

# Queensland compared, Census 2016

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016

This publication uses demographic data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Census of Population and Housing 2016 to compare key characteristics of Queensland's resident population with those of other Australian states and territories. Where appropriate, comparisons are also made between the populations of greater capital city statistical areas (GCCSA) and rest of state regions for each state or territory.

Greater capital cities include the population within the urban area of the city, as well as people from nearby small towns and rural areas who regularly socialise, shop or work within the city.

## Population

At the time of the 2016 Census, 4,703,193 persons were counted as being usual residents of Queensland (Table 1). Queensland had the third largest population of all states and territories after New South Wales and Victoria. Western Australia and South Australia also had populations of more than one million people.

Australia is a highly urbanised nation, with two in three people (66.6%) living in its greater capital cities in 2016.

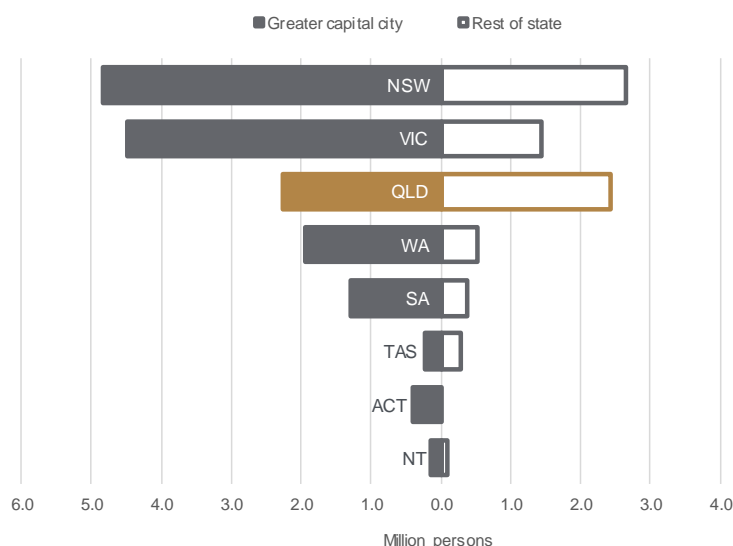
Queensland's greater capital city area of Greater Brisbane<sup>1</sup> had a usual resident population count of 2,270,800 persons. Like the overall population pattern, only New South Wales (Greater Sydney) and Victoria (Greater Melbourne) had larger greater capital city populations (Figure 1).

**Table 1 Population by GCCSA<sup>(a)</sup>, 2016**

State / territory	Greater capital city	Rest of state	Total	Greater capital city	Rest of state
	— persons —			— % of total —	
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>2,270,800</b>	<b>2,419,724</b>	<b>4,703,193</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>51.4</b>
New South Wales	4,823,991	2,643,536	7,480,228	64.5	35.3
Victoria	4,485,211	1,433,818	5,926,624	75.7	24.2
South Australia	1,295,714	378,074	1,676,653	77.3	22.5
Western Australia	1,943,858	524,167	2,474,410	78.6	21.2
Tasmania	222,356	286,627	509,965	43.6	56.2
Northern Territory	136,828	89,443	228,833	59.8	39.1
Australian Capital Territory	396,857	—	397,397	99.9	—
<b>Australia</b>	<b>15,575,615</b>	<b>7,775,389</b>	<b>23,401,892</b>	<b>66.6</b>	<b>33.2</b>

(a) Refer to explanatory notes at the end of this report for additional information on this table.

**Figure 1 Population by size and distribution, 2016**



In contrast to most states and territories, Queensland's population was relatively decentralised, with less than half (48.3%) of its population in Greater Brisbane. Only Tasmania (43.6%) had a smaller share than Queensland of residents living in its greater capital city area.

More than half of Queensland's population (51.4% or 2,419,724 persons) in 2016 lived in the rest of state region outside of Greater Brisbane. In absolute terms, only New South Wales had a larger rest of state population than Queensland (2,643,536 persons).

