

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland, Census 2016

Sources: ABS, various census releases, as detailed in footnotes, and sources listed for individual tables and charts.

At a glance

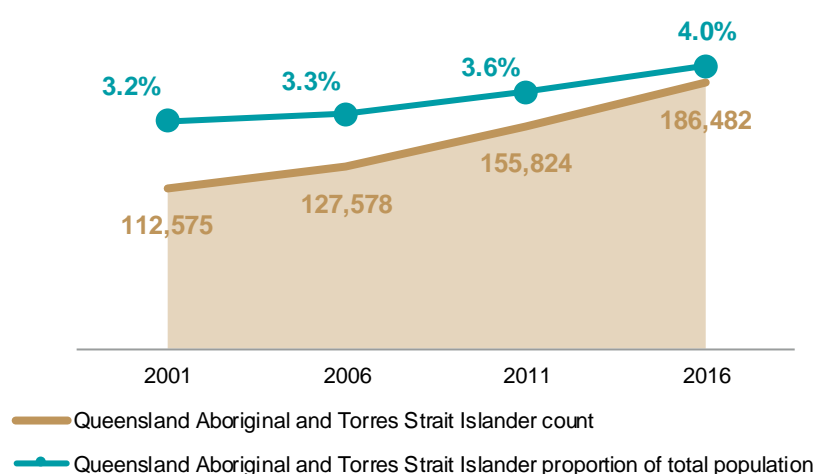
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	2011	2016	change	Non-Indigenous persons change
Census population count	155,824	186,482	19.7% ↑	6.5% ↑
Home ownership	32.6%	33.9%	1.3ppts ↑	1.2ppts ↓
Year 12 completions	31.7%	37.9%	6.2ppts ↑	5.3ppts ↑

Population

Usual resident counts

- At the time of the 2016 Census, 4.0% of Queensland residents identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin (186,482 persons) (Figure 1).
- Of the 649,171 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people counted Australia-wide, over one-quarter (28.7%) were residents of Queensland. Only New South Wales recorded a higher count (216,181 persons) (Figure 2).
- In the five years to 2016, the census count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders increased by 30,658 (or 19.7%), faster than the increase a decade earlier (13.3%).
- This growth can be attributed to a combination of factors including natural population increase, an increasing propensity for people to identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, and improved data collection methods.

Figure 1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population count and proportion of total population, Queensland, 2016



Intercensal change in counts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander usual residents

	Queensland	Australia
2001–2006	13.3% ↑	11.0%
2006–2011	22.1% ↑	20.5%
2011–2016	19.7% ↑	18.4%

Source: ABS 2004.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2001, Table U05B; 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, 2011 and 2016, Tables I02

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin

At the time of the 2016 Census:

- 79.9% (148,943 persons) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders identified as being of only Aboriginal origin
- 11.3% (21,053 persons) identified as being of only Torres Strait Islander origin
- 8.8% (16,493 persons) identified as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (Table 1, Figure 2).

Queenslanders who identified as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander increased by 57.3% (or 6,005 persons) since 2006.

Table 1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons by origin, Queensland, 2016

Origin	Persons		
	2006	2011	2016
	— number —		
Aboriginal	98,716	122,896	148,943
Torres Strait Islander	18,374	20,094	21,053
Both ^(a)	10,488	12,834	16,493
Total	127,578	155,824	186,482
	— % —		
Aboriginal	77.4	78.9	79.9
Torres Strait Islander	14.4	12.9	11.3
Both ^(a)	8.2	8.2	8.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

