were not in the labour force in the reference week of the survey, wanted to work and were either actively looking for work but did not meet the availability criteria to be classified as unemployed, or were not actively looking for work but were available to start looking for work within four weeks or could start within four weeks if child care was available.

Work

Work: national summary — key points

Unemployment(a) and labour force underutilisation rates(b)

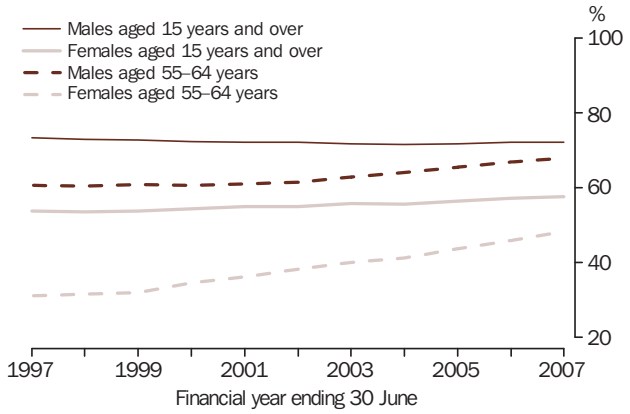


- The unemployment rate has followed a downward trend over the past decade, reaching a low of 4.5% in 2006–07.
- The labour force underutilisation rate has generally tracked the unemployment rate since the mid 1990s, trending downward over the period to reach 8.9% in 2006–07.

(a) Annual averages for the financial year ending 30 June.
(b) At September.

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey, and *Underemployed Workers, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6265.0).
For further information see *Work: national summary*, page 113, indicators 39 and 48.

Labour force participation rate(a)



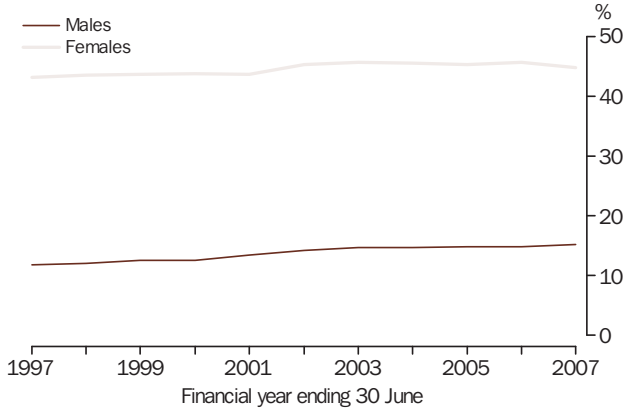
- While the labour force participation rate for women increased over the past decade, from 54% in 1996–97 to 58% in 2006–07, the labour force participation rate for men decreased slightly from 73% in 1996–97 to 72% in 2006–07.
- There have been increases in the labour force participation rates for both older men and women aged 55–64 years between 1996–97 and 2006–07, from 31% to 48% for women and from 61% to 68% for men.

(a) Annual averages.

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey.

For further information see *Work: national summary*, pages 112–113, indicators 4–5 and 52–53.

Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment(a)



- There have been increases in the proportion of both employed men and women working part-time over the past decade.
- The proportion of employed men working part-time increased from 12% in 1996–97 to 15% in 2006–07, while for women the proportion increased from 43% to 45%.
- Most of the part-time workers over this period were women (71% in 2006–07).

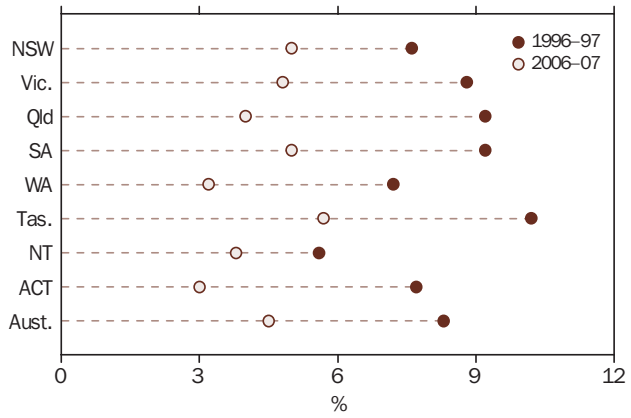
(a) Annual averages.

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey.

For further information see *Work: national summary*, page 112, indicators 14–16.

Work: state summary — key points

Unemployment rates by states and territories(a)



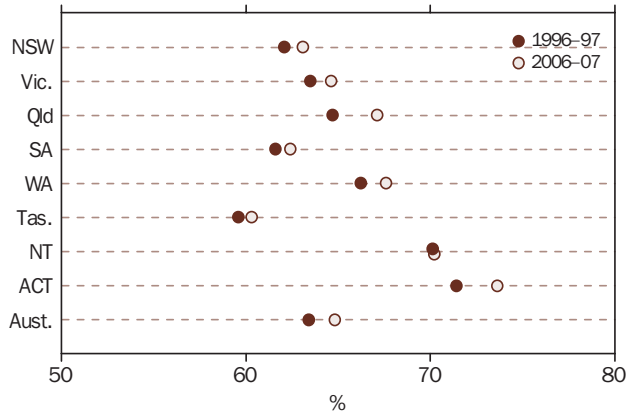
- Unemployment rates were lower in 2006–07 than in 1996–97 across all states and territories.
- In 2006–07, the annual average unemployment rate in Australia was 4.5%.
- In 2006–07, Tasmania had the highest unemployment rate (5.7%), while the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest (3.0%).

(a) Annual averages for the financial year ending 30 June.

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey.

For further information see *Australian Social Trends: Work*, data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 39 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

Labour force participation rates by states and territories(a)



- Labour force participation rates have remained fairly stable over the past decade, increasing only slightly in most states and territories since 1996–97.
- In 2006–07, the annual average labour force participation rate in Australia was 65%.
- In 2006–07, the Australian Capital Territory had the highest labour force participation rate (74%) among all the states and territories, while Tasmania had the lowest (60%).
- Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory had the largest increases over the past decade, of around two percentage points each.

(a) Annual averages for the financial year ending 30 June.

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey.

For further information see *Australian Social Trends: Work*, data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 3 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

Work: national summary

LABOUR FORCE	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1 Total labour force	'000	9 169	9 256	9 379	9 495	9 674	9 819	10 004	10 129	10 367	10 591	10 824
2 Females – of total labour force	%	43.1	43.2	43.3	43.8	44.2	44.2	44.6	44.6	44.8	45.0	45.1
3 Participation rate	%	63.4	63.1	63.1	63.1	63.4	63.3	63.6	63.4	63.9	64.4	64.8
4 Males	%	73.4	72.9	72.7	72.3	72.1	72.0	71.6	71.4	71.7	72.0	72.2
5 Females	%	53.8	53.6	53.8	54.3	54.9	55.0	55.8	55.5	56.3	57.1	57.6
6 Females with children aged 0–4(a)	%	47.8	48.2	47.1	49.1	49.7	49.2	49.8	47.5	51.3	52.4	51.3
7 Persons aged 15–19	%	58.9	57.6	58.2	59.1	59.7	59.4	59.2	59.9	60.0	59.8	59.6
8 Persons aged 20–24	%	82.5	81.9	82.1	82.1	82.2	81.7	81.4	80.9	81.0	81.5	81.9
9 Median age of male labour force	years	37	37	38	38	38	38	39	38	39	39	39
10 Median age of female labour force	years	36	36	36	37	37	37	38	38	38	38	39

EMPLOYED PEOPLE	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
11 Total employed	'000	8 404	8 519	8 689	8 869	9 056	9 161	9 389	9 556	9 826	10 064	10 335
12 Proportion of the population in employment	%	58.1	58.1	58.4	59.0	59.3	59.1	59.7	59.8	60.6	61.2	61.9
Part-time work												
13 Persons employed part-time – of total employed	%	25.3	25.7	26.1	26.3	26.8	28.0	28.6	28.4	28.4	28.6	28.5
14 Males employed part-time – of total males employed	%	11.8	12.1	12.6	12.6	13.4	14.2	14.7	14.7	14.8	14.8	15.2
15 Females employed part-time – of total females employed	%	43.1	43.5	43.6	43.8	43.6	45.2	45.7	45.5	45.2	45.6	44.8
16 Females employed part-time – of total part-time employed	%	73.6	73.3	72.7	73.2	72.2	71.7	71.5	71.3	71.2	71.6	70.7
17 Average hours worked per week by persons employed part-time	hours	15.4	15.4	15.4	15.6	15.6	15.8	16.0	15.9	16.2	16.2	16.1
18 Persons employed part-time who prefer more hours – of all part-time employed	%	26.5	26.1	25.8	23.9	23.8	27.0	26.2	26.2	25.9	24.7	24.1
Full-time work												
19 Average hours worked per week by persons employed full-time	hours	41.0	41.1	41.1	41.4	40.6	40.7	41.0	40.3	40.6	40.0	39.4
20 Persons employed full-time working 50 hours or more per week – of all full-time employed	%	24.4	24.9	24.9	25.6	24.0	24.2	24.4	23.1	23.8	22.5	21.6
Employment arrangements												
21 Employees without leave entitlements – of all employees(b)	%	r24.2	r24.9	r24.9	r25.2	r25.1	r25.1	r25.5	r25.7	r24.5	r24.5	24.8
22 Males employed without leave entitlements – of all male employees(b)	%	r18.5	r19.7	r19.7	r19.9	r20.6	r20.3	r20.8	r21.7	r19.8	r20.6	21.1
23 Females employed without leave entitlements – of all female employees(b)	%	r30.9	r30.9	r30.8	r31.1	r30.1	r30.4	r30.6	r30.0	r29.6	r28.7	28.8
24 Owner managers	%	20.4	19.7	19.9	19.8	20.4	20.3	19.7	20.0	19.9	19.2	18.7
Industry												
25 Employed in service industries – of total employed	%	72.6	72.9	73.6	73.2	73.8	74.1	74.7	74.9	74.8	75.0	75.0
26 Employed in manufacturing industries – of total employed	%	13.5	13.2	12.5	12.4	12.4	11.8	11.9	11.2	11.1	10.6	10.3
Occupation(c)												
27 Employed in highest skill occupations – of total employed	%	24.5	25.0	25.2	25.2	25.7	26.5	25.9	26.4	27.0	27.8	27.6
28 Employed in lowest skill occupations – of total employed	%	20.4	20.4	20.3	19.7	19.5	19.0	19.4	19.3	19.0	18.4	17.9
29 Females – of all employed in highest skill occupations	%	41.4	41.2	40.9	42.1	42.8	42.5	43.3	44.0	44.6	44.4	44.8
30 Females – of all employed in lowest skill occupations	%	51.4	51.1	52.0	52.0	51.9	51.9	51.4	50.6	51.1	51.6	51.1

Work: national summary continued

WORKPLACE RELATIONS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
31 Trade union members – of all employees	%	30.3	28.1	25.7	24.7	24.5	23.1	23.0	22.7	22.4	20.3	18.9
32 Working days lost due to industrial disputes (per 1,000 employees)	days	90.0	82.1	55.8	105.3	45.1	41.9	30.2	66.9	28.8	21.6	9.9
33 Pay set by award only – of all employees	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	23.2	n.a.	20.5	n.a.	20.0	n.a.	19.0	n.a.
34 Pay set by collective agreements – of all employees	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	36.8	n.a.	38.2	n.a.	40.9	n.a.	41.2	n.a.
35 Pay set by individual arrangements – of all employees	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40.0	n.a.	41.3	n.a.	39.1	n.a.	39.9	n.a.

UNEMPLOYMENT	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
36 Total unemployed	'000	764.9	737.8	689.6	626.3	618.1	657.4	614.4	572.7	540.5	527.1	489.0
37 Long-term unemployed – of total unemployed(d)	%	n.a.	29.4	29.8	26.9	23.4	22.3	21.9	21.0	19.5	18.3	16.9
38 Long-term unemployed – of total labour force(d)	%	n.a.	2.3	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.8
39 Unemployment rate	%	8.3	8.0	7.4	6.6	6.4	6.7	6.1	5.7	5.2	5.0	4.5
40 Males	%	8.6	8.2	7.6	6.7	6.7	6.9	6.2	5.5	5.1	4.9	4.3
41 Females	%	8.0	7.6	7.0	6.4	6.0	6.4	6.1	5.8	5.4	5.1	4.8
42 Capital cities	%	8.2	7.4	6.8	6.0	5.9	6.3	5.8	5.4	4.9	4.6	4.4
43 Balance of states and territories(e)	%	9.4	9.1	8.3	7.6	7.2	7.4	6.8	6.0	5.7	5.6	4.8
44 Unemployment rate of persons aged 15–24 years not in full-time education	%	15.2	14.8	13.3	11.3	11.6	12.2	11.2	10.4	9.9	9.0	8.4
45 Median duration of unemployment – males(d)	weeks	26	26	26	24	18	20	19	16	14	14	11
46 Median duration of unemployment – females(d)	weeks	21	22	19	15	16	14	14	13	11	12	11
47 Retrenchment rate(f)	%	n.a.	4.4	n.a.	4.0	n.a.	3.9	n.a.	2.7	n.a.	2.2	n.a.

LABOUR FORCE UNDERUTILISATION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
48 Labour force underutilisation rate	%	13.6	13.0	11.8	10.9	12.6	12.1	11.5	11.1	10.5	9.8	8.9
49 Extended labour force underutilisation rate	%	15.0	14.3	13.2	12.2	13.7	13.1	12.5	12.2	11.4	10.6	9.9

NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE(f)	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
50 Marginally attached	'000	890.5	922.6	883.2	823.9	816.5	808.1	834.6	855.3	831.1	743.9	802.8
51 Discouraged jobseekers	'000	118.4	110.9	105.8	106.5	81.7	78.0	79.8	82.0	59.3	52.9	58.6

TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Persons aged 55–64 years												
52 Participation rate – males	%	60.5	60.4	60.8	60.7	61.0	61.4	62.8	64.0	65.4	66.9	67.9
53 Participation rate – females	%	31.1	31.6	32.0	34.5	36.1	38.3	40.0	41.2	43.7	45.9	48.4
54 Males employed part-time – of all employed males aged 55–64	%	13.8	14.8	14.9	13.9	15.8	16.3	17.0	15.8	16.1	15.9	16.9
55 Females employed part-time – of all employed females aged 55–64	%	51.2	49.7	51.0	51.3	51.3	52.3	50.9	50.1	50.0	50.1	48.0

(a) From 2001, data include females in both opposite-sex and same-sex couple families, and lone parents with children aged 0–4 years.

(b) Excludes owner managers of incorporated enterprises.

(c) Highest skill occupations refer to those occupations classified as skill level 1 by *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, second edition* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0). Lowest skill occupations refer to those occupations classified as skill level 5 by *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, second edition* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0). For more information, see "Occupation" in work definitions, page 117.

(d) Prior to April 2001, data refers to duration of unemployment since last full-time job. From April 2001 data refers to duration of unemployment since last full-time or part-time job.

(e) Includes Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.

(f) Data include persons aged 15–69 years.

Reference periods: All data are annual averages for the year ending 30 June except:
Data for indicators 6, 9, 10 and 45–46 are at June.
Data for indicators 21–24 and 31 are at August.
Data for indicators 33–35 are at May.
Data for indicators 47 are at February.
Data for indicators 48–51 are at September.

Work: state summary

LABOUR FORCE	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
1 Total labour force	'000	2006–07	3 493	2 687	2 187	796	1 122	238	107	194	10 824
2 Females – of total labour force	%	2006–07	44.8	45.2	45.4	45.5	44.1	45.6	44.7	48.1	45.1
3 Participation rate	%	2006–07	63.1	64.6	67.1	62.4	67.6	60.3	70.2	73.6	64.8
4 Males	%	2006–07	70.8	72.4	73.9	69.1	75.6	67.2	74.5	78.4	72.2
5 Females	%	2006–07	55.6	57.1	60.5	55.9	59.5	53.8	65.6	69.0	57.6
6 Females with children aged 0–4(a)	%	2007	51.6	49.7	53.3	48.3	48.6	50.2	68.1	65.0	51.3
7 Persons aged 15–19	%	2006–07	54.0	56.8	68.4	60.1	66.1	59.1	49.4	66.6	59.6
8 Persons aged 20–24	%	2006–07	81.1	80.9	83.6	82.6	83.1	83.3	73.6	86.5	81.9
9 Median age of male labour force	years	2007	39	39	39	40	39	40	38	38	39
10 Median age of female labour force	years	2007	39	38	38	40	39	40	38	37	39
EMPLOYED PEOPLE	*Units*	*Years*	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Aust.*
11 Total employed	'000	2006–07	3 319	2 558	2 099	756	1 086	224	103	188	10 335
12 Proportion of the population in employment	%	2006–07	60.0	61.5	64.5	59.3	65.4	56.9	67.6	71.4	61.9
Part-time work											
13 Persons employed part-time – of total employed	%	2006–07	28.0	29.3	27.3	31.3	28.9	31.4	20.1	24.6	28.5
14 Males employed part-time – of total males employed	%	2006–07	15.6	15.7	14.1	16.2	13.8	16.4	13.9	14.8	15.2
15 Females employed part-time – of total females employed	%	2006–07	43.5	45.9	43.3	49.4	48.2	49.1	27.6	35.1	44.8
16 Females employed part-time – of total part-time employed	%	2006–07	69.2	70.5	71.7	71.9	73.2	71.7	61.8	68.8	70.7
17 Average hours worked per week by persons employed part-time	hours	2006–07	16.1	15.6	16.6	16.1	16.0	16.0	18.0	15.9	16.1
18 Persons employed part-time who prefer more hours – of all part-time employed	%	2006–07	25.6	24.5	24.4	25.1	18.5	24.7	15.8	19.6	24.1
Full-time work											
19 Average hours worked per week by persons employed full-time	hours	2006–07	39.2	39.1	39.9	39.0	40.1	38.2	40.1	37.7	39.4
20 Persons employed full-time working 50 hours or more per week – of all full-time employed	%	2006–07	21.1	20.6	23.3	20.3	23.8	19.0	24.0	17.5	21.6
Employment arrangements											
21 Employees without leave entitlements – of all employees(b)	%	2007	24.3	23.5	26.9	28.2	23.1	26.9	19.4	21.9	24.8
22 Males employed without leave entitlements – of all male employees(b)	%	2007	20.7	19.9	22.7	24.8	19.2	22.7	18.3	21.6	21.1
23 Females employed without leave entitlements – of all female employees(b)	%	2007	28.3	27.5	31.6	31.7	27.5	31.6	20.7	22.2	28.8
24 Owner managers	%	2007	18.7	18.3	20.2	17.8	19.2	17.1	15.2	11.5	18.7
Industry											
25 Employed in service industries – of total employed	%	2006–07	77.1	74.1	73.9	72.9	70.9	73.9	83.1	89.2	75.0
26 Employed in manufacturing industries – of total employed	%	2006–07	9.7	12.8	9.2	12.5	9.2	9.8	3.6	2.8	10.3
Occupation(c)											
27 Employed in highest skill occupations – of total employed	%	2006–07	29.1	29.1	23.8	26.7	25.7	24.9	26.9	39.0	27.6
28 Employed in lowest skill occupations – of total employed	%	2006–07	17.2	17.7	19.1	18.9	18.0	19.4	19.6	11.5	17.9
29 Females – of all employed in highest skill occupations	%	2006–07	44.5	44.6	45.8	45.1	43.0	46.1	51.1	48.2	44.8
30 Females – of all employed in lowest skill occupations	%	2006–07	49.9	51.3	51.8	53.3	51.8	53.2	40.7	50.8	51.1

Work: state summary continued

WORKPLACE RELATIONS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
31 Trade union members – of all employees	%	2007	19.5	19.2	18.2	21.5	15.6	24.0	17.1	15.0	18.9
32 Working days lost due to industrial disputes (per 1,000 employees)	days	2006–07	9.8	21.3	1.5	6.3	2.2	1.6	0.8	15.5	9.9
33 Pay set by award only – of all employees	%	2006	22.9	14.9	22.0	18.9	11.1	23.2	11.3	17.0	19.0
34 Pay set by collective agreements – of all employees	%	2006	36.1	42.9	41.6	48.8	41.0	47.3	54.3	57.0	41.2
35 Pay set by individual arrangements – of all employees	%	2006	41.0	42.2	36.4	32.3	47.9	29.4	34.3	26.1	39.9

UNEMPLOYMENT	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
36 Total unemployed	'000	2006–07	173.9	128.4	87.3	39.9	36.2	13.5	4.1	5.7	489.0
37 Long-term unemployed – of total unemployed(d)	%	2006–07	20.1	15.9	13.8	17.1	11.2	25.4	11.1	10.0	16.9
38 Long-term unemployed – of total labour force(d)	%	2006–07	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	0.4	1.4	0.4	0.3	0.8
39 Unemployment rate	%	2006–07	5.0	4.8	4.0	5.0	3.2	5.7	3.8	3.0	4.5
40 Males	%	2006–07	4.7	4.5	3.6	5.1	2.9	5.9	4.5	3.1	4.3
41 Females	%	2006–07	5.3	5.2	4.5	4.9	3.7	5.4	3.0	2.8	4.8
42 Capital cities	%	2006–07	4.6	4.6	3.9	5.3	3.1	4.9	. .	. .	4.4
43 Balance of states and territories(e)	%	2006–07	5.8	5.4	4.1	4.1	3.5	6.3	3.8	3.0	4.8
44 Unemployment rate of persons aged 15–24, not in full-time education	%	2006–07	9.4	9.0	7.2	10.2	5.1	11.4	7.5	5.4	8.4
45 Median duration of unemployment – males(d)	weeks	2007	12	14	7	15	4	20	15	8	11
46 Median duration of unemployment – females(d)	weeks	2007	14	14	8	9	4	16	16	10	11
47 Retrenchment rate(f)	%	2006	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.6	2.0	1.3	2.2

LABOUR FORCE UNDERUTILISATION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
48 Labour force underutilisation rate	%	2007	9.7	9.4	8.0	10.2	6.5	10.2	4.9	6.2	8.9
49 Extended labour force underutilisation rate	%	2007	10.9	10.5	8.8	11.4	7.2	11.0	5.3	6.6	9.9

NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE(f)	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
50 Marginally attached	'000	2007	274.1	209.5	144.5	66.5	72.2	19.9	4.7	11.5	802.8
51 Discouraged jobseekers	'000	2007	25.0	16.5	8.2	4.5	*3.0	*1.1	n.p.	n.p.	58.6

TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Persons aged 55–64 years											
52 Participation rate – males	%	2006–07	65.8	68.8	69.0	64.4	73.8	59.3	73.6	72.1	67.9
53 Participation rate – females	%	2006–07	46.7	47.9	50.5	46.8	51.1	41.0	64.7	58.7	48.4
54 Males employed part-time – of all employed males aged 55–64	%	2006–07	18.4	17.4	14.7	16.5	15.8	20.9	9.3	19.7	16.9
55 Females employed part-time – of all employed females aged 55–64	%	2006–07	46.8	50.6	45.7	50.2	52.1	50.0	26.7	37.3	48.0

(a) From 2001, data include females in both opposite-sex and same-sex couple families, and lone parents with children aged 0–4 years.

(b) Excludes owner managers of incorporated enterprises.

(c) Highest skill occupations refer to those occupations classified as skill level 1 by *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, second edition* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0). Lowest skill occupations refer to those occupations classified as skill level 5 by *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, second edition* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0). For more information, see "Occupation" in work definitions, page 117.

(d) Prior to April 2001, data refers to duration of unemployment since last full-time job. From April 2001 data refers to duration of unemployment since last full-time or part-time job.

(e) Includes Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.

(f) Data include persons aged 15–69 years.

Reference periods: All data are annual averages for the year ending 30 June except:
Data for indicators 6, 9, 10 and 45–46 are at June.
Data for indicators 21–24 and 31 are at August.
Data for indicators 33–35 are at May.
Data for indicators 47 are at February.
Data for indicators 48–51 are at September.

Work: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–5, 11–16	*Labour Force Spreadsheets, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0.55.001).
6, 9, 10, 36–43, 45–46	ABS data available on request, Labour Force Survey.
7–8, 17, 19–20, 44, 52–55	*Labour Force, Australia, Detailed,* Electronic delivery (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).
18, 25–30	*Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003).
48–49	*Australian Labour Market Statistics, April edition* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).
21–24	*Australian Labour Market Statistics, July edition* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).
31	*Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).
32	*Industrial Disputes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).
33–35	*Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).
47	*Labour Mobility, Australia, February* (ABS cat. no. 6209.0).
50–51	*Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia, September* (ABS cat. no. 6220.0).

Work: definitions

Average hours worked per week

aggregate hours worked by a group divided by the number of people in that group.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).

Civilian population aged 15 years and over

all usual residents of Australia aged 15 years and over except members of the permanent defence forces, certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments customarily excluded from census and estimated resident population counts, overseas residents in Australia, and members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Discouraged jobseekers

people who were marginally attached to the labour force, wanted to work and who were available to start work within four weeks but whose main reason for not actively seeking work was that they believed they would not find a job for any of the following reasons:

- considered to be too young by employers
- considered to be too old by employers
- lacked necessary schooling, training, skills or experience
- difficulties because of language or ethnic background
- no jobs in their locality or line of work
- no jobs available at all.

Reference: *Persons Not in the Labour Force* (ABS cat. no. 6220.0).

Employed

people aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind, in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers); or
- worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers); or
- were employees who had a job but were not at work and were:
  - away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement; or
  - on strike or locked out; or
  - on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job; or
- were employers or own account workers who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Employee

a person who works for a public or private employer and receives remuneration in wages, salary, a retainer fee from their employer while working on a commission basis, tips, piece rates or payment in kind, or a person who operates his or her own incorporated enterprise with or without hiring employees.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003).

Employees without leave entitlements

employees who were not entitled to either paid holiday leave or paid sick leave (or both) in their main job.

Reference: *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).

Employer

a person who operates their own unincorporated economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade, and hires one or more employees.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003).

Extended labour force underutilisation rate

the unemployed, plus the underemployed, plus two groups of people marginally attached to the labour force:

i. people actively looking for work, who were not available to start work in the reference week, but were available to start work within four weeks
ii. discouraged jobseekers

as a percentage of the labour force augmented by (i) and (ii).

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Full-time employed

people who usually worked 35 hours or more a week (in all jobs) and those who, although usually working less than 35 hours a week, worked 35 hours or more during the reference week.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Industrial dispute

a state of disagreement over an issue or group of issues between an employer and its employees, which results in employees ceasing work. Industrial disputes comprise strikes, which are a withdrawal from work by a group of employees; and lockouts, which are a refusal by an employer or group of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work.

Reference: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

Work: definitions continued

Labour force

the labour force is the labour supply available for the production of economic goods and services in a given period, and is the most widely used measure of the economically active population. People in the labour force are classified as either employed or unemployed according to their activities during the reference period by using a specific set of priority rules.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Labour force underutilisation rate

the unemployed plus the underemployed, as a percentage of the labour force.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Long-term unemployed

people unemployed for 12 months or more.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).

Manufacturing industries

consists of the manufacturing division of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC).

Reference: *ANZSIC 1993* (ABS cat. no. 1292.0).

Marginally attached

people who were not in the labour force in the reference week, wanted to work and;

- were actively looking for work but did not meet the availability criteria to be classified as unemployed; or
- were not actively looking for work but were available to start work within four weeks or, for people with children aged 12 years and under, could start within four weeks if suitable child care was available.

Reference: *Persons Not In the Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6220.0).

Median age

the age which divides a group of people into two equal groups: one comprising people whose age is above the median; and the other, people whose age is below it.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Median duration of unemployment

the duration which divides unemployed people into two equal groups, one comprising people whose duration of unemployment is above the median and the other, people whose duration is below it.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Occupation

a collection of jobs which are sufficiently similar in their main tasks to be grouped together for the purposes of classification. The *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) Second Edition 1997* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0), which is used for the classification of occupations, applies skill level and skill specialisation as major criteria.

Skill level is measured by: formal education and training, and previous experience usually required for entry into an occupation. ASCO Second Edition assigns each of the nine major groups in the classification to one of five ranked skill levels.

Skill Level 1 — Managers and administrators and Professionals
Skill Level 2 — Associate professionals
Skill Level 3 — Tradespersons and related workers and Advanced clerical and service workers
Skill Level 4 — Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers and Intermediate production and transport workers
Skill Level 5 — Elementary clerical, sales and service workers and Labourers and related workers

Reference: *ASCO — Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, Second Edition, 1997* (ABS cat. no. 1220.0).

Own account worker

a person who operates his or her own unincorporated economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade, and hires no employees.

Reference: *Forms of Employment* (ABS cat. no. 6359.0).

Owner managers

people who work in their own business, with or without employees, whether or not the business is of limited liability. Comprises owner managers of incorporated enterprises and owner managers of unincorporated enterprises.

Reference: *Forms of Employment* (ABS cat. no. 6359.0).

Owner manager of incorporated enterprise

people who work in their own incorporated enterprise, that is, a business entity which is registered as a separate legal entity to its members or owners (also known as a limited liability company). These people are classified as employees under 'status in employment'.

Reference: *Forms of Employment* (ABS cat. no. 6359.0).

Owner manager of unincorporated enterprises

people who operate their own unincorporated enterprise, that is, a business entity in which the owner and the business are legally inseparable, so that the owner is liable for any business debts that are incurred. Includes those engaged independently in a trade or profession. These people are classified as employers under 'status in employment' if their business has employees, or own account workers if they do not.

Reference: *Forms of Employment* (ABS cat. no. 6359.0).

Participation rate

the labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Part-time employed

employed people who usually worked less than 35 hours a week (in all jobs) and either did so during the survey reference week, or were not at work in the reference week.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Pay set by award only

employees who are paid at the rate of pay specified in the award, and who are not paid more than that award rate of pay.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Pay set by collective agreements

employees who had the main part of their pay set by a registered or unregistered collective agreement or enterprise award.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Pay set by individual arrangements

employees who had the main part of their pay set by an individual contract, registered individual agreement (e.g. Australian Workplace Agreement) or common law contract. It also includes people who receive 'over-award' payments by individual agreement and those who are working proprietors of incorporated businesses.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Proportion of the population in employment

the number of employed people expressed as a percentage of the civilian population in the same group. Also known as employment to population ratio.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Work: definitions continued

Retrenchment rate

total people retrenched during the 12 month period before the survey, as a percentage of all people who had been employed at some time over the same period.

People retrenched are those who ceased their last job because they were either:

- employees who were laid off, including no work available, retrenched, made redundant, employer went out of business or dismissed; or
- self employed people whose business closed down for economic reasons, including 'went broke', liquidated, no work, or no supply or demand.

Reference: *Labour Mobility, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6209.0).

Service industries

the combination of the following divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC): Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Transport and storage; Communication services; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Education; Health and community services; Cultural and recreational services; and Personal and other services.

Reference: *ANZSIC 1993* (ABS cat. no. 1292.0).

Trade union members

employees with membership in a trade union (that is, an organisation consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members) in conjunction with their main job.

Reference: *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).

Underemployed

underemployed workers are employed people who would prefer, and are available for, more hours of work than they currently have. They comprise:

- people employed part-time who would prefer to work more hours and are available to start work with more hours, either in the reference week or in the four weeks subsequent to the survey.
- people employed full-time who worked part-time hours in the reference week for economic reasons (such as being stood down or insufficient work being available). It is assumed that these people would prefer to work full time in the reference week and would have been available to do so.

Reference: *Underemployed Workers, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6265.0).

Unemployed

people aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, and:

- had actively looked for full-time work or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and were available for work in the reference week; or
- were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Unemployed looking for full-time work

unemployed people who:

- actively looked for full-time work; or
- were waiting to start a new full-time job.

Reference: *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0).

Unemployment rate

the number of unemployed people expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Working days lost

working days lost by employees directly or indirectly involved in industrial disputes.

Reference: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

Labour force participation across Australia

The labour force participation rate of women aged between 55 and 64 years increased from 31% to 48% and for men increased from 61% to 68% between 1996 and 2006.

Increasing the Australian working-age population, lifting labour force participation rates, and raising productivity have been identified by the Treasury department as critical in addressing the economic challenges posed by an ageing population.[1] While Australia's labour force participation rate is high by international standards, there are some groups, such as people aged 55 years and over, and women with young children, whose labour force participation is lower than in some other OECD countries (see *Australian Social Trends 2007*, Labour force participation – an international comparison, pp. 125–131). Much of the policy focus in recent years has been directed towards encouraging people in these groups to enter or remain in the labour force.[1]

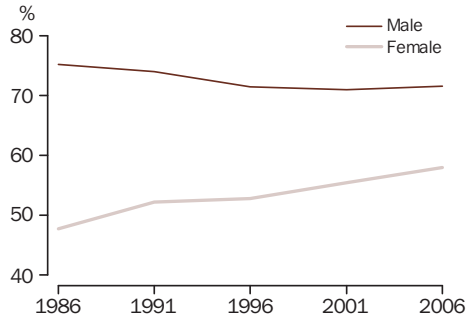
While there is an economic incentive to lift labour force participation rates, there is also an individual dimension. Labour force participation can lead to greater individual wellbeing in terms of financial security, self-esteem and social engagement.

The labour market opportunities associated with the current period of economic prosperity in Australia have not necessarily been equally distributed across all population groups or all regions of the country.

Labour force participation continues to rise

Given the traditional model of the male breadwinner family, the labour force participation rate for men has historically been much higher than the rate for women. However, a range of cultural and economic shifts in recent decades has seen a dramatic increase in the proportion of women participating in the labour force.[2] According to Census data, between 1986 and 2006 the labour force participation rate among women aged 15 years and over in Australia increased from 48% to 58%.

Labour force participation rates(a) for men and women



(a) For people aged 15 years and over.

Source: ABS 1986–2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

Data sources and definitions

Data presented in this article are mainly from the most recent Census of Population and Housing, conducted in August 2006. Data presented are based on place of usual residence.

Census labour force data presented in this article are different to August 2006 Labour Force Survey estimates due to a number of factors, including differences in collection methodology (see *Australian Labour Market Statistics, October 2007* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0)). However, these differences have minimal impact on the analysis in this article.

Census data, particularly data relating to Indigenous Australians in Very Remote areas, are affected by undercount (see *Census of Population and Housing – Details of Undercount* (ABS cat. no. 2940.0)). In 2006, the net undercount (i.e. people missed in the Census, minus those counted more than once) rate for the whole of Australia was estimated at around 2.7%. This may have an impact on data presented for Very Remote areas. In addition, around 5.7% of people did not report their Indigenous status on the Census form.

Despite these issues, census data are used in this article to allow for more detailed analysis of variations between smaller population groups and small geographic areas than is possible with Labour Force Survey data.

Employed people are those aged 15 years and over who worked for payment or profit, or as an unpaid helper in a family business, during the week prior to Census night, or had a job from which they were on leave or otherwise temporarily absent, or were on strike or stood down temporarily.

Unemployed people are those aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the week prior to Census night and had actively looked for work in the previous four weeks and were available to start work in the week prior to Census night.

The *labour force* consists of all people who are employed or unemployed. The *labour force participation rate* is the proportion of all people 15 years and over who are in the labour force.

People *employed part-time* are those who worked between 1 and 34 hours in the week prior to Census night.

The rate for men fell by around four percentage points between 1986 and 1996, before stabilising at around 72% in the ten years to 2006.

Much of the increase in women's labour force participation has been associated with part-time work. In 2006, 45% of employed women were working part-time, compared with 18% of employed men.

...by age and sex

The labour force participation rate of both men and women varies over the life course. For both sexes, participation in the labour force tends to be lower in the teenage years, before rising in the twenties as people complete educational qualifications and begin a career. The rate for men tends to stay quite high until they reach their sixties, when many men retire.

For women, the labour force participation rate tends to dip during the peak childbearing years between ages 25 and 44 years. Delayed childbearing and an increased propensity for women to combine work and family has seen this dip become later and less pronounced than in the past.

The decline in the participation rates of women in the older age groups occurs at a younger age than for men, reflecting the fact that women tend to retire earlier.

...by Remoteness Areas

Labour force participation can also be examined from a geographic perspective as economic and social circumstances may vary from cities to regional and remote areas.

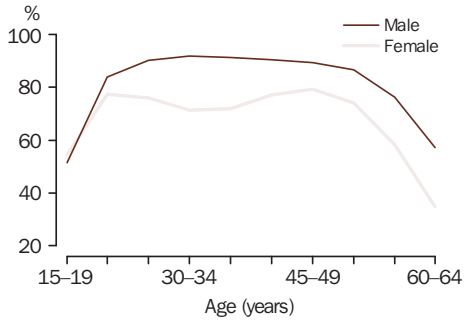
In 2006, the labour force participation rate in Major Cities was 66%, slightly above the national average of 65%. The labour force participation rate was lower in Inner Regional (61%) and Outer Regional (64%) areas and higher in Remote (70%) and Very Remote (68%) areas. In part these differences reflect the different age structures across Remoteness Areas. In particular, since the labour force participation rate is based on the entire population aged 15 years and over, areas that have a relatively high proportion of people aged 65 years and over, many of whom are retired, will tend to have lower rates of labour force participation than will areas with a relatively small share of their population aged 65 years and over (see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Population distribution, pp. 9–12).

After adjusting for age differences, the labour force participation rates between the different areas converge, indicating that to a large extent differences in observed rates of labour force participation between Remoteness Areas are explained by differences in the age structure of their populations.

Geographical classifications

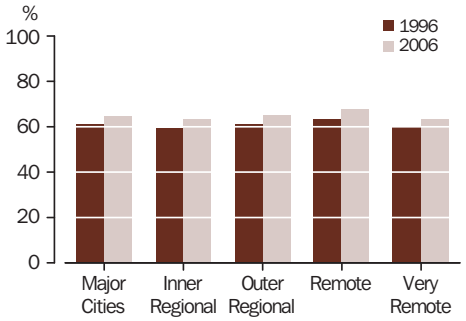
Remoteness Area (RA) is a structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), covering the whole of Australia. It is intended to classify areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. As remoteness is measured nationally, not all Remoteness Areas are represented in each state or territory. There are six RAs in the structure: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia and Migratory Australia. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these official terms, with 'Australia' omitted. For further information see *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), 2006* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0).

Labour force participation rates of men and women by age — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Labour force participation rates(a) by Remoteness Areas



(a) Rates have been age standardised and are for people aged 15 years and over.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Labour force status of selected population groups(a)

	1996			2006		
	Participation rate	*Employed part-time(b)(c)*	*Unemployment rate*	*Participation rate*	*Employed part-time(b)(c)*	*Unemployment rate*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
People aged 55–64 years						
Males	61.2	17.8	10.4	67.9	19.6	4.4
Females	30.9	47.6	6.0	48.1	48.0	3.3
Females with children (0–14 years)						
Couple families	61.4	57.0	6.2	65.6	58.9	4.1
Lone parents	50.2	56.8	17.3	59.0	59.5	13.7
Indigenous	52.7	37.1	22.7	54.5	39.1	15.6
Australia						
Males	71.4	15.1	9.9	71.5	17.6	5.2
Females	52.8	43.0	8.3	58.0	45.1	5.3
Total	**61.9**	**27.4**	**9.2**	**64.6**	**30.3**	**5.2**

(a) Unless otherwise stated, data refer to people aged 15 years and over.
(b) Worked between 1 and 34 hours in the week prior to Census night.
(c) Proportion of all employed people, including those who worked 0 hours in the week prior to Census night.