Around one in five Australians (20.1%) lived in Queensland in 2016.

<sup>1</sup> Greater Brisbane excludes the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Refer to explanatory notes at the end of this report for additional information.

## Age structure

Queensland has a relatively young age profile, with a median age of 37 years, slightly lower than the Australian average of 38 years (Table 2). Queensland's median age was similar to that of Victoria (37 years) and lower than Tasmania (42), South Australia (40) and New South Wales (38). The Northern Territory (32), Australian Capital Territory (35) and Western Australia (36) had the lowest median ages in Australia.

Compared with Australia and the other states and territories, Queensland has proportionally more children and young people and fewer working age adults and seniors. In 2016, Queensland had the second largest proportion of children (0–14 years) after the Northern Territory, accounting for close to one-fifth of the population (19.4%), while Northern Territory had 21.6%. Young adults (15–24 years) made up 13.0% of the state's usual residents, the third largest share of the states and territories. In contrast, the state had the third smallest share of working age adults (25–64 years) at 52.3%, and a relatively small proportion of seniors (65 years and older) (15.3%).

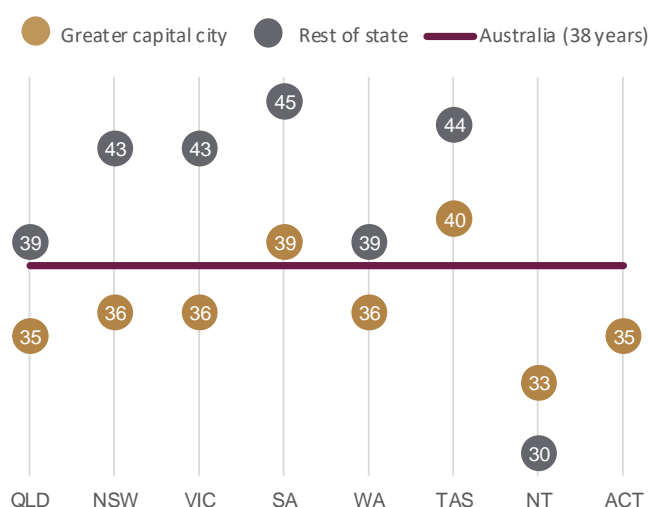
Queensland's total dependency ratio<sup>2</sup> of 53 dependents per 100 workers was slightly higher than the Australian average (52 per 100 workers), reflecting its younger population. By comparison, high dependency ratios in Tasmania (59 per 100 workers) and South Australia (56 per 100 workers) reflect their older age profiles.

**Table 2 Population by age, 2016**

State / territory	Children	Young adults	Working age adults	Seniors	Total population	Median age	Dependency ratio
	0–14 years	15–24 years	25–64 years	65+ years			
	— % of total population —				persons	years	n : 100 <sup>(a)</sup>
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>52.3</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>4,703,193</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>53</b>
New South Wales	18.5	12.5	52.6	16.3	7,480,228	38	53
Victoria	18.2	13.0	53.2	15.6	5,926,624	37	51
South Australia	17.5	12.4	51.8	18.3	1,676,653	40	56
Western Australia	19.3	12.5	54.2	14.0	2,474,410	36	50
Tasmania	17.7	12.0	51.0	19.4	509,965	42	59
Northern Territory	21.6	13.4	57.8	7.2	228,833	32	40
Australian Capital Territory	18.7	14.1	54.6	12.6	397,397	35	46
<b>Australia</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>23,401,892</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>52</b>

(a) Number of 'dependents' (0–14 years and 65+ years) per 100 'workers' (15–64 years).

**Figure 2 Median age by GCCSA, 2016**



Across Australia, notable differences in age were apparent at the GCCSA level, with capital city areas mostly having younger populations than the rest of state areas. Except for the Northern Territory, all greater capital city areas recorded lower median ages than their corresponding rest of state regions in 2016 (Figure 2).