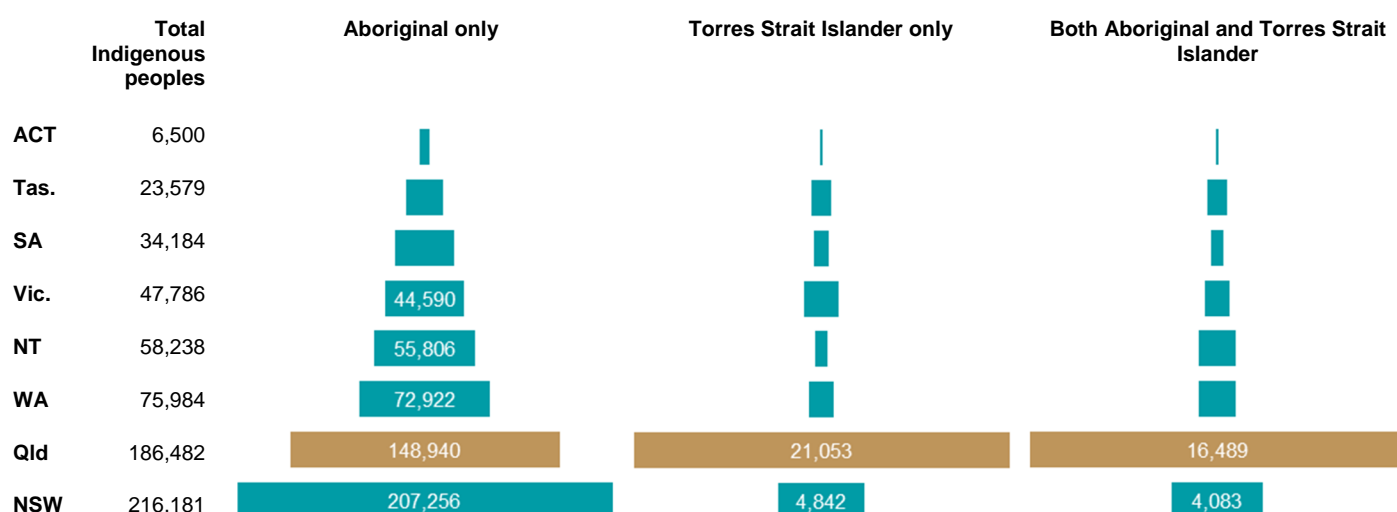
(a) Persons who identified as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, 2011 and 2016, Tables I02

Indigenous status in Australia

- **One in four** of the 590,050 persons in Australia who identified as being of only Aboriginal origin were usual residents of Queensland (25.2%)
- **Nearly two-thirds** (65.1%) of the 32,345 Australians who identified as being of only Torres Strait Islander origin lived in Queensland
- Similarly, of the 26,760 persons nationally who identified as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, 61.6% lived in Queensland

Figure 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population by state/territory, 2016

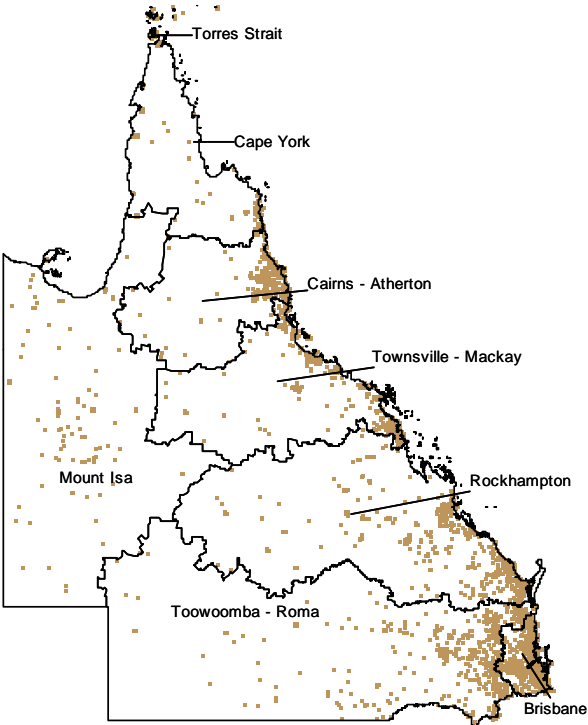


Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Regional distribution at 2016 Census¹

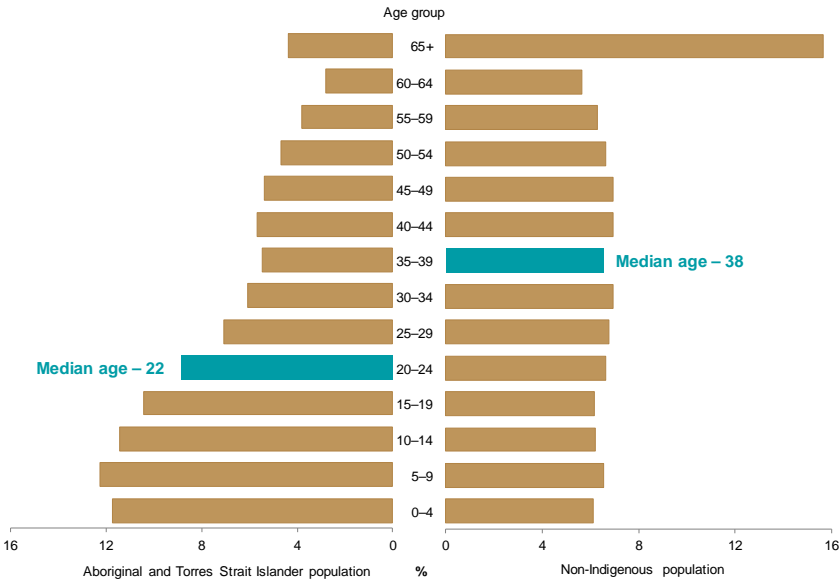
- Queensland had three out of the top 10 most populous Indigenous Regions (IR) based on counts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout Australia.
- Brisbane (IR) had the highest count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons of all IRs in Australia, with 70,734 (or 10.9%) of the population nationally.
- Townsville – Mackay IR (26,478 persons or 4.1%) and Cairns – Atherton IR (24,465 persons or 3.8%) also featured in the top 10.
- Torres Strait IR had the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (81.8%) of all IRs in Australia, while Cape York had the seventh-highest proportion (55.8%).
- More than one-third of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population lived in Brisbane IR (37.9%) (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by Indigenous Region^(a), Queensland, 2016