Source: ABS 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

The age-standardised labour force participation rates for Inner Regional (63%) and Outer Regional (65%) areas increased slightly from the unadjusted rates, reflecting the older age profile of these areas. By contrast, the age-standardised labour force participation rates for Remote (68%) and Very Remote (63%) areas were lower than the corresponding unadjusted rates, reflecting their younger age profiles. The age-standardised rate for Major Cities (65%) was also slightly lower than the unadjusted rate.

Between 1996 and 2006, the age-standardised labour force participation rate increased by a similar magnitude across all Remoteness Areas. Overall, the age-standardised labour force participation rate increased by four percentage points in each Remoteness Area, with rates increasing by one to two percentage points for men, and by six to eight percentage points for women.

Participation across particular groups

Strong economic growth between 1996 and 2006 saw a considerable increase in the labour force participation rate and a marked decline in Australia's unemployment rate. These trends were widespread and benefited a broad cross-section of groups, including men and women aged 55–64 years, women with young children and Indigenous people.

...people aged 55–64 years

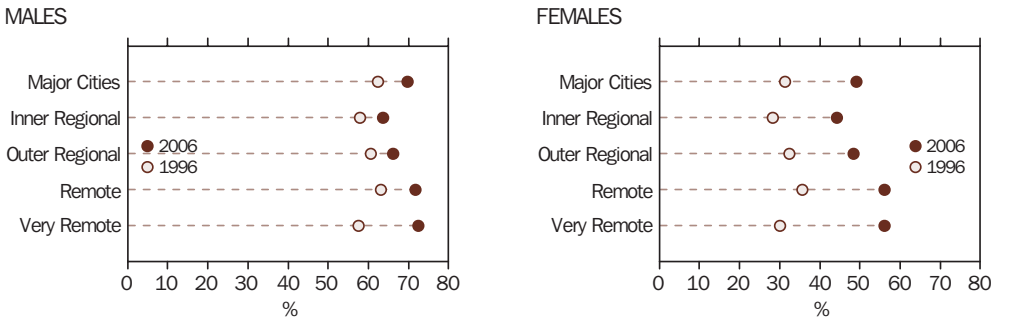
The labour force participation rate of people aged 55–64 years has traditionally been lower than for younger age groups as many people retire from the labour force around this age. A number of policy initiatives have been introduced in recent years, such as the Mature Age Workers Tax Offset in 2004, to encourage older workers to delay retirement.[3]

According to Census data, between 1996 and 2006 there was a rise in the labour force participation rate of both men and women aged 55–64 years. While the participation rate for women overall rose in the ten years to 2006 (from 53% to 58%), the increase in the participation rate for women aged 55–64 years was considerably larger (up 17 percentage points, from 31% to 48%). The participation rate among men aged 55–64 years rose seven percentage points to 68% between 1996 and 2006, while the overall rate for males remained steady at around 72%.

Although the increase in the participation rate of women has been much more pronounced than for men, almost half (48%) of women aged 55–64 years who were employed in 2006 were working part-time, compared with one in five (20%) employed men of this age.

The large increase in labour force participation among women aged 55–64 years was evident across all Remoteness Areas, but particularly in Very Remote areas (up from 30% in 1996 to 56% in 2006). The increases

Labour force participation rates of men and women aged 55–64 years by Remoteness Areas



Source: ABS 1996 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

for men aged 55–64 years over this period were relatively modest across most areas, with the exception of Very Remote areas where the participation rate rose by 15 percentage points to 73% in 2006.

For this age group, the rise in labour force participation rates was coupled with a considerable fall in the unemployment rate for both men and women.

...women with young children

Women with young children have also been identified as a key focus of policies aimed at lifting labour force participation in recent years.[4] The Child Care Tax Rebate, for example, first introduced in 2004–05, aimed to encourage the labour force participation of mothers with young children by increasing the affordability of child care.

According to Census data, between 1996 and 2006 the participation rate of mothers with children aged 0–14 years rose from 59% to 64%. The rise was particularly pronounced among lone mothers (up from 50% to 59%).

In 2006, employed mothers with children aged 0–14 years were much more likely to be working part-time (59% of both employed lone mothers and employed mothers in couple families) than were employed women overall (45%).

The labour force participation rates of mothers also varied according to the age of their youngest child. In 2006, the participation rate among mothers with children aged 0–4 years was lower (52%) than those whose youngest child was aged 5–9 years (71%) and 10–14 years (77%).

Mothers in Major Cities were slightly more likely than those elsewhere to be in the labour force when their youngest child was aged 0–4 years (53% compared with 51%). However, mothers in Major Cities whose youngest child was aged 5–14 years were less likely to be in the labour force than were their counterparts in Inner Regional, Outer Regional or Remote areas (73% in Major Cities compared with 76% in each of the other areas).

...Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Indigenous Australians benefited to some extent from the economic prosperity of the period from 1996 to 2006, with a slight rise in the labour force participation rate (from 53% to 55%) and a considerable fall in the unemployment rate (from 23% to 16%).

The Indigenous labour force participation and employment figures from the 2006 Census include people participating in the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme. The CDEP scheme enables members of Indigenous communities, particularly in Remote and Very Remote areas, to exchange unemployment benefits for opportunities to undertake paid work and training in activities managed by a local Indigenous community organisation.

As the age profile of the Indigenous population is much younger than that of the non-Indigenous population, a comparison of specific age groups is more informative than a comparison of the standard labour force participation rate for all people aged 15 years and over.

In the 2006 Census, the participation rate of Indigenous people aged 25–44 years was 62% compared with 83% for the non-Indigenous population of the same age. For those aged 15–24 years, the rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people were 51% and 67%, respectively. Among all people aged 15–64 years, the difference in labour force participation was around 19 percentage points (57% for Indigenous compared with 76% for non-Indigenous Australians).

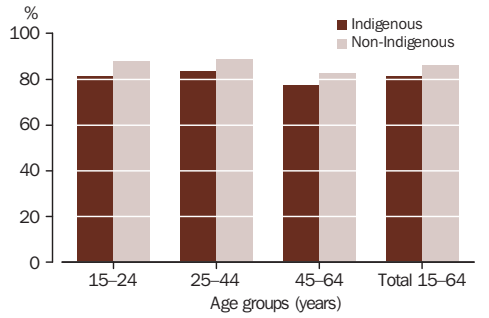
Higher levels of education or qualifications, in terms of both years of schooling completed and non-school qualifications, are generally associated with increased employment opportunities. Although the proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over with non-school qualifications doubled from 12% to 24% over the decade to 2006, it remained low compared with the non-Indigenous population (46% in 2006).

When looking just at those people with non-school qualifications, the Indigenous labour force participation rate is roughly comparable with that of non-Indigenous Australians. In 2006, the participation rate of Indigenous Australians aged 15–64 years with non-school qualifications was 81%, compared with 86% for non-Indigenous people.

Looking ahead

Labour force participation increased among the groups discussed in this article over the decade to 2006. There is still potential for participation rates to increase further. Such increases could occur in response to increased demand for labour and be facilitated by flexibility in working arrangements, allowing people to better balance work and other activities, especially caring (see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Barriers to work, pp. 125–129). Opportunities to maintain a highly skilled and adaptive workforce through ongoing education and training will also help shape the characteristics of the Australian labour force into the future (see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Adult learning, pp. 104–108).

Labour force participation rate of people with non-school qualifications by Indigenous status and age — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Endnotes

1 The Treasury 2007, *Intergenerational Report – 2007*, viewed 7 April, 2008, <http://www.treasury.gov.au/documents/1239/PDF/IGR_2007_final_report.pdf>.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005, *Australian Labour Market Statistics, January 2005,* cat. no. 6105.0, ABS, Canberra.

3 Australian Taxation Office 2008, *Mature age worker tax offset – overview*, viewed 15 April, 2008, <http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/content.asp?doc=/content/56588.htm>.

4 Abhayaratna, J and Lattimore, R 2006, *Workforce Participation Rates – How Does Australia Compare?*, Productivity Commission working paper, viewed 25 February 2008, <http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/60479/workforceparticipation.pdf>.

Barriers to work

In 2006–07 there were 1.7 million Australians who either wanted a job or who usually worked less than 16 hours per week and wanted more hours of work.

Participation in the labour force has many benefits for both individuals and Australian society as a whole. Higher economic growth is, in part, achieved through increases in labour force participation, with increases in hours worked generally leading to higher levels of GDP (gross domestic product) per person. At the individual level, participating in the workforce can bring greater health, wealth and self-esteem, as well as providing the opportunity for social interaction.[1]

A recent report by the Productivity Commission has noted that, although Australia's labour force participation rate has risen slightly during the period of economic prosperity which has characterised the past two decades, there is scope for a number of population groups, such as men aged 25–54 years, women with young children and people aged 55 years and over, to increase their labour force participation.[2]

Decisions on whether to work and the number of hours worked reflect both the availability of suitable work and people's work preferences. For a variety of reasons, many people who are without work do not wish to gain employment, while others working few hours do not wish to increase their hours. However, there are also many people without work who want a job and people working few hours who would prefer more hours of work. These people often face barriers to participating or to increasing their participation in the labour force. These barriers include lacking the necessary qualifications for available jobs, caring responsibilities and perceived discrimination.

In 2006–07, there were 9.4 million Australians aged 18 years and over who usually worked 16 hours or more per week and 6.3 million who were either not employed or usually worked less than 16 hours each week. Among the latter group, about one-quarter (1.7 million) wanted a job or additional hours of work.

Before focusing on these 1.7 million people, this article briefly discusses the 4.7 million people who did not want a job or more hours of work in 2006–07.

Data sources and definitions

Data presented in this article are from the ABS 2006–07 Multi-Purpose Household Survey. The scope of this survey is restricted to the civilian population of Australia aged 18 years and over.

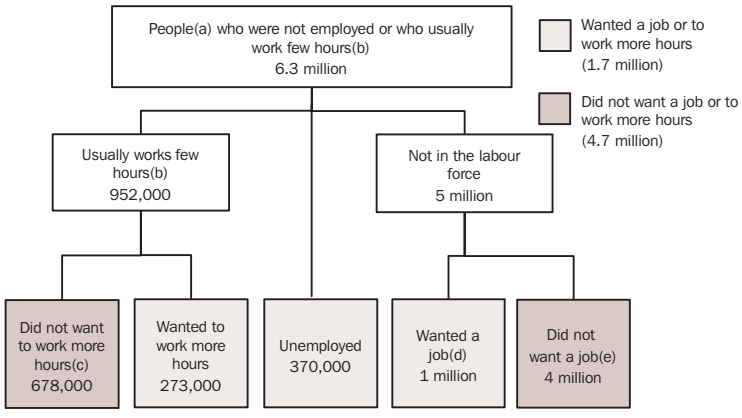
Employed people are those aged 18 years and over who, during the reference week, worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business or on a farm; or worked without pay in a family business, or who had a job but were not at work.

Unemployed people are those aged 18 years and over who were not employed during the survey reference week and had actively looked for work in the previous four weeks and were available to start work.

People who *usually work few hours* are those workers who usually work less than 16 hours a week (in all jobs).

Persons *not in the labour force* are those aged 18 years and over who are neither 'employed' nor 'unemployed'.

People(a) who were not employed or who usually work few hours(b) — 2006–07



(a) Aged 18 years and over.
(b) Less than 16 hours per week.
(c) Includes people who did not know.
(d) Includes people who answered 'maybe/it depends' when asked if they wanted a job.
(e) Includes people who answered 'don't know/hadn't thought about it' when asked if they wanted a job.

Source: Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, July 2006 to June 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6239.0).

People who did not want a job or more hours of work

In 2006–07, most people (74% or 4.7 million) who were not employed or who usually worked few hours did not wish to increase their level of labour force participation. Their reasons for not wanting to increase their participation varied. Many of those without

People(a) who wanted a job or more hours: selected characteristics — 2006–07

	Males	*Females*	*Persons*
	%	%	%
Age group (years)			
18–24	20.8	17.1	18.5
25–44	31.0	43.4	38.7
45–64	33.0	32.2	32.5
65 and over	15.1	7.3	10.3
Labour force status			
Employed working few hours	15.8	17.0	16.5
Unemployed	26.6	19.8	22.4
Not in the labour force	57.7	63.1	61.0
Education(b)			
No non-school qualification	55.2	51.6	53.0
Certificate or diploma/Advanced diploma	30.8	33.5	32.5
Bachelor degree or above	13.3	13.1	13.2
Unpaid activities when not working(c)			
Caring for children(d)	36.2	69.9	56.9
Caring for someone with a long-term illness or disability	10.5	13.6	12.4
Caring for an elderly person	8.6	11.6	10.4
Other unpaid voluntary work	16.2	21.4	19.4
No selected unpaid activities	50.1	23.4	33.7
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
	'000	'000	'000
Total	**636.1**	**1 014.2**	**1 650.3**

(a) Aged 18 years and over.
(b) Excludes a small number of people whose level of non-school qualification could not be determined.
(c) Refers to all unpaid activities, therefore people may appear in more than one category.
(d) Includes own children and children of others e.g. grandchildren.

Source: ABS 2006–07 Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation Survey.

work were retired, while many of those working few hours were caring for children, were satisfied with their current arrangements, or were studying.

Those not in the labour force accounted for the vast majority (85% or 4 million) of people not wanting work (or more hours of work) in 2006–07. People not in the labour force tended to be older, with 19% aged 55–64 years, and 55% aged 65 years and over. Almost two-thirds (62%) were retired, while 21% had a long-term sickness or disability.

People who usually worked few hours represented the remaining 15% (or 678,000) of people not wanting to increase their labour force participation. These people comprised more than two-thirds (71%) of all people usually working few hours, suggesting that this type of work arrangement suits the lifestyle and circumstances of many of these people.

People usually working few hours and not wishing to increase their hours were mostly women (79%). Around one-third (34%) of women in this group did not want more work because they were caring for children.

People who wanted a job or more hours

Many people without work want a job while others who are working few hours would prefer more hours of work. In 2006–07, there were 1.7 million people who wanted a job or more hours of work.

Most people who wanted a job or more hours were without work; with 22% unemployed (that is actively looking for and available to start work) and 61% not in the labour force. The remaining 17% were working fewer hours than they would like. A higher proportion of men than women who wanted a job or more hours were unemployed (27% and 20% respectively).

Of the 950,000 people who worked few hours, 29% wanted to work more hours. Men were more likely than women to want more hours of work (41% and 24% respectively).

...main source of income

The main source of income for people who wanted a job or more hours varied according to their labour force status. Not surprisingly, government pensions and allowances were a common source of income for those without work. About 56% of people not in the labour force who wanted work and 60% of unemployed people reported this as their main source of income. While wages and salaries were the main source of income for more than half of those people with a job wanting more hours, government pensions and allowances were reported as the main source of income by one-quarter (25%) of this group.

...people with qualifications

In 2006–07, people wanting a job or more hours of work were less likely to have a non-school qualification such as a Certificate or Bachelor degree (47%) than were employed people working 16 hours or more a week (64%).

...unpaid activities

More than three-quarters (77%) of the one million women and half of the 636,000 men who wanted a job or more hours of work were undertaking unpaid activities when they were not working. Caring for others, particularly children, was the most commonly reported unpaid activity. More than one-third (36%) of men and more than two-thirds (70%) of women who wanted a job or more hours of work reported caring for children as one of their unpaid activities when not working. Other caring responsibilities undertaken while not working included caring for people with long-term illnesses or disabilities (11% of men and 14% of women) and caring for the elderly (9% and 12% respectively).

Increasing labour force participation is generally beneficial for the economy. However, unpaid activities, such as caring for children or the elderly, undertaken by people with low, or no, hours of work, have considerable social and economic benefits. This is particularly important given Australia's ageing population which will in time increase the need for both formal and informal care (i.e. care provided by relatives and friends) for the elderly.[3]

Preferred weekly hours

While most people who wanted a job or more hours of work preferred part-time work, preferences for hours varied between men and women as well as by labour force status.

About four in five (82%) women and three in five (61%) men not in the labour force who wanted work reported that they would prefer to work part-time hours (i.e. 1–34 hours per week). The preference for part-time work among women was apparent across all age groups, reflecting the need for many women to balance work with family caring responsibilities. Men who balance work and family responsibilities are more likely to do so through flexible working arrangements rather than through part-time work (see *Australian Social Trends, 2006,* Fathers' work and family balance, pp. 39–43).

Among the men who were not in the labour force and wanted a job, older men were more likely than younger men to prefer part-time work, with 73% of men aged 65 years and over preferring part-time work.

The average working hours preferred by women not in the labour force who wanted a job was 19.5 hours per week compared with 25 hours per week for men.

People who were unemployed were more likely than those not in the labour force to want full-time work, with 79% of unemployed men and 61% of unemployed women preferring full-time work.

Men who were working few hours and who wanted additional hours of work were twice as likely to prefer full-time hours (50%) as women (25%).

Older people who usually worked few hours were more likely to prefer part-time hours than their younger counterparts, reflecting the trend towards part-time work as a transition to retirement from the labour force. About four in five (82%) of those people aged 55 years and over preferred part-time work, compared with 57% of those aged 18–30 years.

People(a) who wanted a job or wanted to work more hours — 2006–07

(a) Aged 18 years and over.
(b) Excludes those who did not know or whose preference was not determined.

Source: ABS 2006–07 Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation Survey.

Barriers to finding a job or more hours

People who wanted a job or more hours of work reported a variety of barriers to finding work (or more work). The barriers that people encountered differed according to their availability for work, and whether they were actively seeking work. Job search related difficulties were generally reported by those available and looking for work. Personal circumstances were more commonly reported by those not looking or not available for work.

...available and looking for work

In 2006–07, there were 512,000 people (56% of whom were women and 44% men) who wanted a job or more hours of work and were also available and looking for work (or more work). People identified a range of difficulties in finding suitable work. These included difficulties directly associated with the job search, such as a lack of job vacancies or suitable jobs, as well as associated personal circumstances, such as a lack of qualifications or experience, lack of access to transport or perceptions about the impact of age or disability.

The most common specific barrier reported by people in this situation was 'lacks necessary training, skills or experience' (15%). More than two-thirds of people who reported this as their main difficulty were women. 'No jobs with suitable conditions or arrangements' was another commonly reported difficulty (12%).

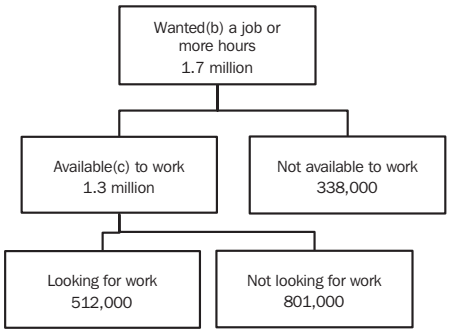
...available but not looking for work

In 2006–07, 61% (or 801,000) of the people who wanted a job or more hours and were available to start work were not actively looking for work (or more work). Most of this group were women (64%) and most were not in the labour force (87%).

Reasons for not looking for work (or more hours of work) varied according to age. Studying or returning to study was the main reason given by over half (58%) of those aged 18–24 years, while 'caring for children' was the most frequently reported main reason (40%) for people aged 25–44 years, the vast majority of whom were women. Being 'considered too old by employers' was the most common main reason (40%) reported by people aged 65 years and over.

Almost one in five (18%) of those people who wanted a job or more hours and were available to start but were not actively looking reported 'caring for children' as the main reason they were not looking for work. Many of this group expressed a preference for looking after their own children, while others nominated the cost of childcare, or difficulties with access to childcare, as the main reason that caring for children prevented them from looking for work (or more work).

People(a) who wanted a job or more hours — 2006–07



(a) Aged 18 years and over.
(b) Includes people who answered 'maybe/it depends' when asked if they wanted a job.
(c) In the reference week or within four weeks.

Source: Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, July 2006 to June 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6239.0).

...not available for work

In 2006–07, there were 338,000 people who wanted a job or more hours of work but were not available to start work in the reference week or within four weeks. People not in the labour force represented most (85%) of those not available, and two-thirds (64%) of those who were not available were women.

Men and women reported different reasons for not being available to start work (or more hours of work) within four weeks. Almost half (49%) of men reported 'long-term sickness or injury' as their main reason for not being available. In contrast, 44% of women reported 'caring for children'.

The reasons people were not available to start work (or more work) also varied according to age. 'Caring for children' was the most commonly reported reason for those aged 25–44 years (51%), while 'long-term sickness or injury' was the most common reason among people aged 45 years and over (41%).

Conclusion

Removing barriers to labour force participation and increasing the incentives for people to participate will become increasingly important as Australia prepares for the economic challenges of an ageing population.

Individuals' decisions about whether and how much to work will be shaped by their own circumstances along with the type of work and working arrangements available.

Endnotes

1 The Treasury, 2004, *Australia's Demographic Challenges*, viewed 25 February 2008, <http://demographics.treasury.gov.au/content/_download/australias_demographic_challenges/australias_demographic_challenges.pdf>.

2 Abhayaratna, J and Lattimore, R, 2006, *Workforce Participation Rates – How Does Australia Compare*?, Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper, Canberra, viewed 25 February 2008, <http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/60479/workforceparticipation.pdf>.

3 Lymer, S, Percival, R and Harding, A, 2006, 'The cost of caring in Australia 2002 to 2005 – Who cares?' *AMP NATSEM Income and Wealth Report, Issue 13*, AMP, viewed 25 February 2008, <http://www.amp.com.au>.

Trade union members

In 2007, around one in five employees belonged to a trade union compared with nearly one in two in 1986.

In the last twenty years, the industrial relations environment in Australia has undergone significant change. Beginning in the mid-1980s, there has been a series of legislative changes that have resulted in a move away from a centralised system of awards towards agreements at the enterprise and workplace level. The emphasis on decentralised bargaining, and the opening up of collective and individual bargaining to non-union members, has reduced the role of unions in the negotiation of wages and conditions (see also *Australian Social Trends 2008,* Industrial Disputes, pp. 136–139).[1,2]

The last two decades have also seen changes in the composition of the labour force. Most of the growth in employment since the 1980s has occurred in industries where the level of trade unionisation has traditionally been relatively low, such as Property and business services.[3,4] There has also been growth in part-time and casual employment (where unionisation rates are generally low) and a relative decline in public sector employment (where unionisation rates are generally higher than in the private sector).[5] This period also saw changes in the structure of the union movement with the amalgamation of some 300 unions into a much smaller number of unions organised along industry lines.[1] Associated with these changes, there has been a dramatic decline in trade union membership rates since the 1980s.

Trade union membership

Trade union membership has declined steadily since the early 1980s. In 1986, 46% of Australian employees (or 2.6 million) were trade union members; by 2007 the unionisation rate had declined to 19% (or 1.7 million employees). While the rates for male and female employees converged over the period, to 19% and 18% respectively, unionisation rates were higher among male than female employees in all age groups up to 45 years in 2007.

Although unionisation rates fell across all age groups between 1986 and 2007, the pattern of generally higher rates of trade union membership among older employees and lower rates among younger employees was maintained. The biggest decrease in rates were seen in the younger age groups. Over this period, the trade union membership rate among employees aged 15–24 years fell from about one in three (36%) to one in ten (10%), and the rate among employees aged 25–34 fell from 48% to 15%.

Data sources and definitions

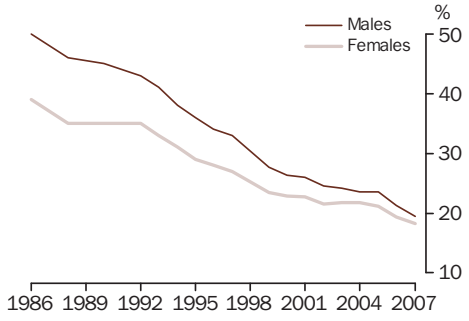
Data for this article are from the ABS survey of Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership (EEBTUM), conducted annually in August as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

A *trade union* is an organisation consisting predominantly of employees and is concerned with negotiating rates of pay and employment conditions for its members.

A *trade union member* is an employee with membership in a trade union related to the member's main job.

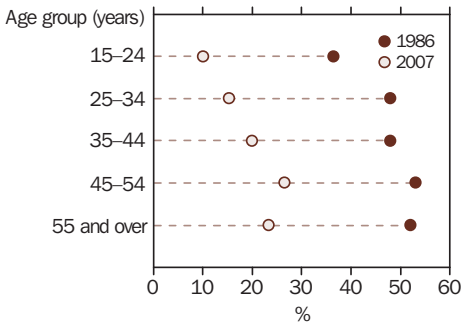
The *trade union membership rate* (also known as the *unionisation rate*) is the proportion of employees who are trade union members.

Unionisation rates



Source: Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986 (ABS cat. no. 6325.0); *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2007* (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).

Unionisation rates, by age



Source: ABS 1986 Survey of Trade Union Members and ABS 2007 Survey of Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership.

The decline in unionisation rates is also observed when age cohorts are examined, suggesting that people may not be renewing their membership from year to year or when they change jobs. To some extent, this would be expected as older workers move to managerial and other non-unionised positions.[6]

In 1986, almost half (48%) of those employees born in the 1950s, and then aged 25–34 years, were union members. Ten years later the unionisation rate of this cohort, then aged 35–44 years, had fallen to 36%, and a further decade later it was 28% (26% in 2007). Similarly, among employees born in the 1960s and aged 15–24 years in 1986, 36% belonged to a union. Ten years later their unionisation rate had fallen to 30%, and the decline continued to 23% in 2006 (20% in 2007).

Employees

Falling unionisation rates are evident when the workforce is examined by sector, industry, occupation and type of employment. The workforce has continued to undergo compositional change, which has tended to increase the employment share of groups that generally have lower unionisation rates at the expense of groups that have higher rates.

...sector

The proportion of public sector employees who belonged to a trade union fell from 55% in 1997 to 41% in 2007, while the proportion in the private sector fell from 23% to 14%.

In addition, over this period the share of public sector employees of the total workforce fell from 22% to 19%.

...industry

Between 1997 and 2007, trade union membership rates fell across all industries. There were relatively steep declines in a number of industries including Finance and insurance (from 36% to 11%), Communication services (60% to 28%),

Employees and unionisation rate: by selected industry, sector and type of employment

	1997		*2007*	
	Employees	*Unionisation rate*	*Employees*	*Unionisation rate*
	%	%	%	%
Sector				
Public sector	22.1	54.7	18.9	41.1
Private sector	77.9	23.3	81.1	13.7
Selected industry				
Electricity, gas and water supply	1.0	65.9	0.9	34.1
Communication services	2.0	59.8	1.8	27.5
Education	8.2	49.3	8.0	39.7
Manufacturing	14.8	36.6	11.0	20.4
Mining	1.1	43.9	1.5	21.5
Finance and insurance	4.3	35.5	4.2	11.5
Health and community services	10.3	34.6	11.2	25.3
Cultural and recreational services	2.3	23.8	2.6	14.2
Retail trade	14.3	22.3	15.0	13.6
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	5.0	15.5	5.1	6.2
Property and business services	10.4	10.0	11.9	5.5
Full-time / Part-time status				
Full-time employees	72.5	33.7	70.5	20.7
Part-time employees	27.5	21.3	29.5	14.3
Type of employment				
With paid leave entitlements	74.2	36.0	72.9	23.3
Without paid leave entitlements	25.8	13.8	27.1	6.9
Total	**100.0**	**30.3**	**100.0**	**18.9**

Source: ABS 1997 Survey of Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution) and 2007 Survey of Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership.

Cultural and recreational services (24% to 14%), and Property and business services (from 10% to 5%). While the Education and Electricity, gas and water supply industries experienced falls in membership rates, they still maintained relatively high overall membership rates (40% and 34% respectively in 2007).

Over this period, the share of the total workforce employed in the more highly unionised Manufacturing industry fell (from 15% to 11%) while the share working in the less unionised Property and business services industry increased (from 10% to 12%).

...occupation

Trade union membership rates are higher in 'blue collar' occupation groups such as Intermediate production and transport workers and Tradespersons and related workers, and are lowest in the higher skilled 'white collar' occupations such as Managers and administrators and Advanced clerical and service workers. Unionisation rates for female employees were higher than males for Managers and administrators (15% and 9% respectively in 2007), and Professionals (30% and 17%).

As with other aspects of employment, falls in unionisation rates between 1997 and 2007 have been observed across all occupation groups. The largest declines in rates were among Intermediate production and transport workers (from 48% to 29%), Tradespersons and related workers (38% to 22%), and Labourers and related workers (33% to 20%).

The occupation distribution of employees has also changed between 1997 and 2007, with a trend away from the relatively higher unionised occupations of Labourers and related workers, Tradespersons and related workers, and Intermediate production and transport workers.

Unionisation rates, by occupation

Source: Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).

International comparison

There is considerable variation in the trade union membership rates among OECD countries. In 2003, compared with the Australian unionisation rate of 23%, lower rates were observed in France (8%), Korea (11%) and the United States (12%); while much higher rates were observed in Denmark (70%) and Finland (74%). Countries with unionisation rates closer to Australia's included Japan (20%), The Netherlands (22%), New Zealand (22% in 2002) and Germany (23%).[6]

There were some similarities in the pattern of trade union membership across countries. Rates were generally higher in the public than private sector, and higher for full-time than part-time employees. Unionisation rates in manufacturing were generally at least equal to or higher than the national average and rates for young workers (aged 16–24 years) were generally lower. Differences between men and women varied from country to country, with employed women more likely than employed men to be union members in Finland, Norway and Sweden.[7]

While a small number of countries, including Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Korea, experienced an increase in unionisation rates over the period 1970 to 1990; the picture from 1990 to 2003 was one of declining rates in virtually all OECD countries. Steep declines were observed in Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and Germany. As in Australia, the changing composition of the workforce and legislative changes were associated with declining unionisation rates in other countries.[6]

Trade union membership rates, selected countries

Country	1993	2003
Sweden	83.9	78.0
Italy	39.2	33.7
United Kingdom	36.1	29.3
Canada	32.8	28.4
Australia	**37.6**	**22.9**
New Zealand(a)	34.5	22.1
Japan	24.3	19.7
United States	15.1	12.4

(a) 1993 and 2002 for New Zealand.

Source: Visser, J 2006, 'Union membership statistics in 24 countries', *Monthly Labour Review*, January, pp. 38–49; Blanchflower, DG 2007, 'International Patterns of Union Membership', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 1–28.

...type of employment

Unionisation rates also differed with employment conditions. Rates were higher for full-time employees (21% in 2007) than part-time employees (14%), and were also

higher for those with paid leave entitlements (23% in 2007) than those without paid leave entitlements (7%). The unionisation rates in all these groups fell between 1997 and 2007, most notably among people without leave entitlements (from 14% to 7%).

Endnotes

1 Cole, K 2007, *Workplace Relations in Australia,* Pearson Education, Australia.

2 Peetz, D 2002 'Individual contracts, bargaining and union membership', *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 39–52.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004 'Trade Union Membership', in *Australian Labour Market Statistics, April 2004,* cat. no. 6105.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005, 'Industrial relations', *Year Book Australia*, ABS, Canberra.

5 Wooden, M, and Sloan, J 1998, *Industrial relations reform and labour market outcomes: A comparison of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.* Paper presented at the Reserve Bank of Australia 1998 conference: Unemployment and the Australian Labour Market, 9–10 June 1998. Viewed 2 June 2008, <http://www.rba.gov.au/PublicationsAndResearch/Conferences/1998/WoodenSloan.pdf>.

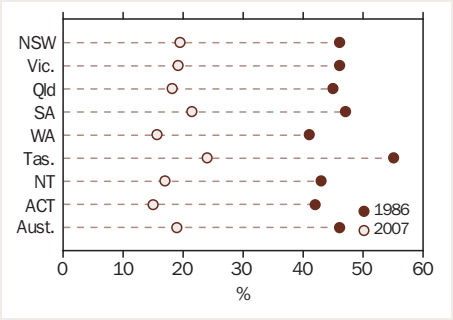
6 Blanchflower, DG 2007, 'International Patterns of Union Membership', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 1–28.

7 Visser, J 2006, 'Union membership statistics in 24 countries', *Monthly Labour Review*', January, pp. 38–49.

States and territories

The downward trend in unionisation since 1986 was reflected in each state and territory. The unionisation rate in Tasmania, which has the highest proportion of trade union members, fell from 55% in 1986 to 24% in 2007. By comparison, in the ACT, which has the lowest unionisation rate, the proportion of union members fell from 42% to 15% over the same period.

Unionisation rates: states and territories



Source: Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986 (ABS cat. no. 6325.0)*; Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2007* (ABS cat. no. 6310.0).

Industrial disputes

The number of industrial disputes per year decreased from 1,519 in 1987 to 135 in 2007.

Institutional, legislative and economic changes over the past twenty years have dramatically changed the industrial relations environment in Australia. The Prices and Incomes Accords between 1983 and 1996 fostered wage restraint and negotiation among employees, employers and governments outside formal industrial relations processes.[1] Since the early 1990s, there have been a range of legislative initiatives which affected the legal terms under which industrial action can take place, including how and when such action is lawful.[1] Following the economic downturn of the early 1990s, there has been a sustained period of prosperity characterised by strong employment growth and a decline in unemployment (see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, 'Work national and state summary tables' pp. 112–115).

These developments have coincided with a pronounced decline in the level of industrial disputation in Australia. Although there were some short term increases for particular years, the general downward trend is evident in both the number of disputes and in working days lost due to industrial disputation. (See also *Australian Social Trends 1996*, Industrial disputes, pp. 109–112.)

Industrial disputes

The number of industrial disputes per year decreased from 1,519 in 1987 to 135 in 2007. There was a large decline from the mid-1980s until 1997, when there were 447 disputes recorded. This coincided with a period of labour market deregulation, relatively high unemployment and high interest rates. The number of disputes per year then fluctuated between about 520 and 770 up until 2005, before falling to 135 in 2007.

While the large decline in industrial disputes was evident prior to the legislative changes of the last decade, changes to workplace relations legislation are relevant when considering trends in industrial disputes. The *Workplace Relations Act 1996* stipulated circumstances in which disputes were legally allowed and strengthened the powers of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) against illegal industrial action.[2]

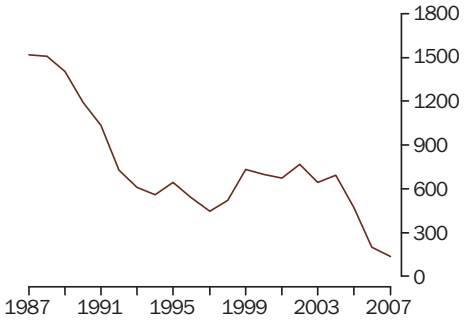
Data sources and definitions

Data for this article are from the ABS Industrial Disputes collection which is conducted monthly, with data released on a quarterly basis. Data presented are for disputes in the calendar year.

An *industrial dispute* is defined as a state of disagreement over an issue or group of issues between an employer and its employees, which results in employees ceasing work. Industrial disputes comprise strikes, which are a withdrawal from work by a group of employees; and lockouts, which are a refusal by an employer or group of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work.

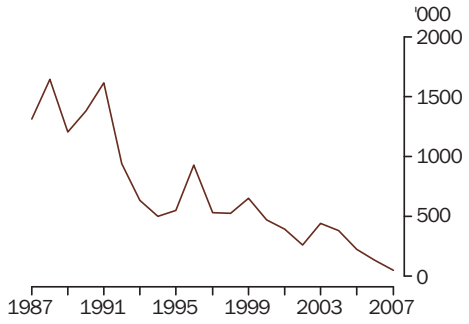
Working days lost refers to the number of working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute. For example, ten working days lost is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time which would have been worked during a stoppage of work by ten employees for one day, or by 40 workers attending a 2 hour stop work meeting (assuming they usually work an 8 hour day). Disputes which involve the equivalent of less than 10 working days lost are excluded from the collection.

Industrial disputes, number of disputes



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia, Dec 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

Industrial disputes, number of working days lost



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia, Dec 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

Under decentralised bargaining systems, disputes became lawful only during the bargaining period and not while an agreement was in place, except over Occupational Health and Safety issues.[3] *The Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005* made further changes to legal requirements and processes for industrial action, especially the necessity for a registered secret ballot to be undertaken by employees considering strike action.[1]

Working days lost

The number of working days lost due to industrial disputes provides an indication of the impact of industrial disputes on the total economy and on particular industries. In line with the fall in the number of industrial disputes, the number of working days lost also declined, from 1.3 million in 1987 to 50,000 in 2007. However, the reduction was somewhat volatile over the first half of the period, with major peaks of 1.6 million days lost in both 1988 and 1991, and 930,000 days lost in 1996. Since 1996, there has been a marked decline in the number of working days lost due to industrial disputes.

...by industry

Nearly one-third of total working days lost (32%) during the period 1987 to 2007 occurred in the Manufacturing industry, with the Metal products, Machinery and equipment industries accounting for 20% and other manufacturing industries 12%. Other industries with a high number of working days lost were Education, Health and community services (17% of total working days lost), Construction (16%) and Coal mining (14%).

Looking at the years in which working days lost peaked, the industry which contributed most to total working days lost in 1988 was Coal mining (470,000 days). Metal product, Machinery and equipment manufacturing (660,000 days) and Construction (330,000) contributed most to the peaks in working days lost in 1991 and 1996, respectively.

The industries with the highest number of working days lost in 2007 were Education, Health and community services (21,000 days).

Working days lost per thousand employees

Corresponding to the dramatic reduction in the overall number of working days lost, there was also a strong fall in the number of working days lost per thousand employees over the twenty years to 2007. Overall, the number of working days lost per thousand employees fell from 219 in 1987 to 5 in 2007.

The number of working days lost per thousand employees provides a measure of the relative impact of industrial disputes across industries and states. For example, whereas the Education, Health and community services industries accounted for 21,000 or 41% of the total working days lost in 2007, these industries had a lower rate of working days lost per thousand employees (11 days) than either Coal mining (139 days), Metal product, Machinery and equipment manufacturing (20 days), or Other manufacturing (12 days).