The median ages for greater capital city areas were below the Australian average of 38 years for all states and territories, except Tasmania and South Australia. By contrast, the median ages of people living in the rest of state areas were higher than the national average for all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory.

Queensland had the equal-second youngest greater capital city population with the Australian Capital Territory (35 years), while the median age of those living outside of Greater Brisbane was 39 years – equal with Western Australia for the second-lowest rest of state median age.

<sup>2</sup> The total dependency ratio is a measure showing the number of 'dependents' (children and seniors, who are generally not in the labour force) for every 100 'workers' (young adults and working age adults, who are more likely to be economically active).

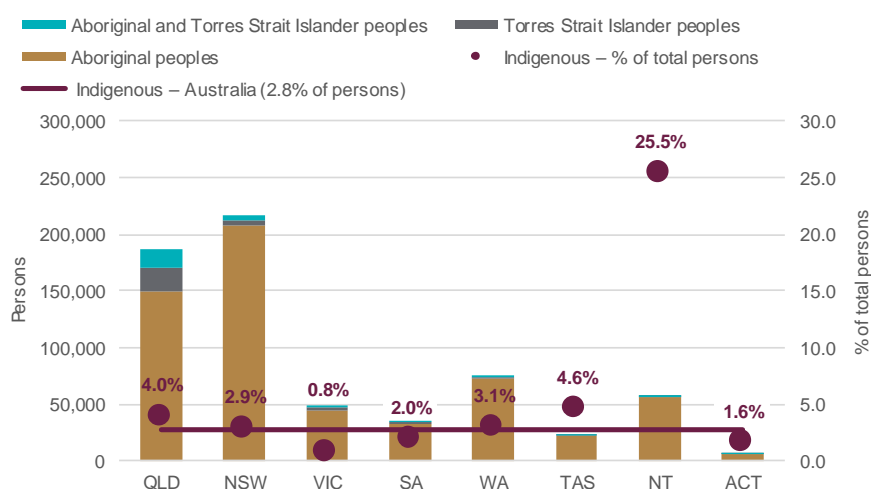
## Indigenous status

At the time of the 2016 Census, Queensland (186,482 persons) had the second-largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of all states and territories after New South Wales (216,176 persons) (Figure 3). Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples made up 4.0% of Queensland's total population, above the national average of 2.8%.

Queensland had the largest number of people who identified as Torres Strait Islander peoples (21,053 persons), representing around two-thirds (65.1%) of Australia's Torres Strait Islander population (Table 3). A further 16,493 Queenslanders identified as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, making up 61.6% of the Australian total for that category.

Altogether, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population accounted for 28.7% of Australia's total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

**Figure 3 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, 2016**



**Table 3 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Queensland and Australia, 2016**

Indigenous status	Queensland	Australia	Queensland
	— persons —	— persons —	% of Australia
Aboriginal peoples	148,943	590,056	25.2
Torres Strait Islander peoples	21,053	32,345	65.1
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (a)	16,493	26,767	61.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>186,482</b>	<b>649,171</b>	<b>28.7</b>