Map notes:
 1 dot = 5 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons.
 (a) Australian Statistical Geography Standard, 2016 edition
 Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Figure 4 Age profile by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2016



Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I03

Age at 2016 Census

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are, on average, younger than non-Indigenous Queenslanders.
- Around one-third (35.4%) were aged less than 15 years, compared with one-fifth (18.9%) of non-Indigenous Queenslanders.
- Only 4.4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were aged 65 years and over (Figure 4).
- For Queenslanders aged 65 years and older, there were:
 - 79 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men for every 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
 - 90 non-Indigenous men for every 100 non-Indigenous women.

¹ Summary statistics sourced from ABS 2075.0, Census of Population and Housing - Counts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2016

Australian Indigenous languages

- Within Queensland, less than one in ten (7.0% or 13,134 persons) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents reported speaking an Australian Indigenous language at home. There were 288 non-Indigenous Queensland residents who reported speaking an Indigenous language at home.
- In 2016, the most widely spoken Australian Indigenous language groups in Queensland were:
 - Yumplatok (Torres Strait Creole) (3.1%)
 - Kalaw Kawaw Ya/Kalaw Lagaw Ya (0.5%)
 - Guugu Yimidhirr (0.4%).
- Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders (86.4% or 161,162) reported speaking only English at home, similar to the proportion reported by non-Indigenous Queenslanders (86.2%).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders from remote IRs were more likely than those from urban areas to speak an Australian Indigenous language (Table 2).
- Over the 10 years to 2016, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders speaking an Australian Indigenous language decreased, from 8.8% to 7.0%. This was despite an overall increase in the number of people indicating that they spoke an Australian Indigenous language, 11,243 in 2006 to 13,135 persons in 2016 (Figure 5).

Almost **80%** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders living in Torres Strait IR and **40%** living in Cape York IR reported speaking an Australian Indigenous language at home

Table 2 Distribution of Indigenous language speakers by Indigenous Region^(a), Queensland, 2016

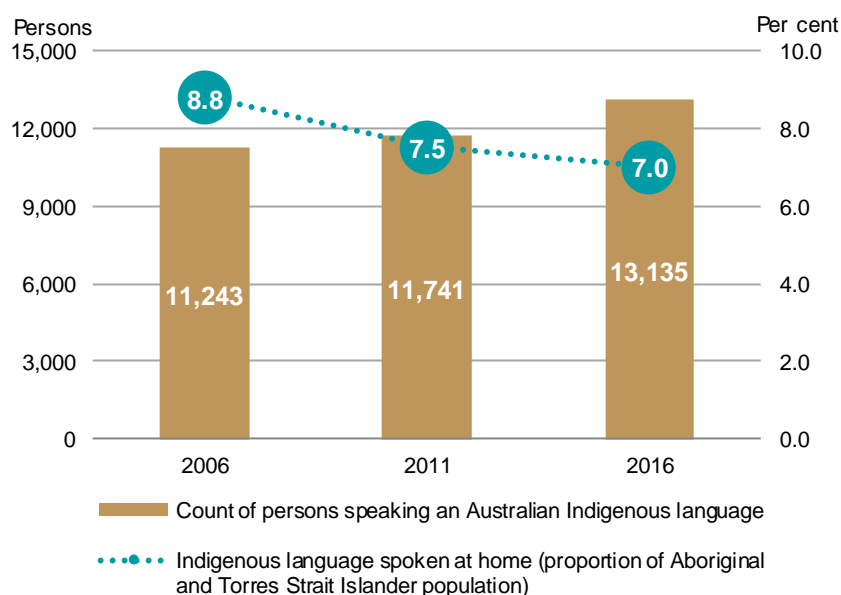
Indigenous region	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander usual residents	% of those residents who speak an Indigenous language
	— number —	— % —
Brisbane	70,732	1.1
Cairns - Atherton	24,466	7.8
Cape York	9,455	40.1
Mount Isa	7,376	3.1
Rockhampton	22,511	1.4
Toowoomba -	18,037	1.0
Torres Strait	6,623	77.7
Townsville - Mackay	26,472	2.9
Queensland^(b)	186,484	7.0

(a) Australian Statistical Geography Standard, 2016 edition.

