This bulletin contains information on computer and internet usage in Queensland. The data come from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and also, where indicated, the May 2002 Queensland Household Survey (QHS) by the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR). The Census asked people whether they used a computer at home in the week before the Census and whether they used the internet anywhere in the week before the Census. This was the first time questions on computer and internet use had been asked in the Census. Usual residence data have been used in this bulletin, except where stated. The QHS asked respondents aged 18 years and over whether they had access to a computer and the internet at home, and other questions such as what they used the internet for and their level of computer skills.

Key points

- About 7 in 10 (69.7%) persons aged 18 years and over in Queensland had access to a computer at home in May 2002 (up from 60.2% in May 2001), while 55.6% had access to the internet at home (up from 43.7% in May 2001) (QHS).
- More than two-fifths (43.3%) of all Queenslanders used a computer at home in the week before the 2001 Census. A lower proportion (36.1%) used the internet anywhere.
- Virtually equal numbers of males and females used a computer at home and the internet anywhere in the week before the Census.
- Persons aged 10-19 years were the most likely to use a computer at home. Those least likely to use a computer at home were aged 60 years and over and less than 10 years. The situation was similar for internet use.
- A greater proportion of high income earners than low income earners used a computer at home or the internet anywhere.
- The most popular place to use the internet was at home, with 52.6% of users only using it at home in the week before the Census.
- Occupation groups most likely to use a computer at home in the week before the Census were professionals (70.9%), advanced clerical and service workers (60.7%) and associate professionals (58.0%). These groups were also the most likely to use the internet at home.
- The most common uses of the internet at home were for research/study (72.8% of users) and emails (70.7%) (QHS).
- Tertiary qualified persons were more likely to have access to a computer at home (90.1%) than those without tertiary qualifications (range: 57.4% to 70.7%) (QHS).
- Persons born overseas (45.0%) were more likely to have used a computer at home in the week before the Census compared with those born in Australia (42.8%).
- Persons in Brisbane, South and East Moreton, and Northern regions were more likely to have access to a computer and the internet compared with other regions (QHS).
- About two-fifths (38.7%) of adults in Queensland rated their computer skills as very good or good (QHS).

Gender and computer use

The 2001 Census found that almost equal proportions of male and female Queenslanders used a computer at home in the week before the Census. Of the 1,470,422 Queenslanders who stated that they used a computer at home, 50.1% were males. Similarly, of the 1,270,367 persons who used the internet anywhere, 50.5% were males.

In the under 20 years and 50 years and over age groups, more males than females used a computer at home and the internet anywhere. Conversely, in the 20-49 years age group, more females than males used a computer at home and the internet anywhere.

Age and computer use

The largest group of Queenslanders by age who used a computer at home in the week before the 2001 Census were those aged 10-19 years (see Figure 1). Some 65.7% of this group stated that they used a computer. Persons aged 30-49 years were also more likely to use a computer at home than not.

Older Queenslanders and the very young were the least likely to use a computer at home in the week before the Census. Only 14.2% of persons aged 60 years and over stated that they used a computer at home, while 31.6% of persons aged less than 10 years used a computer.

Figure 1: Persons who used and did not use a computer at home by age, Queensland, 2001

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001
Similarly to computer usage, the largest group of Queenslanders who used the internet anywhere were those aged 10-19 years (see Figure 2), with 59.5% using it. The 20-29 years age group were also more likely to use the internet than not. Only 10.6% of those aged 60 and over and 12.0% of those less than 10 used the internet. While a slightly lower proportion of Queenslanders used the internet (36.1%) compared with Australians (37.1%), the proportion was higher in Queensland than in Australia for persons aged 55 and over.

Figure 2: Persons who used and did not use the internet anywhere by age, Queensland, 2001

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

On a count basis, 41.3% of persons in Queensland used a computer at home compared with 42.0% in Australia. The differential was slightly greater for the 0-24 years age groups, but for age groups 35-44 and older, the proportion of users was actually slightly higher in Queensland than in Australia.

Income and computer use

In general, Queenslanders with higher incomes were more likely than lower income earners to use a computer at home and the internet anywhere in the week before the 2001 Census. Over half of persons in income groups $800-$999 a week and higher used a computer (see Figure 3), while the internet was used by over half those in income groups $600-$799 a week and higher (see Figure 4). The exception was those earning less than $120 a week, a group comprising a large proportion of students.