Changes to industrial relations legislation since the 1980s

There have been a number of changes to industrial relations legislation in Australia since the 1980s, resulting in increased deregulation of the labour market. Between 1983 and 1996 Prices and Income Accords (or Accords) were negotiated, covering a range of employment-related issues. The Accords contributed to wage restraint and facilitated a shift from collective bargaining at the national and industry level towards enterprise bargaining at the local workplace.[1]

The *Industrial Relations Reform Act 1993* provided further flexibility and allowed for collective bargaining without trade unions being involved. Awards which had been the means of negotiating employment conditions became the safety net for vulnerable workers.[1]

The introduction of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* led to further deregulation of the labour market, and increased the role of management in industrial relations.[1,4] Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) were introduced as a means of facilitating individual agreements between employers and employees.[4] The privatisation and corporatisation of public sector functions was promoted, and policies to foster the growth of part-time and casual employment were introduced.[1]

The *Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005* established the Australian Fair Pay Commission to set and adjust the federal minimum wage and award minimum classification wages. Unfair dismissal provisions for organisations with less than 100 employees were removed. Through this legislation, employers and employees were encouraged to resolve disputes at the workplace through the introduction of a dispute-settling procedure.[1]

A further amendment to the *Workplace Relations Act (Transition to Forward with Fairness)* was introduced to parliament in early 2008.

Industrial disputes by industry

Industry	Working days lost '000 1987	Working days lost '000 1997	Working days lost '000 2007	Working days lost per thousand employees no. 1987	Working days lost per thousand employees no. 1997	Working days lost per thousand employees no. 2007
Coal mining	291.8	95.7	3.4	7 844.2	4 094.4	139.4
Other mining	55.7	1.0	–	912.4	19.6	0.5
Metal product; Machinery and equipment manufacturing	199.6	77.0	7.5	465.8	190.5	20.3
Other manufacturing	195.4	68.6	7.6	296.9	106.8	11.9
Construction	194.6	107.8	6.8	605.2	288.1	10.1
Transport and storage; Communication services	92.6	47.7	1.9	206.3	103.4	3.2
Education; Health and community services	91.3	94.1	20.5	88.3	73.5	11.4
Other industries	191.1	42.1	2.2	64.0	11.1	0.4
All industries	**1 311.9**	**534.2**	**49.7**	**219.3**	**75.0**	**5.4**

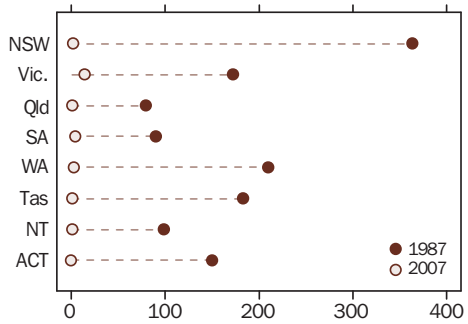
Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia, Dec 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

...by industry

Over the period 1987 to 2007, the decline in the number of working days lost per thousand employees was evident across all industries. Coal mining, which generally had the highest number of working days lost per thousand employees of all industries, recorded a fall from 7,800 working days lost per thousand employees in 1987 to 4,100 days in 1997 and 139 days in 2007. Over this period, there was also a dramatic fall in the working days lost per thousand employees in all other Mining industries combined, with a fall from 900 in 1987 to less than one day in 2007.

The data for Coal mining represent a fall from about 8 working days lost per employee in 1987 to around one hour lost per employee in 2007.

Working days lost per thousand employees by states and territories



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia, Dec 2007 (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

...states and territories

All states and territories experienced a reduction in the number of working days lost per thousand employees over the period 1987 to 2007, although the size of the decrease varied across the states. The largest decreases were in New South Wales, from 363 working days lost per thousand in 1987 to 2 in 2007, Western Australia (from 210 to 3) and Tasmania (from 183 to 1).

In 2007, Victoria had the highest number of working days lost per thousand employees (15), followed by South Australia (5).

Conclusion

Economic, institutional, and legislative changes have reshaped the Australian industrial landscape over the past two decades. This has coincided with a marked decline in industrial disputation.

Looking ahead, a range of economic and social factors will determine whether this trend continues into the future. For example, the strength of the economy and demand for labour will affect the relative bargaining power of employers and employees and may influence levels of disputation. Likewise, attitudes on the part of employers, employees and unions, and any future changes in legislation, are also likely to influence the level of industrial disputation.

Endnotes

1 Cole, K 2007, *Workplace Relations in Australia,* Pearson Education, Australia.

2 Reith, P, Minister for Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business 1999, *The Workplace Relations Act 1996 – Workplace Relations To Date, And Where To From Here?*, speech presented to Australian Mines and Metals Association, Hobart.

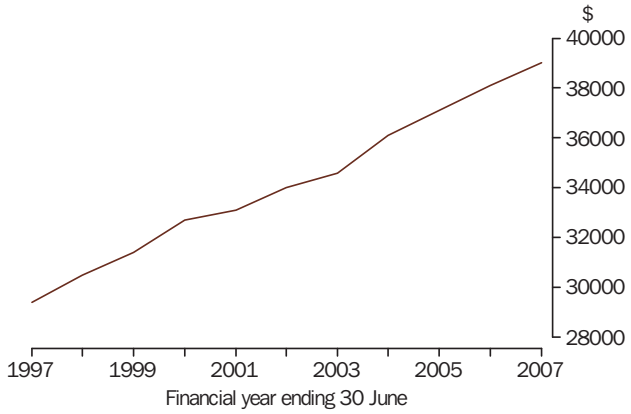
3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, 'Industrial Relations', *Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods*, cat. no. 6102.0.55.001, ABS, Canberra.

4 Balnave, N Brown, J Maconachie, G & Stone, R 2007, *Employment Relations in Australia*, John Wiley and Sons, Queensland.

Economic resources

Economic resources: national summary — key points

Real net national disposable income per person(a)

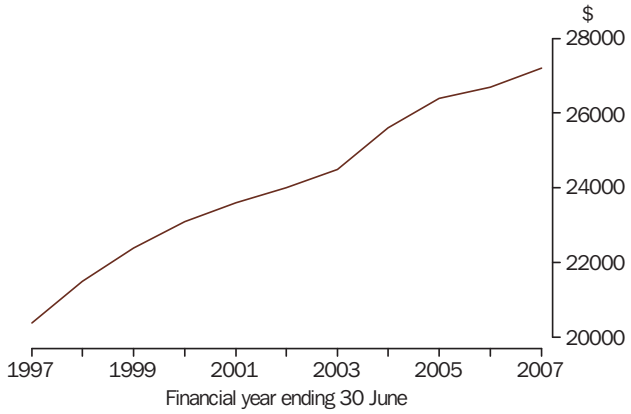


- Australia has experienced considerable growth in real income per person during the past decade.
- In 1996–97, the real net national disposable income per person was $29,400. By 2006–07, it had risen 33% to $39,000.
- Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, the real net national disposable income per person grew on average by 2.9% a year.

(a) Chain volume measure, reference year 2005–06.

Source: Australian System of National Accounts (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).
For further information see *Economic resources: national summary,* page 144, indicator 1.

Real household final consumption expenditure per person(a)

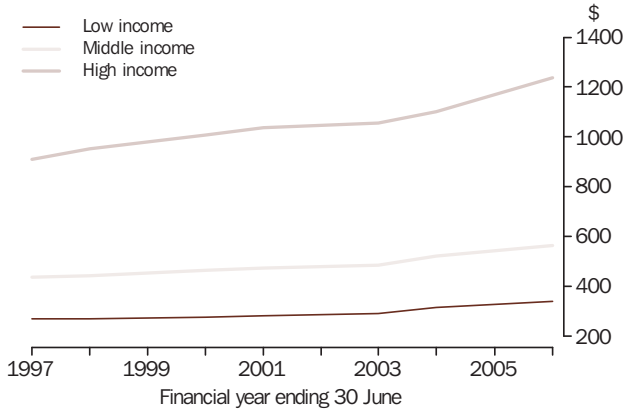


- Over the past decade, growth in real household final consumption expenditure per person has been quite strong.
- In 1996–97, the real household final consumption expenditure per person was $20,800. By 2006–07, it had risen to $27,200.
- Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, real household final consumption expenditure per person rose by 2.8% per year on average, with the largest annual growth rate of 5.4% coming in the year to 1997–98.

(a) Chain volume measure, reference year 2005–06.

Source: Australian System of National Accounts (ABS cat. no. 5204.0) and *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
For further information see *Economic resources: national summary*, page 145, indicator 47.

Mean weekly equivalised household income(a) for low, middle and high income groups(b)



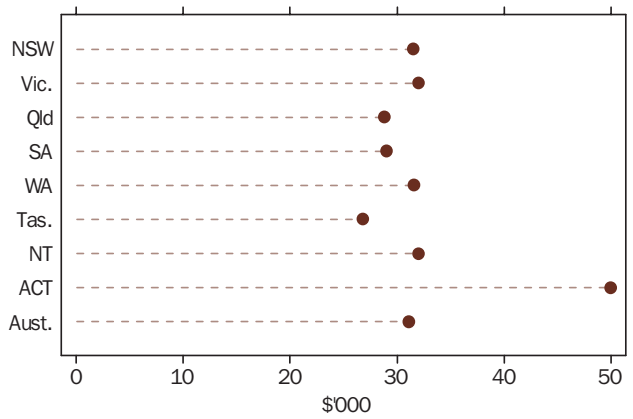
- Between 1996–97 and 2005–06, there was an increase in the mean real weekly equivalised household income for all income groups.
- Households in the low income group experienced a 26% increase in their mean weekly equivalised household income between 1996–97 and 2005–06. Households in the middle income group had a 29% increase.
- The highest income group experienced the largest proportional change, with a 36% increase in their mean real weekly equivalised household income.

(a) Values are given in 2005–06 dollars.
(b) Data are not available for 1998–99, 2001–02, 2004–05 and 2006–07.

Source: ABS Survey of Income and Housing.
For further information see *Economic resources: national summary*, page 144, indicators 19–22.

Economic resources: state summary — key points

Gross household disposable income per person — 2006–07(a)

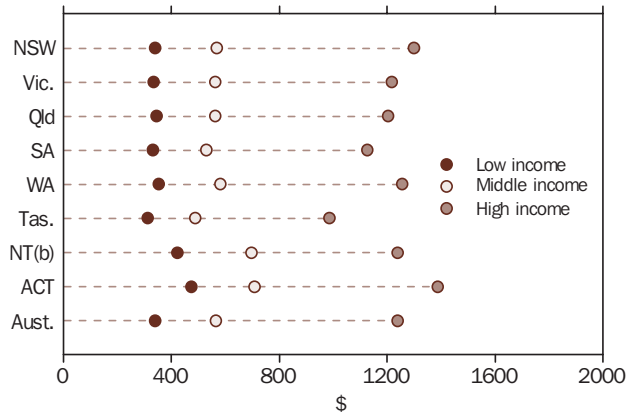


- In 2006–07, the Australian Capital Territory had a gross household disposable income per person of $49,900, the highest of all Australian states and territories. This was $18,800 higher than the Australian average of $31,100.
- The lowest gross household disposable income in 2006–07 was $26,800, recorded in Tasmania. This was $4,300 less than the Australian average.

(a) Financial year ending 30 June.

Source: Australian National Accounts: State Accounts (ABS cat. no. 5220.0).
For further information see *Economic resources: state summary,* page 146, indicator 2.

Mean weekly equivalised household income for selected groups — 2005–06(a)



- Of all Australian states and territories in 2005–06, the Australian Capital Territory recorded the highest mean weekly equivalised household income for all income groups.
- The high income group in the Australian Capital Territory received a mean weekly equivalised household income of $1,387 per week, while the low income group received $475 per week.
- In 2005–06, Tasmania recorded the lowest mean weekly equivalised household income for all income groups.
- The high income group in Tasmania received a mean weekly equivalised household income of $986 per week, while the low income group received $311 per week.

(a) Financial year ending 30 June.
(b) Estimates for the Northern Territory refer mainly to urban areas and should be used with caution.

Source: ABS Survey of Income and Housing.
For further information see *Economic resources: state summary,* page 146, indicators 19–22.

Economic resources: national summary

	INCOME AND PRICES	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1	Real net national disposable income per person(a)	$'000	r29.4	r30.5	r31.4	r32.7	r33.1	r34.0	r34.6	r36.1	r37.1	r38.1	39.0
3	Real GDP per person(a)	$'000	r38.2	r39.6	r41.2	r42.3	r42.6	r43.6	r44.5	r45.7	r46.4	r47.1	48.0
	Weekly earnings												
5	Average weekly total cash earnings – all employees	$	n.a.	610	n.a.	653	n.a.	r712	n.a.	r777	n.a.	852	n.a.
6	Average weekly ordinary time cash earnings of full-time adult non-managerial employees	$	n.a.	692	n.a.	737	n.a.	r815	n.a.	r890	n.a.	989	n.a.
7	Female/male ratio of mean weekly ordinary time cash earnings of full-time adult non-managerial employees	ratio	n.a.	0.89	n.a.	0.90	n.a.	0.89	n.a.	0.90	n.a.	0.88	n.a.
8	Full weekly benefit received by a single age pensioner	$	r174	r177	r181	r186	r201	211	220	232	238	250	263
9	Full weekly benefit received by a couple with two children	$	386	393	397	405	445	465	482	496	531	545	562
10	Wage price index(b)	index	n.a.	82.2	84.8	87.3	90.3	93.3	96.5	100.0	103.8	108.1	112.4
11	Consumer price index(c)(d)	index	120.3	120.3	121.8	124.7	132.2	136.0	140.2	143.5	147.0	151.7	156.1

	INCOME DISTRIBUTION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Disposable household income												
	Mean weekly income of selected households(e)												
12	Lone person aged under 35 years	$	r554	r527	n.a.	r573	r583	n.a.	r570	r601	n.a.	665	n.a.
13	Couple only, reference person aged under 35	$	r1 098	r1 108	n.a.	r1 231	r1 186	n.a.	r1 242	r1 307	n.a.	1 333	n.a.
14	Couple with dependent children	$	r1 069	r1 137	n.a.	r1 160	r1 219	n.a.	r1 206	r1 343	n.a.	1 504	n.a.
15	One parent with dependent children	$	r601	r618	n.a.	r650	r658	n.a.	r653	r710	n.a.	786	n.a.
16	Couple only, reference person aged 65 and over	$	r556	r528	n.a.	r563	r553	n.a.	r586	r632	n.a.	688	n.a.
17	Lone person aged 65 and over	$	r295	r298	n.a.	r328	r314	n.a.	r329	r370	n.a.	363	n.a.
18	All households	$	r847	r867	n.a.	r901	r908	n.a.	r921	r974	n.a.	1 066	n.a.
	Mean weekly equivalised household income for selected groups of persons(e)												
19	Low income	$	r270	r272	n.a.	r276	r282	n.a.	r292	r317	n.a.	341	n.a.
20	Middle income	$	r437	r445	n.a.	r464	r475	n.a.	r486	r521	n.a.	565	n.a.
21	High income	$	r912	r954	n.a.	r1 008	r1 037	n.a.	r1 056	r1 100	n.a.	1 239	n.a.
22	All households	$	r491	r504	n.a.	r526	r539	n.a.	r552	r585	n.a.	644	n.a.
	Ratio of equivalised household incomes of persons at top of selected income percentiles												
23	P90/P10	ratio	3.66	3.77	n.a.	3.89	r3.97	n.a.	4.00	r3.75	n.a.	3.92	n.a.
24	P80/P20	ratio	r2.54	2.56	n.a.	2.64	2.63	n.a.	2.63	r2.50	n.a.	2.55	n.a.
25	P80/P50	ratio	1.56	1.56	n.a.	1.57	1.56	n.a.	1.57	r1.51	n.a.	1.54	n.a.
26	P20/P50	ratio	r0.61	0.61	n.a.	0.59	0.59	n.a.	0.60	0.61	n.a.	0.60	n.a.
	Share of total equivalised income received by persons with:												
27	Low income	%	11.0	10.8	n.a.	10.5	10.5	n.a.	10.6	r10.8	n.a.	10.6	n.a.
28	High income	%	37.1	37.9	n.a.	38.4	38.5	n.a.	38.3	r37.6	n.a.	38.5	n.a.
29	Gini coefficient of equivalised income	ratio	0.292	0.303	n.a.	0.310	0.311	n.a.	0.309	r0.297	n.a.	0.307	n.a.

Economic resources: national summary cont.

	SOURCES OF INCOME	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Main source of income – of all households												
30	Wages and salaries	%	56.3	56.8	n.a.	56.7	56.9	n.a.	58.0	57.5	n.a.	59.3	n.a.
31	Own business or partnership	%	6.6	6.0	n.a.	6.4	6.4	n.a.	6.2	6.0	n.a.	6.1	n.a.
32	Government pensions and allowances	%	28.6	28.5	n.a.	28.7	28.3	n.a.	26.6	27.7	n.a.	26.1	n.a.
33	Other	%	7.6	7.7	n.a.	7.3	7.3	n.a.	8.1	8.2	n.a.	8.0	n.a.
	Income support												
34	Social assistance benefits in cash to residents as a proportion of GDP	%	8.4	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.7	8.5	8.2	8.6	8.4	r8.1	7.9
	Main source of income is government pensions and allowances – proportion of all households in selected groups												
35	Lone person aged under 35 years	%	15.6	16.3	n.a.	17.2	13.7	n.a.	10.3	12.9	n.a.	10.8	n.a.
36	Couple only, reference person aged under 35	%	*2.6	*3.6	n.a.	*2.6	*2.8	n.a.	3.4	*2.0	n.a.	*2.0	n.a.
37	Couple with dependent children	%	10.6	10.3	n.a.	10.7	9.1	n.a.	8.7	7.7	n.a.	6.9	n.a.
38	One parent with dependent children	%	58.7	54.3	n.a.	53.1	53.0	n.a.	48.9	54.2	n.a.	50.9	n.a.
39	Couple only, reference person aged 65 and over	%	65.2	65.9	n.a.	70.1	71.7	n.a.	66.4	66.9	n.a.	67.6	n.a.
40	Lone person aged 65 and over	%	80.0	77.9	n.a.	79.8	79.2	n.a.	79.9	76.5	n.a.	77.6	n.a.
	Recipients of selected government payments												
41	Labour market program allowance(f)	'000	798.0	837.6	778.7	697.8	666.9	635.9	599.8	567.8	533.2	513.7	486.5
42	Single-parent payment	'000	358.9	372.3	382.3	391.4	416.7	427.8	437.0	449.3	450.8	433.4	395.5
43	Disability support pension(g)	'000	527.5	553.3	577.7	602.3	623.9	658.9	673.3	696.7	706.8	712.2	714.2
44	Age pension(g)	'000	1 680	1 683	1 716	1 730	1 786	1 811	1 854	1 870	1 915	1 922	1 953
45	Age pensioners – of persons of qualifying age	%	64.4	65.4	65.5	65.9	65.8	66.2	66.3	67.4	66.3	66.0	66.2
46	Females – of all age pensioners	%	64.4	63.5	63.1	62.1	61.6	59.6	59.4	59.5	59.1	58.4	58.2

	EXPENDITURE AND WEALTH	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
47	Real household final consumption expenditure per person(a)	$'000	r20.8	r21.5	r22.4	r23.1	r23.6	r24.0	r24.5	r25.6	r26.4	r26.7	27.2
48	Real national net worth per person(a)	$'000	232.3	235.9	238.5	242.8	243.1	246.8	248.2	251.1	252.8	254.8	254.2

(a) Chain volume measure, reference year 2005–06.

(b) Series is total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses; base of index: 2003–04 = 100.0.

(c) Base of index: 1989–90 = 100.0.

(d) Data refer to the weighted average of the eight state and territory capital cities.

(e) Series updated to adjust for movements in the Consumer Price Index. As a result, the series show real values based on the most recent data point (in this case, 2005–06).

(f) Data includes current Newstart and Youth Allowance (other) customers from 1999. From 2001 the Newstart component of the data excludes CDEP participants and those who did not receive a payment.

(g) Includes payments to people living overseas.

Reference periods: All data are for the financial year ending 30 June except:
Data for indicators 5–7 are at May.
Data for indicators 8–9 and 41–46 and 47–48 are at June.

Economic resources: state summary

	INCOME AND PRICES	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
2	Gross household disposable income per person(a)	$'000	2006–07	31.5	32.0	28.8	29.0	31.6	26.8	32.0	49.9	31.1
4	Real gross state income per person(b)	$'000	2006–07	47.4	46.8	45.7	42.9	64.8	41.7	65.3	62.4	48.6
	Weekly earnings											
5	Average weekly total cash earnings – all employees	$	2006	879	833	824	780	912	744	908	965	852
6	Average weekly ordinary time cash earnings of full-time adult non-managerial employees	$	2006	1 013	967	945	922	1 096	902	995	1 050	989
7	Female/male ratio of mean weekly ordinary time cash earnings of full-time adult non-managerial employees	ratio	2006	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.95	0.79	0.94	0.89	0.95	0.88
10	Wage price index(c)	index	2006–07	111.9	111.8	113.3	111.6	114.1	113.1	112.4	113.1	112.4

	INCOME DISTRIBUTION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Disposable household income											
	Mean weekly income of selected households											
12	Lone person aged under 35 years	$	2005–06	721	619	731	606	631	460	778	703	665
13	Couple only, reference person aged under 35	$	2005–06	1 376	1 269	1 426	1 213	1 268	1 244	1 358	1 365	1 333
14	Couple with dependent children	$	2005–06	1 583	1 477	1 427	1 352	1 544	1 274	1 565	1 832	1 504
15	One parent with dependent children	$	2005–06	810	715	850	756	809	730	830	822	786
16	Couple only, reference person aged 65 and over	$	2005–06	721	664	639	734	661	669	509	841	688
17	Lone person aged 65 and over	$	2005–06	362	364	371	358	349	322	257	637	363
18	All households	$	2005–06	1 114	1 055	1 050	957	1 053	871	1 303	1 298	1 066
	Mean weekly equivalised household income for selected groups of persons											
19	Low income	$	2005–06	339	334	345	332	354	311	422	475	341
20	Middle income	$	2005–06	569	563	562	529	581	488	697	707	565
21	High income	$	2005–06	1 298	1 217	1 204	1 125	1 255	986	1 238	1 387	1 239
22	All households	$	2005–06	660	635	632	605	658	546	724	786	644
	Ratio of equivalised household incomes of persons at top of selected income percentiles											
23	P90/P10	ratio	2005–06	4.11	3.89	3.70	3.67	3.84	3.42	3.45	3.42	3.92
24	P80/P20	ratio	2005–06	2.62	2.56	2.45	2.48	2.50	2.40	2.42	2.18	2.55
25	P80/P50	ratio	2005–06	1.57	1.52	1.50	1.56	1.53	1.52	1.52	1.46	1.54
26	P20/P50	ratio	2005–06	0.60	0.59	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.63	0.63	0.67	0.60
	Share of total equivalised household income received by persons with:											
27	Low income	%	2005–06	10.3	10.5	10.9	11.0	10.8	11.4	12.0	12.1	10.6
28	High income	%	2005–06	39.3	38.4	38.0	37.3	38.1	36.2	34.3	35.4	38.5
29	Gini coefficient of equivalised income	ratio	2005–06	0.317	0.306	0.301	0.291	0.303	0.273	0.252	0.268	0.307

Economic resources: state summary continued

	SOURCES OF INCOME	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	Main source of income – of all households(a)											
30	Wages and salaries	%	2005–06	59.3	58.9	60.0	55.1	61.0	52.8	78.6	68.0	59.3
31	Own business or partnership	%	2005–06	6.0	5.7	6.4	5.4	7.3	6.5	*6.0	*4.0	6.1
32	Government pensions and allowances	%	2005–06	25.7	26.8	25.9	31.2	23.8	31.5	*10.9	14.3	26.1
33	Other	%	2005–06	8.6	8.3	7.0	7.7	7.2	8.5	*4.6	13.3	8.0
	Income support											
	Main source of income is government pensions and allowances – proportion of all households in selected groups(a)											
37	Couple with dependent children	%	2005–06	6.5	6.9	7.6	9.7	5.5	11.2	n.p.	n.p.	6.9
38	One parent with dependent children	%	2005–06	48.6	60.0	46.5	48.9	44.8	54.2	n.p.	n.p.	50.9
39	Couple only, reference person aged 65 and over	%	2005–06	66.3	67.1	70.9	72.0	70.1	60.4	n.p.	n.p.	67.6
40	Lone person aged 65 and over	%	2005–06	78.9	77.2	76.8	76.8	80.3	78.6	n.p.	n.p.	77.6
	Recipients of selected government payments											
41	Labour market program allowance(d)(e)	'000	2007	170.9	118.1	88.7	42.9	32.4	17.5	11.2	3.9	486.5
42	Single-parent payment(e)	'000	2007	128.8	89.6	85.0	31.7	37.5	11.6	5.3	4.0	395.5
43	Disability support pension(e)	'000	2007	227.0	169.7	135.9	68.2	58.5	24.9	6.3	6.9	714.2
44	Age pension(e)	'000	2007	633	494	345	178	166	54	7	18	1 953
45	Age pensioners – of persons of qualifying age	%	2007	63.1	66.0	62.9	69.5	62.1	69.9	56.9	50.8	66.2
46	Females – of all age pensioners	%	2007	58.9	59.0	57.7	59.2	58.8	58.1	53.8	61.4	58.2

	EXPENDITURE AND WEALTH	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
47	Real household final consumption expenditure per person(b)	$'000	2006–07	28.3	27.8	25.7	25.6	26.5	23.9	28.1	33.6	27.2

(a) Estimates for Northern Territory relate mainly to urban areas.

(b) Chain volume measure, reference year 2005–06.

(c) Series is total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses; base of index: 2003–04 = 100.0.

(d) Data includes current Newstart and Youth Allowance (other) customers. Newstart component of data excludes CDEP participants and those who did not receive a payment.

(e) Components do not add to Australian total because total for Australia includes payments to people living overseas and where valid geographic data were not available.

Reference periods: All data are for the financial year ending 30 June except:
Data for indicators 5–7 are at May.
Data for indicators 41–46 and 47–48 are at June.

Economic resources: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1, 3, 4, 34	*Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).
2	*Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5220.0).
5–7	*Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).
8–9	*A Guide to Australian Government Payments*, Centrelink.
10	*Labour Price Index, Australia, September Quarter* (ABS cat. no. 6345.0).
11	*Consumer Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).
12–33, 35–40	ABS Survey of Income and Housing.
41	National data are from Department of Social Security Annual Reports 1997, *Labour Market and Related Payments* (July 2002 edition, which contains revised data for June 1998) and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data 1999–2007. State data are from Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data 1999–2007.
42–43	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data.
44, 46	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs administrative data.
45	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs administrative data and ABS Estimated resident population.
47–48	ABS Australian System of National Accounts and ABS Estimated resident population.

Economic resources: definitions

Adult employees

employees aged 21 years and over, and those under 21 years who are paid at the full adult rate for their occupation.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Age pension recipients

people receiving full or partial Age pension excluding associated Wife's or Carer's pension. The qualifying age for Age pension eligibility for men is 65 years. Between 1 July 1995 and 2014, the qualifying age for women is gradually being raised from 60 to 65 years. At 30 June 2007 the qualifying age for women was 63 years.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *Customers: a statistical overview*.

Age pensioners — of persons of qualifying age

the number of Age pension recipients as a proportion of the estimated resident population (ERP) of people who meet the age requirements for the Age pension. In the years where the age requirement for women was a number of years plus six months the ERP was prorated.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Average weekly ordinary time cash earnings

total weekly ordinary time cash earnings of employees (payment for award, standard or agreed hours of work, including allowances, penalty payments, payments by measured result and regular bonuses or commission), divided by the number of employees. Amounts salary sacrificed are also included. Excluded are non-cash components of salary packages, overtime payments, and payments not related to the survey reference period, such as retrospective pay, pay in advance, leave loadings, and severance pay and termination and redundancy payments.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Average weekly total cash earnings

weekly total cash earnings of employees (regular wages and salaries in cash, including amounts salary sacrificed, which is equal to weekly ordinary time cash earnings plus weekly overtime cash earnings), divided by the number of employees.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Chain volume measures

are obtained by linking together (i.e. compounding) movements in volumes, calculated using the average price of the previous financial year, and applying the compounded movements to the current price estimates of the reference year.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (ABS cat. no. 5216.0).

Consumer price index

a measure of change over time in the retail price of a constant basket of goods and services which is representative of consumption patterns of all private households in the eight capital cities.

Reference: *Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (ABS cat. no. 6461.0).

Couple

two people in a registered or de facto marriage, who usually live in the same household.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Couple only household

a household which contains a couple and no other people.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Couple with dependent children household

a one-family household comprising a couple with at least one dependent child. The household may also include non-dependent children, other relatives and unrelated individuals.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Dependent children

children under 15 years of age and full-time students, aged 15 to 24 years, who have a parent in the household and do not have a partner or child of their own in the household.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Economic resources: definitions continued

Disability support pension recipients

people receiving a pension on the basis of an assessed permanent physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment and on their continuing inability to work or be retrained to work 30 hours or more per week within the next two years, or 15 hours per week as from 1 July 2006.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Disposable income

gross income less income tax and the Medicare levy.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Employees

people who worked for a private or public employer and received pay for the reference period in the form of wages or salaries, a commission while also receiving a retainer, tips, piece rates or payment in kind. People who operated their own incorporated business with or without hiring employees were also included as employees.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Equivalised income

equivalising adjusts actual income to take account of the different needs of households of different size and composition. There are economic advantages associated with living with others, because household resources, especially housing, can be shared. The equivalence scale used to obtain equivalised incomes is that used in studies by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and is referred to as the 'modified OECD scale'. The scale gives a weight of 1.0 to the first adult in the household, a weight of 0.5 for each additional adult (people aged 15 years and over) and a weight of 0.3 for each child. For each household, the weights for household members are added together to form the household weight. The total household income is then divided by the household weight to give an income that a lone person household would need for a similar standard of living.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Full-time non-managerial employees

employees who are 21 years or over, and employees under 21 years old who are paid at the full adult rate for their occupation, who normally work the agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation. If agreed or award hours do not apply, employees are regarded as full-time if they usually work 35 hours or more per week. Non-managerial employees are not in charge of a significant number of employees and do not have strategic responsibilities in the conduct or operations of the organisation. They also exclude professionally qualified staff who primarily perform managerial tasks in conjunction with using their professional skills, and working proprietors and working directors of their own incorporated businesses, who are regarded as managerial employees.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Full-time employees

employees who normally work the agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation. If agreed or award hours do not apply, employees are regarded as full-time if they usually work 35 hours or more per week.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Full weekly benefit received by a single age pensioner

the amount paid to a single age pensioner, who passes the income and asset test for the full basic rate, excluding all allowances.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Full weekly benefit received by a couple with two children

the maximum weekly social security benefit available to an unemployed couple with two children (one aged under 5 years and one aged 5 years or over but under 13 years). The calculation for 2007 includes unemployment benefits for each partner (currently Newstart), Family Tax Benefit Part A (excluding supplement) for each child and Family Tax Benefit Part B (excluding supplement) for the family. This calculation excludes any rent assistance which may be available.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

GDP (gross domestic product)

total market value of goods and services produced in Australia within a given period after deducting the cost of goods and services used up in the process of production but before deducting allowances for the consumption of fixed capital.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).

Gini coefficient

a measure for assessing inequality of income distribution. The measure, expressed as a ratio that is always between 0 and 1, is low for populations with relatively equal income distributions and high for populations with relatively unequal income distributions.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Government pensions and allowances

income support payments from government under social security and related government programs. Included are pensions and allowances received by aged, unemployed and sick people, families and children, veterans or their survivors, and study allowances for students.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Gross household disposable income per person

gross household disposable income, as measured in the Australian System of National Accounts, is gross household income less income tax payable, other current taxes on income, wealth etc., consumer debt interest, interest payable by unincorporated enterprises, net non-life insurance premiums and other current transfers payable by households. The population used is the estimated resident population for the financial year.

Reference: *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5220.0).

Gross income

cash receipts (including salary sacrificed income), that are of a regular and recurring nature, before income tax or any other deductions are made.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

High income persons

persons in the 9th and 10th income deciles after being ranked by their equivalised disposable household income.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Household

a person living alone or a group of related or unrelated people who usually live in the same private dwelling.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Labour market program allowance recipients

the number of recipients of Newstart Allowance in 1997 and 1998; and Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance for job seekers [referred to as Youth Allowance (other)] from 1999. From 2001, the Newstart component of the data excludes CDEP participants and those who did not receive a payment.

Reference: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Economic resources: definitions continued

Lone-person household

a household which consists of a person living alone.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Low income persons

persons in the 2nd and 3rd income deciles after being ranked by their equivalised disposable household income.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Main source of income

that source from which the most positive income is received. If total income is nil or negative the principal source is undefined.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Mean weekly income

the sum of the weekly income of all households or people in a population, divided by the number of households or people in the population.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Middle income persons

persons in the 5th and 6th income deciles after being ranked by their equivalised disposable household income.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

National net worth per person

represents the difference between the stock of assets (both financial and non-financial) and the stock of liabilities (including shares and other equity) as at 30 June. The measure is expressed in Australian dollars using current price measures, and is based on the estimated resident population as at 30 June.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).

One parent with dependent children household

a one-family household comprising a lone parent with at least one dependent child. The household may also include non-dependent children, other relatives and unrelated individuals.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Ordinary time hours paid for

award, standard or agreed hours of work, paid for at the ordinary time rate. Included are stand-by or reporting time which are part of standard hours of work, and that part of annual leave, paid sick leave and long service leave taken during the reference period.

Reference: *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0).

Own business or partnership income

the profit or loss that accrues to people as owners of, or partners in, unincorporated businesses. Profit/loss consists of the value of the gross output of the business after the deduction of operating expenses (including depreciation). Losses occur when operating expenses are greater than gross receipts.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Percentiles

when people are ranked from the lowest to the highest on the basis of some characteristic such as their equivalised household income, they can then be divided into equal sized groups. Division into 100 groups gives percentiles. The highest value of the characteristic in the tenth percentile is denoted P10. The median or the top of the 50th percentile is denoted P50. P20, P80 and P90 denote the highest values in the 20th, 80th and 90th percentiles.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Ratio of incomes

the ratio is calculated by dividing the highest value in a selected percentile by the highest value in a second selected percentile (see percentiles). For example, in 2005–06, the person at the top of the 80th percentile for Australia when ranked by equivalised disposable income had an equivalised disposable household income of $867. If this is divided by the equivalised disposable household weekly income of the person at the top of the 20th percentile ($340), the result is 2.55.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Real GDP (gross domestic product)

Is GDP at market prices, adjusted for price changes. The ABS measures real GDP using chain volume estimates. Chain volume estimates of GDP are derived by revaluing current price, income-based estimates of GDP, using deflators which are calculated from the expenditure components of the series concerned.

Reference: *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0).

Real household final consumption expenditure per capita

household final consumption expenditure is expenditure on goods and services by people and non-profit institutions serving households. Spending on the maintenance of dwellings is excluded, as is spending by unincorporated businesses and spending on assets by non-profit institutions. However, personal expenditure on motor vehicles and other durable goods and the imputed rent of owner-occupied dwellings are included, along with the value of 'backyard' production (including food produced and consumed on farms) and the payment of wages and salaries in kind (e.g. food and lodging supplied free to employees). The measure is expressed in Australian dollars using chain volume measures, reference year 2005–06, and is based on the estimated resident population of each financial year.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).

Real net national disposable income per capita

real net national disposable income is a broad measure of economic wellbeing which adjusts the chain volume measure of GDP for the terms of trade effect, real net incomes from overseas (primary and secondary) and consumption of fixed capital. The population estimates are based on data published in the quarterly publication *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0) and ABS projections.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).

Reference person

the reference person for each household is chosen by applying to all household members aged 15 years and over the selection criteria below in the order listed, until a single appropriate reference person is identified:

- the person with the highest tenure when ranked as follows: owner without a mortgage, owner with a mortgage, renter, other tenure (for periods up to 2003 only),
- one of the partners in a registered or de facto marriage, with dependent children
- one of the partners in a registered or de facto marriage, without dependent children
- a lone parent with dependent children
- the person with the highest income
- the eldest person.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Single-parent payment recipients

the number of lone parents receiving Parenting Payment (Single). Prior to March 1998, this was known as the 'Sole Parent Pension'.

Reference: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Economic resources: definitions continued

Social assistance benefits in cash to residents

includes current transfers to people from general government in return for which no services are rendered or goods supplied. Principal components include: scholarships; maternity, sickness and unemployment benefits; child endowment and family allowances; and widows', age, invalid and repatriation pensions.

Reference: *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0).

Wage price index

the total hourly rates of pay index excluding bonuses measures quarterly change in combined ordinary time and overtime hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses.

Bonuses are payments made to a job occupant that are in addition to regular wages and salaries and which generally relate to the job occupant's, or the organisation's performance. Base period for index is 2003–04 = 100.0.

Reference: *Labour Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6345.0).

Wages and salaries

the gross cash income received as a return to labour from an employer or from a person's own incorporated business. Salary sacrificed income is regarded as cash or 'near cash' income and is included in the scope of wages and salaries.

Reference: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia (*ABS cat. no. 6523.0).

Women's incomes

Contributed by Siobhan Austen (Curtin University of Technology) and Gerry Redmond (Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales).

During the last decade women's relative economic position, as measured by their share of total gross personal income, has remained largely unchanged.

The last 25 years have seen substantial changes in women's economic circumstances. In particular, the proportion of women earning their own incomes has risen, and levels of economic autonomy experienced by women have increased. Many of these changes have been associated with improvements in women's educational qualifications, training and work-related experience.

In 1982, women aged 18–64 years received 31% of all income received by men and women in this age group. By 2005–06 this share had increased to 38%. However, nearly all of the increase in women's share of total income occurred in the 13 years from 1982 to 1995–96, while in the decade to 2005–06 women's share of total income changed little. (See also *Australian Social Trends 2001,* Women's incomes, pp. 153–156.)

Women's position in the distribution of personal income

The living standards of the many Australian women who live with their partner, their parents, or in other shared living arrangements are influenced by the level of household income as well as their own income. Nevertheless, across all household types it is important to measure women's individual incomes, as well as family or household income. This is because personal income is an important determinant of each individual's economic autonomy within the household and household income is not always equally shared between all household members. Furthermore, women's ability to support themselves and their children when family circumstances change (for example as a result of divorce or death of a partner) will be significantly influenced by their access to a source of income.

One commonly used measure of the distribution of income between the sexes is the proportion of men and women in each personal income quintile. A quintile is derived by ranking the population (here, all people aged 18–64 years) from lowest to highest income, and dividing it into five equal groups. The lowest quintile is made up of the 20% of the population with the lowest income.

If there were no inequality in the incomes of men and women, then each quintile group would contain equal proportions of each sex, with 20% of men and 20% of women located in each quintile group. This is not the case in Australia (or in other countries) as women are over-represented in the lowest income quintiles and under-represented in the highest quintiles. In 2005–06, for example,

Data sources and definitions

Data in this article are drawn from the ABS Survey of Income and Housing (SIH) and Labour Force Survey.

This article looks at people aged 18–64 years.