(b) Includes 'No usual address'.

Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Figure 5 Indigenous language speakers as a proportion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, Queensland, 2016



The proportion of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders speaking an Australian Indigenous language at home declined in 2016

Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Household and family composition

At the time of the 2016 Census:

- 75.4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households were one family households and 13.6% were lone person households (Table 3).
- By comparison, among Other households (those with only non-Indigenous members and members who did not state their Indigenous status), around seven in ten (69.7%) were one family households and around one-quarter (23.9%) were lone person households.

More than 1 in 3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in Queensland were single parent families

- Over one-third of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were single parent families (35.8%), more than double the proportion of Other families (15.4%).
- In contrast, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that were couple only families with no children was about half that of Other households (21.5% compared with 40.4%) (Figure 6).

Household income²

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households had a median total weekly household income of \$1,222 at the time of the 2016 Census (Figure 7).

This was lower than the median total household income of \$1,412 recorded for Other households.

Over the past 10 years (to 2016), the gap between the median weekly income of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Other households increased. In 2006, the gap was \$138 and in 2016 it was \$190.

While the median weekly household incomes of all Queensland households increased by about 36% between 2006 and 2016, the higher 2006 median weekly household income for Other households led to an overall larger increase in median income by 2016, compared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households.

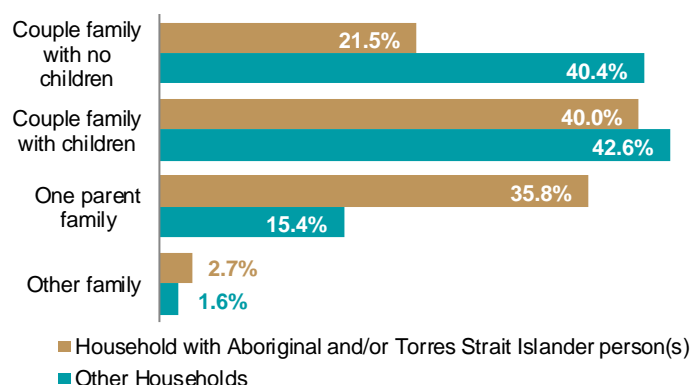
Table 3 Household composition, Queensland, 2016

Household	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households	Other ^(a) households
	— % of occupied private dwellings —	
One family	75.4	69.7
Multiple family	5.1	1.7
Lone person	13.6	23.9
Group	5.9	4.6
Total	100	100

(a) Other households include those with only non-Indigenous people, or people who did not state their Indigenous status.

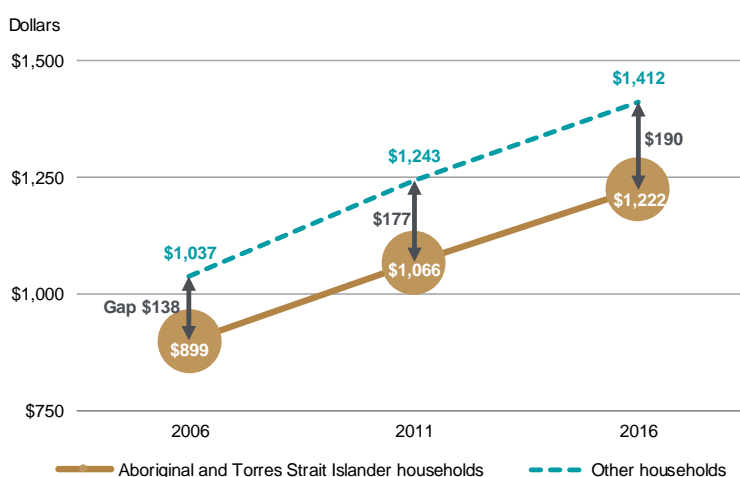
Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I12

Figure 6 Families by selected composition and Indigenous status, Queensland, 2016



Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Figure 7 Median weekly household income, Queensland