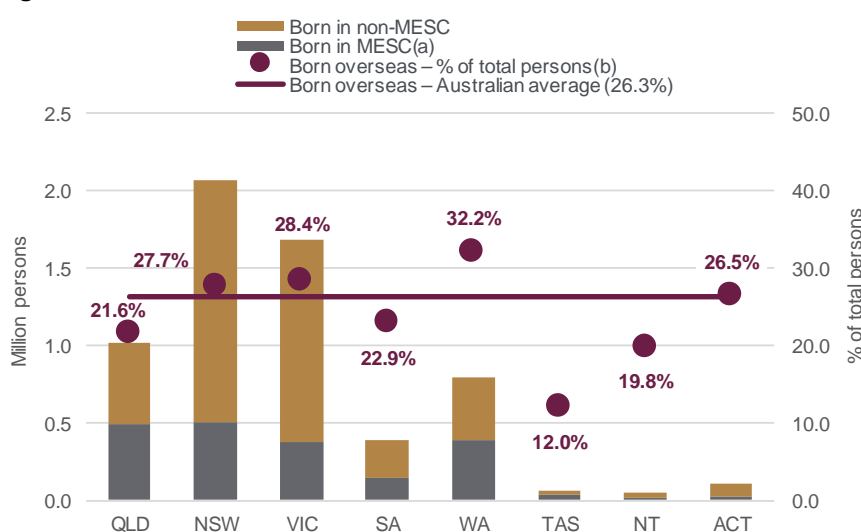
## Birthplace and language

Around one in five Queenslanders was born overseas.

While more than one million Queenslanders were born overseas (1,015,875 persons), they accounted for 21.6% of Queensland's total population, a smaller proportion than most other states and territories, except Tasmania (12.0%) and Northern Territory (19.8%). Western Australia had the largest proportion of overseas-born population (32.2%).

People born in mainly English-speaking countries (MESC) made up close to half of Queensland residents who were born overseas (48.7% or 494,919 persons). In absolute terms, only New South Wales had a larger population of MESC-born residents than Queensland (498,481 persons).

**Figure 4 Persons born overseas, 2016**



(a) Main English-speaking countries (MESC) include all people born in New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, United States of America and South Africa.

(b) Born overseas includes 'Inadequately described', and 'At sea'. Excludes 'Not stated'.

In 2016, nearly two in five New Zealanders living in Australia lived in Queensland.

Queensland has the largest New Zealand-born population in Australia. At the time of the 2016 Census, there were 201,202 people born in New Zealand living in Queensland. This represents 19.8% of Queensland's overseas-born population and 38.8% of all New Zealanders living in Australia.

Just over one in ten Queenslanders (11.9% or 557,690 people) spoke a language other than English at home in 2016 (Table 4), well below the national average (20.8%). New South Wales (1,882,015 persons) and Victoria (1,548,835 persons) had the largest numbers of residents speaking a language other than English at home, representing more than a quarter of their populations (25.2% and 26.0% respectively).

**Table 4 Language spoken at home, 2016**

State / territory	Speaks a language other than English <sup>(a)</sup>	
	persons	% of total persons
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>557,690</b>	<b>11.9</b>
New South Wales	1,882,015	25.2
Victoria	1,538,835	26.0
South Australia	274,115	16.3
Western Australia	435,339	17.6
Tasmania	27,294	5.4
Northern Territory	67,559	29.5
Australian Capital Territory	86,669	21.8
<b>Australia</b>	<b>4,871,647</b>	<b>20.8</b>

(a) Includes 'Inadequately described' and 'Non-verbal, so described'. Excludes 'Not stated'.

## Household and family composition

At the time of the 2016 Census there were 1,656,831 households in Queensland (Table 5). Couple families with children were the most common household type (31.0%), followed by couple families with no children (28.0%), and lone person households (23.5%). More than seven in ten households in Queensland were family households (71.8%), slightly higher than the national average (71.3%). Except for Tasmania, couple family with children households were the most common household type across Australia.

Queensland's household and family composition differed somewhat from Australia and the other states and territories. In 2016, Queensland had the second-largest proportion of couple family with no children households after Tasmania (28.0% and 28.8% respectively), as well as the greatest share of one parent family households (11.6%, equal to Tasmania). In contrast, it had comparatively fewer couple family with children households, with the third-smallest proportion after Tasmania and South Australia (31.0%, 25.9% and 28.8% respectively). Queensland also had a relatively small proportion of lone person households (23.5%) and a larger share of group households (4.7%) compared with the national average (lone person households 24.4%, group households 4.3%).