Gross personal income comprises income from all sources (government pensions and allowances, earnings, investment income, and private cash transfers) attributed to individuals before income tax or the Medicare levy are deducted.

Government pensions and allowances are income support payments from government to people under social security and related government programs. These include unemployment payments, the disability support pension, family allowance and family tax benefit.

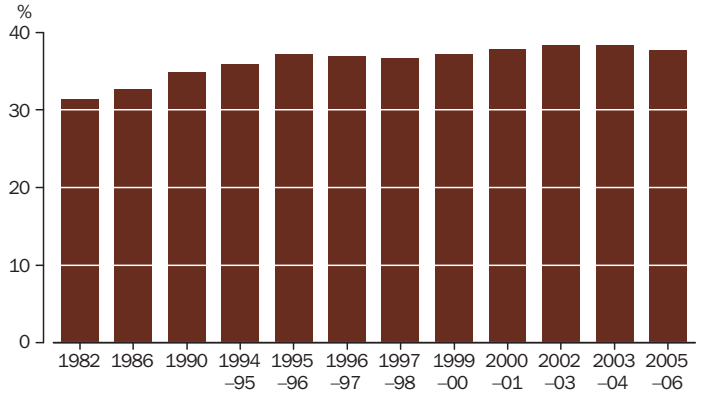
Earnings comprise regular and recurring cash receipts from wages and salaries together with profit/loss from an individual's own unincorporated business.

Investment income comprises interest, rent, dividends and royalties.

Private cash transfers include superannuation, regular workers' compensation, income from annuities, child support, and other transfers from other households.

Private income comprises earnings, investments, income and private cash transfers.

Women's income as a proportion of total income(a)(b)



(a) Gross personal income of persons aged 18–64 years.
(b) From 1982 to 1990, income surveys were run in the last quarter of that calendar year. From 1994–95 they were conducted throughout the financial year.

Source: ABS Surveys of Income and Housing.

25% of women were in the bottom quintile while only 11% of women were in the top quintile. The pattern for men was the opposite: 29% of men were in the top quintile and only 15% were in the bottom quintile.

While there was significant growth in real incomes (i.e. income adjusted to remove the effects of price change) during the decade between 1995–96 and 2005–06, there was very little change in the distribution of men and women across the gross personal income quintiles.

In comparison, the years between 1982 and 1995–96 were associated with substantial shifts in the distribution of men and women across the gross income groups. The proportion of women in the bottom quintile fell from 33% to 25% over the period and the proportion of women in the top two quintiles combined rose from 20% to 27%. For men, the change was in the opposite direction: the proportion of men in the bottom quintile more than doubled – from 7% to 15% – while the proportion of men in the top two quintiles fell from almost 60% to 53%.

...sources of change

The amount people earn from employment is a key factor influencing most people's incomes (see also *Australian Social Trends 2005*, Female/male earnings, pp. 150–155). Other factors, such as receipt of government pensions and allowances, or private income from, for example, investments, also affect personal incomes. However, the influence of these factors is smaller, on average, than the influence of earnings from employment.

The decade to 2005–06 saw substantial growth in women's employment. According to the Labour Force Survey, the proportion of women aged 18–64 years in employment (full and part-time combined) rose from 61% in December 1995 to 67% in December 2005.

Measuring women's incomes

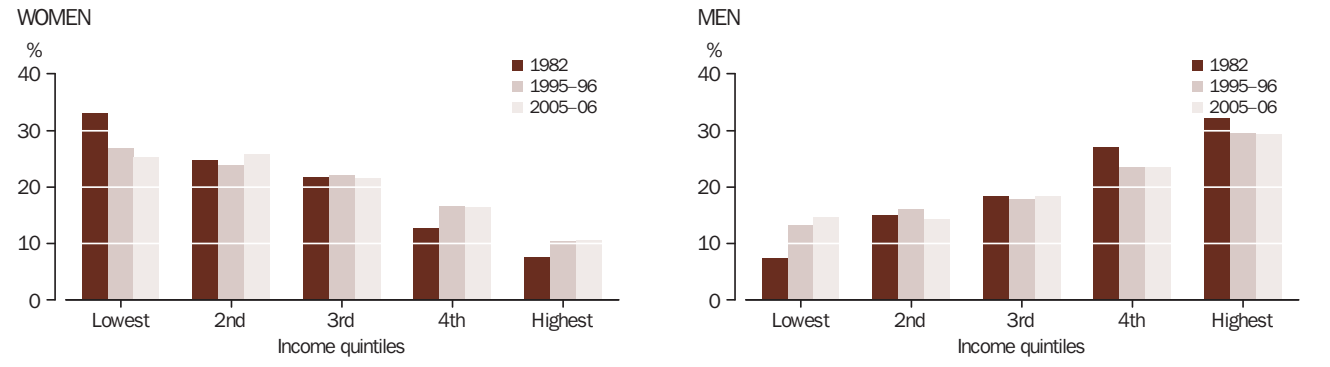
The ABS Survey of Income and Housing is conducted by personal interview and includes instructions to optimise the consistency of responses. Nevertheless, there may be inconsistencies in the way income is reported by household members and therefore assigned to men and women. For example, the value of government family benefits is assigned to the member of the couple who reports these benefits. In some cases, this person may not be the one who actually received them. Investment income may be understood as received by one member of a couple in some households and as jointly received in others.

In this article the analysis of women's incomes is on a gross basis. On a net (after tax and Medicare levy) basis, women's incomes as a percentage of total personal incomes are about two percentage points higher than as recorded on a gross basis. The improved relative outcome for women on a net income basis reflects lower marginal tax rates, on average, payable on lower earnings and investment incomes, and a higher proportion of their incomes derived from tax exempt government benefit income, such as family tax benefit. While the share of total gross personal income received by women aged 18–64 years rose 1.6% between 1995–96 and 2005–06, on a net basis it rose 2.1%.

This continued an upwards trend that was apparent from at least December 1982, when the proportion of women in employment was only 48%. One reason the substantial growth in women's employment did not translate into an improvement in their relative position in terms of the distribution of gross income was that the proportion of men in employment also rose slightly over the decade, from 80% to 82%.

Another reason why the growth in women's employment did not translate into improvements in their position on the distribution of gross income during the last decade is that employment growth was concentrated in part-time jobs. The proportion of women employed in part-time jobs rose

Proportion of women and men aged 18–64 years in gross personal income quintiles



Source: ABS 1982, 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

Labour force status of women and men aged 18–64 years(a)

	Women			Men		
	1982	*1995*	*2005*	*1982*	*1995*	*2005*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employed	48.3	61.4	67.0	82.0	80.2	82.0
Full-time	31.1	36.8	38.2	78.4	73.6	72.4
Part-time	17.2	24.6	28.8	3.6	6.6	9.6
Not employed(b)	51.7	38.6	33.0	18.0	19.8	18.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

(a) At December.
(b) Includes persons who are unemployed or not in the labour force.

Source: ABS *Labour Force Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery* (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).

from 25% to 29% over the decade to December 2005 while full-time employment remained steady at around 37%. Similarly for men, part-time employment increased slightly (from 7% to 10%) and the proportion in full-time employment remained fairly stable (at about 73%).

In contrast, women's position in the distribution of gross incomes changed considerably between 1982 and 1995–96. This was associated with the growing representation of women in both the part and full-time workforces, and a decline in full-time employment by men. In the 13 years from December 1982 to December 1995, the proportion of women in full-time work increased from 31% to 37%, and the proportion in part-time work rose from 17% to 25%. In comparison, the proportion of men in full-time employment declined from 78% to 74%, while the proportion in part-time employment increased from 4% to 7%.

Changes in the composition of women's income

In spite of the growth in women's employment since 1982, the share of income received by women from both earnings from employment and government pensions and allowances overall remained relatively stable. In 1982, 1995–96 and 2005–06, earnings comprised about 80% of the total income of women aged 18–64 years. However, the stability of earnings as a proportion of total income masks some considerable changes for women in the lowest income quintiles over the years. In 1982, earnings comprised 8% of total incomes in the lowest quintile group. This rose to 20% in 1995–96, after which there was relatively little change in the decade to 2005–06. Among women in the top income quintiles, the importance of earnings increased slightly between 1982 and 1995–96 but decreased between 1995–96 and 2005–06, from about 94% to 89% of total income.

Share of earnings and government pensions and allowances in women's gross personal income by quintile group(a)

	Earnings(b)			Government pensions and allowances		
	1982	*1995–96*	*2005–06*	*1982*	*1995–96*	*2005–06*
Quintile	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lowest	7.6	20.2	21.3	70.8	65.6	68.3
Second	36.3	38.1	54.2	53.3	54.6	36.8
Third	88.1	82.7	82.6	5.9	12.0	11.8
Fourth	94.0	93.1	89.9	1.8	2.7	4.8
Highest	90.6	94.1	88.5	1.6	0.7	1.3
All women	**80.2**	**79.9**	**79.1**	**12.8**	**14.4**	**13.3**

(a) Women aged 18–64 years.
(b) Comprises income from employment, including self-employment.

Source: ABS 1982, 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

Components of women's gross personal income by population group(a)

	Earnings(b)			Other private incomes			Government pensions and allowances		
	1982	*1995–96*	*2005–06*	*1982*	*1995–96*	*2005–06*	*1982*	*1995–96*	*2005–06*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Single, no dependent children	84.0	82.6	83.1	5.2	5.1	6.3	10.7	12.3	10.7
Single, with dependent children	46.2	44.4	46.3	8.2	8.4	11.0	45.5	47.2	42.7
Partnered, no dependent children	82.3	83.8	86.2	9.3	7.2	8.1	8.4	9.0	5.6
Partnered, with dependent children	81.9	82.6	78.3	6.8	4.2	7.3	11.3	13.2	14.4

(a) Women aged 18–64 years.
(b) Comprises income from employment, including self employment.

Source: ABS 1982, 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

While the importance of government pensions and allowances as a component of women's incomes overall did not change during the period 1982 to 2005–06, there were some changes for women at different levels of income. In the 13 years after 1982, pensions and allowances increased in importance for women at the middle of the income distribution. Over the decade to 2005–06, the share of government pensions and allowances in total income increased slightly for women in the top two income quintiles, but decreased sharply for women in the second lowest quintile, from 55% to 37%.

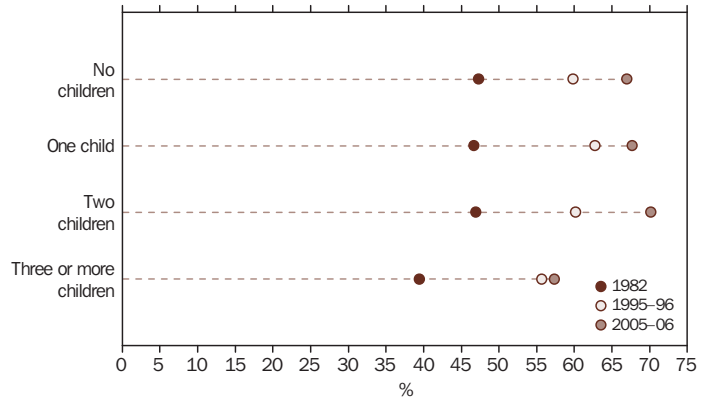
...marital status and children

Much of the increase in the labour force participation of women that occurred in Australia in the last quarter century was associated with the increased involvement in paid work of partnered women with dependent children (see *Australian Social Trends 2006*, Trends in women's employment, pp. 121–125). This trend has been attributed to a range of factors, including a fall in the fertility rate (meaning that partnered women have fewer dependent children), increased availability of formal child care and rising levels of education.

Despite the substantial growth in employment within this population group, the share of earnings in total income recorded by partnered women with dependent children was stable between 1982 and 1995–96 and declined in the most recent decade. This decline is due to a number of factors beyond those linked to the relatively small increase in women's working hours. They include: a slight increase in government pensions and allowances for women with children; an increase in income received from private sources other than earnings (investments, superannuation and child support payments, for example); and little change in employment for partnered women with three or more children. Employment among partnered women with one or two children increased throughout the quarter century, and by 2005–06 they had caught up with partnered women without children, with more than two thirds in employment. The rate of employment among partnered women with three or more children grew substantially between 1982 and 1995–96 from 39% to 56%, but changed little between 1995–96 and 2005–06.

In other population groups, namely single women, and partnered women without children, earnings as a share of total income did not change much over the years from 1982 to 2005–06, in spite of the overall growth in female employment. This is because income from private sources other than earnings also increased on average, as did income from a number of government pensions and allowances.

Proportion of partnered women aged 18–64 years in employment(a): by number of dependent children



(a) Comprises women in full-time and part-time employment.

Source: ABS 1982, 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

Looking ahead

A number of current trends suggest that the policy importance of women's personal incomes will grow in future years. Rising education levels and changing social norms are increasing expectations of financial independence for both partnered and single women. Women's life expectancy continues to grow and exceed that of men. Women's personal incomes while they are of working age will thus be an important determinant of their ability to secure adequate living standards in old age. Furthermore, for as long as separation and divorce rates remain relatively high, women's access to a source of income will be a crucial determinant of their ability to support themselves and their dependent children. For these reasons and more, it is important to continue to monitor trends in women's personal incomes, as well as those of families and households.

Government benefits, taxes and household income

In 2003–04, people in the bottom 20% of private household incomes in Australia received less than 1% of the total of such income, but after government benefits and taxes their share of final income was 13%.

One of the aims of the system of government benefits and taxes is to assist members of the community who most need financial support. In addition to paying pensions, benefits and allowances, governments provide a range of goods, services and infrastructure for use by households. This article looks at the effects of the tax and transfer system on the distribution of income among households in Australia.

Income and the tax and transfer system

While income is usually received by individuals, it is normally shared between partners in a couple relationship, with dependent children, and to a lesser extent, with other members of the household. A restricted concept of household income is private income. Private income includes the gross incomes, before tax, received in the form of: wages and salaries; profit or loss from own unincorporated business operations; income from property and financial investments; income from superannuation and annuities; and private inter-household transfers.

Adding social assistance benefits (government cash benefits and allowances) to private income gives a measure of gross household income. While gross household income is a useful concept for some analyses, it does not give a complete picture of the current income resources available to households to meet their daily needs. Disposable household income, derived by subtracting income taxes and the Medicare levy from gross income, is a more complete income measure for understanding the material wellbeing of households.

An even more extensive measure of a household's command over economic resources to satisfy its needs and wants can be obtained by also taking account of the goods and services received from local, state/territory and federal governments (e.g. medical care, schooling, child care, aged care, disability services and public housing). While health, education, child care, housing and other services can be obtained entirely in the private market, many households receive some of these services either free of charge or subsidised to some extent by governments. The value of some of these services can be determined and allocated to households (based on the characteristics of each household). Adding that value (referred to as 'social transfers in kind') to the disposable income of households provides a wider picture of the resources available to and used by households to support their material standard of living.

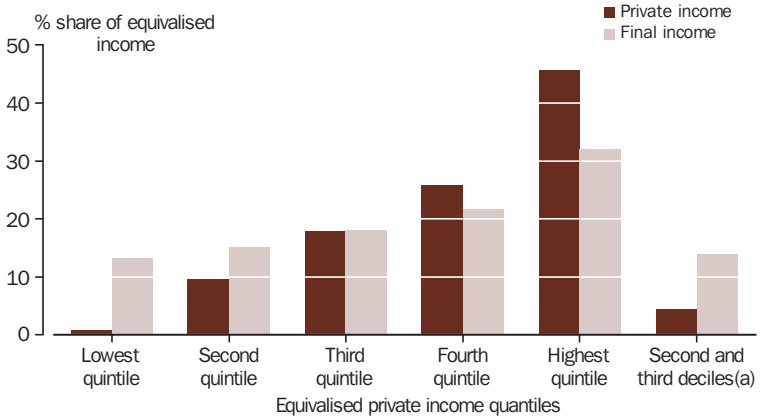
Finally, understanding the distributive effects on households of the whole tax and transfer system needs to take account of taxes paid by households not only directly, as income tax, but also indirectly as taxes on production that are passed on to households in the prices that

Data sources and definitions

The major data sources used in this article are the 2003–04 ABS Household Expenditure Survey, ABS Government Finance Statistics, and Input-Output tables from the Australian System of National Accounts.

All quintile groups in this article are based on the distribution of equivalised private income. *Equivalising* takes account of differing household sizes and composition and is used to give a relative comparison of living standards. Larger households normally require a greater level of income to maintain the same material standard of living as smaller households, and the material needs of adults are normally greater than the needs of children. Therefore, income estimates are adjusted (by equivalence factors) to standardise the income estimates with respect to household size and composition, while taking into account the economies of scale that arise from the sharing of dwellings. For a more detailed explanation see Appendix 2 of *Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia, 2003–04* (ABS cat. no. 6537.0).

Effect of taxes and benefits on household income — 2003–04



(a) Low income households are defined as those in the second and third deciles of equivalised income.

Source: Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia, 2003–04 (ABS cat. no. 6537.0)

Intra-household transfers

While income is usually received by individuals, it is normally shared between partners in a couple relationship and with dependent children. To a lesser degree, there may be sharing with other members of the household. Even when there is no transfer of income between members of a household, nor provision of free or cheap accommodation, members are still likely to benefit from the economies of scale that arise from the sharing of dwellings. The income measures used in the analysis of income distribution and material wellbeing therefore generally relate to household income.

Inter-household transfers

Private transfers are one form of income redistribution between households, and for some households, communities and even economies they can be very significant. In Australia, in aggregate, private transfers between households are relatively small. As with most research into income distribution, this article does not separately analyse private incomes before inter-household transfers are made.

they pay, such as the goods and services tax and the excise taxes on products such as alcohol and tobacco. Deducting these taxes from the sum of disposable income and social transfers in kind provides a more comprehensive income measure, referred to as final income.

...magnitude of income redistribution

In 2003–04, the net effect of the system of government benefits and taxes was to redistribute substantial economic resources from people with relatively high private incomes to people with lower private incomes. In 2003–04, people in the bottom 20% of equivalised private household incomes in Australia received less than 1% of such income. Their share of final income rose to 13% after being adjusted for government benefits and taxes. Conversely, the share of income for the top 20% of households was 46% of private incomes, falling to 32% of final incomes.

The differences in income distribution initially observed in private incomes narrow for disposable household income (when Australian government pensions, allowances and family tax benefit are added, and income tax and the Medicare levy are deducted). They narrow further when social transfers in kind are added and indirect taxes on production are removed. As a result of income redistribution through the tax and transfer system, the average final income of households in the lowest quintile of equivalised private income was about 40% of average final income of households in the highest quintile. In contrast, the average private income of households in the lowest quintile of equivalised private income was 2% of that of households in the highest quintile.

...low and middle incomes

The extent to which the system of government taxation and benefit allocation raises the living standards of people in low income households is of fundamental interest to policy makers and the wider community.

Some households in the bottom income decile (i.e. the 10% of households with the lowest income) have disproportionately high levels of consumption expenditure and/or wealth relative to their incomes. Incomes alone therefore do not accurately reflect the economic wellbeing of the average household in the bottom decile. Thus, in summary analysis, households in the second and third lowest income deciles combined are often used in preference to households in the bottom quintile (i.e. bottom and second deciles) to better represent those with relatively low consumption possibilities. The income share of these 'low' private income households was 4% of all private incomes, rising to 14% of final income after the effects of government benefits and taxes were taken into account.

The system of government benefits and taxes gave middle income households (those in the fifth and sixth equivalised private income deciles) a marginal increase in their share of income, from 18% of all private income to a 19% share of all final income.

Life course stages

People's private incomes may change over the life course as their circumstances change. The extent to which they, on balance, contribute to or benefit from the system of government benefits and taxes is influenced by a range of factors which may also change throughout their lives. For example, the presence and number of people in a household, their ages, whether they are employed, and whether or not they have children benefiting from subsidised services in the education and health systems, will affect the extent to which a household is a net beneficiary of the government system of household-based benefits and tax.

...young singles and couples

Young people (aged less than 35 years) living alone or as a couple without children tend to contribute more on average in taxes than they

Modelling benefits and taxes

Information reported in the ABS 2003–04 Household Expenditure Survey (HES) formed the basis for the modelling of benefits and taxes which underpins some of the data presented in this article. The HES established the composition of households, the characteristics of their members, the level and sources of their gross income, and their expenditure patterns. Income tax was then imputed using tax legislation in force in 2003–04. Government non-cash benefits were also imputed, according to the characteristics of household members and their expenditure patterns, using estimates of expenditure at all levels of government. Indirect taxes were imputed from survey expenditure data using Input-Output tables from the Australian System of National Accounts.

Only benefits and taxes conceptually and practically relatable to individual households were allocated to households. For example, government revenue from capital gains tax and company tax has not been allocated. Nor has government spending on defence, public order and safety, transport and communications. Overall, 59% of the taxation revenue of all levels of government (net of subsidies) and 51% of total government expenditure has been allocated to individual households for the purpose of calculating their final income. The value of government services received includes related research and program administration costs.

There are several ways to analyse the effects of taxation and government expenditure on the distribution of income among private households in Australia. The extent of change to data sources and methods for the analysis of 2003–04 data means that it is not comparable with the analyses undertaken for 1984, 1988–89, 1993–94 and 1998–99 and published by the ABS.

For a more detailed explanation of these technical matters see the explanatory notes and Appendices 4–5 of *Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia, 2003–04* (ABS cat. no. 6537.0).

receive in benefits. In 2003–04, young singles contributed on average $258 a week in taxes and received $87 a week in benefits, while young couple households paid $534 a week and received $109 a week in benefits. The net contributor state for these two life course groups largely reflects their comparatively high employment levels and their relative youth, which means they tend to be in good health and therefore use fewer health services than other groups. The absence of children in these households also means that they receive relatively few education benefits and no health benefits associated with the early years of life.

...couples with young children

The net effect of government benefits and taxes changes with the arrival of children. Before any of their children reach school age, couples whose eldest child is under 5 years of age still paid more in taxes ($450 a week) than they received in benefits ($282 a week). The average net contribution to the tax and transfer system ($167 a week) of these households was much less than that of young childless couples ($425 a week), partly because households with children have fewer employed people and pay less income tax, but also because they receive a range of benefits targeted at families with children, such as the family tax benefit, parenting payment and subsidised child care. They also receive more subsidised health services such as hospital care, 'well baby' clinics, community dental health services, immunisation, and screening for childhood diseases.

...couples with older children

Couples whose eldest child is aged between 5 and 14 years gained slightly overall from the system of government benefits and taxes, largely reflecting both the value of schooling ($219 a week) that they received and the higher family tax benefit ($81 a week on average).

...couples aged 55–64 years

Couple only households with reference person aged 55–64 years were net contributors through the tax and transfer system, paying an average of $64 a week more in taxes than they received in benefits. As the average number of employed people in these households was relatively small (0.9), their private income ($861 a week on average) was much lower than that of younger couple only households ($1,577 a week) who had more employed people per household (1.8 on average). The 55–64 year old couple households, however, received much more in government pensions and allowances ($113 a week) than couples aged under 35 years ($12), and much more in health benefits ($115 a week compared with $60 for younger couples).

...older people

On average, people aged 65 years and over without children benefit substantially from the system of government benefits and taxes. During 2003–04, older couple only households (reference person aged 65 years and over) were allocated $586 a week on average in benefits and paid $148 in taxes. People aged 65 years and over living alone received a similar boost ($361 in benefits less $84 in taxes).

Because fewer members of these older households were employed than in younger households, they had lower private incomes on average and therefore paid less income tax. In contrast, during 2003–04, government pensions and allowances (largely the Age

Effect of taxes and benefits on the household income of selected life course groups — 2003–04(a)

		Benefits					
	Private	Income payments	Social transfers	Total	Taxes	Final	Net effect of taxes and benefits
Selected life course groups	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
Lone person aged under 35 years	710	32	55	87	258	539	–171
Couple only, reference person aged under 35 years	1 577	12	96	109	534	1 152	–425
Couple with dependent children only, eldest child aged 0–4 years	1 262	82	200	282	450	1 094	–167
Couple with dependent children only, eldest child aged 5–14 years	1 356	118	405	523	495	1 384	**28
Couple with dependent children only, eldest child aged 15–24 years	1 643	101	481	583	578	1 648	**5
Couple with dependent and non-dependent children only	1 785	134	468	602	612	1 775	**–10
Couple with non-dependent children only	1 582	157	213	370	542	1 410	–172
Couple only, reference person aged 55 to 64 years	861	113	149	261	325	797	*–64
Couple only, reference person aged 65 and over	335	285	302	586	148	774	438
Lone person aged 65 and over	195	185	175	361	84	471	277
All households	**992**	**136**	**238**	**375**	**360**	**1 007**	***15**

(a) Average weekly value.

Source: Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia, 2003–04 (ABS cat. no. 6537.0).

pension and to a much lesser extent the Veterans Affairs pension) comprised the principal source of gross income for 68% of older couple only households and 75% of older people living alone.

The final incomes of these older households were also considerably boosted by the allocated value of publicly-funded health benefits ($240 a week for couples and $138 a week for singles). Compared with younger households, older couple only households and older people living alone received much more acute care in institutions such as hospitals and hospices. During 2003–04, government spending on pharmaceuticals, medical aids and appliances was also greater for these older groups.

Patterns of income redistribution from young adults to people of pensionable age underpin concerns about the fiscal pressures that could potentially accompany the projected continual ageing of the Australian population. Such concerns have prompted a range of policies over recent decades encouraging people to have more children, to delay retirement, and to accumulate sufficient superannuation assets to be able to self-fund their retirement years.

Other population groups of special interest

Some population groups, such as couple families with no employed parent and lone parents, are of interest because of the risks of disadvantage that their circumstances raise. Allocating the effects of taxes and transfers aids understanding of the overall impact of the tax and transfer system on these groups.

...lone parents

One-parent family households with dependent children received substantial income support, predominantly in the form of the family tax benefit and parenting payment. They also benefited from government spending on pre-school, primary and secondary education, and student transportation.

In 2003–04, the average value of social assistance benefits in cash received by these lone parent households was $293 a week compared with $136 a week for all households. Social transfers in kind were also relatively high because of high use of education services (average value of $383 a week compared with $238 a week for all households).

Taxes on income and taxes on production are low for sole parents, since their incomes and expenditures are relatively low. Taxes on income for this group averaged $95 a week compared with $213 a week for all households. Taxes on production averaged $108 a week compared with $147 a week for all households.

The average weekly equivalised private income of lone parent households was 46% of the average weekly equivalised private income of all households. Due to the higher net benefits they received, however, the average equivalised final income of this group was a much higher proportion of average equivalised final income of all households (93%).

...couple families with children and no employed parent

Couple family households with dependent children and with no employed parent received relatively high amounts of government cash benefits ($439 a week), most notably family tax benefit, parenting payment, student and unemployment allowances and disability support pension.

There was a marked difference between the amount of tax paid by couple family households with dependent children with one or two or more persons employed ($436 and $581 a week respectively) and such families with no one employed ($118 a week). The total tax paid by families with no employed person was relatively low because of both the lower level of income tax paid, and the lower indirect taxes due to the constraints on their consumption of market supplied goods and services. They also received more government non-cash benefits than other couple family households with dependent children.

...public housing tenants

Many public housing tenants belong to population groups discussed above in terms of the effects of the system of benefits and taxes. These include low income households, lone parents and households where no parent is employed. In 2003–04, households renting from a state or territory housing authority received on average a relatively low private income of $152 a week. However, they received a net transfer of $551 a week after the allocation of government benefits and taxes, largely reflecting the high cash benefits they received on average ($288 a week), high housing benefits ($71 a week) and sizeable school education and health transfers in kind.

Changes since 2003–04

There have been numerous changes to the system of government benefits and taxes since 30 June 2004 which would alter the extent to which income is currently being redistributed. For example, individual income tax rates have changed each year. In 2003–04, the highest marginal tax rate (47%) applied to annual income above $62,500, whereas by 2007–08, the highest rate had reduced to 45% and was not payable until annual income had reached $150,000. Eligibility to receive the baby bonus commenced on 1 July 2004, and there have also been changes to the Family Tax Benefit, child care funding and the taxation of superannuation payments.

The next ABS Household Expenditure Survey (currently scheduled for 2009–10) will provide the basis for the next opportunity to measure final income redistribution in Australia.

Effect of taxes and benefits on the household income of selected population groups — 2003–04(a)

		Benefits					
	Private	*Income payments*	*Social transfers*	*Total*	*Taxes*	*Final*	*Net effect of taxes and benefits*
Selected household types	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
One parent family households with dependent children							
with one dependent child	559	243	263	506	221	844	285
with two dependent children	448	305	440	744	194	998	550
with three or more dependent children	326	432	657	1 090	159	1 257	931
Couple family households with dependent children							
no person employed	117	439	512	951	118	950	833
one person employed	1 091	157	370	527	436	1 182	91
two or more persons employed	1 707	68	391	459	581	1 584	–122
Gross income principally government pensions and allowances							
50% to less than 90%	154	351	302	653	105	701	547
90% and over	12	334	273	607	69	550	537
Households renting from a state/territory housing authority	152	288	343	631	80	703	551
All households	**992**	**136**	**238**	**375**	**360**	**1 007**	***15**

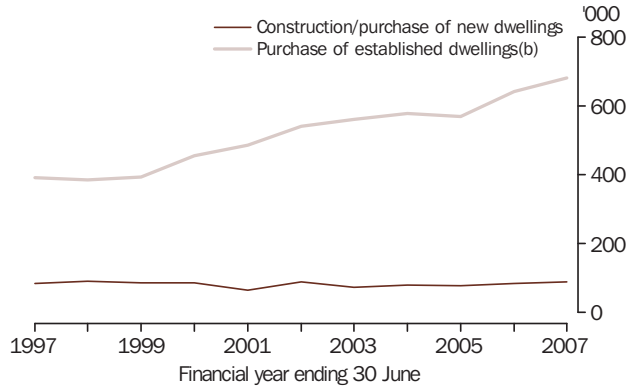
(a) Average weekly value.

Source: Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia, 2003–04 (ABS cat. no. 6537.0).

Housing

Housing: national summary — key points

Number of purchases of new and established dwellings(a)

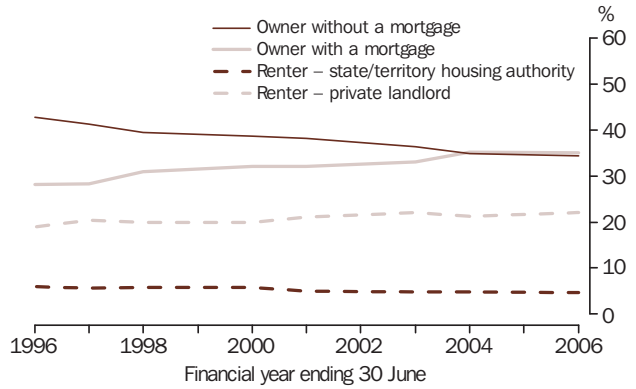


- In 1996–97, 392,500 established dwellings were purchased or refinanced in Australia. By 2006–07, the number of purchased or refinanced dwellings had increased to 682,500, up 74% from 1996–97.
- In 2006–07, there were 88,900 newly constructed and purchased dwellings. This is a slight increase from 1996–97 when there were 84,800 newly constructed and purchased dwellings.

(a) Data include owner occupied housing only.
(b) Data include refinancing commitments.

Source: Housing Finance, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).
For further information see *Housing: national summary*, page 168, indicators 25 and 27.

Population by tenure and landlord type(a)(b)

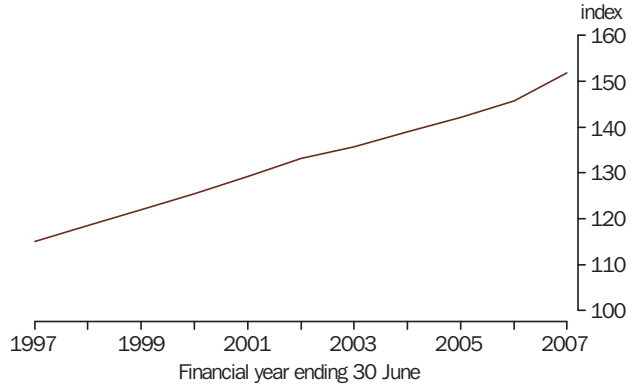


- In 2005–06, 69% of all households owned their own homes, down slightly from 71% in 1995–96.
- Between 1995–96 and 2005–06, the proportion of households who owned their own home without a mortgage decreased from 43% to 34%, while those who owned their own home with a mortgage increased from 28% to 35%.
- In 2005–06, the proportion of households renting a state or territory housing authority property was 4.7%, while 22% of households rented privately. The proportion renting privately in 2005–06 (22%) was a slight increase from the level in 1995–96 (19%).

(a) Data not available for 1998–99, 2001–02, and 2004–05.
(b) Data for 1996 from *Australian Social Trends 2007: Housing, national summary,* page 174, indicators 11–14.

Source: Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).
For further information see *Housing: national summary*, page 168, indicator 11–14.

Rental cost index(a)



- The rental cost index measures changes in the average rent paid by private households.
- In 1996–97, the rental cost index was 115.1. By 2006–07, the index had increased to 151.8.
- Rental costs grew by an average of 2.8% per year over the ten year period, though between 2005–06 and 2006–07 the rental cost index grew by 4.2%.

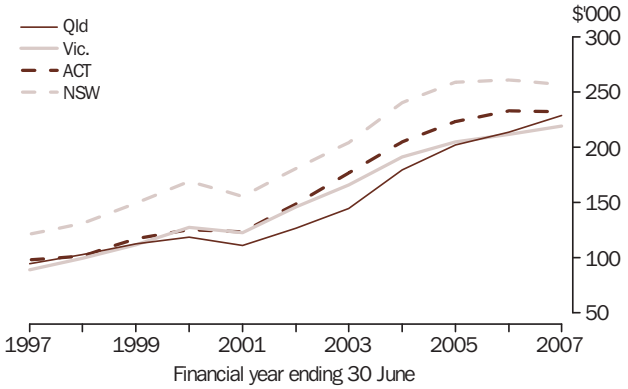
(a) Base of index: 1989–90=100.

Source: Consumer Price Index, Australia, (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).
For further information see *Housing: national summary*, page 168, indicator 19.

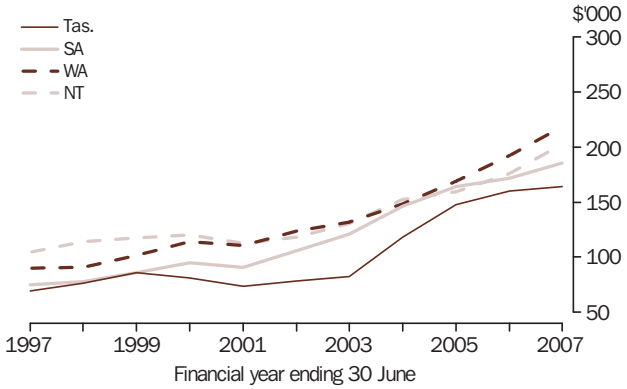
Housing: state summary — key points

Average loan for first home buyers by state and territory(a)(b)

HIGHEST AVERAGE HOME LOAN



LOWEST AVERAGE HOME LOAN

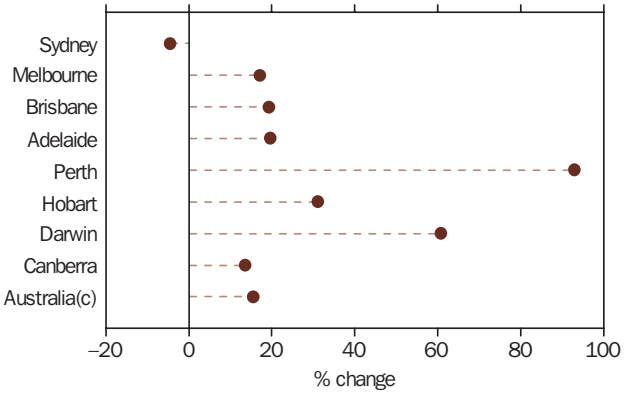


(a) Measured in original prices.
(b) Data include owner occupied housing only.

Source: Housing Finance, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).
For further information see *Australian Social Trends – Housing 2008* data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 21 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

- Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, the average amount of money people borrowed in order to purchase their first home increased in all states and territories.
- New South Wales people consistently borrowed more money to purchase their first home than buyers in any other state or territory. In 2006–07, they borrowed an average of $257,500, which is $93,100 more than those in Tasmania ($164,400), the state with the lowest average first home loan in 2006–07.

Established house price index — percentage change between 2003–04 and 2006–07(a)(b)



- Between 2003–04 and 2006–07, established house prices in Perth grew by 93%. This is the largest growth in any Australian capital city over this time period.
- Darwin also recorded high growth with a 61% increase in established house prices.
- Since the 2003–04 financial year, the only capital city in which established house prices fell was Sydney, with a 4.5% decrease.

(a) Data refer to the financial year ending June.
(b) Base of index 2003–04=100.
(c) Data refer to the weighted average of the eight state and territory capital cities.

Source: House Price Index: Eight Capital Cities (ABS cat. no. 6416.0).
For further information see *Australian Social Trends – Housing 2008* data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 23 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

Housing: national summary

	HOUSING STOCK	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1	Number of occupied private dwellings(a)	'000	6 910	7 015	7 127	7 250	7 367	7 506	7 645	7 784	7 921	8 058	8 187
2	Public sector dwellings completed	'000	6.1	4.6	5.4	4.8	3.9	3.7	3.4	3.8	r3.5	3.7	3.9
3	Private sector dwellings completed	'000	115.7	130.6	140.3	153.9	133.0	131.0	151.7	r155.3	r159.1	r153.2	145.1
	Dwelling structure – selected(b)												
4	Separate house	%	80.0	79.4	n.a.	79.4	78.1	n.a.	77.7	80.0	n.a.	79.0	n.a.
5	Semi-detached	%	7.8	8.6	n.a.	9.8	9.9	n.a.	10.2	8.3	n.a.	9.4	n.a.
6	Flat	%	11.5	11.5	n.a.	10.0	11.3	n.a.	11.4	11.2	n.a.	10.6	n.a.
	Housing utilisation												
7	Average persons per household	no.	2.67	2.65	n.a.	2.62	2.58	n.a.	2.53	2.53	n.a.	2.51	n.a.
8	Average bedrooms per dwelling	no.	2.94	2.96	n.a.	3.00	3.00	n.a.	3.00	3.02	n.a.	3.06	n.a.
9	Households with two or more bedrooms above requirements	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	41.8	n.a.	42.4	n.a.
10	Households with insufficient bedrooms	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.7	n.a.	2.8	n.a.

	TENURE AND LANDLORD TYPE(c)	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
11	Owner without a mortgage	%	41.3	39.5	n.a	38.6	38.2	n.a.	36.4	34.9	n.a	34.3	n.a.
12	Owner with a mortgage	%	28.3	30.9	n.a	32.1	32.1	n.a.	33.1	35.1	n.a	35.0	n.a.
13	Renter – state/territory housing authority	%	5.6	5.8	n.a	5.8	5.0	n.a.	4.9	4.9	n.a	4.7	n.a.
14	Renter – private landlord	%	20.4	20.0	n.a	19.9	21.0	n.a.	22.0	21.2	n.a	22.0	n.a.