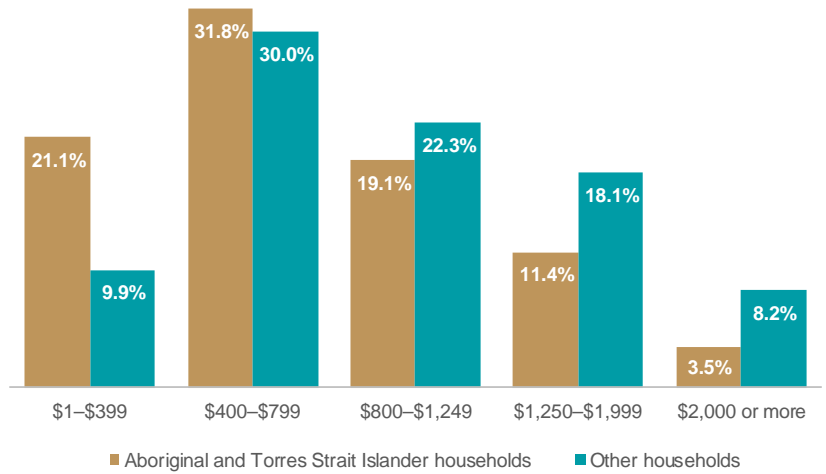
Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, 2011 and, Tables I04

² Gross income from all sources. It includes wages, salaries, regular overtime, business or farm income (less operating expenses), rents received (less operating expenses), dividends, interest, income from superannuation, maintenance (child support), workers' compensation, and government pensions and allowances.

Figure 8 Equivalised weekly household income^(a), Queensland, 2016

A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households had incomes of less than \$400 per week (21.1%) compared with Other households (9.9%) (Figure 8).

In contrast, only 14.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households had incomes of \$1,250 or more, compared with 26.3% of Other Households.



(a) Excludes households with 'nil' income, or where full or partial income was not stated.

Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Housing

A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households lived in rental accommodation (42.3%) compared with Other households (29.9%) (Figure 9).

Around one-fifth (19.5%) of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households rented through a social housing provider compared with only 3.0% of Other households.

Smaller proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households owned their home outright or were paying a mortgage compared with Other households.

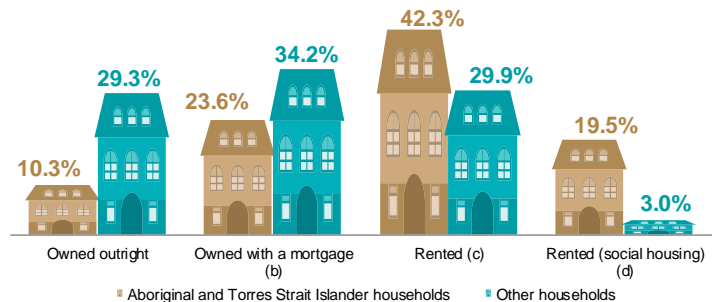
More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households rent than own or have a mortgage on their home

Housing utilisation

11% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households were living in occupied private dwellings that required at least one extra bedroom³

3% of Other households required at least one extra bedroom

Figure 9 Tenure type^(a), Queensland, 2016



- (a) 'Other tenure type' and 'Tenure type not stated' not displayed.
- (b) Includes dwelling purchased under a shared equity scheme.
- (c) Includes landlord type not stated. Excludes social housing.
- (d) Rented through a state housing authority, a housing co-operative, or a community or church group.

Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I10

³ According to the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (as applied by the ABS to the 2016 Census data).

Figure 10 Proportion of households with house owned outright or mortgaged, Queensland



Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016, Table I10 and Census of Population and Housing, 2006, Table I18

Overcrowding was higher in rural areas. In 2016, 12.4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in rural areas of Queensland were deemed to be overcrowded, compared with 9.7% in urban areas⁴. This compares with 15.0% and 9.0% respectively at the national level for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households.

Over the 10 years to 2016:

- The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households that owned their own home outright or that had a mortgage increased by 2.0 percentage points, up from 31.9% of households in 2006, to 33.9% in 2016.
- For Other households, this proportion decreased 3.0 percentage points over this same period (Figure 10).

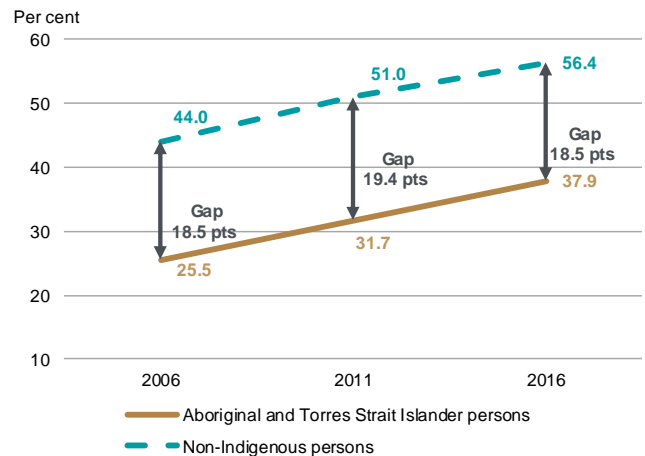
Education

Highest year of school completed

In the 2016 Census:

