This bulletin contains information on older Queenslanders and covers demography, housing and employment. Most of the data come from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). However, it also draws on OESR’s population projections and other ABS publications. Unless otherwise indicated Census data is provided on a place of enumeration basis.

**Key points**

- A total of 11.7 per cent of Queensland’s population were aged 65 and over at the time of the 2001 Census.
- Persons aged 65 and over represented 11.6 per cent of the population in 2001 and are projected to comprise 27.7 per cent of the population in 2051.
- The number of persons aged 80 and over is projected to increase almost 600 per cent over the next 50 years from 101,900 to 685,500.
- The proportion of persons aged 65 and over was highest in Wide Bay-Burnett Statistical Division at the time of the 2001 Census (16%).
- Just 0.6% of persons aged 65 and over identified themselves as being of Indigenous origin in the 2001 Census.
- Of those Queenslanders aged 65 to 74 years that spoke a language other than English at home, 15.6 per cent did not speak English well, or at all.
- Life expectancy at birth was 76.9 years for Queensland males and 82.3 years for females in 2001.
- The standardised death rate for Queensland males in 2001 was 6.9 deaths per 1,000 population compared with 4.3 per 1,000 for females.
- The median age at death for Indigenous persons in Queensland was 53.2 in 2001, compared with 78.1 for non-Indigenous persons.
- Ageing of the population will result in the median age of Queenslanders rising from 35.0 years in 2001 to 47.3 years in 2051.
- For persons aged over 65, a separate house was by far the most dominant dwelling type (as a proportion of all dwelling types), although this declined with age.
- In the 65-74 years age group, 23 per cent of persons lived alone, rising to 38 per cent of persons aged 75 and over.
- At the time of the 2001 Census, 24 per cent of Queenslanders aged 55 years and over were employed.
- Of all Queenslanders unemployed and looking for work, 8.3 per cent were over 55 years of age.

**Demographics**

**Population**

On Census night there were 3,522,044 persons usually resident in Queensland. Of these, 413,174 persons (11.7 per cent of the population) were aged 65 years and over.

Of the total number of males usually resident in Queensland, 10.7 per cent were aged 65 and over, compared with 12.7 per cent of Queensland females.

Figure 1 shows Queensland’s usual resident population by age and sex. The distribution differs with age, with a higher proportion of males than females in the younger age groups and more females than males in the older age groups.

**Regional population**

Regionally, the highest proportion of persons aged 65 and over were in Wide Bay-Burnett Statistical Division (16 per cent of the total population of the statistical division). This was followed by Moreton (15 per cent) and Darling Downs (14 per cent) statistical divisions.

The North West Statistical Division had the lowest proportion of persons aged 65 and over as a percentage of total population (6 per cent).

Figure 2 shows the proportion of persons 65 years and over usually resident as a percentage of the population in each statistical division.
Cultural diversity

In the 2001 Census, 443,105 of the enumerated population (12.4% of the population of Queensland) were aged 65 and over. Of these, 3,041 persons (0.6%) identified themselves of being of Indigenous origin.

Of the Indigenous population, only 2.7 per cent were aged 65 and over, compared with 12.7 per cent of the non-Indigenous population. Figure 3 shows Indigenous status as a proportion of the population for persons aged 65 years and over. The proportion of Indigenous persons in this age group as a proportion of the total Indigenous population was significantly lower than for the non-Indigenous population.

Life expectancy and death rates

Data from *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0) shows that life expectancy at birth for Queensland males was 76.9 years and for females 82.3 years in 2001. This has increased by 9.8 years for males and 7.6 years for females in the 30 years since 1971.

Death rates at all ages for Queensland men are higher than for women. The standardised death rate for Queensland males in 2001 was 6.9 deaths per 1,000 population compared with 4.3 per 1,000 for females.