	HOUSING COSTS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Owners, mean weekly housing costs												
15	without a mortgage	$	21	21	n.a.	22	23	n.a.	25	26	n.a.	29	n.a.
16	with a mortgage	$	208	206	n.a.	211	220	n.a.	246	287	n.a.	338	n.a.
	Renters, mean weekly housing costs												
17	State/territory housing authority	$	66	62	n.a.	71	73	n.a.	81	r85	n.a.	100	n.a.
18	Private landlord	$	154	157	n.a.	166	173	n.a.	189	r200	n.a.	223	n.a.
19	Rental cost index(d)	index no.	115.1	118.5	122.0	125.4	129.3	133.1	135.7	138.9	142.0	145.7	151.8
	Construction/purchase												
20	Housing interest rate	%	8.3	6.7	6.6	7.0	7.6	6.3	6.5	6.8	7.1	7.3	8.0
21	First home buyers – average loan(e)(f)	$'000	98.8	106.5	r119.6	r133.1	r124.8	r145.5	r162.5	r191.7	r209.5	r219.9	230.0
22	Project home price index(g)	index no.	70.6	71.3	73.1	78.0	87.2	89.2	93.1	100.0	106.1	110.3	113.3
23	Established house price index(g)(h)	index no.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	86.6	100.0	101.2	105.1	115.5
24	Materials used in house building price index(d)(i)	index no.	116.1	118.2	119.5	122.8	124.4	126.0	130.5	134.3	138.8	142.0	147.0
	Finance commitments(f)												
	Construction/purchase of new dwellings												
25	Number	'000	84.8	92.0	87.2	86.5	64.8	88.3	74.0	80.5	77.5	r84.5	88.9
26	Value	$m	8 943	10 800	11 554	12 701	9 602	14 137	13 573	16 720	r17 304	r19 798	21 919
	Purchase of established dwellings(j)												
27	Number	'000	392.5	384.7	394.5	455.6	486.0	541.3	560.8	579.8	r569.2	r643.2	682.5
28	Value	$m	40 676	43 375	49 342	61 577	64 558	82 613	94 796	110 912	r117 700	r135 616	152 120
29	Value for alterations and additions	$m	3 039	2 779	2 821	3 321	3 108	4 083	5 350	6 703	5 761	5 555	5 596

	HOUSING ASSISTANCE	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
30	Public sector rental dwelling stock	'000	400.3	380.8	386.2	363.0	359.3	354.1	348.0	345.3	343.3	341.4	339.8
31	Applicants on housing waiting lists	'000	221.4	217.9	183.8	213.0	221.6	223.3	208.1	204.2	203.9	186.9	176.3
32	Applicants accommodated	'000	46.8	42.1	40.5	41.4	39.7	36.9	33.4	31.0	27.8	27.5	26.8
33	Income units receiving private rental assistance	'000	986.6	910.6	963.8	941.3	976.3	943.9	940.7	949.7	965.2	956.2	954.4
34	Mean fortnightly rental assistance received	$	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	62	69	73	75	78	81	83	87
35	Mean fortnightly rent paid by rental assistance recipients	$	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	225	239	253	264	277	293	307	326

(a) Data for 1997–2000 are household estimates based on 1996 Census data; for 2001 onwards, estimates are based on 2001 Census data.
(b) Components do not total 100% because 'other' dwellings are not included.
(c) As a proportion of all private households; components do not total 100% because 'other renters' and those with 'other tenure' are not included.
(d) Base of each index: 1989–90=100.
(e) Measured in original prices.
(f) Data include owner occupied housing only.
(g) Data refer to the weighted average of the eight state and territory capital cities; base of each index: 2003–04=100.
(h) Data for this index only available from 2003 due to changes in methodology. Data for previous years can be found in *Australian Social Trends 2006* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).
(i) Data refer to the weighted average of six state capital cities, excluding Darwin and Canberra.
(j) Data include refinancing commitments.

Reference periods: All data are for year ending 30 June except:
Data for indicators 1 and 30–31 are at June 30.
Data for indicators 33–35: for 1998, March; all other years are for a date in June.

Housing: state summary

	HOUSING STOCK	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
1	Number of occupied private dwellings	'000	2007	2 679	2 004	1 620	655	822	205	68	132	8 187
2	Public sector dwellings completed	'000	2006–07	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	3.9
3	Private sector dwellings completed	'000	2006–07	29.5	38.6	37.9	9.4	23.7	2.4	1.3	2.3	145.1
	Dwelling structure – selected(b)											
4	Separate house	%	2005–06	75.0	83.5	78.8	80.0	80.5	77.8	79.1	81.5	79.0
5	Semi-detached	%	2005–06	9.1	7.0	8.5	13.5	13.0	14.4	12.4	10.7	9.4
6	Flat	%	2005–06	15.5	9.3	8.9	6.3	6.1	6.9	*7.9	7.6	10.6
	Housing utilisation											
7	Average persons per household	no.	2005–06	2.60	2.50	2.51	2.36	2.42	2.39	2.83	2.49	2.51
8	Average bedrooms per dwelling	no.	2005–06	3.10	3.01	3.10	2.92	3.21	2.96	2.87	3.27	3.06
9	Households with two or more bedrooms above requirements	%	2005–06	40.1	40.0	44.4	40.9	52.2	43.6	26.6	52.7	42.4
10	Households with insufficient bedrooms	%	2005–06	3.7	2.7	2.7	2.1	*0.9	*2.2	**2.7	*1.0	2.8
	TENURE AND LANDLORD TYPE(c)	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
11	Owner without a mortgage	%	2005–06	34.9	37.3	32.0	34.6	29.8	39.3	18.4	27.3	34.3
12	Owner with a mortgage	%	2005–06	33.5	34.8	34.7	35.0	39.8	33.8	37.2	42.5	35.0
13	Renter – state/territory housing authority	%	2005–06	5.0	3.7	3.6	8.1	4.0	5.2	*11.7	8.0	4.7
14	Renter – private landlord	%	2005–06	22.8	21.3	24.8	18.9	20.2	16.9	20.5	19.4	22.0
	HOUSING COSTS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT	Aust.
	Owners, mean weekly housing costs											
15	without a mortgage	$	2005–06	29	31	30	28	24	24	32	31	29
16	with a mortgage	$	2005–06	405	309	326	258	322	232	276	343	338
	Renters, mean weekly housing costs											
17	State/territory housing authority	$	2005–06	105	109	109	87	81	77	86	104	100
18	Private landlord	$	2005–06	258	203	223	186	180	156	248	280	223
19	Rental cost index(d)(e)	index no.	2007	154.4	148.1	147.5	151.7	139.5	146.9	143.7	161.4	151.8
	Construction/purchase											
21	First home buyers – average loan(f)(g)	$'000	2006–07	257.5	219.2	229.3	185.2	218.5	164.4	202.6	232.6	230.0
22	Project home price index(e)(h)	index no.	2007	108.1	105.9	111.9	108.4	144.1	120.3	135.6	108.4	113.3
23	Established house price index(e)(h)	index no.	2007	95.5	117.2	119.2	119.7	192.8	131.1	160.7	113.5	115.5
24	Materials used in house building price index(d)(e)	index no.	2007	153.3	141.7	145.3	149.9	144.0	156.2	n.a.	n.a.	147.0
	Finance commitments(g)											
	Construction/purchase of new dwellings											
25	Number	'000	2006–07	18.5	23.4	21.7	7.4	14.8	1.5	0.6	1.0	88.9
26	Value	$m	2006–07	5 098	5 519	5 511	1 553	3 536	288	141	274	21 919
	Purchase of established dwellings(i)											
27	Number	'000	2006–07	205.5	148.9	154.9	55.4	89.8	13.1	5.8	9.1	682.5
28	Value	$m	2006–07	50 482	32 376	34 271	9 668	19 913	2 149	1 141	2 119	152 120
29	Value for alterations and additions	$m	2006–07	1 487	980	1 157	616	1 033	196	37	90	5 596
	HOUSING ASSISTANCE	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
30	Public sector rental dwelling stock	'000	2007	121.9	64.8	50.1	43.8	31.3	11.7	10.8	5.4	339.8
31	Applicants on housing waiting lists	'000	2007	50.3	40.9	36.8	26.2	14.6	3.1	2.6	1.9	176.3
32	Applicants accommodated	'000	2006–07	8.6	5.2	4.5	2.9	3.1	1.2	0.6	0.7	26.8
33	Income units receiving private rental assistance	'000	2007	327.9	210.3	230.3	69.4	78.2	24.9	5.4	7.9	954.4
34	Mean fortnightly rental assistance received	$	2007	88	86	89	85	87	85	87	82	87
35	Mean fortnightly rent paid by rental assistance recipients	$	2007	336	305	345	294	318	294	338	359	326

(a) Estimates for dwelling structure, housing utilisation, tenure type and mean weekly housing costs for Northern Territory relate mainly to urban areas.
(b) Components do not total 100% because 'other' dwellings are not included.
(c) As a proportion of all private households, components do not total 100% because 'other renters' and those with 'other tenure' are not included.
(d) Base of each index: 1989–90=100.
(e) State and territory data refer to capital cities only.
(f) Measured in original prices.
(g) Data include owner occupied housing only.
(h) Base of each index: 2003–04=100.
(i) Data include refinancing commitments.

Reference periods: All data are for year ended 30 June except:
Data for indicators 1 and 30–31 are at June 30.
Data for indicators 33–35 are for a date in June.

Housing: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1	*Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
2–3	*Building Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8752.0), Time series spreadsheets, Tables 37–38.
4–18	ABS Surveys of Income and Housing.
19	*Consumer Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).
20	Reserve Bank of Australia, *Indicator Lending Rates – F5*, viewed 10 June 2008, <http://www.rba.gov.au/statistics/bulletin/F05hist.xls>.
21, 25–29	*Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).
22–23	*House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (ABS cat. no. 6416.0).
24	*Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6427.0).
30–32	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, *Report on Government Services 2008*, viewed 10 June 2008, <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2007/housing/attachment16.pdf>.
33–35	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs administrative data.

Housing: definitions

Alterations and additions

covers all approved structural and non-structural changes which are integral to the functional and structural design of the dwelling, e.g. garages, carports, pergolas, re-roofing, re-cladding etc., but excluding swimming pools, ongoing repairs, landscaping, and maintenance and home improvements not involving building work.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Applicants accommodated

the number of public rental applicants (households) accommodated in a year.

Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement national data reports 2002–2005, Public rental housing.*

Applicants on housing waiting lists

the number of applicants (households) waiting for public rental accommodation at 30 June.

Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement national data reports 2002–2005, Public rental housing.*

Average number of bedrooms per dwelling

the average number of bedrooms in occupied private dwellings.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Average number of persons per household

the average number of usual residents in occupied private dwellings.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Canadian National Occupancy Standard

for housing appropriateness, measures the bedroom requirements of a household by specifying that: there should be no more than two people per bedroom; children less than five years of age of different sexes may reasonably share a bedroom; children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom; single household members 18 years and over should have a separate bedroom, as should parents or couples; and a lone person household may reasonably occupy a bedsitter.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Construction of dwelling

represents commitments made to individuals to finance, by way of progress payments, the construction of owner-occupied dwellings.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Established dwelling

is a dwelling which has been completed for 12 months or more prior to the lodgement of a loan application, or which has been previously occupied.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Established house price index

measures changes in the price of detached residential dwellings on their own block of land, regardless of age (i.e. including new houses sold as a house/land package as well as established houses) expressed as an index, with base year 2003–04=100.0. Price changes therefore relate to changes in the total price of dwelling and land.

Reference: *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (ABS cat. no. 6416.0).

Finance commitments

firm offers to provide finance for owner-occupation or alterations and additions which have been, or are expected to be, accepted. Commitments to provide housing finance to employees and commitments accepted and cancelled in the same month are included. Commitments for owner occupied dwellings can be for the construction of owner occupied dwellings, the purchase of new owner occupied dwellings (completed for less than 12 months with the borrower being the first occupant), the purchase of established owner-occupied dwellings (completed for more than 12 months or previously occupied), or refinancing of established dwellings.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

First home buyers: average loan size

first home buyers are people entering the home ownership market for the first time. Their average loan is calculated by dividing the total value of lending commitments per month by the total number of dwellings financed per month.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Flat, unit or apartment

includes all self-contained dwellings in blocks of flats, units or apartments. These dwellings do not have their own private grounds and usually share a common entrance foyer or stairwell. This category includes houses converted into flats and flats attached to houses such as granny flats. A house with a granny flat attached is regarded as a separate house.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Housing: definitions continued

Household

a person living alone or a group of related or unrelated people who usually live in the same private dwelling.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Housing costs

comprise rent payments; rates payments (general and water); and mortgage or unsecured loan payments, if the initial purpose was primarily to buy, add to, or alter the dwelling.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Households with insufficient bedrooms

households living in dwellings that do not have enough bedrooms to meet the requirements of community standards. See Canadian National Occupancy Standard.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Households with two or more bedrooms above requirements

households which have at least two bedrooms above that required to meet the Canadian National Occupancy Standard.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Housing interest rate

the financial year average of the interest rate applicable on the last working day of each month to standard variable rate loans for owner-occupation extended by large bank housing lenders. It is the predominant or representative rate of major banks, although some banks may quote higher or lower rates.

Reference: Reserve Bank of Australia, *Bulletin*.

Income units receiving private rental assistance

families or individuals who pay rent or similar payments for private accommodation and receive a rental assistance payment from the government. Rental assistance may be payable to pensioners without children, families receiving above the minimum family payment and people already receiving a government allowance or benefit.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Materials used in house building price index

measures changes in prices of selected materials used in the construction of dwellings expressed as an index, with base year 1989–90=100.0. Data for the national total are a weighted average of the six state capital cities.

Reference: *Producer Price Indexes* (ABS cat. no. 6427.0).

Mean rental assistance received

average rental assistance received fortnightly by eligible social security customers who pay rent in the private rental market.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Mean rent paid by rental assistance recipients

the average rent paid fortnightly by social security customers who receive rental assistance.

Reference: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

New dwelling

is a dwelling that has been completed within 12 months of the lodgement of a loan application, and the borrower will be the first occupant.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Occupied private dwellings

the premises occupied by a household. For population estimation purposes, the total number of occupied private dwellings is treated as being equal to the total number of households of the usually resident population.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Other dwelling

includes caravans, houseboats, or houses or flats attached to a shop or other commercial premises.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Other renter

where a household pays rent to the owner/manager of a caravan park, an employer (including a government authority), a housing cooperative, a community or church group, or any other body not included elsewhere.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Other tenure

where a household is not an owner (with or without a mortgage), or a renter. Includes rent free, life tenure, rent/buy and shared equity schemes.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Owner with a mortgage

a household in which at least one member owes an amount on a mortgage or loan secured against the dwelling.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Owner without a mortgage

a household in which at least one member owns the dwelling and does not owe any amount on a mortgage or loan secured against the dwelling.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Private/public sector dwellings completed

when building activity has progressed to the stage where the building can fulfil its intended function. The ABS regards buildings as completed when notified as such by the respondents (builders) to the survey. Includes new residential buildings, i.e. houses, blocks of flats, home units, attached townhouses, etc., and conversions of non-residential buildings to residential buildings. Dwellings are classified into private and public sector ownership, according to the sector of the intended owner of the completed building as evident at the time of approval.

Reference: *Building Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8752.0).

Project home price index

measures changes in the price of dwellings available for construction on a client's block of land expressed as an index, with base year 2003–04=100.0. Price changes therefore relate only to the price of the dwelling (excluding land).

Reference: *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (ABS cat. no. 6416.0).

Public sector rental dwelling stock

those rental dwellings held by state and territory housing authorities.

Reference: Department of Family and Community Services, *Housing Assistance Act 1996 Annual Report*.

Refinancing

for investment housing finance, represents a commitment to refinance an existing loan. For secured housing finance for owner occupation, only those loans where the refinancing lender is not the original lender and the security is unchanged are included. The refinancing of a loan to fund a change of residence is treated as a new lending commitment.

Reference: *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0).

Rental cost index

measures changes in the average rent paid by private households for privately and government owned rental properties, expressed as an index, with base year 1989–90=100.0.

Reference: *Consumer Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

Housing: definitions continued

Renter: private landlord

a household paying rent to a landlord who is: a real estate agent; a parent or other relative not in the same household; or another person not in the same household.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Renter: state/territory housing authority

a household paying rent to a state or territory housing authority or trust.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Semidetached, row or terrace house or townhouse

a dwelling with its own private grounds and no dwelling above or below. A key feature is that they are attached in some structural way to one or more dwellings, or separated from neighbouring dwellings by less than half a metre. Examples include semi-detached, row or terrace houses, townhouses and villa units.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Separate house

a dwelling which is self-contained and separated from other houses (or other buildings or structures) by a space to allow access on all sides (of at least half a metre). This category also includes houses with an attached flat (e.g. granny flat). The attached flat will be included in the flat, unit or apartment category.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Renter households

In 2005–06, 59% of lone parent households with dependent children were renting, almost three times the rate of couples with dependent children.

Home ownership is a widely held aspiration in Australia with renting commonly viewed as a transitory phase in one's housing 'career'. Owner-occupier households are seen to enjoy a number of benefits that may not be available to renters such as greater locational stability and the accumulated wealth present in the property.[1] While renting is often associated with low income, living in a rented home can also be seen as a cost-effective alternative to home ownership. The advantages of renting include greater flexibility of lifestyle and the opportunity to invest money elsewhere.[1]

This article examines selected characteristics of renter households such as household composition, life course stage, and relative income level. It also looks at changes in rental costs over time.

Trends in renter households

The proportion of Australian households renting increased slightly from 26.9% of all households in 1995–96 to 28.5% in 2005–06. This article focuses on those households renting from private landlords (over 1.7 million households in 2005–06) and those renting from state/territory housing authorities (369,000 households). A further 147,000 households (2% of all households) were renting from other landlords such as employers (e.g. the Defence Housing Authority). In 2006, about 34% of renter income units were in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance.[2]

Data sources and definitions

Most of the data in this article are drawn from the ABS Survey of Income and Housing (SIH). The Census of Population and Housing and the ABS General Social Survey are also used to provide information on the mobility of renters.

Renter households are those households which pay rent to live in a dwelling. These are classified according to the following landlord types:

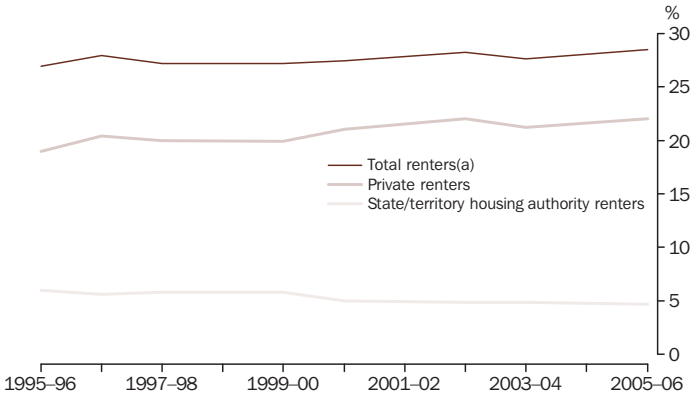
- *Private landlord:* the household pays rent to a real estate agent or to another person not in the same household.
- *State or territory housing authority:* the household pays rent to a state or territory housing authority or trust.
- *Other landlord:* the household pays rent to the owner/manager of a caravan park, an employer, a housing co-op, a community or church group, or any other body not included elsewhere.

An *owner-occupier* household is a household in which at least one member owns the dwelling in which they live, either with or without a mortgage.

The household *reference person* in the Survey of Income and Housing is selected by applying the following criteria, in the order listed, to all individuals aged 15 years and over in a household until a single appropriate reference person is identified: one of the partners in a registered or defacto marriage, with dependent children; one of the partners in a registered or de facto marriage, without dependent children; a lone parent with dependent children; the person with the highest income; and finally the eldest person.

Housing costs comprise: rent payments, rates payments (general and water) and mortgage or unsecured loan payments (where the purpose of the loan was to buy or alter the dwelling).

Proportion of households renting — 1995–96 to 2005–06



(a) Includes households renting from other landlords.

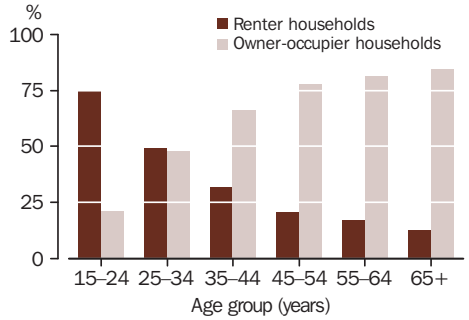
Source: ABS Surveys of Income and Housing.

In the ten years to 2005–06 the proportion of households renting from state/territory housing authorities remained relatively stable, at close to 5% of all households. Over the same period the proportion of households renting privately increased from 19% to 22%.

Age

Renters tend to be a younger group than owner-occupier households. In 2005–06 the median age for renters (based on the age of the household reference person) was 37 years, which was 15 years younger than the median age for owner-occupier households (52 years).

Household tenure(a) and age of reference person — 2005–06



(a) Components do not add to 100% as graph excludes other tenure types.

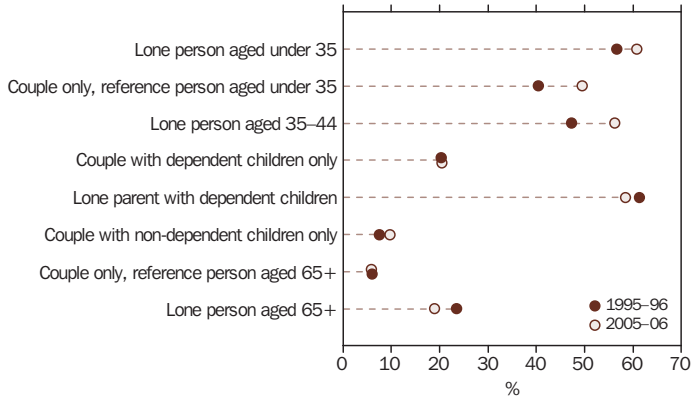
Source: ABS 2005–06 Survey of Income and Housing.

In 2005–06, three-quarters of households with a reference person aged 15–24 years were renter households, similar to the level in 1995–96. The proportion of households renting decreased with age. There was little change in the proportions of households which were renters for most age groups over the ten years to 2005–06. The exception was the 35–44 years group. The proportion of these households which rented increased by five percentage points, from 27% in 1995–96 to 32% in 2005–06.

Life course

The rental rates of different life course groups broadly reflect the age pattern for renting, but also reflect household composition, with higher rates of renting among unpartnered people.

Renters as a proportion of all households: selected life course groups



Source: ABS 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

In 2005–06, young lone person households (reference person aged less than 35 years) were the most likely of all the selected life course groups to be renters (61%). Half (50%) of all young couples without children were renters.

Lone person households aged 35–44 years were more likely to be renters (56%) than owner-occupiers (44%), with the rental rate for this group increasing by nine percentage points between 1995–96 and 2005–06. Over this period, the rate of renting among lone male households aged 35–44 years increased from 44% to 59%, while about half of lone female households in this age group were renting in both periods (52% and 49%, respectively).

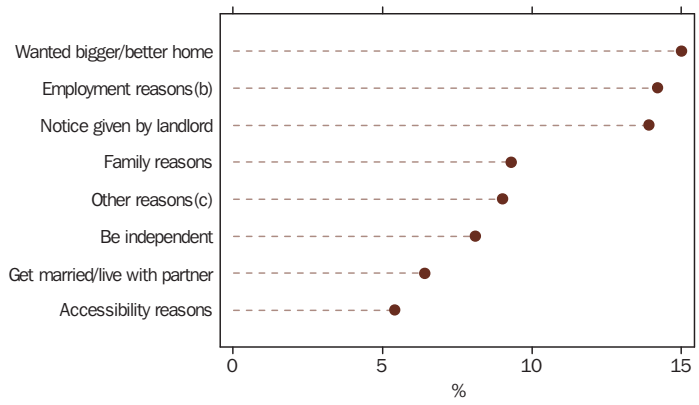
In 2005–06, 59% of lone parent households with dependent children were renting. This was almost three times the rate (20%) of renting among couples with dependent children and reflects the relatively lower household incomes of one parent families. Lone parents with dependent children were also the most likely of all life course groups to be renting from a state/territory housing authority (15%, compared with 3% for all other households).

Households in the later life course stages are more likely to be living in their own home than renting. Older couple-only households were the least likely of all life course groups to be renters. In 2005–06 less than 6% of all couple-only households aged 65 years and over were renting, compared with 19% of lone person households aged 65 years and over. Older lone person households were also the second most likely of the selected life course groups to be renting from state/territory housing authorities (8% in 2005–06).

Renter mobility

In 2006, renters were three times more likely than owner-occupiers to have changed address within the previous 12 months. At the 2006 Census, 35% of people who were renting had lived at a different address within the last year, compared with only 10% of owner-occupiers. Further, 63% of all renters said that they had lived at a different address five years previously. Census data indicates higher rates of mobility among people in renter households with certain characteristics. Among renters aged 18–24 years, just over half (52%) had lived at a different address within the past year and 69% had lived at a different address in the past five years.

Renters(a): main reason for last move — 2006



(a) Who moved in last five years.
(b) Includes gained or lost a job, transferred job or moved to improve employment prospects.
(c) Includes reasons such as wanted lifestyle change or change of neighbourhood.

Source: ABS 2006 General Social Survey.

Renting is often considered to be a less attractive form of housing tenure than home ownership, as renters are less likely to have security of tenure in their residency. On the other hand, renting is also associated with flexibility, and renters may choose to move for lifestyle or employment reasons.

Data from the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS) show that about three-quarters (76%) of people aged 18 years and over who were renting in 2006 had changed address in the previous five years. These renters moved house for a variety of lifestyle and employment-related reasons. Among people aged 18 and over who were renting in 2006 and had moved in the last five years, 15% said their main reason for moving was because they wanted a bigger/better home and 14% had reasons related to employment such as gaining a job or improving their job prospects. Independence (8%), to get married/live with partner (6%) and accessibility (5%) were some other main reasons given by those renters who had moved. Independence was reported as the main reason for moving by 16% of renters aged 18–24 years.

Moving house as a result of notice given by a landlord was also one of the main reasons for changing address, given by 14% of movers.

Income distribution

Housing tenure type is likely to be influenced by household income as well as life course stage. In general, lower income is associated with higher rates of renting, and as income rises the likelihood of renting falls. The general exception is for households where the reference person is aged 65 years and over. In these older households, tenure type is less related to household income as the majority of retired Australians live on considerably reduced incomes, yet older households (65 years and over) are the most likely of all age groups to own their own home outright.

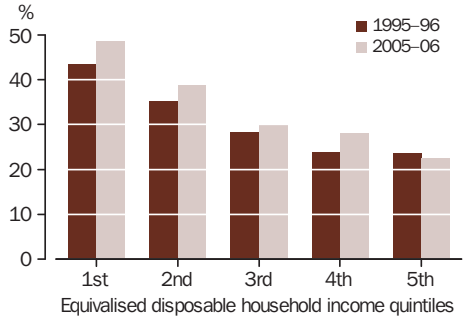
Of all households with a reference person aged under 65 years in 2005–06, almost one-third (32%) were renting. This was consistent with households in the middle income quintile, where 30% were renters. By comparison, around one-half (49%) of households in the bottom quintile of household incomes were renting, and less than one-quarter (23%) of high income households (in the top quintile) were renters. The proportions of renters across the income distribution were similar to 1995–96.

...high income renter households

Although it is often the case that renting is associated with lower income, there are a considerable number of high income households which by choice or circumstance are renting. High income households are defined as those households in the highest quintile (20%) of equivalised disposable household income (i.e. income adjusted to take account of differing household size and composition). In 2005–06 there were 349,100 high income renter households (15% of all renters).

High income renters tended to be younger households than other renters. In 2005–06 half of high income renter households were aged less than 34 years (based on the age of the household reference person) compared with 38 years for all other renter households. High income renter households were also less likely to have children present, with just 15% having children aged less than 15 years compared with 36% for all other renter households.

Proportion of renters in income quintiles: households with reference person aged under 65



Source: ABS 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

High income renter households, selected characteristics — 2005–06

	Units	High income renter households(a)	Non-high income renter households(b)	All households
Median age of household reference person	years	34.2	38.4	47.9
Had children aged less than 15 years in household	%	14.6	36.2	34.1
Owned other residential property	%	25.4	6.9	16.8
Mean net worth	$'000	289.2	86.6	562.9
Households	'000	349.1	1 911.9	7 926.2

(a) Households in top quintile of equivalised disposable household income.
(b) Households from the first to fourth quintile of equivalised disposable household income.

Source: ABS 2005–06 Survey of Income and Housing.

High income renters were also considerably wealthier than other renters. In 2005–06, the mean net worth (value of a household's assets less liabilities) of high income renter households was $289,000 compared with $87,000 for all other renter households. Contributing to this wealth, one-quarter (25%) of high income renters owned a residential property, compared with 7% of all other renters. The proportion of high income renter households owning a residential property was higher among older households, with 38% of those aged 45 years and over owning a property compared with 19% for those aged less than 45 years. Some property-owning renters may own property as an investment, while others may own a home but be renting elsewhere to take up employment opportunities in the short to medium term.

A number of high income renter households also had shares. In 2005–06, 19% of high income renter households had over $10,000 worth of shares compared with only 3% of middle income renter households (i.e. households in the third quintile of equivalised disposable household income).

Housing costs

Housing costs are a major component of total living expenses. The income left over after housing costs are met is an important indicator of how much money households have left for other things.

Despite increases in housing costs over the last decade, the incomes of renters after paying housing costs have increased in real terms. In 2005–06 average housing costs for private renter households before deducting CRA receipts were $224 per week; this had increased in real terms from $190 per week in 1995–96, an average annual rate of increase above inflation of 1.7%. However, the average incomes of renters increased over the period at a faster average rate (2.2%) than their housing costs. The net result was a real increase in the average income after housing costs of renters, from $570 to $720 per week (or 2.4% per year).

In comparison, owner occupier households with a mortgage had a real average increase of 2.8% in income after housing costs from $784

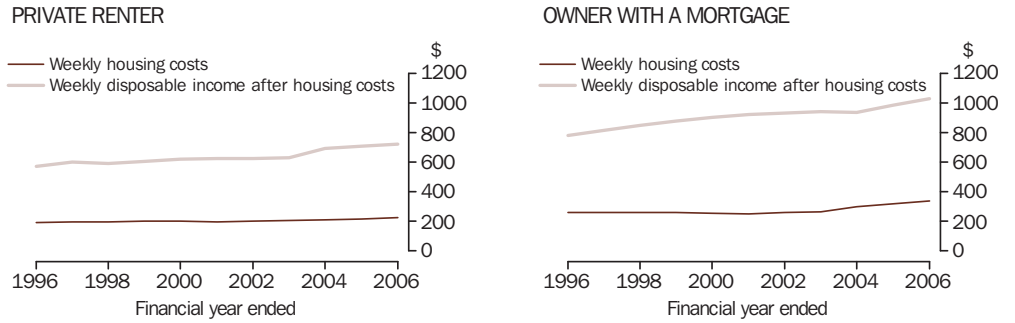
Government assistance for renters

Since the mid 1980s there has been a change in policy on the provision of government assisted housing with a move from low-cost public housing to an increased emphasis on subsidising private rental accommodation. Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) was introduced as a non-taxable income support payment designed to help people on lower incomes who rent in the private market. In the ten years to 2006–07 Commonwealth government expenditure on CRA increased by 12% in real terms, from $1.9 billion in 1997–98 to $2.2 billion in 2006–07. In addition there was expenditure of $1.3 billion on Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) programs in 2006–07, just over 70% of which was provided by the Commonwealth government, with the remainder provided by state and territory governments.[3]

CRA reimbursement amounts to households have not been separately identified in the SIH. As a result care should be taken when analysing and comparing housing costs relative to income for different types of households. This is illustrated by the following example. Two households are renting their dwellings, both receive government pensions of $400 per week. One household rents from a public housing authority and pays rent of $100 per week. The other pays $135 rent per week to a private landlord and receives CRA of $35. In the SIH the housing costs of the latter household would be recorded as $135 and their income recorded as $435. The couple renting from a public housing authority has a housing costs to income ratio of 25%. The housing costs to income ratio for the household renting privately would be derived as 31%. If CRA receipts are deducted from housing costs and income, the ratio for the latter household is also 25%, highlighting that there is no substantive difference between the housing costs or income situations of the two households.

Source: *Housing Occupancy and Costs 2005–06* (ABS cat. no. 4130.55.001).

Mean weekly housing costs and disposable household income after housing costs(a)



(a) In 2005–06 dollars.

Source: ABS Surveys of Income and Housing.

to $1,031 per week. In other words, owner occupiers experienced a faster increase in their income after paying housing costs than did renters, due in part to the faster growth in average household incomes of owner occupiers (2.7% per year). It is worth noting that, reflecting lifestyle choices, owner occupiers may exercise a degree of choice about the type of house they want and size of mortgage they are willing to service (see also *Australian Social Trends 2008,* First home buyers pp. 179–183).

Rental vacancy rates

Information on the proportion of rental properties vacant in capital cities is collected by the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA). The population weighted average of the eight capital cities shows the level of vacancies has moved cyclically over the 20 years to 2008. Between the March quarter of 1988 and the peak in the November quarter 1993, the vacancy rate more than doubled from 1.8% to 4.6%, before declining to a low of 1.5% in the June quarter 1997. Vacancy rates subsequently rose, averaging 3.8% between the September quarter 2001 and December 2003. From that period, the vacancy rate has undergone another decline to be 1.5% in the March quarter 2008, although the lowest level was 1.3% for the March quarter 2007.

In the 12 months to March 2008, Sydney had the lowest average vacancy rate of 1.2%, while the vacancy rate in Adelaide was 1.4%. Vacancies were also low in Melbourne (1.5%), Brisbane (1.8%), and Perth (1.9%).

Weighted average of capital city rental vacancy rates

Source: REIA quarterly vacancy rates, ABS Estimated Resident Population.

...among lower income renter households

Households with lower incomes are generally more sensitive to rising housing costs than other households. Lower income households are defined as those with equivalised disposable household income in the second, third and fourth income deciles. In 2005–06, 32% of all renter households were classified as lower income households, and around three-quarters (74%) of these lower income renters were renting from a private landlord.

Over the ten years to 2005–06, average weekly housing costs for lower income private renter households increased from $162 in real terms to $194 (before deducting CRA receipts), an average annual increase of 1.8%. However, as with all renters, the disposable incomes of lower income renters increased at a faster rate (2.7%). The net result of the faster growth in incomes relative to housing costs meant that lower income renters had a real increase in their after housing costs incomes from $307 to $421 per week in the ten years to 2005–06, equivalent to a 3.2% average annual increase.

Looking ahead

The cost of renting has risen over the past year. During the 10 years to March 2007, the rents component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose at an average rate of 2.8% per year comparable with the corresponding rate of increase in overall inflation (2.6%).

In the 12 months to March 2008, however, the rents component rose by 7.1%, outstripping the increase of 4.2% in overall inflation.[4]

Recent government initiatives to increase the supply and affordability of rental accommodation include the National Rental Affordability Scheme, designed to encourage private sector investment in rental housing.[5]

When released next year, data recently collected in the 2007–08 ABS Survey of Income and Housing will enable the characteristics and financial circumstances of renters to be updated and further analysed.

Endnotes

1 Baum, S and Wulff, M 2001, *Housing aspirations of Australian households: positioning paper,* Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne.

2 See *Australian Social Trends 2008,* 'Housing: national summary', page 168, indicator 33. Note that CRA data are provided for income units.

3 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2008, *Report on Government Services*, viewed 22 April 2008, <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/2008/housing>.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March quarter 2008*, cat. no. 6401.0, ABS, Canberra.

5 Australian Government 2008, 'Budget Measures 2008–09*', Budget paper no. 2, Expense Measures: Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs*, viewed 15 May 2008, <http://www.budget.gov.au/2008–09/content>.

First home buyers

Between July 1991 and March 2008, the average loan commitment to first home buyers increased from $96,100 to $215,100 in 2005–06 dollars.

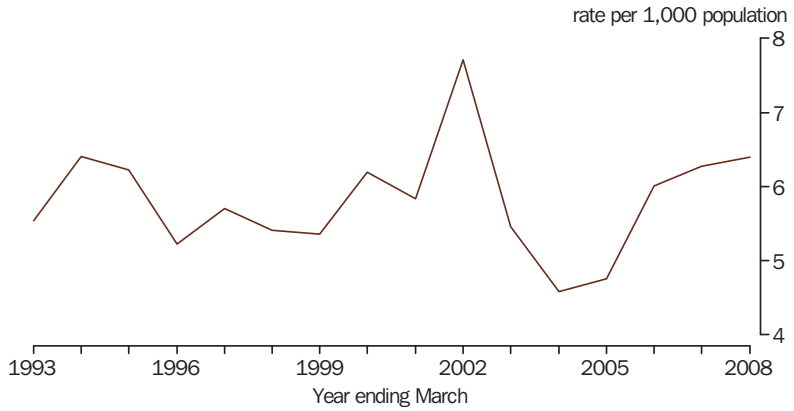
Many Australians consider home ownership to be a highly desirable goal, offering security of residential tenure, a tax-free capital gain, and a minimisation of housing costs during retirement when income tends to be lower. While the overall home ownership rate has remained fairly stable at around 70% over recent decades, there is a widespread perception that escalating property prices and rising interest rates have made home ownership less attainable.

Borrowing with a mortgage is the means by which the great majority of first home buyers purchase their property. In 2005–06, 95% of households who bought their first home in the three years prior to interview had a mortgage on their home. Analysis in this article is limited to first homes purchased with finance and first home buyers who had a mortgage.

Trends in housing finance

During the year to March 2008, there were 135,000 housing finance commitments to first home buyers, equivalent to 6.4 new commitments per 1,000 people. This was higher than the average annual rate to March since data collection began in July 1991, although significantly lower than the record 7.7 commitments per 1,000 people in the year to March 2002. This peak was associated with increased commitments following the introduction of the First Home Owners Grant in July 2000, and the hastening of commitments ahead of the cessation of the Commonwealth Additional Grant at the end of June 2002.

Annual housing finance commitments(a) to first home buyers



(a) From significant lenders for owner occupation, excluding alterations and additions.

Source: Housing Finance, Australia, April 2008 (ABS cat. no. 5609.0); *Australian Demographic Statistics, December Quarter 2007* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Data sources and definitions

Most of the data in this article are from ABS Surveys of Income and Housing conducted between 1995–96 and 2005–06. These data are supplemented by ABS Housing Finance Statistics and the Reserve Bank of Australia's Indicator Lending Rates series.