- 37.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 15 years and over (who were no longer attending school) reported that Year 12 (or equivalent) was the highest year of school they had completed.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were less likely to have completed Year 12 or equivalent than non-Indigenous Queenslanders across all age groups.
- The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous completers narrowed from 2011 to 2016 (19.4 to 18.5 percentage points respectively).
- Notably, there has been a steady upward trend in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who had completed Year 12 over the past 10 years (up 12.3 percentage points) (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Completion of Year 12 or equivalent, Queensland, 2016



Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016, Table I06 and Census of Population and Housing, 2006 Table I11

More than half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 20–24 years had completed Year 12 or equivalent

Of all the states and territories, Queensland had the second highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 years that had completed Year 12 or equivalent (55.4%), which was above the national average of 46.9% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this age group.

⁴ Based on place of enumeration. Overcrowding is households requiring at least one additional bedroom, and includes households in occupied private dwellings only. Excludes visitor only and other non-classifiable households. Data sourced from ABS 2017.0 Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia – Stories from the Census, 2016, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population Article'.

Studying at a tertiary or other higher education institution

More than twice as many females as males in the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population were studying at university or other tertiary institution in 2016 (3,149 females compared with 1,502 males).

Similarly, two-thirds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons studying at a technical or further education institution were female (2,058 females compared with 1,122 males).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females were more than twice as likely to have gained a Bachelor degree or higher-level qualification than males (2.1 times). This is notably different to the non-Indigenous population, where females were 1.4 times more likely to have a Bachelor degree or higher-level qualification.

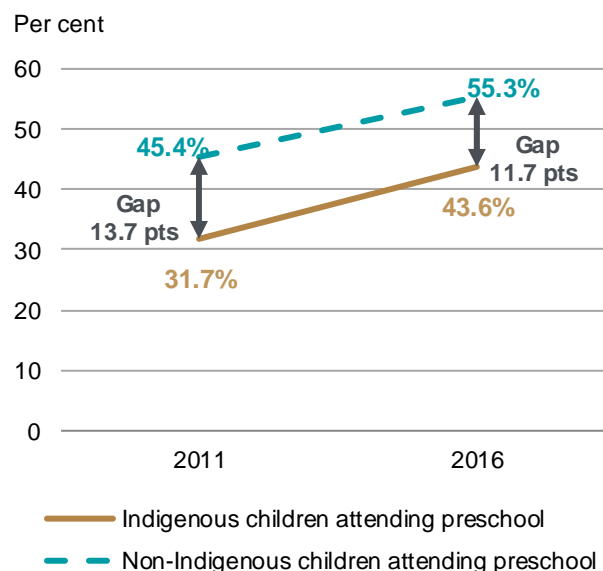
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females were more likely than males to be studying at a technical or tertiary institution, and to have non-school qualifications

Early childhood education

At the time of the 2016 Census:

- 43.6% of four-year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland were reported to be attending preschool, compared with more than half (55.3%) of non-Indigenous four-year olds.
- The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland reported to be attending preschool in 2016 was an increase from the 31.7% attending in 2011 (Figure 12).
- The gap between the proportion of non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four-year-olds attending preschool decreased from 13.7 percentage points in 2011 to 11.7 percentage points in 2016.
- Preschool attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four-year-olds varied across the Indigenous Regions from 34.2% in Cairns – Atherton IR to 50.0% in Brisbane IR.
- The second-highest attendance (as a proportion of the regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population) was recorded in Torres Strait IR (47.3%).

Figure 12 Proportion of four-year old children attending preschool, by Indigenous status, Queensland



Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016

Engagement in work or study

Those who are not fully engaged in either education or employment may be at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, underemployed or marginally attached to the labour force⁵.

In 2016:

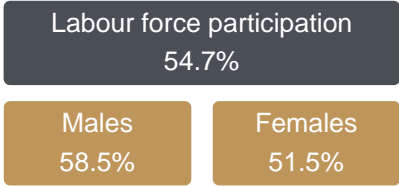
- 53.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 15–24 years were fully engaged in work or study, compared with 74.7% of non-Indigenous Queenslanders.
- Both proportions were slightly lower than the national average of 55.7% and 78.3% respectively.

⁵ Source: ABS 2071.0 Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia – Stories from the Census, 2016, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population Article'.