Figure 3: Persons who used and did not use a computer at home by weekly income, Queensland, 2001

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

Location of use of the internet

Of those Queenslanders who used the internet anywhere in the week before the 2001 Census, 52.7% used it at home only, while 12.9% used it at work only (see Figure 5). Queenslanders were more likely to use the internet at home and less likely to use the internet at work compared with Australians overall. In total, 75.9% of persons in Queensland who used the internet used it at home and 31.0% at work (Australia, 74.6% and 34.1% respectively).

Figure 5: Persons who used the internet by location of use, Queensland and Australia, 2001

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

Occupation and computers at home

Queenslanders in certain occupations were more likely to use a computer and the internet at home (see Table 1). Professionals were the most likely to use computers, with 71.1% of this group using a computer at home and 55.3% using the internet at home in the week before the 2001 Census. Other occupations with high computer and internet use at home were advanced clerical and service workers, associate professionals, and managers and administrators. Lowest usage was among labourers and related workers, and intermediate production and transport workers.
Table 1: Proportion of persons who used a computer and the internet at home by occupation, Queensland, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Used a computer %</th>
<th>Used the internet %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and administrators</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professionals</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradespersons and related workers</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced clerical and service workers</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate production and transport workers</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary clerical, sales and service workers</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers and related workers</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

Table 2: Number and proportion of employed persons who used the internet at work only by occupation, Queensland, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and administrators</td>
<td>18,916</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>46,115</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professionals</td>
<td>31,013</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradespersons and related workers</td>
<td>7,316</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced clerical and service workers</td>
<td>11,765</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers</td>
<td>34,482</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate production and transport workers</td>
<td>2,369</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary clerical, sales and service workers</td>
<td>5,469</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers and related workers</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>5,640</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164,388</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

Uses of the internet at home

About half (48.0%) of persons aged 18 years and over in Queensland with internet access at home in 2002 used it for personal purposes only, while 49.9% used it for both personal and business purposes (QHS). Only 1.8% used it solely for business purposes. Most persons with internet access at home used it for research/study (72.8% of users) and email/social communication (70.7%) (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Proportion of persons 18 years and over with internet access at home by use, Queensland, 2002

Source: OESR, Queensland Household Survey, May 2002

Using the internet at work

The largest group (28.1%) of employed Queenslanders who used the internet only at work in the week before the 2001 Census were professionals (see Table 2). The next largest groups were intermediate clerical, sales and services workers (21.0%) and associate professionals (18.9%). Only 0.8% of employed persons using the internet at work were labourers and related workers.

Qualifications and computer use

Tertiary qualified persons in Queensland were more likely to have access to a computer at home (90.1%) than those without tertiary qualifications. Persons who had completed senior high school were more likely to have access to a computer at home (70.7%) than those who had not completed senior high school (57.4%) (QHS).

Country of birth and computer use

While 43.3% of Queenslanders born in Australia used a computer at home in the week before the 2001 Census, persons born in certain overseas countries/regions recorded higher proportions. Those born in North America had the highest proportion of computer users, with 67.0% using a computer at home (see Figure 7). Persons born in Africa also had a high proportion (64.2%). The United Kingdom and Ireland, Oceania and Europe had relatively low proportions of persons who used a computer, and this may reflect their earlier arrival / older age structure.

Figure 7: Proportion of overseas born persons who used a computer at home by region of birth, Queensland, 2001

Note: Excludes not stated.
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

There were wide variations in the proportion of overseas born Queenslanders who used a computer between countries/regions. More than two-thirds (67.7%) of those born in South Africa used a computer at home in the week before the Censuses (see Figure 8). Next highest were persons born in North America and South Korea.
Computer access by region

About 7 in 10 (69.7%) persons aged 18 years and over in Queensland had access to a computer at home in 2002. This varied slightly among the State’s regions, with the highest proportions being in South and East Moreton, Brisbane and Northern (see Figure 10). However, the regional differences were not statistically significant (QHS).

Some 55.6% of persons aged 18 years and over in Queensland had access to the internet at home. The same three regions had the highest proportion of persons aged 18 years and over with internet access at home. However, the only statistically significant difference in internet use between the regions was that persons in South and East Moreton (63.6%) were more likely to have access than those in Darling Downs, Wide Bay-Burnett and Far North (range: 43.7% to 45.2%) (QHS).

Computer and internet skill levels

About two-fifths (38.7%) of persons aged 18 years and over in Queensland in 2002 rated their computer skills as very good or good (see Figure 11). The younger age groups were more likely than older age groups to rate their computer skills as very good or good. Only 12.9% of persons had never used a computer (QHS).

Internet skills were rated as very good or good by 41.3% of persons aged 18 years and over who had used a computer. Only 14.8% of persons who had used a computer had never used the internet (QHS).