First home buyers are defined differently in the Survey of Income and Housing (SIH) and ABS Housing Finance Statistics, and this should be borne in mind when comparing data from the two sources. In ABS Housing Finance Statistics, first home buyers represent firm offers of housing finance to first time entrants to the home ownership market. In the SIH, first home buyer households are those which have bought their current home as their first home, and the measure reported is generally for first home buyers who bought within three years of being interviewed for the SIH ('recent first home buyers').

Throughout this article, all monetary values have been converted into 2005–06 dollars.

Higher residential property values

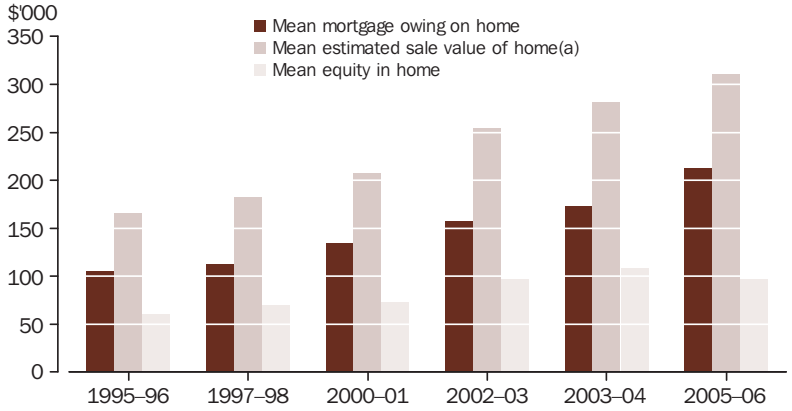
In 2005–06, the average value of the homes of recent first home buyers with a mortgage (as reported by the home owners) was $310,000. This was considerably higher than the average real (i.e. adjusted for inflation) value of the homes of recent first home buyers with a mortgage in 1995–96 ($165,400), representing average annual price growth of 6.5% above general price inflation. These values may exceed actual purchase prices because recent first home buyers surveyed in each period could (by definition) have bought their home up to three years before being interviewed. Established house price growth was around four times faster during the three years to 2005–06 than it had been during the three years to 1995–96.[1]

First home buyers without a mortgage

In 2005–06, 5% of households who had recently bought their first home did not have a mortgage, down from 18% in 1995–96.

First home buyer households without a mortgage differed significantly from those with mortgages in a number of areas. For example, in 2005–06, first home buyer households without a mortgage had much greater wealth, with an average net worth of $882,200 compared with $235,900 for first home buyer households with a mortgage. Over half (56%) of all first home buyer households without a mortgage were lone person households. In contrast, couple family households made up the majority of first home buyer households with a mortgage.

Real change in average mortgage debt, home sale value and home equity among recent first home buyers with a mortgage



(a) Based on the sale price of their home at the time of their interview, as estimated by recent first home buyers with a mortgage.

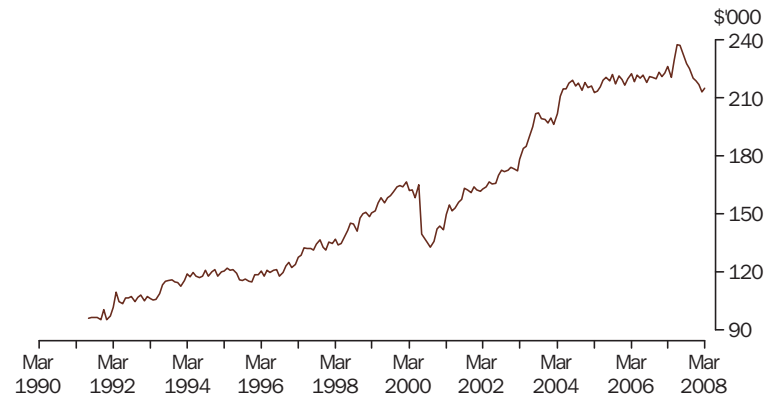
Source: ABS Surveys of Income and Housing; *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March Quarter 2008* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

Larger loans

Adjusted to 2005–06 dollars, the nationwide average loan commitment to first home buyers rose from $96,100 in July 1991 to peak at $237,600 in June 2007, before falling to $215,100 in March 2008. Despite an even larger fall coinciding with the introduction of the First Home Owners Grant, the overall rise from July 1991 to March 2008 represented an average yearly increase of 5.0% over and above the rate of general price inflation.

There were clear differences at the state and territory level, with the average amount committed to first home buyers in the ACT in March 2008 ($234,400 in 2005–06 dollars) substantially larger than the average amount committed to their Tasmanian counterparts

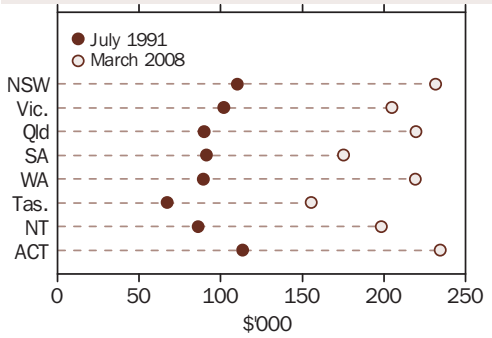
Average real housing loan commitment(a) to first home buyers



(a) From significant lenders for owner occupation, excluding alterations and additions.

Source: Housing Finance, Australia, April 2008 (ABS cat. no. 5609.0); *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March Quarter 2008* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

Real change in the size of an average housing loan(a) to a first home buyer



(a) From significant lenders for owner occupation, excluding alterations and additions.

Source: Housing Finance, Australia, April 2008 (ABS cat. no. 5609.0); *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March Quarter 2008* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

($155,500). Between July 1991 and March 2008, the average annual real increase in the average first home buyer housing loan commitment by significant lenders ranged from 4.0% in South Australia to 5.5% in Queensland and Western Australia.

Mortgage debt rises as property values rise

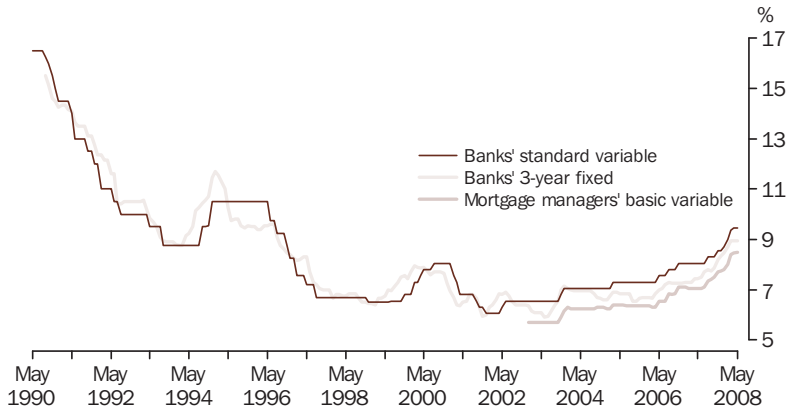
Reflecting the real increases in both property values and loan commitments to first home buyers, the average amount of mortgage debt held by recent first home buyers with a mortgage more than doubled in real terms from $105,400 in 1995–96 to $212,700 in 2005–06 (an average annual increase of 7.3%). Over the same period, their average equity in their homes rose in real terms by 5% a year on average from $59,900 to $97,300, although in 2003–04 it had been higher at $108,200. The higher level of equity in 2003–04 was partly due to established house price growth being approximately twice as rapid during the three years to 2003–04 as it had been during the three years to 2005–06.[1]

Interest rates and housing costs

Between 1995–96 and 2002–03, falling housing loan interest rates largely offset rising levels of mortgage borrowing, leading to the housing costs of first home buyers with a mortgage remaining steady in real terms. The average weekly outlay (in 2005–06 dollars) by recent first home buyer households with a mortgage on home loan repayments and property rates (general and water/sewerage) was $299 in 1995–96 and $304 in 2002–03.

Since 2002–03, these housing costs have increased considerably, as rising interest rates have combined with larger loans to generate

Annual interest rates charged on housing loans



Source: Reserve Bank of Australia Bulletin, June 2008 (Table F5 - Indicator Lending Rates).

higher interest charges and higher mortgage repayments. Between 2002–03 and 2005–06, average housing costs rose in real terms for recent first home buyers with a mortgage by an average of 11% per year to $415 per week (in 2005–06 dollars).

Combining the average loan size with mortgage interest rates gives an indication of the additional cost from more recent interest rate increases. Those who borrowed the average amount in March 2008 for their first home ($215,100) at the banks' prevailing standard variable interest rate (9.35%) would have faced initial interest of $20,100 per annum (in 2005–06 dollars), while those who borrowed at the discounted mortgage managers' basic rate (8.40%) would have begun incurring interest charges of $18,100 per annum (in 2005–06 dollars). This compares with annualised commencing interest of $12,400 and $10,800 respectively in June 2003, and between $16,600 and $14,400 in June 2006.

Housing costs and income

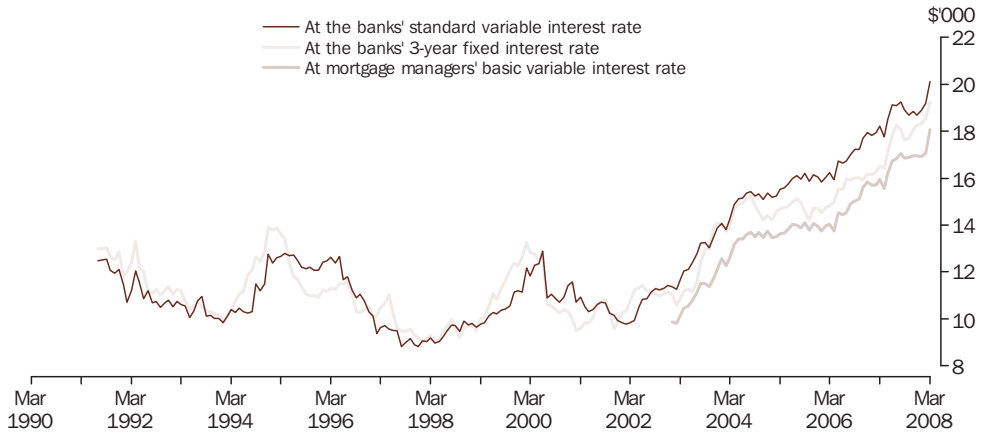
In 2005–06, the housing costs (i.e. home loan repayments and property rates) of recent first home buyer households with a mortgage accounted for 27% of their gross weekly household income. This was similar to the proportion they paid in 1995–96 (26%), but higher than intervening years such as 1997–98 and 1999–2000 when their housing costs represented 20% of their gross weekly income.

After deducting housing costs, average weekly disposable household income of recent first home buyers with a mortgage in 2005–06 was $800. While this level of after housing costs disposable income was 27% more in real terms than it had been in 1995–96 ($629), it was no higher than what it had been in 1999–2000 ($807).

High income recent first home buyers with a mortgage tend to have higher absolute but lower proportional housing costs than those on low incomes. In 2005–06, first home buyer households with a mortgage in the highest equivalised disposable household income quintile had average weekly housing costs of $501 (22% of their gross income), leaving them with average weekly disposable income after housing costs of $1,200.

Low income first home buyers with a mortgage (i.e. those in the second and third deciles of the equivalised disposable household income distribution) had much lower housing costs ($278 a week) which accounted for a larger proportion of their income (36%), leaving them

Real average annual interest payable by first home buyers with a mortgage(a)



(a) At the commencement of an average-sized owner-occupier housing loan to a first home buyer. Not all scenarios are covered by the Reserve Bank's indicator housing lending rates series (e.g. honeymoon rates and 5 year fixed interest rates).

Source: Housing Finance, Australia, April 2008 (ABS cat. no. 5609.0); *Reserve Bank of Australia Bulletin, June 2008* (Table F5 - Indicator Lending Rates); *Consumer Price Index, Australia, March Quarter 2008* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0).

Quintile distribution and housing costs(a): first home buyers with a mortgage

Equivalised disposable household income quintiles	*Distribution across income groups*		*Housing costs(a) as a proportion of gross household income*	
	1995–96	*2005–06*	*1995–96*	*2005–06*
	%	%	%	%
Lowest quintile	7.2	6.8	61.9	66.0
Second quintile	13.3	10.8	35.1	33.1
Third quintile	18.3	22.0	26.9	30.7
Fourth quintile	24.4	27.8	25.2	28.5
Highest quintile	36.7	32.6	22.4	22.1
All first home buyers with a mortgage	**100.0**	**100.0**	**25.6**	**26.9**
Second and third deciles	9.8	8.9	40.6	36.2

(a) In this table and its explanatory text, housing costs are limited to mortgage or unsecured loan payments for the purpose of buying, building, adding to, or altering the home, plus general rates and water/sewerage rates.

Source: Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001); ABS 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

with average weekly disposable income after housing costs of $398. Two-thirds (67%) of all low income first home buyers with a mortgage allocated more than 30% of their gross income to meet their housing costs in 2005–06.

Demographically stable

The demographic profile of recent first home buyer households with a mortgage differed little in 2005–06 to what it had been in 1995–96. For example, the average age of the household reference person remained in the early 30s.

Partnering commonly precedes home buying, although people living alone comprised around one-fifth of all first home buyer households with a mortgage in both 1995–96 and 2005–06. In both years more than two-thirds of all first home buyer households with a mortgage were couple family households, and about half of those households included dependent children.

In both 1995–96 and 2005–06, recent first home buyer households with a mortgage had an average of around 1.6 employed members, with the majority having at least two employed members.

Selected characteristics of first home buyer households with a mortgage

	1995–96	*2005–06*
Family composition of the household	%	%
Non-family households		
Lone person	17.4	20.0
One family households		
Couple only	32.0	33.5
Couple family with dependent children	36.6	34.6
All first home buyer households with a mortgage(a)	**100.0**	**100.0**
	no.	no.
Average number of persons in the household	2.60	2.50
Average number of employed persons in the household	1.57	1.60
Average number of children under 15 in the household	0.65	0.58
	years	years
Average age of household reference person	32	33
	'000	'000
Total number of first home buyer households with a mortgage	**318.2**	**303.3**

(a) Includes other household compositions not listed among the preceding categories.

Source: Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001); ABS 1995–96 and 2005–06 Surveys of Income and Housing.

Changing profile of first homes

It is unclear whether the quality of housing occupied by recent first home buyers with a mortgage in 2005–06 was superior to that inhabited by comparable first home buyers in 1995–96. For example, between 1995–96 and 2005–06, the proportion of recent first home buyers with a mortgage who bought a new home declined from 23% to 14%. Over the same period, the proportion living in medium or high density housing increased from 15% to 27%. These shifts away from new dwellings and separate houses towards established dwellings and higher density housing may reflect the availability of housing stock as well as changing lifestyle and locational preferences among first home buyers with a mortgage.

The shift from new to established dwellings does suggest a shift to lower priced housing, given that established dwellings occupied by

Selected characteristics of the homes occupied by first home buyers with a mortgage

	1995–96	*2005–06*
Structure of dwelling(a)	%	%
Separate house	84.7	72.3
Semi-detached, row, terrace or town house	7.9	15.2
Flat, unit or apartment	7.4	11.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
Whether home was new or established when bought		
New	22.7	13.5
Established	77.3	86.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
	no.	no.
Average number of bedrooms in dwelling	2.88	2.94
	'000	'000
Total number of homes occupied by first home buyers with a mortgage	**318.2**	**303.3**

(a) The three listed categories may not sum to the total because some first home buyers occupy other dwelling structures such as caravans, cabins, houseboats and commercial premises.

Source: Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

recent first home buyers with a mortgage in 2005–06 were, on average, worth less than new ones ($302,200 compared with $360,100). However, the move from freestanding dwellings to higher density housing does not indicate a flight to cheaper homes. In 2005–06, the difference between the average value of separate houses occupied by recent first home buyers with a mortgage ($309,900) and the homes of their counterparts in higher density housing ($311,700) was not statistically significant.

There was also no statistically significant difference between the average number of bedrooms in the homes of recent first home buyers with a mortgage in 1995–96 (2.88) and 2005–06 (2.94). This stability occurred despite the shift to higher density housing, partly because the average number of bedrooms in medium density housing (semi-detached, row, terrace and town houses) occupied by recent first home buyers with a mortgage increased between 1995–96 (2.24) and 2005–06 (2.58).

Looking ahead

The increase in interest rates since 2005–06 might be expected to have lifted current mortgagors' housing costs relative to their household incomes. If sustained, increased interest rates may alter the socio-demographic profile of first home buyers who bought since 2005–06, or affect the type of homes they are buying, and the location of these homes.

On the other hand, house price rises may slow in a climate of higher interest rates, and there have been several policy responses in the past year to the widely perceived decline in housing affordability. Some governments are identifying land to be released more quickly for the construction of new housing, and the Australian government intends to introduce superannuation-style First Home Saver Accounts and a Housing Affordability Fund designed to reduce the cost of new housing by lowering infrastructure charges and the holding costs associated with planning delays.[2,3,4]

Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, March Quarter 2008*, cat. no. 6416.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 The Canberra Times, 13 November 2007, *Naval station to be home to hundreds*.

3 Senate Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia, June 2008, *A good house is hard to find: Housing affordability in Australia*, viewed 4 July 2008, <http://www.aph.gov.au/SEnate/committee/hsaf_ctte/report/report.pdf>.

4 Australian Government 2008, *Making housing affordable again*, viewed 4 July 2008, <http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/vIA/housing_affordable/$File/making_housing_affordable_again.pdf>.

Housing and services in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

In 2006, 74% of people living in remote Indigenous communities had a primary school located in their community, 57% had access to a child care centre and 21% had access to a swimming pool.

Housing that provides adequate shelter and essential services (such as functional sewerage and water connections) is a fundamental expectation of most Australians. Not having access to housing that meets these basic standards poses risks to the health of the individuals and communities affected. Compared with other Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have higher rates of illness associated with poor housing conditions and overcrowding.[1]

In addition to housing, access to a range of services (such as health and educational facilities) is important for building and maintaining long term health and wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may experience more difficulty than other Australians in accessing these services, particularly in remote areas.

Community location and size

In 2006, almost one-fifth (18%) or 93,000 of Australia's estimated 517,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders lived in a discrete Indigenous community. Housing in these communities is mostly provided by Indigenous Housing Organisations, which manage these dwellings on behalf of the people living in the community. For more information on the whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see *Australian Social Trends 2008*, Population distribution, pp. 9–12.

The majority (80,500) of people living in discrete Indigenous communities lived in either Remote or Very Remote area communities. This population accounted for around 61% of all Indigenous people in Remote and Very Remote areas. Discrete Indigenous communities in Remote and Very Remote areas are the focus of this article and are referred to as *remote Indigenous communities*.

Discrete Indigenous communities, selected characteristics — 2006

	Units	Remote communities	Non-remote communities	Total
Discrete Indigenous communities	no.	1 112	75	1 187
Total IHO managed permanent dwellings	'000	13.4	2.2	15.7
Total persons	'000	80.5	12.5	93.0
Proportion of persons living in community type	%	86.6	13.4	100.0

Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

Data sources and definitions

This article uses information from the 2001 and 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Surveys (CHINS). CHINS was conducted by the ABS on behalf of the then Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in 2006, and on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in 2001. The surveys collected information from discrete Indigenous communities and Indigenous Housing Organisations across Australia. Data for overcrowding are from the 2001 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

The term *discrete* Indigenous community is used to describe a geographic location, contained within physical or legal boundaries, which is inhabited or intended to be inhabited predominantly by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

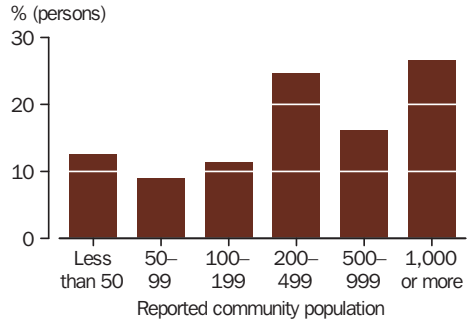
An *Indigenous Housing Organisation* (IHO) is any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation which is responsible for managing housing for Indigenous people, and includes community organisations such as Resource Agencies and Land Councils. In 2006, there were 264 IHOs managing 14,800 permanent dwellings in Remote and Very Remote areas, with 91% (13,400) in discrete Indigenous communities.

An *Indigenous household* is a household that includes at least one person who identifies as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

The remoteness of discrete Indigenous communities has been defined using the Australian Standard Geographical Classification for *Remoteness Area* (RA). It classifies areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into six broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. The six Remoteness Areas are: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia; and Migratory. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these names with 'Australia' omitted. For the purposes of this article *remote Indigenous communities* comprise discrete Indigenous communities located in *Remote Australia* and *Very Remote Australia.* Together these remoteness categories accounted for 94% of discrete Indigenous communities in 2006. For more information see *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), 2006* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0).

The remaining 12,500 Indigenous people in non-remote discrete communities lived in either Major Cities or the Inner/Outer Regional areas, in communities such as Redfern in Sydney and Framlingham in western Victoria.

Population distribution, remote communities, by size of community — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

In 2006, 26% of people in remote Indigenous communities lived in one of the fourteen communities with 1,000 or more people such as Yuendumu in the Northern Territory and Hope Vale in Queensland. A further 41% lived in communities with between 200 and 1,000 residents and 20% were in communities with between 50 and 199 residents. Nearly 13% of people lived in the 838 communities with a population of less than 50 people.

Physical condition of housing

Not all people in remote Indigenous communities in 2006 had a permanent dwelling as a home – 3,400 people were living in temporary dwellings such as sheds or humpies. This amounted to 4% of the total population in these communities.

A significant number of those who lived in a permanent dwelling experienced problems with the condition of their home. In 2006, one-third (33%) of dwellings managed by Indigenous Housing Organisations in remote communities needed either major repairs (24%) or replacement (9%). This was similar to 2001 when a total of 31% of dwellings were in need of either major repairs or replacement.

Dwellings and their condition

Permanent dwellings are buildings designed for people to live in, with fixed walls, a roof and doors.

Temporary dwellings are caravans, tin sheds without internal dividing walls, humpies, dongas, or other makeshift shelters.

Housing conditions refer to the condition of permanent dwellings owned or managed by an Indigenous Housing Organisation, as assessed and categorised by community housing officers, in terms of the costs of repairs needed.

- *Minor or no repairs*: repairs of less than $20,000;
- *Major repairs*: repairs of $20,000 to less than $60,000;
- *Replacement*: repairs of $60,000 or more.

These ranges were higher in medium and high-cost areas.

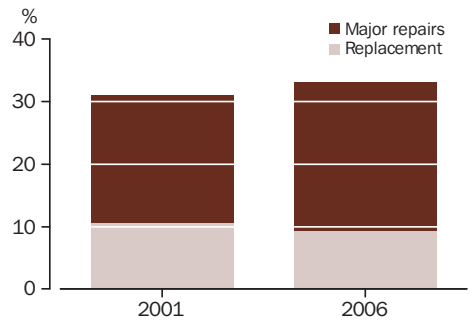
Overcrowding

The *Canadian National Occupancy Standard* for overcrowding is sensitive to both household size and composition. It measures the bedroom requirements of a household by specifying that:

- there should be no more than two persons per bedroom;
- children less than 5 years of age of different sexes may reasonably share a bedroom;
- children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom; and
- single household members aged 18 years and over should have a separate bedroom, as should parents or couples.

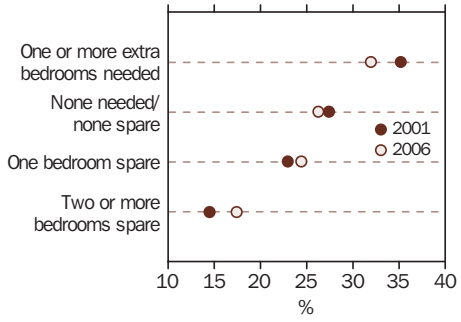
Households living in dwellings where this standard cannot be met are considered to be overcrowded.

Need for repair: permanent dwellings, remote Indigenous communities



Source: ABS 2001 and 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Surveys.

Overcrowding for Indigenous households in remote Australia



Source: ABS 2001 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Housing.

...overcrowding

Overcrowded conditions can put stress on household amenities such as cooking equipment and sewerage systems, potentially affecting safety, and may also contribute to higher transmission rates of infectious diseases. At the time of the 2006 Census, 32% of all Indigenous households in Remote and Very Remote areas (including those in discrete Indigenous communities and other locations) needed one or more extra bedrooms to adequately accommodate all residents. This represented a small decrease from 35% in 2001. Just over one-quarter (26%) were occupied to capacity and 42% had one or more bedrooms to spare.

Supply of essential services

For most of the Australian population, improvements in housing conditions, drinking water quality, sanitation and disease control in the early 20th century led to significant improvements in public health including large declines in infant mortality. While the standard of infrastructure in remote Indigenous communities generally remains below that enjoyed by Australians in most other locations, there were improvements in the availability and quality of infrastructure services in the five years to 2006. In particular, there were improvements in water and electricity supply and sewerage disposal. Overall, people in large communities had better access than those in smaller communities to more reliable types of services.

Proportionally more people used a town supply as their main source of water in 2006 than in 2001 (28% compared with 12%) and this was the result of more communities using a town supply as their main source of water (up 15% to 152 in 2006). Nevertheless, in 2006, more than half (54%) of all people in remote Indigenous communities relied on bore water. Very few people lived in communities where there was no organised supply of water (less than 0.1%).

In 2006, a greater proportion of people had access to the state grid for their electricity supply than in 2001 (28% compared with 24%), as more communities accessed this type of electricity connection (up 10%, to 204 in 2006). Community generators remained the main source of electricity supply for the majority of people (62%) in remote Indigenous communities in 2006. Very few people lived in communities with no organised supply of electricity (less than 1%).

Essential services in remote Indigenous communities(a)

	Proportion of persons with access to supply	
	2001	*2006*
Service supply	%	%
Main source of water		
Town supply	12.0	28.3
Bore water	66.2	54.0
Rain water tank	4.0	2.9
River/reservoir	16.0	12.0
No organised supply	0.1	—
Main source of electricity		
State grid	23.5	28.5
Community generators	69.1	62.3
Domestic generators	2.3	2.5
Solar/solar hybrid	3.9	4.5
No organised supply	0.7	0.4
Main sewerage system		
Town system	8.4	30.0
Water-borne system	50.4	37.7
Septic tanks	35.9	28.3
Pit toilets	3.8	3.2
No organised system	1.2	0.3

(a) Data are presented for selected essential services only and therefore components do not add to 100%.

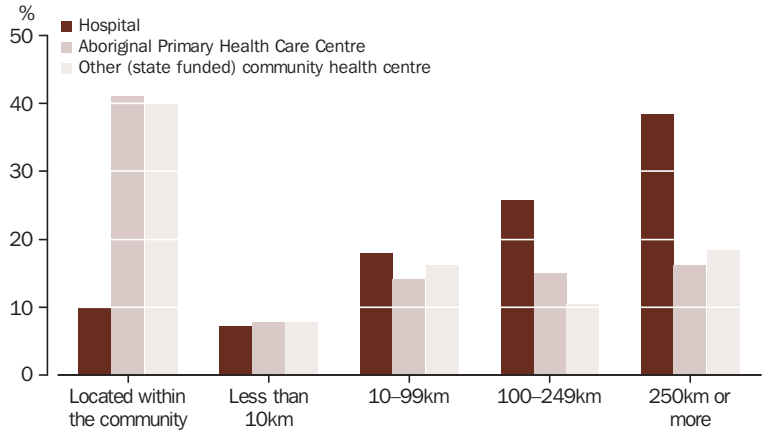
Source: ABS 2001 and 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Surveys.

Between 2001 and 2006, there was a 55% increase in the number of communities connected to a town sewerage system as their main form of waste disposal. This resulted in the proportion of people whose community had town sewerage increasing from 8% to 30%. As a consequence, a lower proportion of people relied on water-borne systems and septic tanks (38% and 28% respectively) in 2006 than in 2001 (50% and 36%). Virtually all people in remote Indigenous communities had access to some kind of organised sewerage system.

...reliability of services

In 2006, 59% of people living in remote Indigenous communities with a population of 50 or more had experienced an interruption to their water supply in the previous 12 months, with half of these people experiencing five or more interruptions.

Proportion of population in remote Indigenous communities with access to health services — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

A smaller proportion of people in larger communities experienced an interruption to their electricity supply in 2006 (81%) than in 2001 (90%). Around one in five people (19% or 13,000 people) experienced 20 or more interruptions in 2006.

The reliability of sewerage systems in larger remote Indigenous communities has improved, with a decrease in the proportion of people affected by sewerage system overflows or leakages, down to 40% (or 28,000) in 2006 from 56% in 2001.

Health services

Indigenous people in remote areas may face particular difficulty in accessing health services due to the travel involved to reach those services. In 2006, just one in ten people were in a community which had a hospital. However, three-quarters (75%) of people in remote Indigenous communities had an Aboriginal Health Care Centre or other community health centre located in their community. Access to health facilities was influenced by the size of the community. All people in communities with a population of 1,000 or more had either an Aboriginal Health Care Centre or community health centre located in their community, and 34% had a hospital. In contrast, 32% of people in communities of less than 200 people had either an Aboriginal Health Care Centre or community health centre located in their community and less than 1% had a hospital.

While most people in Indigenous communities have access to Aboriginal Health Care Centres or community health centres, not all centres have full-time trained medical staff able to provide treatment services. Instead, health professionals such as nurses and doctors are required to visit communities on a regular basis.

Most people living in communities (of at least 50 people) located 10 kilometres or more away from the nearest hospital had access to a nurse on a daily basis (77%). Only one in five (20%) had access to a doctor this frequently, however a further 41% had access to a doctor weekly or fortnightly. About 3% of people were able to access a doctor in their own community less than once every three months.

Persons in larger remote communities(a) affected by service interruptions(b)(c)

	2001		*2006*	
	'000	%	'000	%
Experienced water interruptions	n.a.	n.a.	41 500	59.0
Experienced water interruption five times or more	n.a.	n.a.	20 600	29.4
Experienced electricity interruptions	71 800	89.7	56 900	80.9
Experienced electricity interruption 20 times or more	13 500	16.8	13 100	18.6
Experienced sewerage system overflows or leakages	44 500	55.6	27 900	39.7
Total persons living in larger remote Indigenous communities	**80 000**	**100.0**	**70 300**	**100.0**

(a) Larger communities are defined as those with a total population of 50 or more.
(b) In the 12 months prior to the survey.
(c) Data not collected in 'administered' communities with a population of less than 50.

Source: ABS 2001 and 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Surveys.

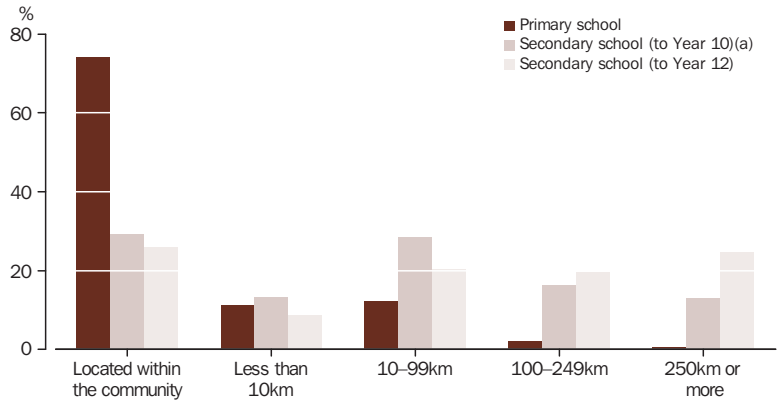
Education services

Increasingly, researchers and governments are realising the importance of early childhood learning for improved educational and social outcomes in later life.[2,3] In 2006, 54% of people in communities with more than 50 residents had pre-primary schooling services located in their community.

The majority (74%) of all people in remote Indigenous communities had a primary school within their community. A further 11% had a primary school located within 10 kilometres of their community and less than 1% of people were 250 kilometres or more away from their nearest primary school. Access was associated with community size – 95% of people living in communities of 1,000 or more people had a primary school located in their community compared with just 15% of those in communities with less than 50 residents.

While the majority of people in remote Indigenous communities in 2006 had relatively close access to primary schools, secondary school education was less readily

Proportion of population in remote Indigenous communities with access to education services — 2006



(a) Excludes not stated.

Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

accessible. Around 29% of people in remote Indigenous communities had a secondary school that went up to Year 10 level located within their community, whereas slightly less (26%) had a school that went to Year 12 level. A Year 10 school was located up to 10 kilometres away for a further 13% of people, while 9% had a school that went to Year 12 within 10 kilometres.

Access to other community facilities

In addition to adequate housing and the infrastructure required to support housing viability, a range of community facilities such as community halls, child care centres, libraries and sporting grounds contribute to the greater functioning of the community.

In 2006, 57% of people in remote communities with a population of 50 or more had access to a child care centre and 36% had access to a library. The vast majority of people in communities of this size had access to a community store (83%) and most had access to a public hall or meeting area (75%).

The population of a remote Indigenous community can fluctuate dramatically due to social, cultural and seasonal factors.[1] In addition to accommodation to alleviate overcrowding during times of peak visitor inflows, communities may require accommodation to meet the needs of particular groups of residents. In 2006, 65% of people had general visitor accommodation, 32% had accommodation for the aged and 32% had a women's refuge located within their community.

Nearly nine in ten (89%) people in remote communities with a population of 50 or more had access to some type of sporting facility within their community, with 81% of people having access to sports grounds, 74% having access to outdoor basketball or netball courts and 21% with access to a public swimming pool.

Access to communication services

Increasingly, social participation is becoming more reliant on communication technology. Those without access to these services may experience difficulty maintaining cultural and social connections and be less able to access information and services that are available in the wider community. In 2006, 85% of people in all remote Indigenous communities had access to a public telephone and more than half (54%) had access to a public Internet connection.

Virtually all (99%) people living in remote Indigenous communities with a population of 50 or more in 2006 were able to receive television and radio broadcasts, with the most accessible resources being ABC

Percentage of population with access to selected facilities(a) — 2006

Communities with a population of 50 or more	%
Accommodation facilities	
Visitor accommodation	64.5
Aged accommodation	31.7
Women's refuge	32.5
Accommodation for contract workers	61.7
No accommodation facilities	16.0
Public facilities	
Hall/meeting area	74.7
Store	83.4
Administration building	86.8
Library	36.3
Child care centre	56.5
No public facilities	4.7
Sporting facilities	
Sports grounds	80.7
Swimming pool(s)	20.8
No sporting facilities	10.0

(a) Data not collected in 'administered' communities with a population of less than 50.

Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

Access to telecommunications, remote Indigenous communities — 2006

Communities with a population of 50 or more	%
Broadcasts	
Radio broadcasts	
ABC radio	92.4
Commercial radio	64.8
Indigenous radio	90.6
Television broadcasts	
ABC television	95.5
Commercial television	91.1
SBS television	84.5
Indigenous television	82.8
Did not receive broadcasts	1.2
All remote Indigenous communities	%
Access to public telephone	84.7
Public Internet access	54.0

Source: ABS 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

television (96%) and ABC radio (92%). Indigenous broadcasting services were also highly accessible, with a high proportion of people able to receive Indigenous radio broadcasts (91%) or television (83%).

Looking ahead

Housing and related infrastructure are fundamentally important to achieving positive social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Ongoing data collection from surveys and administrative sources will help provide the evidence base to inform future policy development and initiatives in this area, such as the joint policy commission proposed by the Australian Government to develop and implement housing solutions for Indigenous people in remote Australia.

Endnotes

1 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2007, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007*, Productivity Commission, Canberra.

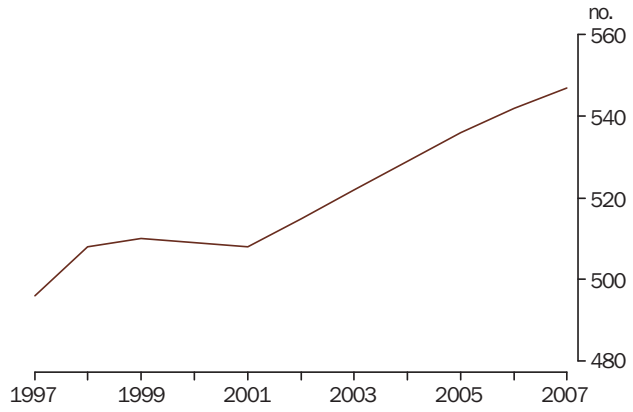
2 Office of Early Childhood Education 2008, *Universal Access to Early Childhood Education: Guidelines, 2007–08*, viewed 4 April 2008, <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/E6053E84-48A9-4F0C-A64A-DD48A09E8692/20838/Guidelines_UAECE_March2008.pdf>.

3 Office of Early Childhood Education, 2008, *Literacy & Numeracy: a review of the literature*, viewed 4 April 2008, <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/04E9722A-8797-41D5-BBE4-38628FE60B78/18865/ecl_literaturereview.pdf>.

Other areas of social concern

Other areas of social concern: national summary — key points

Passenger vehicles per 1,000 population(a)(b)

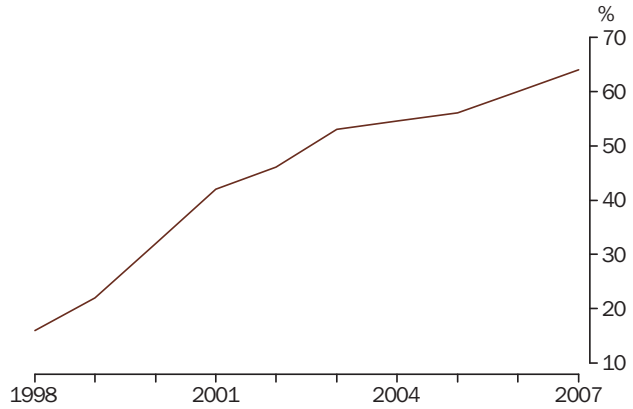


- Between 1997 and 2007, the number of passenger vehicles per 1,000 resident population in Australia increased from 496 to 547, an increase of 1% per year.

(a) Data not available for 2000.
(b) From 2001, number of passenger vehicles registered at 31 March from the motor vehicle census per 1,000 estimated resident population at 31 March. For years 1997 to 1999, registrations as at 31 October per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 September.

Source: ABS Motor Vehicle Census, Australia (ABS cat. no. 9309.0); *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
For further information see *Other areas of social concern: national summary*, page 194, indicator 8.

Households connected to the Internet(a)



- Between 1998 and 2006–07, the proportion of total households connected to the Internet increased from 16% in 1998 to 64% in 2006–07.

(a) From 1999 to 2003, data are at the point in time when surveys were conducted. Data are not available for 2004. For 2004–05, the reference period is from August 2004 to June 2005, for 2005–06, the reference period is from July 2005 to June 2006 and for 2006–07, the reference period is July 2006 and October 2006 to June 2007.

Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).
For further information see *Other areas of social concern: national summary*, page 194, indicator 4.

Victims of selected crimes(a)(b)

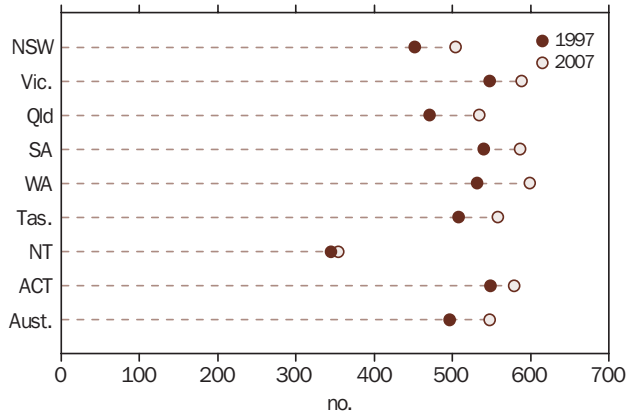
- Though small, the changes in the victimisation prevalence rates for selected personal crimes between 1998 and 2005 showed an increase from 4.8% to 5.3%, the same level as in 2002.
- Between 1998 and 2005, the proportion of households that were the victim of selected household crimes fell from 9.0% to 6.2%.

(a) Data refer to the victimisation prevalence rate, which is the number of victims of an offence in a given population expressed as a percentage of that population.
(b) Data are for the 12 months prior to each survey.
(c) Assault and robbery among people aged 15 years and over. Sexual assault among people aged 18 years and over.
(d) Actual or attempted break-ins and motor vehicle theft.

Source: Crime and Safety, Australia (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).
For further information see *Other areas of social concern: national summary*, page 194, indicators 12 and 13.

Other areas of social concern: state summary — key points

Passenger vehicles per 1,000 population(a)

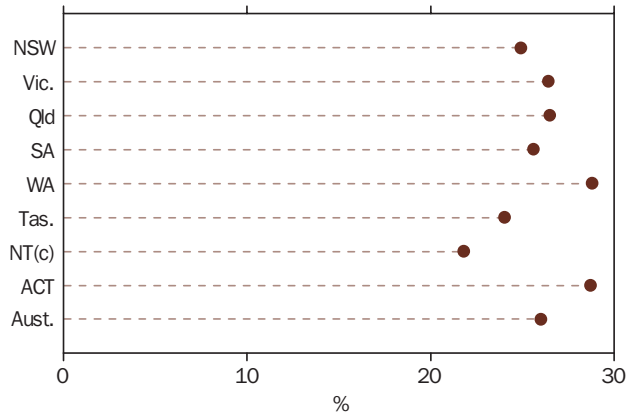


- In 2007, Western Australia (599), Victoria (588), South Australia (586) and the Australian Capital Territory (579) had the highest number of passenger vehicles per 1,000 Australian resident population.
- Western Australia experienced an increase of 68 passenger vehicles per 1,000 residents over the ten year period. This was the largest increase of all the states and territories, followed by Queensland, where there was an increase of 63 passenger vehicles per 1,000 residents.
- The Northern Territory reported the lowest number of passenger vehicles per 1,000 resident population in 2007, at 354 vehicles.

(a) For 2007, number of passenger vehicles registered at 31 March from the motor vehicle census per 1,000 estimated resident population at 31 March. For 1997, registrations as at 31 October per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 September.

Source: ABS Motor Vehicle Census, Australia (ABS cat. no. 9309.0); *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
For further information see *Australian Social Trends: Other areas of social concern, 2008,* data cube, tables 2.1 to 2.8, indicator 8 (ABS cat. no. 4102.0).

Participation in organised sport(a) — 2005–06(b)



- Over one in four (26%) Australians aged 18 years and over participated in organised sport during 2005–06.
- Western Australia (29%) and the Australian Capital Territory (29%) had the highest participation rates in organised sport in 2005–06.

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over who participated in organised sport in the 12 months prior to the survey.
(b) Survey conducted between July 2005 and June 2006.
(c) Estimates for the Northern Territory refer to mainly urban areas only.

Source: Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4177.0).
For further information see *Other areas of social concern: state summary*, page 197, indicator 22.

Other areas of social concern: national summary

COMMUNICATIONS	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1 Households with a computer	'000	n.a.	3 083	3 337	3 803	4 311	4 556	5 038	n.a.	5 266	5 527	5 860
2 Households with a computer	%	n.a.	44	47	53	58	61	66	n.a.	67	70	73
3 Households connected to the Internet	'000	n.a.	1 098	1 538	2 340	3 114	3 445	4 039	n.a.	4 393	4 730	5 138
4 Households connected to the Internet	%	n.a.	16	22	32	42	46	53	n.a.	56	60	64
5 Households with broadband type Internet connection	'000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	r1 278	2 251	3 506
6 Households with broadband type Internet connection as a proportion of those with Internet connection	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	r29	48	69
TRANSPORT	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
7 Number of passenger vehicles(a)	'000	9 206	9 527	9 686	n.a.	9 836	10 101	10 366	10 629	10 896	11 189	11 462
8 Passenger vehicles per 1,000 population(b)	no.	496	508	510	n.a.	508	515	r522	r529	r536	r542	547
9 Road fatalities	no.	1 767	1 755	1 764	1 817	1 737	1 715	1 621	1 583	1 627	1 601	n.a.
ENVIRONMENT	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
10 Total water consumption(c)(d)	GL	22 186	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21 703	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18 767	n.a.	n.a.
11 Household water consumption(d)	GL	1 829	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2 278	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2 108	n.a.	n.a.
CRIME	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
12 Victims of personal crime(e)(f)(h)	%	n.a.	4.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5.3	n.a.	n.a.	5.3	n.a	n.a.
13 Victims of household crime(e)(g)(h)	%	n.a.	9.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.9	n.a.	n.a.	6.2	n.a	n.a.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
14 Proportion of the population with a religious affiliation(i)(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	74.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	70.1	n.a.
15 Christian(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	68.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	63.9	n.a.
16 Islam(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.
17 Hindu(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.7	n.a.
18 Judaism(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.4	n.a.
19 Buddhist(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.1	n.a.
20 No religious affiliation(j)	%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	15.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18.7	n.a.

Other areas of social concern: national summary

PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES	Units	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Adult's participation												
21 Persons aged 18 years and over – attendance rate at any sporting event in previous 12 months	%	n.a.	n.a	46.3	n.a	n.a	48.2	n.a	n.a	n.a	43.8	n.a
22 Persons aged 18 years and over – participation rate in organised sport in previous 12 months(k)	%	26.5	28.3	30.3	28.9	n.a	31.4	n.a	n.a	n.a	26.0	n.a
23 Persons aged 18 years and over – attendance rate at live performances in previous 12 months	%	n.a.	n.a	49.6	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	49.4	n.a
Children's participation in organised activities outside school hours												
24 Organised sporting activities	%	n.a	n.a	n.a	59.4	n.a	n.a	61.6	n.a	n.a	63.5	n.a
25 Singing	%	n.a	n.a	n.a	4.7	n.a	n.a	4.6	n.a	n.a	5.5	n.a
26 Playing a musical instrument	%	n.a	n.a	n.a	17.9	n.a	n.a	16.8	n.a	n.a	19.5	n.a
27 Drama	%	n.a	n.a	n.a	4.6	n.a	n.a	4.3	n.a	n.a	4.5	n.a

(a) The number of passenger vehicles refers to the total number of passenger vehicles registered in the ABS motor vehicle census. From 2001, registrations were measured as at 31 March. For the years 1997 to 1999 registrations were measured as at 31 October.

(b) From 2001, number of passenger vehicles registered at 31 March from the motor vehicle census per 1,000 estimated resident population at 31 March. For years 1997 to 1999, registrations as at 31 October per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 September.

(c) Water consumption estimates cannot be compared from 1997 to 2001 and 2005. This is due to the differences in data sources and the methodologies used to calculate estimates.

(d) One gigalitre (GL) equals 1,000 megalitres (ML). One ML equals 1 million litres.

(e) Data refer to the victimisation prevalence rate, which is the number of victims of an offence in a given population expressed as a percentage of that population.

(f) Assault and robbery among people aged 15 years and over. Sexual assault among people aged 18 years and over.

(g) Actual or attempted break-ins and motor vehicle theft.

(h) Interpret with caution as not all differences between years are statistically significant.

(i) Proportion includes people who have Other religious affiliations.

(j) Proportion is of the total population which includes people whose religious affiliation was not stated.

(k) Data for the years from 1997–2000 were collected in four quarters of the financial year ending in year shown, from March to July in 2002 and monthly for the year 2005–06. Differences in survey methods and question design influences such as question sequencing and question wording may account for some part of the differences observed in these time series data. For details of differences between 2007 and previous years see *Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4177.0).

Reference periods: Until 2003, data for indicators 1–6 are for the period over which the surveys were conducted. For 2004–05, the reference period is from August 2004 to June 2005, and for 2005–06, the reference period is from July 2005 to June 2006.
Data for indicators 7–8 are at 31 October in 1997–1999; 31 March in 2001–2006.
Data for indicator 9 are for the calendar year.
Data for indicators 10–11 are for year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 12–13 are for the 12 months prior to the survey.
Data for indicators 14–20 are at Census night.
Data for indicators 21 and 23 are at April 1999, March–July 2002 and July 2005 to June 2006.
Data for indicator 22 are collected through the financial year ending June 1997–2000, at March–July 2002 and monthly for the year 2005–06.
Data for indicators 24–27 are for the twelve months prior to the survey interview conducted in April 2000, April 2003 and April 2006.

Other areas of social concern: state summary

COMMUNICATIONS	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
1 Households with a computer	'000	2007	1 918	1 435	1 159	451	613	131	46	108	5 860
2 Households with a computer	%	2007	72	72	74	69	76	66	75	84	73
3 Households connected to the Internet	'000	2007	1 712	1 253	1 020	369	536	112	41	95	5 138
4 Households connected to the Internet	%	2007	64	63	65	57	66	56	67	73	64
5 Households with broadband type Internet connection	'000	2007	1 166	895	693	212	374	64	27	75	3 506
6 Households with broadband type Internet connection as a proportion of those with Internet connection	%	2007	69	72	68	58	70	58	64	79	69

TRANSPORT	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
7 Number of passenger vehicles(a)	'000	2007	3 464	3 049	2 221	927	1 254	275	76	196	11 462
8 Passenger vehicles (per 1000 population)(b)	no.	2007	504	588	534	586	599	558	354	579	547
9 Road fatalities	no.	2006	500	337	336	117	202	54	42	13	1 601

ENVIRONMENT	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
10 Total water consumption(c)	GL	2004–05	5 922	4 993	4 361	1 365	1 495	434	141	56	18 767
11 Household water consumption(c)	GL	2004–05	573	405	493	144	362	69	31	31	2 108

CRIME	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(d)	ACT	Aust.
12 Victims of personal crime(e)(f)	%	2005	5.4	4.5	6.1	5.0	5.6	4.7	6.6	5.8	5.3
13 Victims of household crime(e)(g)	%	2005	6.8	4.6	6.1	6.6	7.8	4.5	13.0	7.6	6.2

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
14 Proportion of the population with a religious affiliation(h)(i)	%	2006	75.7	68.4	69.6	63.8	64.3	66.3	59.8	66.4	70.1
15 Christian(i)	%	2006	67.7	60.5	66.3	59.8	59.3	64.2	54.6	60.2	63.9
16 Islam(i)	%	2006	2.6	2.2	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.2	0.6	1.4	1.7
17 Hindu(i)	%	2006	1.1	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	1.0	0.7
18 Judaism(i)	%	2006	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.3	—	0.1	0.2	0.4
19 Buddhist(i)	%	2006	2.6	2.7	1.2	1.5	1.8	0.5	1.5	2.2	2.1
20 No religious affiliation(i)	%	2006	14.3	20.4	18.6	24.2	22.9	21.5	23.1	23.4	18.7

Other areas of social concern: state summary

PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES	Units	Years	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Adult participation											
21 Persons aged 18 years and over – attendance rate at any sporting event in previous 12 months	%	2005–06	41.6	44.7	43.3	47.5	45.4	46.4	49.7	46.9	43.8
22 Persons aged 18 years and over – participation rate in organised sport in previous 12 months	%	2005–06	24.9	26.4	26.5	25.6	28.8	24.0	21.8	28.7	26.0
23 Persons aged 18 years and over – attendance rate at live performances in previous 12 months	%	2005–06	48.5	49.5	48.1	51.1	52.5	46.7	48.1	61.7	49.4
Children's participation in organised activities outside school hours											
24 Organised sporting activities	%	2006	64.7	62.9	60.9	64.1	65.2	59.2	66.8	70.7	63.5
25 Singing	%	2006	5.2	5.1	6.0	6.4	5.7	7.5	*4.3	5.0	5.5
26 Playing a musical instrument	%	2006	20.2	18.5	19.7	17.3	20.6	18.0	18.5	24.9	19.5
27 Drama	%	2006	4.5	4.1	5.4	3.2	4.3	3.2	**2.2	7.0	4.5

(a) The number of passenger vehicles refers to the total number of passenger vehicles registered at 31 March from the motor vehicle census.
(b) Number of passenger vehicles registered at 31 March from the motor vehicle census per 1,000 estimated resident population at 31 March.
(c) One gigalitre (GL) equals 1,000 megalitres (ML). One ML equals 1 million litres.
(d) Data for NT refers to mainly urban areas only.
(e) Data refer to the victimisation prevalence rate, which is the number of victims of an offence in a given population expressed as a percentage of that population.
(f) Assault and robbery among people aged 15 years and over. Sexual assault among people aged 18 years and over.
(g) Actual or attempted break-ins and motor vehicle theft.
(h) Proportion includes people who have Other religious affiliations.
(i) Proportion is of the total population which includes people whose religious affiliation was not stated.

Reference periods: Until 2003, data for indicators 1–6 are for the period over which the surveys were conducted. For 2004–05, the reference period is from August 2004 to June 2005, and for 2005–06, the reference period is from July 2005 to June 2006.
Data for indicators 7–8 are at 31 October in 1997–1999; 31 March in 2001–2006.
Data for indicator 9 are for the calender year.
Data for indicators 10–11 are for year ending 30 June.
Data for indicators 12–13 are for the 12 months prior to the survey.
Data for indicators 14–20 are at Census night.
Data for indicator 21 and 23 are at April 1999, March–July 2002 and July 2005 to June 2006
Data for indicator 22 are collected through the financial year ending June 1997–2000, at March–July 2002 and monthly for the year 2005–06.
Data for indicators 24–27 are for the twelve months prior to the survey interview conducted in April 2000, April 2003 and April 2006.

Other areas of social concern: data sources

INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE
1–6	*Household Use of Information Technology, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).
7–8	*Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9309.0); *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).
9	Australian Transport Safety Bureau 2006, *Road Deaths Australia 2006: Statistical Summary*.
10–11	*Water Account, Australia,* 1996–97, 2000–01, 2004–05 (ABS cat. no. 4610.0).
12–13	*Crime and Safety, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).
14–20	ABS 2001 and 2006, Census of Population and Housing.
21	*Sports Attendance, Australia,* 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4174.0).
22	*Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation, Australia,* 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4177.0).
23	*Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia,* 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 4114.0).
24–27	*Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia,* 2000, 2003, 2006 (ABS cat. no. 4901.0).

Other areas of social concern: definitions

Broadband

"always on" Internet connection with an access speed equal to or greater than 256 Kilobits per second.

Reference: *Household Use of Information Technology* (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).

Drama

children's participation in drama outside of school hours includes lessons, practising and performances. Interpretation of the term 'drama' was left to the respondent. If the respondent queried the definition they were advised it included acting; designing; creating and organising costumes; props and sets; lighting and front of house activities (e.g. organising venues, production and distribution of programs, ticket sales, ushering).

Reference: *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities* (ABS cat. no. 4901.0).

Estimated resident population (ERP)

the official measure of the population of Australia based on the concept of residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality or citizenship, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents who are overseas for less than 12 months. It excludes overseas residents who are in Australia for less than 12 months.

Reference: *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

Household

a group of related or unrelated people who usually live in the same private dwelling or a lone person living in a private dwelling.

Reference: *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.001).

Household crime

a break-in, attempted break-in or motor vehicle theft, in which a household is considered to be the victim of the crime.

Reference: *Crime and Safety, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).

Internet

a world-wide public computer network. Organisations and individuals can connect their computers to this network and exchange information across a country and/or across the world. The Internet provides access to a number of communication services including the World Wide Web and carries email, news, entertainment and data files.

Reference: *Household Use of Information Technology* (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).

Live performance

these performances comprise the following events: popular music concerts; classical music concerts; dance performances, theatre performances; operas, musicals and other performing arts.

Reference: *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events* (ABS cat. no. 4114.0).

Organised sport and physical recreation

those sport and physical recreation activities that are organised by a club or association. The club or organisation does not need to be a sporting body; it may be a social club, church group, old scholars association or gymnasium. People may participate in more than one organised activity and also participate in non-organised activities.

Reference: *Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4177.0).

Passenger vehicles

motor vehicles constructed primarily to carry people and containing up to nine seats (including the driver's seat). Includes cars, station wagons, four-wheel drive passenger vehicles and forward-control passenger vehicles. Excludes campervans.

Reference: *Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9309.0).

Personal crime

a robbery, assault or sexual assault, in which an individual is considered to be the victim of the crime.

Reference: *Crime and Safety, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).

Playing a musical instrument

children's participation in playing a musical instrument outside of school hours includes playing as part of learning (e.g. playing a musical instrument to learn chords without actually being able to play a set piece of music). Includes lessons, practising and giving performances.

Reference: *Children's participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities* (ABS cat. no. 4901.0).

Road fatality

a death of any person within 30 days of the road vehicle accident where the death is attributable to injuries sustained in the accident. The road fatalities figures include deaths for all categories of public road users; drivers; passengers; motorcyclists; pedestrians, and cyclists.

Reference: Australian Transport Safety Bureau.

Other areas of social concern: definitions continued

Singing

children's participation in singing outside of school hours includes formal singing lessons (e.g. learning scales and voice training), practice sessions to learn songs (e.g. for choir) and singing performances. These must have occurred outside of school hours.

Reference: *Children's participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities* (ABS cat. no. 4901.0).

Victims of household crime

households reporting victimisation for at least one of the household crime offences surveyed. Households were counted once only, regardless of the number of household crime offences reported.

Reference: *Crime and Safety, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).

Victims of personal crime

people reporting victimisation for at least one of the personal crime offences surveyed. Victims were counted once only, regardless of the number of personal crime offences reported.

Reference: *Crime and Safety, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4509.0).

Water consumption

water consumption is equal to distributed water use (delivered by suppliers) plus self-extracted water use plus reuse water use minus distributed water supplied to other users minus in-stream use (where applicable) and less distributed water use supplied for the environment.

Reference: *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0).

Internet access at home

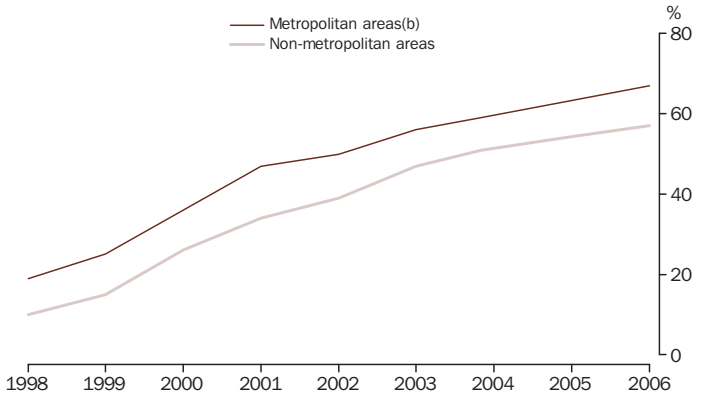
The rate of household Internet access has quadrupled over the past eight years, from 16% in 1998 to 64% in 2006–07.

In recent years, the prominence of the Internet as a vehicle for accessing information, communicating and undertaking commerce has continued to increase. Some government services, such as E–tax, child support and a range of Medicare functions, are now available online. News services, Internet shopping, and personal communication such as email, instant messaging and social networking sites are also increasingly a feature of people's daily lives.

Internet access in the home is dependent on a range of factors such as affordability, the reliability of Internet connections and service providers, and the interest and capability of potential users of the Internet. Socioeconomic characteristics, such as family composition, educational attainment and income are also related to rates of household Internet access.

The type of Internet service people have access to is also significant, with Broadband connections considered to have superior performance capabilities compared to dial-up. Successive governments have recognised Broadband rollout across Australia as an important issue.

Proportion of Australian households that have access to the Internet(a)



(a) From 1998 to 2003, data are at the point in time when surveys were conducted. Data are not available for 2004. For 2004–05, the reference period is from August 2004 to June 2005, and for 2005–06, the reference period is from July 2005 to June 2006. The data for 2006–07 were collected over a ten month period (July 2006 and October 2006–Jun 2007).
(b) Statistical divisions that contain more than just the urban centre and represent the city in the wider sense.

Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 8146.0)

Data sources and definitions

Most of the data presented in this article are sourced from the ABS 2006–07 Household Use of Information Technology survey and the 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing.

Internet access is the availability of lines, points, ports and modems to subscribers to access the Internet at the individual's home, unless otherwise stated.

Internet use refers to the use of the Internet in the 12 months prior to interview. It includes access via mobile phones, set–top boxes connected to either an analogue or digital television and games machines.

A *Broadband connection* is an 'always on' Internet connection with an access speed equal to or greater than 256 Kilobits per second (Kbps).

A *dial-up connection* to the Internet is via modem and dial-up software using the public switched telecommunication network (PSTN).

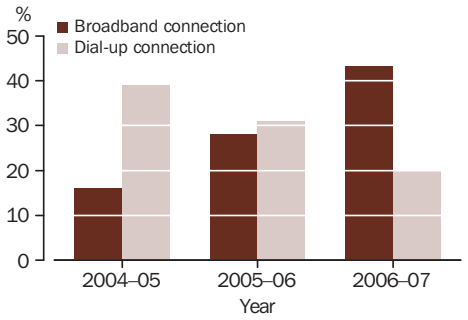
Other Internet connection includes dial–up and all other forms of Internet connections that are not Broadband connections.

Remoteness Area (RA) is a structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), covering the whole of Australia. It is intended to classify areas sharing common characteristics of remoteness into broad geographical regions (Remoteness Areas). The remoteness of a point is measured by its physical distance by road to the nearest urban centre. As remoteness is measured nationally, not all Remoteness Areas are represented in each state or territory. There are six RAs in the structure. These are: Major Cities of Australia; Inner Regional Australia; Outer Regional Australia; Remote Australia; Very Remote Australia and Migratory Australia. The Remoteness Area names used in this article are abbreviated versions of these terms, with 'Australia' omitted. For further information see *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), 2006* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0).

Internet access over time

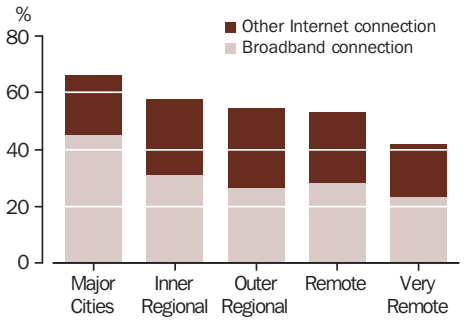
According to the Household Use of Information Technology (HUIT) survey, the rate of household Internet access has increased markedly across Australia in recent years, from 16% of Australian households in 1998 to 64% in 2006–07.

Proportion of households with dial-up or Broadband Internet connection



Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).

Household Internet access by Remoteness Areas — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Dial–up and Broadband

In just two years, the rate of Broadband Internet connections increased from 16% of Australian households in 2004–05 to 43% in 2006–07, becoming more prevalent than dial–up connections (20% of households in 2006–07) for the first time. Broadband now accounts for between one-half and two-thirds of all Internet connections at home across almost all demographic groups and geographic areas. The increased reliability, faster speed and greater capacity to perform tasks compared to dial-up connections are likely to be among the major reasons for the big increase in the take up of Broadband connections.[1] A reduction in the cost of broadband services over time is also likely to be a factor associated with the greater take up of Broadband in recent years.

Geography

Internet access is important to people living in remote areas as it provides increased access to services, resources and information that are physically located far from home. The Internet, and in particular Broadband Internet connections, allows farming households to operate more efficiently as home-based businesses.[1]

The proportion of households with access to the Internet in both Metropolitan and non-Metropolitan areas has followed a similar upward trend over the last decade. The non-Metropolitan household Internet access rate (57%) remained lower than that in Metropolitan areas (67%) in 2006–07.

According to the 2006 Census, rates of household Internet access and Broadband connection decreased with increasing remoteness, with Major Cities having higher rates of Internet access (66%) and Broadband connection (45%), and Very Remote areas lower rates (42% and 24%). To some extent the lower rates of access in remote areas are associated with socioeconomic factors including lower levels of educational attainment and income.[2]

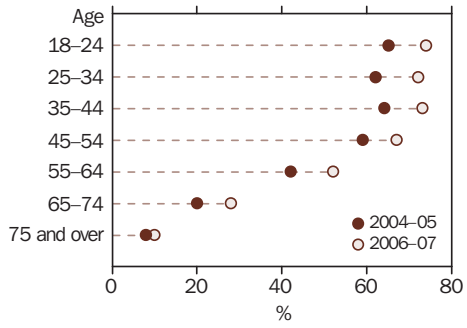
In an effort to improve speed, access rates and reliability of the Internet across Australia, particularly in regional and remote areas, the Australian Government has committed to provide funding and necessary regulatory changes to facilitate the roll-out of a new open access, high-speed, fibre-based broadband network intended to reach 98% of Australian homes and businesses.[3]

Who uses the Internet?

Internet use refers to the use of the Internet in the home for any purpose.

Between 2004–05 and 2006–07 the rate of household Internet use increased across all age groups. The increase in use of the Internet was greatest for people aged 65–74 years, where 40% more people were using the Internet at home in 2006–07 (28%) compared with 2004–05 (20%). Despite this growth,

Internet use at home by age



Source: ABS Household Use of Information Technology Survey, 2004–05 and 2006–07.

Purpose of Internet use at home — 2006–07

	%
Personal/private	98
Education/study	53
Work/business	52
Voluntary/community	12
Other	11

Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).

people aged 55 years and over continued to use the Internet at home less than those in younger age groups.

The lower rate of household Internet use among older people may be related to limited opportunities for introduction to new technologies (for example opportunities afforded in schools and workplaces), a perception that the Internet is not relevant to them, and physical constraints such as arthritis and sight restrictions.[4]

Purpose of Internet use

While people use the Internet at home for a variety of purposes, personal and private reasons (including sending and receiving emails and online shopping) were the most common in 2006–07. Almost all (98%) of the 9.9 million Australians who used the Internet at home reported using it for this purpose. Just over half (53%) used the Internet for education or study and a similar proportion (52%) used it for work related purposes.

In 2006–07, 61% of the 11.3 million people who used the Internet at any site reported using it in the past 12 months to buy goods or services for private use. Among all age groups, people aged 25–34 years were the most likely to have used the Internet for this purpose (71%), compared with 34% of young people aged 15–17 years and 42% of people aged 65 years and over.

Internet access and use at home by age — 2006–07

	Internet access	*Internet use*
Age group (years)	%	%
15–24	79.7	76.5
25–34	75.8	71.8
35–44	80.2	72.6
45–54	78.5	66.5
55–64	64.7	51.7
65–74	42.2	28.1
75 and over	21.8	10.5
Total	**69.5**	**60.9**

Source: ABS 2006–07 Household Use of Information Technology Survey.

International comparison

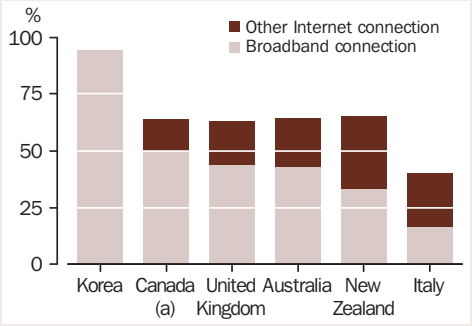
Although household Internet access rates have continued to increase rapidly in almost all OECD countries, the rate of household Internet access varied considerably among member countries in 2006.

In 2006, Korea had the highest proportion of households with a Broadband connection (94%), while Turkey had the lowest (2%).

The rate of Broadband connection in Australia (43%) was similar to that of the UK (44%). In terms of broadband connections, Australia ranked 13th of the 30 OECD countries.

Different levels of response to the survey in different countries may affect the capacity to make comparisons. For example, Canada and the United Kingdom had response rates as low as 67%, while Australia, New Zealand and Korea had response rates of around 90%.

Households with Internet connections, selected OECD countries — 2006



(a) Broadband data relate to 2005.

Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2006–07 (ABS cat. no. 8146.0) and OECD metadata <http:// www.oecd.org/sti/ictmetadata>.

Who has access?

According to regression analysis of 2006 Census data, factors influencing Internet access include age, family composition, educational attainment and income.[5]

...Internet access and use by age

Internet access is the availability of lines, points, ports and modems to subscribers to access the Internet at home.

Access differs from Internet use as, although a person may have access to the Internet at home, they may not have used it there.

Household Internet access is not a good indicator of Internet use for all age groups. While people aged 15–34 years had access to and used the Internet at similar rates, from 35 years the rates diverged with age.

While Internet access rates for those aged 35–44 and 45–54 years were high (80% and 79% respectively), rates of Internet use in the 12 months prior to the survey were lower (73% and 67%). This gap continued to widen with older age groups. For example, while 22% of people aged 75 years and over had access to the Internet in their home, only 11% reported using the Internet.

The high access and lower usage rates for people aged 35–54 years may be related to the presence of children in the household. Parents may acquire Internet access for educational and entertainment purposes for their children, but may not use it themselves.[4]

...family composition

Couple families with dependent children were more likely to have Internet access at home (86%) than any other family type, regardless of the age of the reference person (the person who filled out the census form for the household).

One parent families with non-dependent children had the lowest rate of household Internet access of all family types (54%). Younger one–parent families with dependent children (where the reference person was aged 34 years and under) had particularly low access rates, especially when compared with young couple families with dependent children (51% and 77% respectively).

This difference was also apparent between young couple and one parent families with non-dependent children (71% and 52%).

Internet access by family type — 2006

	Age of reference person(a)			
	34 years and under	*35–54 years*	*55 years and over*	*Total*
Family type	%	%	%	%
Couple family without children	77.0	76.8	52.2	62.5
Couple family with dependent children	76.6	88.6	87.9	85.9
Couple family with non-dependent children	71.2	81.8	69.8	74.7
One parent family with dependent children	51.1	71.5	71.1	65.2
One parent family with non-dependent children	51.6	62.8	49.0	54.0
Other family(b)	72.2	55.1	33.7	58.7
Total	**72.4**	**82.4**	**57.1**	**72.0**

(a) Reference person refers to the person who filled out the Census form for the household.
(b) Other family is defined as a group of related individuals residing in the same household, who cannot be categorised as belonging to a couple or one parent family.

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

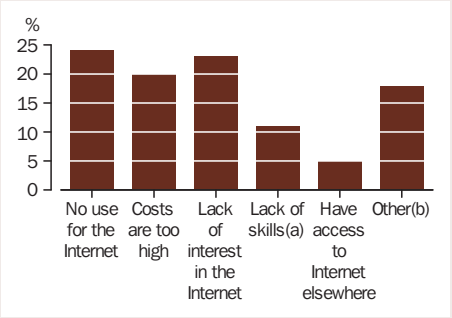
Households without Internet access at home

According to the 2005–06 Household Use of Information Technology survey, 40% of Australian households did not have access to the Internet. The main reasons Australian households did not have Internet access at home were that the people within the household had no use for the Internet at home (24%), or had a lack of interest in the Internet (23%).

Around one–fifth (22%) of households in the bottom two equivalised (that is, adjusted to take account of differing household size and composition) income quintiles stated high cost as the main reason for not having Internet access.

Of those living in households that did not have Internet access at home, one–quarter (25%) had used it at another site in the 12 months prior to the survey. The majority of people used it at a neighbour's, friend's or relative's house, or at work (both 14%). Only 4% of those without Internet access at home used it at TAFE or a tertiary institution.

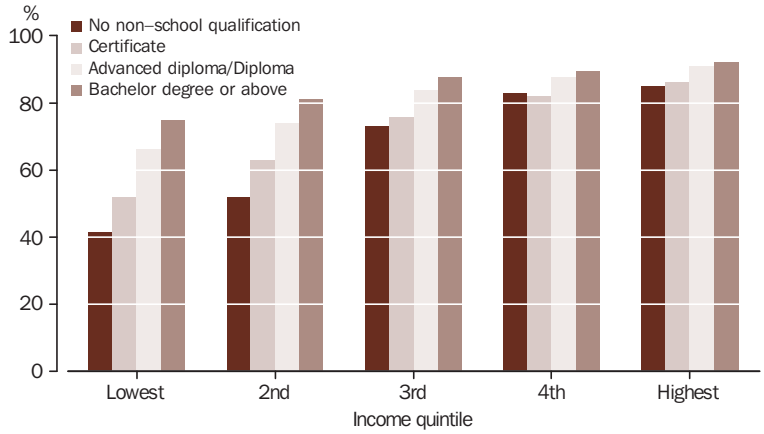
Main reason for not having Internet access at home — 2005–06



(a) Includes insufficient capacity/need to update computer.
(b) Includes poor opinion of the Internet and security concerns.

Source: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2005–06 (ABS cat. no. 8146.0).

Internet access by highest level of educational attainment by household income, aged 15 years and over — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

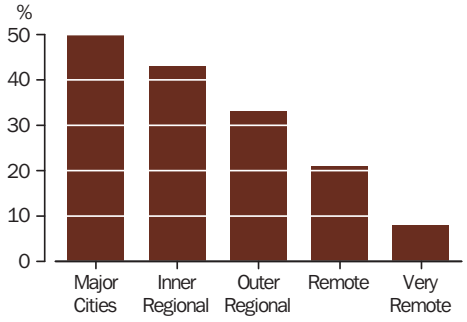
Overall, families in which the reference person was aged 55 years and over had lower rates of household Internet access than those where the reference person was younger.

Around half of couple families without children (52%) and one parent families with non-dependent children (49%), and aound one-third of other families (34%) in which the reference person was aged 55 years and over, had Internet access in the home.

...educational attainment and income

In 2006, people aged 15 years and over, who had higher levels of educational attainment, had higher rates of household Internet access. People with a Bachelor degree or above had the highest rate of household Internet access (88%), whereas those without a non–school qualification had the lowest access rate (63%).

Indigenous Internet access by Remoteness Area — 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Children's use of the Internet

According to the 2006 Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities survey, almost two-thirds (65%) of boys and girls access the Internet.

The most common Internet based activities undertaken at home for children aged 5–8 years were playing online games, and school or educational activities (each 62%), followed by accessing the Internet for leisure (38%).

Nearly nine in ten (86%) children aged 9–11 years used the Internet at home for school or educational activities, while over half used the Internet to play online games (54%). Accessing the Internet for leisure (44%) and emailing or messaging (42%) were also popular activities for children in this age group.

Nine out of ten 12–14 year olds who accessed the Internet used it at home for school or educational activities. Other purposes included emailing or messaging (68%), accessing the Internet for leisure (52%), playing online games (43%) and downloading music from Internet sites (40%).

Higher levels of income were also associated with higher rates of household Internet access. The highest rate of household access was for people in the highest income quintile (89%), while people in households in the lowest income quintile were least likely to have Internet access (47%).

The influence of educational attainment on household Internet access reduces as household income increases. In the bottom two income quintiles, there was a considerable difference in Internet access according to the level of educational attainment. Those with a Bachelor degree or above had higher rates of Internet access than those with lower levels of educational attainment.

In households with relatively higher incomes (top three income quintiles), there were high levels of Internet access regardless of educational attainment. For example, in the top income quintile, those with a Bachelor degree or above (92%) had a similar access rate to those who did not have a non-school qualification (85%).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

According to the 2006 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey, 51% of people living in discrete Indigenous communities had access to the Internet in public locations.

Around 36% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had access to the Internet at home, compared with the national average of approximately 67%.

Remoteness is a factor influencing rates of household Internet access for Indigenous people, given that most (69%) of the Indigenous population lived outside of Major Cities in 2006.[5]

As with the overall population, Internet access rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people decreased with increasing remoteness. While half (50%) of Indigenous people living in Major Cities had Internet access in their homes, this dropped to around 8% of those living in Very Remote areas.

States and territories

There are differences in the rates of household Internet access and Broadband connection across the states and territories.

In 2006, the Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of households with access to the Internet (75%) and Broadband connection (53%), while Tasmania had the lowest (55% and 29%).

States and territories with similar rates of household Internet access also had comparable rates of Broadband connection in 2006. In New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, around 64% of households had Internet access, while approximately 40% (or around two-thirds of all households with Internet access) had a Broadband connection. In South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory approximately 57% of households had Internet access in 2006, and around 30% (or around half of all households with Internet access) had a Broadband Internet connection.

Endnotes

1 Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Broadband in regional Australia: Making a difference,* viewed 19 February, 2008, <http://www.dbcde.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/66870/06020040_CC_CaseStudies_web.pdf>.

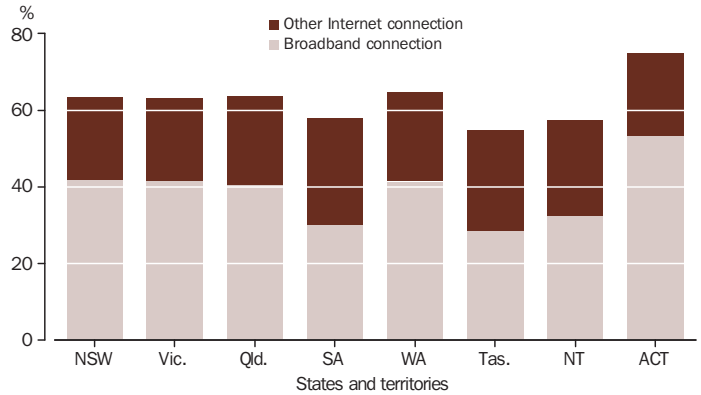
2 Curtin, J 2001, *A Digital Divide in Rural and Regional Australia?,* Current Issues Brief 1 2001–02, Australian Parliamentary Library, Canberra.

3 Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, *National Broadband Network,* viewed 12 March 2008, <http://www.dbcde.gov.au/communications_for_business/funding_programs_and_support/clever_networks/bdn>.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004, *Australia Online: How Australians are using computers and the Internet 2001*, cat. no. 2056.0, ABS, Canberra.

5 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Patterns of Internet Access in Australia 2006,* cat. no. 8146.0.55.001, ABS, Canberra.