Labour force characteristics

Participation

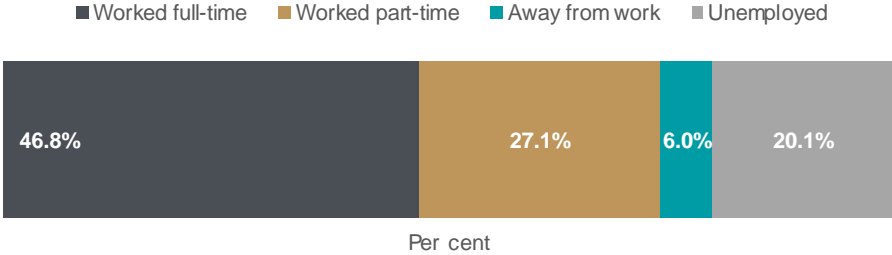
Just over half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons aged 15 years and over stated they were participating in the labour force⁶ (54.7%).



More than 2 in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15 years and over in Queensland were not participating in the labour force (42.4%)

Of these, just under half were employed full-time (46.8%) (Figure 13), and a further 27.1% were in part-time employment in 2016.

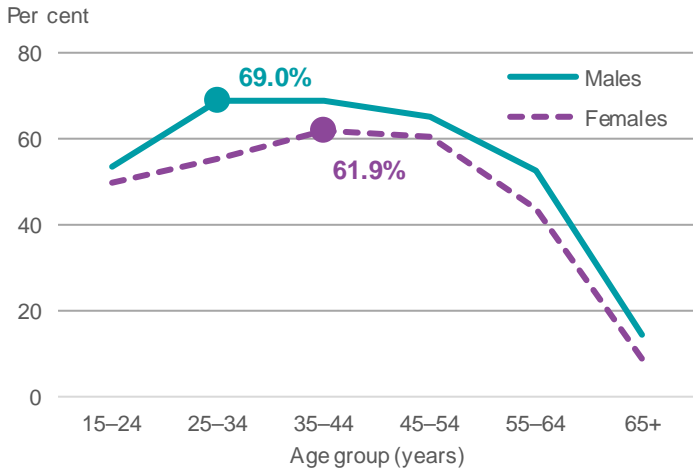
Figure 13 Labour force status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders^(a) participating in the labour force, 2016



(a) Persons aged 15 years and over in the labour force

Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I14

Figure 14 Labour force participation rates by age and sex^(a), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, Qld, 2016



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males participated in the labour force at higher rates than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females

The participation rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males was higher than that for their female peers across all age groups, with the rate for males peaking in the 25–34 years age group (69.0%), while the peak for females was slightly older, in the 35–44 years (61.9%) (Figure 14).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males were nearly twice as likely as their female counterparts to be self-employed (191.5 self-employed males per 100 self-employed females), with just over 1,000 males reporting being self-employed in 2016. For non-Indigenous Queenslanders, there were 151.7 self-employed males per 100 self-employed females.

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over

Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I14

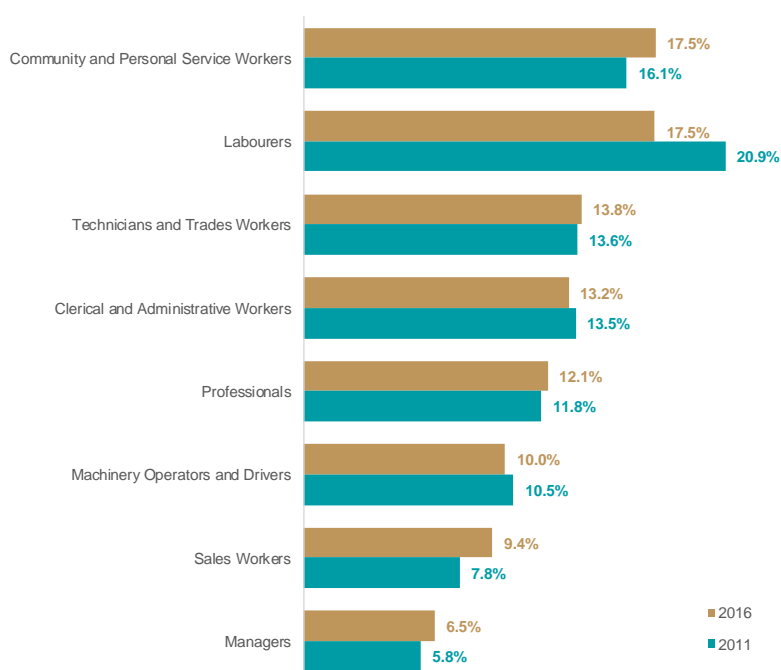
⁶ Participation in the labour force is defined as either being employed, or actively looking for employment in the week prior to the Census reference period. It is calculated as the number of persons in the labour force expressed as a percentage of persons aged 15 years and over.