**Table 5 Household and family composition<sup>(a)</sup>, 2016**

State / territory	Family households					Lone person households	Group households	Total households <sup>(b)</sup>
	Couple family with no children	Couple family with children	One parent family	Other family	Total family households			
	— % of total households —							number
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>1,656,831</b>
New South Wales	25.8	33.6	11.4	1.2	72.0	23.8	4.2	2,604,314
Victoria	25.5	33.3	10.7	1.3	70.8	24.7	4.5	2,112,706
South Australia	27.3	28.8	11.1	1.1	68.4	28.0	3.6	638,792
Western Australia	27.7	33.4	10.4	1.3	72.7	23.6	3.8	866,777
Tasmania	28.8	25.9	11.6	0.9	67.1	29.6	3.3	197,575
Northern Territory	25.8	34.3	11.2	1.6	72.9	21.9	5.3	65,061
Australian Capital Territory	26.2	33.5	9.6	1.0	70.3	24.8	4.9	142,664
<b>Australia</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>8,286,077</b>

(a) Data are based on place of enumeration. Count of occupied private dwellings.

(b) Excludes 'Visitors only' and 'Other non-classifiable' households.

## Dwelling structure

Separate houses are the most common dwelling type in Queensland, accounting for just over three-quarters (76.6%) of dwellings in 2016 — above the Australian average of 72.9% (Table 6).

Conversely, Queensland had relatively low levels of higher density housing stock. Flats or apartments comprised 11.3% of Queensland dwellings, while semi-detached dwellings made up 10.6% of the total. These proportions were below the national average for each category (13.1% and 12.7% respectively).

New South Wales had the largest proportion of flats and apartments (19.9%), while Australian Capital Territory had the largest proportion of semi-detached houses (17.7%).

**Table 6 Dwelling structure<sup>(a)</sup>, 2016**

State / territory	Separate house	Semi-detached house <sup>(b)</sup>	Flat or apartment	Total dwellings <sup>(c)</sup>
	— % of total dwellings —			number
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>76.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>1,656,831</b>
New South Wales	66.4	12.2	19.9	2,604,314
Victoria	73.2	14.2	11.6	2,112,706
South Australia	77.8	14.8	6.6	638,792
Western Australia	79.1	14.1	5.7	866,777
Tasmania	87.6	5.8	5.7	197,575
Northern Territory	66.2	12.1	17.5	65,061
Australian Capital Territory	67.0	17.7	15.0	142,664
<b>Australia</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>8,286,077</b>

(a) Data are based on place of enumeration. Count of occupied private dwellings.

(b) Comprises 'Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse, etc.'

(c) Includes 'Other dwelling' and 'Not stated'.

## Tenure

Queensland has a large share of rented dwellings. At the time of the 2016 Census, more dwellings in Queensland were rented (34.2%) than owned with a mortgage (33.7%) or owned outright (28.5%) (Table 7) — one of only two jurisdictions where this was the case. Compared with other states and territories, only the Northern Territory (50.3%) had a larger proportion of dwellings that were rented than Queensland.

The proportion of dwellings owned outright in Queensland (28.5%) was lower than the national average of 31.0%, as was the proportion of dwellings that were owned with a mortgage (33.7% compared with 34.5%).

Comparing rental levels among the states at the GCCSA level shows notable differences: Queensland (34.5%) and New South Wales (34.1%) had larger than average proportions of rented dwellings in their greater capital city areas, while Western Australia (34.7%) and Queensland (33.9%) had above average proportions of rented dwellings located in the rest of state region (Figure 5). Except for Western Australia, all states had higher levels of rentals in greater capital city areas than in the rest of the state.

**Table 7 Tenure type<sup>(a)</sup>, 2016**

State / territory	Owning outright	Owning with a mortgage <sup>(b)</sup>	Rented	Total dwellings <sup>(c)</sup>
	— % of total dwellings —			number
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>1,656,831</b>
New South Wales	32.2	32.3	31.8	2,604,314
Victoria	32.3	35.3	28.7	2,112,706
South Australia	32.2	35.3	28.5	638,792
Western Australia	28.5	39.7	28.3	866,777
Tasmania	35.7	33.5	27.3	197,575
Northern Territory	15.3	29.6	50.3	65,061
Australian Capital Territory	27.0	38.4	31.8	142,664
<b>Australia</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>8,286,077</b>

(a) Data are based on place of enumeration. Count of occupied private dwellings.