Internet access by state and territory — 2006



Source: 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Public transport use for work and study

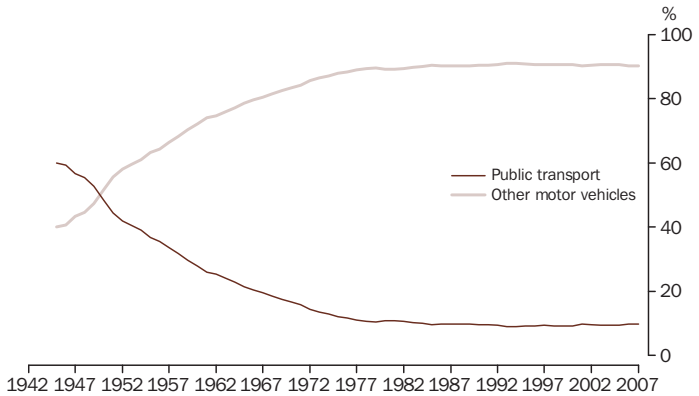
The proportion of adults living in capital cities (excluding Darwin) who used public transport to get to their place of work or study increased from 16% in 1996 to 19% in 2006.

Public transport use is considerably higher in capital cities than in other parts of Australia. This is in part due to their relatively large populations and extensive public transport infrastructure. Increased use of public transport in capital cities has the potential to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicle exhaust. Public transport systems supply a social welfare service by providing a relatively low cost method of travel for those who are unable to drive or do not have access to a private motor vehicle. Public transport also contributes to economic development by transporting labour to locations of work.

In 2005, the transport sector accounted for about 14% of Australia's net greenhouse gas emissions. Between 1990 and 2005, the carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (CO_2-e) from the transport sector grew by 30% or 18.5 million tonnes.[1] The Australian Government has introduced initiatives such as the *National Travel Behaviour Change Project,* which is due to run from 2008 to 2012.[2] Such programs seek to encourage people to reduce their reliance on private motor vehicles and consider more sustainable modes of travel, such as public transport.

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) estimates that the 'avoidable' costs of traffic congestion totalled approximately $9.4 billion in 2005 across Australian capital cities.[3]

Proportion of passenger-kilometres travelled by motorised vehicle type: capital cities — 1945 to 2007



Source: Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics (BTRE), 2007 *Estimating urban traffic and congestion cost trends for Australian cities*, Working Paper 71, viewed 14 December 2007 <http://www.btre.gov.au/publications/49/Files /wp71.pdf>; BTRE unpublished data (1945–1976).

Data sources and definitions

Most of the data in this article are drawn from the ABS 2006 Household Survey of Waste Management and Transport Use and the ABS 1996 Environment Survey. Data on the long-term distribution of passengers between motor vehicles and public transport systems are from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE). The data for international comparisons are from a study done for the International Union of Public Transport (UITP).

These three data sources provide different measures of public transport use. ABS data identifies the proportion of *people* who use public transport as a method of travel, predominantly for their journey to work or study.[4] BITRE data approximates the proportion of motorised *passenger-kilometres* travelled using public transport.[3] UITP data estimates the proportion of all *trips* that use public transport as the mode of travel.[5]

A *Passenger-kilometre* represents one passenger travelling a distance of one kilometre.

The *transport sector* comprises air, road, rail and shipping transportation.[1]

The following refer to the ABS Household Survey of Waste Management and Transport Use.

All survey respondents were *adults* aged 18 years and over. Survey respondents were required to nominate the *main form of transport* used to travel to their usual place of work or study. Only one method of travel could be nominated.[4]

Usual trip to work or study refers to a person's usual journey to their main place of work or study. People who did not work or study, or worked or studied from home, were excluded.

Capital cities comprise the state capitals and Canberra. Separate estimates were not available for Darwin and it has therefore been excluded from capital city calculations. However, Northern Territory estimates (including Darwin) are included in Australian totals.

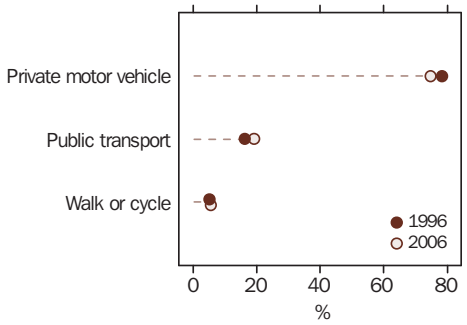
Public transport refers to travel by train, bus, tram, other light rail, and urban ferry. *Private motor vehicles* are vehicles constructed primarily for the carriage of persons and containing up to nine seats (including the driver's seat).

This article examines the use of public transport for journeys to work or study in Australian capital cities over the period 1996 to 2006.

Trends in public transport use

During the 30 years following World War II, the proportion of passenger-kilometres travelled in capital cities using public transport decreased substantially. This decline coincided with a

Main form of transport used on usual trip to work or study: capital cities(a)(b)



(a) Excludes Darwin.
(b) Persons aged 18 years and over.

Source: ABS 2006 Household Survey of Waste Management and Transport Use and ABS 1996 Environment Survey.

considerable increase in the registration and use of private motor vehicles[3] and a sharp decline in the use of trams in Sydney.[6] Since then, the share of overall public transport use, as measured by passenger-kilometres travelled, has remained relatively stable (at about 10% over recent decades).

In contrast, the proportion of adults who use public transport as their main form of travel to work or study has increased slightly over the past decade. In 2006, 19% of adults in capital cities used public transport for this purpose, compared with 16% in 1996.

Proportion of adults using public transport for usual trip to work or study

	1996	*2000*	*2003*	*2006*	*Change between 1996 and 2006(c)*
	%	%	%	%	%
Sydney	23.4	25.0	25.9	26.3	12.4
Melbourne	13.1	15.9	15.3	17.7	35.1
Brisbane	14.3	11.6	15.7	17.5	22.4
Adelaide	12.2	10.6	13.4	14.4	18.0
Perth	10.5	11.3	10.5	10.7	1.9
Hobart	12.8	5.2	6.9	10.3	-19.5
Canberra	11.4	8.2	8.1	7.9	-30.7
Total capital cities(a)	16.3	17.2	17.9	19.1	17.2
Other areas(b)	2.7	1.9	2.4	1.7	-37.0
Australia	**11.9**	**12.2**	**13.0**	**13.5**	**13.4**

(a) Excludes Darwin.
(b) Includes Darwin and all other places outside capital cities.
(c) Represents the change in the proportion of adults using public transport for their usual trip to work or study.

Source: ABS 2003 and 2006 Household Surveys of Waste Management and Transport Use and ABS 1996 and 2000 Environment Surveys.

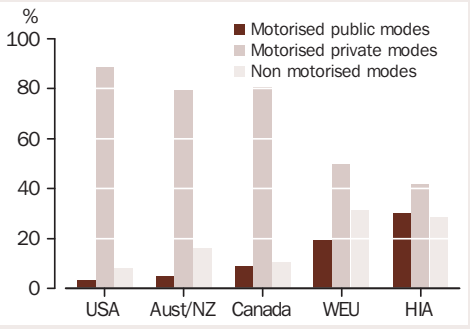
International comparison

Levels of public transport use vary considerably around the world. An International Union of Public Transport (UITP) study found that the rate of public transport use in selected Australian and New Zealand cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Wellington) was relatively low by world standards, with an average of 5% of all trips made using public transport. Cities in the United States (USA) such as Los Angeles and New York recorded similarly low rates (3% of all trips).

In contrast, rates of public transport use were relatively high in both Western European (WEU) cities such as London and Paris (19% of all trips) and High Income Asian (HIA) cities such as Tokyo and Hong Kong (30% of all trips).

While use of non-motorised travel, such as walking or riding bicycles, was higher in selected cities in Australia and New Zealand (16%) than in the USA (8%) and Canada (10%), these forms of transport were more common in HIA (29%) and WEU (31%) cities.[5]

Modes of transport: cities in selected regions(a)(b)



(a) Refers to average rates across selected major cities.
(b) Based on 1995 data.

Source: Kenworthy, JR 2003, *Transport Energy Use and Greenhouse Gases in Urban Passenger Transport Systems: A Study of 84 Global Cities,* viewed 14 December 2007, <http://www.sustainability.dpc.wa.gov.au/conferences/refereed%20papers/Kenworthy,J%20-%20paper.pdf>.

Travel to place of work or study

The capacity for public transport to reduce traffic congestion is greatest during the morning and evening 'peak' times, when large numbers of people are travelling to and from their places of work and study. However, during these 'peak' times, public transport infrastructure, particularly in larger cities, can struggle to meet user demand.

Although there has been a slight increase in the use of public transport over the past 10 years, in March 2006, three-quarters (75%) of adults living in capital cities travelled to their usual place of work or study using private motor vehicles as their main form of transport. In addition, 19% of adults used public

transport, and a further 5% either walked or cycled as their main form of transport to work or study.

In 2006, Sydney had the highest level of public transport use among the capital cities, with over one-quarter (26%) using public transport as their main method for travel to work or study. Canberra (8%) recorded the lowest level of public transport usage.

The increased use of public transport by adults for travel to work or study between 1996 and 2006 is reflected across most capital cities. Overall, public transport use grew by 17% for all capital cities combined, with Melbourne experiencing the highest growth (35%).

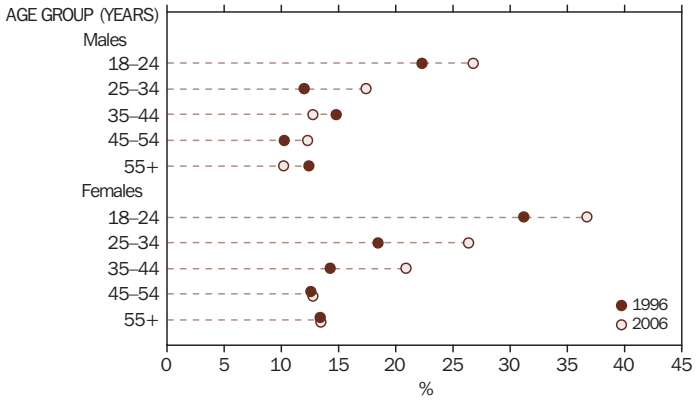
Only Canberra and Hobart experienced a decline in the proportion of adults using public transport as their main form of travel to work or study during this period.

In Canberra, public transport use fell by 31% between 1996 and 2006. While rates of use fluctuated in Hobart over this period, the 2006 rate was 20% lower than that in 1996.

Who uses public transport

Public transport use is associated with a variety of factors including age, sex, household composition, access to private motor vehicles and personal preferences. Research also suggests that those on lower incomes tend to have higher levels of public transport use.[7,8] However, income was not collected in the ABS Household Survey of Waste and Transport Use.

Proportion using public transport as main form of transport for usual trip to work or study(a): capital cities(b)



(a) As a proportion of the total number of persons in each age group.
(b) Excludes Darwin.

Source: ABS 2006 Household Survey of Waste Management and Transport Use and ABS 1996 Environment Survey.

...age and sex

Women of all ages were more likely than men to use public transport for their usual journey to work or study. In 2006, the rate of public transport use for women was 23%, compared with 16% for men.

Similarly, younger people were more likely than older people to use public transport for their usual journey to work or study. In 2006, over one-quarter (26%) of people aged 18–34 years used public transport as their main method of travel to work or study, compared with 11% of people aged 55 years and over.

Between 1996 and 2006, the use of public transport for travel to work or study increased for women aged up to 44 years. For example, public transport use by women in the 35–44 year age group increased from 14% in 1996 to 21% in 2006. Public transport use also grew for younger women aged 18–24 years (from 31% in 1996 to 37% in 2006) and 25–34 years (from 18% in 1996 to 26% in 2006).

For men, the use of public transport as the main method of travel to work or study also grew in the younger age groups. For example, public transport use grew for men aged 18–24 years (from 22% in 1996 to 27% in 2006) and for those aged 25–34 years (from 12% in 1996 to 17% in 2006). Use by men in other age groups remained relatively stable.

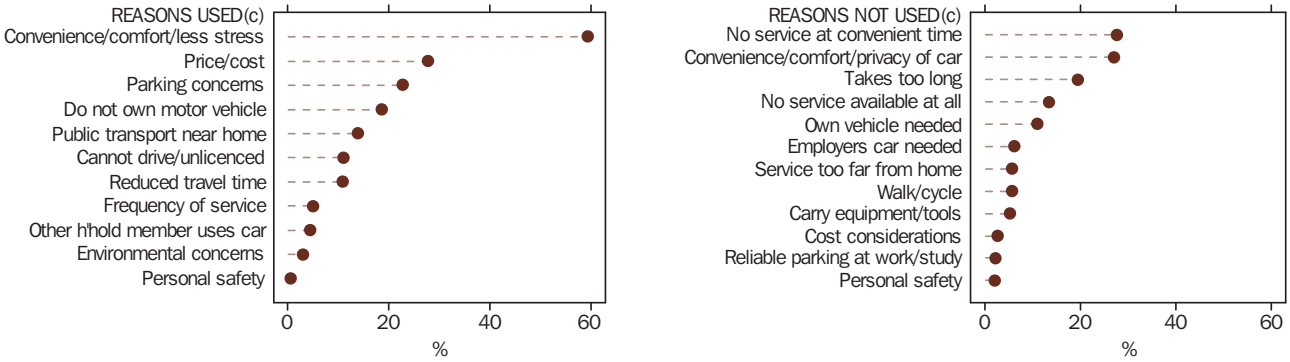
...household composition

Public transport use varies according to the type of household in which a person lives. Lone parents with dependent children had the highest rate of public transport use (24%), compared with 16% living in couple households with dependent children. One-fifth (20%) of adults living in one person households used public transport for their usual journey to work or study, as did 17% of adults living in couple only households.

...number of cars in household

The number of cars per household is associated with public transport use, with relatively low rates of use among residents of households that have two or more cars. In 2006, 70% of adults living in dwellings with no registered cars used public transport for their usual journey to work or study, although only one in twelve (8%) of all adults lived in such dwellings. The rate of public transport use for journeys to work or study for those living in dwellings with two or more cars (12%) was less than half that of those living in dwellings with one registered car (28%). Not only is the rate of public transport use lower in households that have two or more cars, but

Reasons for using/not using public transport for usual journey to work or study: capital cities(a)(b) — 2006



(a) Excludes Darwin.
(b) Persons aged 18 years and over.
(c) More than one reason may be specified.

Source: ABS 2006 Household Survey of Waste Management and Transport Use.

people in these households comprise a much larger share of the overall population (60% compared with 32% in one-car households).

Reasons for transport choices

People reported a variety of reasons for using, or choosing not to use, public transport.

...why is public transport used?

In 2006, the majority of adults who usually took public transport to their place of work or study (59%) considered public transport more convenient, comfortable and less stressful than any other mode of travel. This was reflected across all age groups.

Other reasons included price or cost considerations (28%) and parking concerns (23%). Parking concerns appear to be less of a concern to younger people than those in the older age groups. For example, 14% of people aged 18–24 listed parking concerns as a reason for using public transport compared with 27% of people aged 45–54 years.

Consistent with the pattern of public transport use and the number of cars registered at the household, a widely reported reason for using public transport was that the respondent did not own a car (19%). This was particularly so for people aged 18–24 years, with almost three in ten (28%) giving this as a reason for using public transport. In contrast, of those aged 35 years and over, only around one in ten (11%) reported using public transport because they did not own a car.

About one in ten adults (11%) reported that they used public transport for their usual journey to work or study because they could not drive or were unlicensed. Women were more likely than men to give this reason (14% compared with 7%). People aged 18–24 years were more likely to report this reason (16%) than those in other age groups.

Despite increasing public awareness of the issues of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, only 3% of adults reported that they used public transport for journeys to work or study because they were concerned about the environment.

...why is public transport not used?

While convenience was widely reported as a main reason for using public transport, it also ranked highly among reasons why people used other forms of transport. In 2006, the most commonly reported reason for not using public transport to get to work or study was that there was no service available at a convenient time (28%). A similar proportion (27%) indicated that they did not use public transport because of the convenience, comfort and privacy offered by travel in their own vehicle.

The length of travel time on public transport was also reported as being too long by one in five people (20%). A relatively small proportion of people (6%) did not use public transport for their usual journey to work or study because they preferred to walk or cycle. Very few men or women cited concerns about personal safety as a reason for not using public transport for their usual journey to work or study.

People aged 55 years and over were the most likely to report that they did not use public transport for their journey to work or study because they needed their own vehicle before, during or after work or study hours (14%).

Similarly, 13% of people aged 35–44 years reported this as a reason for not using public transport, and it is likely that many people in the latter group require their vehicles to drop off and pick up their children from childcare, school and other activities.

Conclusion

Individuals' decisions about which form of transport to use are determined by numerous factors. In coming years it is likely that such factors will include the price of transport fuel, traffic congestion, and environmental concerns.

Similarly, the recent trend towards high-density living in and around major cities, as well as continued urban sprawl, may expand alternatives to private car travel for some, while limiting them for others. The level of investment in public transport infrastructure and the services offered will also have a bearing on the level of public transport use in the future.

Endnotes

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International comparisons

Caution

Statistics presented in this chapter have been reproduced from international statistical compendia. National statistical systems differ from country to country and therefore caution should be exercised when comparing international data. Source publications may differ in their classification of China, specifically in regards to the inclusion or exclusion of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Details of national differences and country classifications can be found in the country specific notes in the source publications.

Population composition(a)

Country	Reference year	Total population '000	0–14 years %	15–59 years %	60 years and over %
Australia	**2005**	**20 310**	**19.5**	**62.7**	**17.8**
Canada	2005	32 271	17.6	64.5	17.8
China	2005	1 312 979	21.6	67.4	11.0
France	2005	60 991	18.4	60.8	20.8
Greece	2005	11 100	r14.3	62.5	23.3
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2005	7 057	15.1	69.5	15.4
Indonesia	2005	226 063	28.4	63.3	8.3
Italy	2005	58 646	r14.0	60.7	25.3
Japan	2005	127 897	13.9	59.7	26.4
Korea (Republic of)	2005	47 870	18.6	67.6	13.7
Malaysia	2005	25 653	31.4	61.9	6.7
New Zealand	2005	4 097	21.5	62.0	16.6
Papua New Guinea	2005	6 070	40.6	55.5	3.9
Singapore	2005	4 327	19.5	68.2	12.3
Sweden	2005	9 038	17.4	59.2	23.4
United Kingdom	2005	60 245	18.0	60.8	21.2
United States of America	2005	299 846	20.8	62.6	16.6
Viet Nam	2005	85 029	29.6	62.8	7.6

(a) Medium variant projection.

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database*, viewed 26 March 2008, <http://esa.un.org/unpp/>.

Population growth(a)

Country	Reference year	Annual average growth rate(b) %	Crude birth rate(c) rate	Crude death rate(c) rate	Total fertility rate rate
Australia	**2005–2010**	**1.01**	**12.4**	**7.1**	**1.8**
Canada	2005–2010	0.90	10.3	7.4	1.5
China	2005–2010	0.58	13.1	7.1	1.7
France	2005–2010	0.49	12.2	8.9	1.9
Greece	2005–2010	0.21	9.3	9.9	1.3
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2005–2010	1.00	7.6	5.9	1.0
Indonesia	2005–2010	1.16	18.7	6.3	2.2
Italy	2005–2010	0.13	9.2	10.5	1.4
Japan	2005–2010	-0.02	8.3	9.0	1.3
Korea (Republic of)	2005–2010	0.33	9.3	5.9	1.2
Malaysia	2005–2010	1.69	20.6	4.5	2.6
New Zealand	2005–2010	0.90	13.7	7.1	2.0
Papua New Guinea	2005–2010	2.00	29.6	9.6	3.8
Singapore	2005–2010	1.19	8.2	5.3	1.3
Sweden	2005–2010	0.45	11.3	10.1	1.8
United Kingdom	2005–2010	0.42	12.0	9.9	1.8
United States of America	2005–2010	0.97	14.0	8.2	2.1
Viet Nam	2005–2010	1.32	18.8	5.1	2.1

(a) Medium variant projection.
(b) Data is the average exponential rate of growth.
(c) Per 1,000 population.

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database,* viewed 26 March 2008, <http://www.esa.un.org/unpp>.

Population projections(a)

	Population			Median age			0–14 years			65 years and over		
	2010	*2030*	*2050*	*2010*	*2030*	*2050*	*2010*	*2030*	*2050*	*2010*	*2030*	*2050*
Country	million	million	million	years	years	years	%	%	%	%	%	%
Australia(b)	**21.4**	**25.3**	**28.0**	**38.0**	**41.6**	**43.4**	**r18.4**	**17.3**	**16.3**	**14.2**	**21.3**	**24.3**
Canada	33.8	39.1	42.8	40.0	43.9	45.3	16.2	15.3	15.6	14.2	23.2	25.7
China	1,351.5	1,458.4	1,408.8	34.9	41.3	45.0	19.6	17.3	15.3	8.4	16.2	23.7
France	62.5	66.6	68.3	40.0	43.3	44.7	18.2	16.4	16.0	16.5	23.2	25.9
Greece	11.2	11.2	10.8	41.9	48.4	50.1	13.9	12.6	13.3	18.8	24.2	31.7
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	7.4	8.5	9.0	41.1	48.5	52.1	r13.4	11.2	11.2	12.5	25.8	32.6
Indonesia	239.6	279.7	296.9	28.2	35.4	41.1	r26.7	20.0	17.5	6.1	10.7	18.6
Italy	59.0	57.5	54.6	43.8	50.2	50.4	13.8	12.2	13.3	20.6	27.0	32.6
Japan	127.8	118.3	102.5	44.6	52.1	54.9	13.4	10.8	11.3	22.5	30.6	37.7
Korea (Republic of)	48.7	48.4	42.3	38.0	48.1	54.9	15.9	11.8	10.4	11.3	23.4	35.1
Malaysia	27.9	35.3	39.6	26.3	33.2	39.3	29.2	21.8	18.3	4.8	10.4	16.3
New Zealand	4.3	4.9	5.2	36.8	41.0	44.1	20.2	17.5	16.1	13.0	20.6	24.1
Papua New Guinea	6.7	9.2	11.2	20.3	25.7	30.9	38.7	30.2	23.8	2.5	4.4	7.3
Singapore	4.6	5.2	5.0	40.6	48.3	53.7	15.5	13.0	11.1	10.1	27.4	32.8
Sweden	9.2	10.0	10.5	41.1	42.6	43.3	16.3	17.1	16.4	18.4	22.8	24.1
United Kingdom	61.5	66.2	68.7	40.0	42.2	43.4	17.3	16.9	16.2	16.6	21.6	24.1
United States of America	314.7	366.2	402.4	36.5	39.1	41.1	20.1	18.2	17.3	12.8	19.4	21.0
Viet Nam	90.8	110.4	120.0	26.9	35.8	41.6	26.3	20.4	17.2	5.6	10.9	19.2

(a) Medium variant projection.
(b) United Nations projections for Australia may not agree with ABS projections owing to differences in assumptions and methodology.

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database,* viewed 26 March 2008, <http://www.esa.un.org/unpp>.

Life expectancy

Country	Reference year	Infant mortality rate(a)(b)	Life expectancy at birth(b) Males	Life expectancy at birth(b) Females	Reference year	Healthy life expectancy at birth(c) Males	Healthy life expectancy at birth(c) Females
		rate	years	years		years	years
Australia	**2005–2010**	**4**	**78.9**	**83.6**	**2002**	**70.9**	**74.3**
Canada	2005–2010	5	78.3	82.9	2002	70.1	74.0
China	2005–2010	23	71.3	74.8	2002	63.1	65.2
France	2005–2010	4	77.1	84.1	2002	69.3	74.7
Greece	2005–2010	7	77.1	81.9	2002	69.1	72.9
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2005–2010	4	79.4	85.1	. .	n.a.	n.a.
Indonesia	2005–2010	27	68.7	72.7	2002	57.4	58.9
Italy	2005–2010	5	77.5	83.5	2002	70.7	74.7
Japan	2005–2010	3	79.0	86.1	2002	72.3	77.7
Korea (Republic of)	2005–2010	4	75.0	82.2	2002	64.8	70.8
Malaysia	2005–2010	9	72.0	76.7	2002	61.6	64.8
New Zealand	2005–2010	5	78.2	82.2	2002	69.5	72.2
Papua New Guinea	2005–2010	61	54.6	60.4	2002	51.4	52.4
Singapore	2005–2010	3	78.0	81.9	2002	68.8	71.3
Sweden	2005–2010	3	78.7	83.0	2002	71.9	74.8
United Kingdom	2005–2010	5	77.2	81.6	2002	69.1	72.1
United States of America	2005–2010	6	75.6	80.8	2002	67.2	71.3
Viet Nam	2005–2010	20	72.3	76.2	2002	59.8	62.9

(a) Per 1,000 live births.
(b) Medium variant projection.
(c) Healthy life expectancy at birth is based on life expectancy, but indicates an adjustment for time spent in poor health. This indicator measures the equivalent number of years in full health that a newborn child can expect to live based on current mortality rates and prevalence distribution of health states in the population.

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database*, viewed 26 March 2008, <http://esa.un.org/unpp>; The World Health Organization, *The World Health Report 2004: Changing History,* viewed 26 March 2008, <http://www.who.int/whr/2004/annex/topic/annex4.xls>.

Health services and expenditure(a)

Country	Reference year	Health expenditure as % of GDP	Health expenditure per capita(b)	Reference year	Doctors per 1,000 population(c)	Reference year	Acute hospital beds per 1,000 population
		%	$US		no.		no.
Australia	**2004**	**9.6**	**3 123**	**2005**	**2.7**	**2005**	**3.6**
Canada	2004	9.8	3 038	2005	2.2	2005	2.9
China	2004	4.7	71	2001	1.1	. .	n.a.
France	2004	10.5	3 464	2005	3.4	2005	3.7
Greece	2004	7.9	1 879	2005	4.9	2005	3.8
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	. .	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	. .	n.a.
Indonesia	2004	2.8	33	2003	0.1	. .	n.a.
Italy	2004	8.7	2 580	2005	3.8	2005	3.3
Japan	2004	7.8	2 831	2005	2.0	2005	8.2
Korea (Republic of)	2004	5.6	787	2005	1.6	2005	6.5
Malaysia	2004	3.8	180	2000	0.7	. .	n.a.
New Zealand	2004	8.4	2 040	2005	2.2	. .	n.a.
Papua New Guinea	2004	3.6	30	2000	0.1	. .	n.a.
Singapore	2004	3.7	943	2001	1.4	. .	n.a.
Sweden	2004	9.1	3 532	2005	3.4	2005	2.2
United Kingdom	2004	8.1	2 900	2005	2.4	2005	3.1
United States of America	2004	15.4	6 096	2005	2.4	2005	2.7
Viet Nam	2004	5.5	30	2001	0.5	. .	n.a.

(a) Data are harmonized for international comparisons and may differ from aggregates reported by countries using their national health accounts data.

(b) The per capita values are presented in international dollar estimates (using US dollars), derived by dividing each country's health expenditure by an estimate of its purchasing power parity (PPP) compared with US dollars, i.e. a measure that minimises the consequences of differences in price levels existing between countries.

(c) Care should be taken when comparing data sourced from the WHO (i.e. China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Viet Nam), with data sourced from the OECD.

Source: The World Health Organisation, *The World Health Report 2006: Working together for health,* viewed 26 March 2008, <www.who.int/whr/2006/annex/06_annex2_en.pdf>, <www.who.int.whr/2006/annex/06_annex3_en.pdf>, <http://www.who.int/whr/2006/annex/06_annex4_en.pdf>. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development *OECD in Figures 2007,* viewed 26 March 2008, <http://www.oecd.org/infigures>.

Distribution of persons aged 25–64 years by level of educational attainment

Country	Reference year	Below upper secondary education(a)	Upper secondary education and post-secondary non-tertiary education(b)	Tertiary type B education(c)	Tertiary type A and advanced research programs(d)	Total(e)
		%	%	%	%	%
Australia	**2005**	**35**	**34**	**9**	**23**	**100**
Canada	2005	15	39	23	23	100
China	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
France	2005	33	42	10	15	100
Greece	2005	40	39	7	14	100
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
Indonesia	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
Italy	2005	49	38	1	12	100
Japan(f)	2005	n.a.	60	18	22	100
Korea (Republic of)	2005	25	44	9	23	100
Malaysia	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
New Zealand	2005	21	52	7	20	100
Papua New Guinea	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
Singapore	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..
Sweden	2005	17	54	9	21	100
United Kingdom	2005	14	56	9	21	100
United States of America	2005	13	49	9	29	100
Viet Nam	..	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	..

(a) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels 0, 1 and 2. For Australia this includes Preschool, Primary School and lower Secondary School levels as well as the Basic Vocational level.
(b) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels 3 and 4. For Australia this includes Year 12 completion as well as the Skilled Vocational level.
(c) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 5B. For Australia this includes Associate Diplomas and Undergraduate Diplomas.
(d) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels 5A and 6. For Australia this includes Bachelor degree level or higher.
(e) Components may not add to 100% due to rounding.
(f) 'Below upper secondary education' is included in 'Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education'.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2008, *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2007*, OECD, Paris, viewed 15 April 2008, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/55/3313286.pdf>.

Educational participation(a) and expenditure

		Enrolment rates by age group (years)						
	Reference year(b)	15–19	20–29	30–39	40 and over	Reference year(b)	Total public expenditure as a proportion of GDP(c)	Total public and private expenditure as a proportion of GDP(d)
Country		%	%	%	%		%	%
Australia	**2005**	**82.5**	**33.2**	**14.0**	**6.2**	**2004**	**4.3**	**5.9**
Canada	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2003	4.6	5.9
China	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
France	2005	86.2	20.1	2.6	—	2004	5.7	6.1
Greece	2005	97.4	23.7	6.1	—	2004	3.3	3.4
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
Indonesia	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
Italy	2005	80.2	20.0	3.2	0.1	2004	4.4	4.9
Japan	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2004	3.5	4.8
Korea (Republic of)	2005	85.6	27.3	2.0	0.5	2004	4.4	7.2
Malaysia	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	2005	73.9	30.4	12.3	5.1	2004	5.6	6.9
Papua New Guinea	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
Singapore	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.
Sweden	2005	87.3	36.4	13.3	3.0	2004	6.5	6.7
United Kingdom	2005	78.5	29.0	15.8	7.8	2004	5.0	5.9
United States of America	2005	78.6	23.1	5.2	1.4	2004	5.1	7.4
Viet Nam	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	. .	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Participation rates are based on full-time and part-time enrolments.
(b) 1 January of the reference year is considered a good proxy for the midpoint of the school year except for New Zealand, Australia and Korea where 1 July is used as the midpoint of the reference period.
(c) Includes both purchases by the government agency itself on educational resources and also appropriations by the government agency to educational institutions which have been given responsibility to purchase educational resources themselves. Also includes public subsidies to households attributable for educational institutions, and direct expenditure on educational institutions from international sources.
(d) Public expenditure refers to the spending of public authorities at all levels. Private expenditure refers to expenditure funded by private sources i.e. households, private business firms and nonprofit organisations of religious, charitable or business and labour associations.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2007, *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2007,* OECD, Paris, viewed 15 April 2008, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/55/39313286.pdf>.

Student performance on combined reading, mathematical and scientific literacy scales(a)

		Combined reading literacy		*Mathematical literacy*		*Scientific literacy*	
	Reference year	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
Country		Mean score	Mean score	Mean score	Mean score	Mean score	Mean score
Australia	**2006**	**495**	**532**	**527**	**513**	**527**	**527**
Canada	2006	511	543	534	520	536	532
China	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
France	2006	470	505	499	492	497	494
Greece	2006	432	488	462	457	468	479
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2006	520	551	555	540	546	539
Indonesia	2006	384	402	399	382	399	387
Italy	2006	448	489	470	453	477	474
Japan	2006	483	513	533	513	533	530
Korea (Republic of)	2006	539	574	552	543	521	523
Malaysia	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	2006	502	539	527	517	528	532
Papua New Guinea	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Singapore	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sweden	2006	488	528	505	500	504	503
United Kingdom	2006	480	510	504	487	520	510
United States of America	2006	n.a.	n.a.	479	470	489	489
Viet Nam	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

(a) A scaling method assigns scores so that 500 is the OECD average in each domain.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2008, *PISA 2006: Science Competencies for Tomorrow's World* viewed 15 April 2008, <http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/20/39704105.xls> and <http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/31/0/39704446.xls>.

Unemployment ratio(a)(b) by level of educational attainment and gender of 25–64 year olds

		Below upper secondary education		Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education		Tertiary non-university education		University education		All levels of education	
	Reference year	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Country(c)		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Australia	**2005**	**6.4**	**6.6**	**2.7**	**4.6**	**2.9**	**2.9**	**2.4**	**2.3**	**3.7**	**4.3**
Canada	2005	9.3	11.1	5.8	6.0	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.4	5.8	5.7
China	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
France	2005	11.6	13.5	6.0	8.9	5.3	5.4	6.3	6.6	7.5	9.4
Greece	2005	5.2	13.2	4.3	15.1	4.4	10.3	4.6	9.9	4.9	13.2
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Indonesia	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Italy	2005	6.2	11.4	3.8	7.1	7.4	9.5	4.2	7.0	4.9	8.4
Japan	2005	(d)	(d)	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.9	2.5	3.0	4.3	4.1
Korea (Republic of)	2005	4.0	1.9	4.1	3.3	4.3	3.7	2.6	2.3	3.6	2.7
Malaysia	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	2005	3.5	4.2	2.0	2.9	n.a.	1.6	2.0	2.0	2.3	2.8
Papua New Guinea	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Singapore	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sweden	2005	7.7	10.1	6.1	5.8	5.8	3.7	4.6	4.5	6.0	5.7
United Kingdom	2005	7.4	5.7	3.2	2.6	1.5	1.5	2.2	1.8	3.6	3.1
United States of America	2005	8.0	10.8	5.5	4.6	3.7	3.4	2.5	2.2	4.7	4.2
Viet Nam	. .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Unemployment ratio is the number of unemployed people aged 25 to 64 years as a percentage of people in the labour force.
(b) Derived from unemployment rate and educational attainment by gender.
(c) Care should be taken when comparing these data between countries. In any one year, different countries can be at different stages of the economic cycle which is a major influence on unemployment rates.
(d) 'Below upper secondary education' is included in 'Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education'.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2008, *Education at a Glance:* OECD Indicators, 2007, viewed 14 April 2008, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/55/39313286.pdf>.

Labour force

Country(d)	Reference year	Economically active population(a)(b)(c) '000	Reference year	Participation rate of persons aged 15 years and over: Total %	Males %	Females(b) %
Australia	**2006**	**10 664.7**	**2006**	**64.2**	**71.3**	**57.2**
Canada	2006	17 592.8	2006	67.2	72.5	62.1
China(e)	2003	760 800.0	2003	58.9	n.a.	n.a.
France	2005	27 635.8	2005	55.7	62.2	49.6
Greece	2006	4 880.2	2006	53.3	64.8	42.5
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2006	3 582.4	2006	61.3	71.0	52.6
Indonesia	2006	106 281.8	2006	67.6	86.5	48.9
Italy	2006	24 661.6	2006	49.2	61.0	38.1
Japan	2006	69 100.0	2006	53.6	66.7	41.9
Korea (Republic of)	2006	23 978.2	2006	61.9	74.1	50.3
Malaysia	2000	9 616.1	2000	r41.3	r52.7	r29.4
New Zealand	2006	2 199.8	2006	67.3	74.5	60.6
Papua New Guinea	2000	2 257.9	2000	72.5	73.5	71.3
Singapore	2006	1 880.7	2006	65.0	76.2	54.3
Sweden	2006	4 586.0	2006	78.7	81.3	76.1
United Kingdom	2005	29 517.2	2005	50.3	55.4	45.5
United States of America	2006	151 428.0	2006	66.2	73.5	59.4
Viet Nam	2004	43 242.0	2004	71.4	75.5	67.6

(a) Economically active population are all those people who during the specified reference period are classified either as employed or as unemployed. Reference: International Labour Office, *Year Book of Labour Statistics, 2003* p.3.

(b) Participation rates for women are frequently not comparable internationally since, in many countries, relatively large numbers of women assist on farms or in other family enterprises without pay. There are differences between countries in the criteria used to count economically active workers.

(c) For most countries the Economically active populations are aged 15 years and over. However, the age range varies for some countries: Papua New Guinea – 10 years and over; Malaysia – 15–64 years; Sweden – 16–64 years; China, UK and USA – 16 years and over. Definitions also vary in terms of the inclusion or exclusion of certain other segments of the population such as the armed forces.

(d) Care should be taken when comparing these data between countries. In any one year, different countries can be at different stages of the economic cycle which is a major influence on the labour force.

(e) Data are 'official estimates' and may differ in methodology to other countries, which are based on a labour force survey.

Source: International Labour Office, *Year Book of Labour Statistics LABORSTA,* viewed 16 April 2008, <http://laborsta.ilo.org/>.

Employment and unemployment

Country(b)	Reference year	Employment(a) '000	Unemployment(a) '000	Unemployment rate(a) %
Australia	**2006**	**10 153.8**	**525.6**	**5.0**
Canada	2006	16 484.3	1 108.4	6.3
China(c)	2005	758 250.0	8 390.0	4.2
France	2005	24 919.4	2 717.0	9.8
Greece	2006	4 452.8	427.4	8.8
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2006	3 411.6	170.9	4.8
Indonesia	2006	95 177.1	11 104.7	10.5
Italy	2006	22 988.0	1 673.0	6.8
Japan	2006	63 820.0	2 750.0	4.1
Korea (Republic of)	2006	23 151.0	827.0	3.5
Malaysia	2003	9 869.7	369.8	3.6
New Zealand	2006	2 117.2	82.6	3.8
Papua New Guinea	2000	n.a.	68.6	2.8
Singapore	2006	1 796.7	84.2	4.5
Sweden	2006	4 341.0	246.0	5.4
United Kingdom	2005	28 165.6	1 351.6	r5.0
United States of America	2006	144 427.0	7 001.0	4.6
Viet Nam	2004	42 315.6	926.4	2.1

(a) For most countries the employed and unemployed populations are aged 15 years and over. However, the age range varies for some countries: Papua New Guinea – 10 years and over; Malaysia – 15–64 years; Sweden – 16–64 years; UK – Males 16–64 years and females 16–59 years; USA – 16 years and over. Definitions may also vary in terms of the inclusion of certain segments of the population such as armed forces.

(b) Care should be taken when comparing these data between countries. In any one year, different countries can be at different stages of the economic cycle which is a major influence on employment and unemployment.

(c) Data are 'official estimates' and may differ in methodology to other countries, which are based on a labour force survey.

Source: International Labour Office, *Yearly Labour Statistics LABORSTA,* viewed 27 March 2008, <http://laborsta.ilo.org/>.

Cumulative topic list

Cumulative topic list

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