Occupation

Nearly half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employed persons were working in three broad occupation groups: Community and Personal Service Workers, Labourers, and Technicians and Trades Workers (Figure 15). Community and Personal Service Workers include carers of the aged or disabled, paramedics, police officers, child care workers, teacher's aides, and community workers.

- The fastest growing occupational group was Sales Workers, with 46.4% growth between 2011 and 2016 in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders employed.
- In 2016, for all employed non-Indigenous Queenslanders, the highest occupation groups were Professionals (20.4%) followed by Technicians and Trades Workers (14.5%) and Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.9%).

Figure 15 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by broad occupation group^(a), Queensland, 2011 and 2016



(a) Employed persons aged 15 years and over. 'Not stated and 'Inadequately described' categories have been excluded from proportion calculations.

Source: ABS 2073.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016

Industry⁷

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were more likely to be employed in the government sector than non-Indigenous people (20.5% compared with 15.9%).

- The most common industries of employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were Local Government Administration (4.3% of employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people), followed by Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (3.7%), and Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.4%).
- The proportion employed in Local Government Administration in Queensland was higher than that for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in Australia (3.2%) in 2016, although lower than the proportion recorded in Queensland in 2011 (5.8%).
- The industry with the largest percentage point increase since 2011 was Secondary Education, up 0.53 percentage points from 2.7% in 2011.
- There were 855 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders employed in Secondary Education in 2016, up from 500 in 2011. In 2016, 69.8% of this group were female, down slightly from 72.4% in 2011.

1 in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employed people in Queensland were working in the government sector in 2016

⁷ Employed persons aged 15 years and over. 'Not stated and 'Inadequately described' categories have been excluded from proportion calculations.

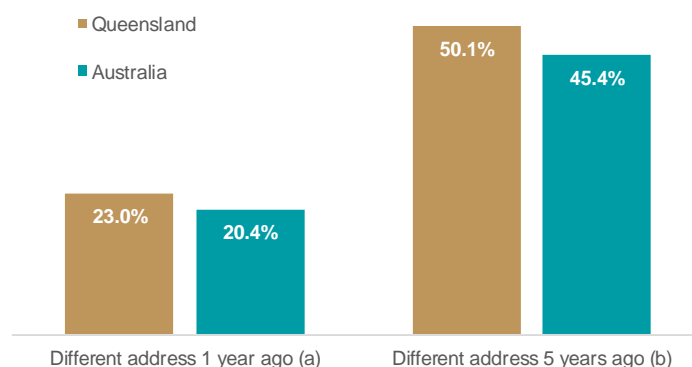
Migration

In 2016, nearly four in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland reported living at the same address as they had one year earlier (77.0%), while only half reported living at the same address as five years earlier (49.9%).

The proportion of the non-Indigenous population who reported living at the same address was slightly higher for both time periods (81.0% same address as one year ago and 52.2% same address as five years ago).

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland that had changed address compared with one and five years prior to the Census, was higher than that for the total Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (Figure 16).

Figure 16 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have changed address, by time period, 2016



- (a) Excludes persons less than 1 year of age. Includes persons living elsewhere in Australia or overseas 1 year ago.
- (b) Excludes persons less than 5 years of age. Includes persons living elsewhere in Australia or overseas 5 years ago.

Source: ABS 2002.0, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Table I14

Notes

Population counts in this bulletin are based on census counts of usual residents. While the census counts are an important source of information about the characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, a more accurate estimate of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is provided by the estimated resident population, based on the census but adjusting for net undercount and unknown Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status.

Unless otherwise stated, person-level data in this bulletin exclude people who did not answer the question regarding their Indigenous status in the 2016 Census (6.5% of residents).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in this bulletin are any households that had at least one usual resident who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, and who was present on census night. Household-level data in this report are based on counts of occupied private dwellings and exclude 'Visitor only' and 'Other non-classifiable' households.

Equivalent household income

Equivalent income enables direct comparison of the relative incomes of households of different sizes and composition by adjusting household income according to an equivalence scale. For a lone person household, equivalent income is equal to household income but for a household comprising more than one person, it is an indicator of the household income that would need to be received by a lone person household to enjoy the same level of economic wellbeing as the household type in question.

Population and dwelling counts

Please note that there are small random adjustments made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality of data. Counts may differ across different census data sources, particularly between Community Profile and TableBuilder products.

Rounding

Figures are rounded to nearest whole number. Calculations (such as percentages and rates) are based on pre-rounded figures.

All data in this report were sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Censuses of Population and Housing (www.abs.gov.au).