The median age at death for non-Indigenous females in 2001 was 81.7 years, compared with 54.1 years for Indigenous females. The male non-Indigenous median age at death was 75.1 years versus 52.5 for Indigenous males.

Population projections

Queensland Government population projections indicate that Queensland’s population is forecast to grow from 3.6 million people in 2001 to 5.3 million people in 25 years, reaching 6.5 million in 50 years.

The number of persons aged 65 years and over is projected to increase by 0.5 million between 2001 and 2021 and 1.4 million between 2001 and 2051 (see Figure 5). This age group represented 11.6 per cent of the population in 2001 and is projected to comprise 27.7 per cent of the population in 2051.
The number of persons aged 80 years and over is projected to increase almost 600 per cent over the next 50 years from 101,900 in 2001 to 685,500 (see Figure 6). As a proportion of the population, this age group is projected to increase from 2.8 per cent in 2001 to 4.1 per cent in 2021 and 10.6 per cent in 2051.

In contrast, the number of persons aged 18 and under as a proportion of the population is projected to decline from 27.1 per cent of the population in 2001 (1 million), to 21.9 per cent in 2021 (1.1 million) and 18.3 per cent in 2051 (1.2 million) (see Figure 7).

Housing and living arrangements

Figure 8 shows dwelling type lived in by age. A separate house was by far the most dominant dwelling type (as a proportion of all dwelling types) for persons aged 65 and over, although this declines with age.

The proportion of persons living in non-private nursing homes and non-private accommodation for the retired increases with age. Less than one per cent of the population aged 65-69 lived in these types of accommodation compared with over 26 per cent of those aged 95 and over who lived in non-private nursing homes and 23 per cent who lived in non-private accommodation for the retired/aged.

Eight per cent of persons aged 65-69 lived in a private flat/unit/apartment. This declined to five per cent for persons aged 95 and over.

The number of lone person households as a proportion of all household types increased with age (see Figure 9). In the 65-74 years age group, 23 per cent of persons lived alone, rising to 38 per cent of the persons aged 75 and over.

Employment

Labour force

At the time of the 2001 Census, 42 per cent of Queenslanders aged 45 years and over were employed compared with 24 per cent of those aged 55 and over and seven per cent of those aged 65 and over (see figure 10). Persons aged 55 and over employed full-time represented 11 per cent of all Queenslanders employed full-time. Thirteen per cent of this age group were employed part-time.
Figure 10: Employed persons by age group, Queensland, 2001

The proportion of females working part-time as a percentage of all females employed was higher at every age group than for males.

Males working part-time as a proportion of males employed increased from 21 per cent for the 55-59 years age group to 43 per cent for the 65 and over age group.

Eight per cent of the Queensland labour force were unemployed at the time of the 2001 Census. Of all Queenslanders unemployed and looking for work, 8.3 per cent were aged 55 years and over.

The unemployment rate for persons aged 45-49 was 5.4 per cent in 2001, increasing to 6.4 per cent for those aged 55-64 year. Persons aged 65 and over had an unemployment rate of 2.8 per cent.

Figure 11: Proportion working part-time, employed persons by age and sex, Queensland, 2001

Participation rate

Figure 12 shows labour force participation (the proportion of persons employed or looking for work as a percentage of the total number of persons) by age group and sex.

The proportion of persons in the labour force generally decreases with age. For Queensland males, participation in the labour force peaks in the 30-34 years age group (88 per cent) and declines to 47 per cent for the 60-64 years age group and 10 per cent for the 65 years and over group.

For females, the participation rate peaks in the 20-24 years age group (73 per cent), and then declines in the 30-34 years age group (65 per cent) before peaking again in the 45-49 years age group (73 per cent). Participation rates for Queensland females in the 60-64 years age group were 23 per cent, and 4 per cent for the 65 years and over age group at the time of the 2001 Census.

Figure 13 shows participation rate by age group by census year. Participation in the labour force for each age group over 45 has increased between 1991 and 2001.

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