(b) Includes dwellings being purchased under a shared equity scheme.

(c) Includes 'Other tenure type' and 'Tenure type not stated'.

**Figure 5 Tenure type – rented by GCCSA<sup>(a)</sup>, 2016**



(a) Territories are excluded from analysis.

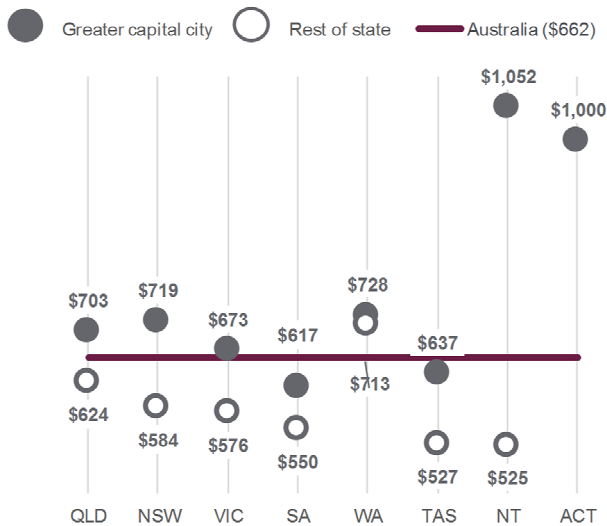
## Income

Differences in median personal and household income data are more apparent at the GCCSA level than at the overall state and territory level. At the time of the 2016 Census, the median personal income for people living in Greater Brisbane was \$703 per week, higher than the Australian average of \$662 (Figure 6).

Queensland's median personal income for the rest of the state (\$624) was higher than that for all states and territories except Western Australia (\$713). Western Australia was the only jurisdiction to record a rest of state median personal income above the national average. All states and territories recorded higher median personal incomes in their greater capital cities than in their rest of state regions.

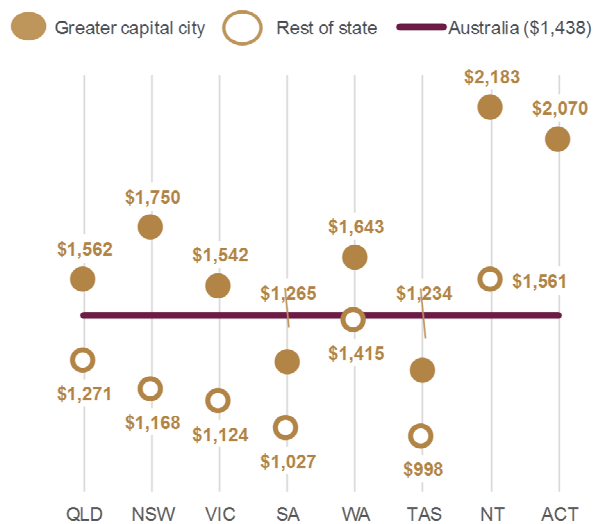
The median household income for Greater Brisbane in 2016 was \$1,562 per week, above the average for Australia (\$1,438) (Figure 7). Queensland had the third highest median household income in the rest of state region (\$1,271) after the Northern Territory (\$1,561) and Western Australia (\$1,415).

**Figure 6 Median total personal income<sup>(a)</sup> (\$/weekly) by GCCSA, 2016**



(a) Applicable to persons aged 15 years and over.

**Figure 7 Median total household income<sup>(a)</sup> (\$/weekly) by GCCSA, 2016**



(a) Applicable to occupied private dwellings. Excludes households where at least one member aged 15 years and over did not state an income and households where at least one member aged 15 years and over was temporarily absent on Census Night.

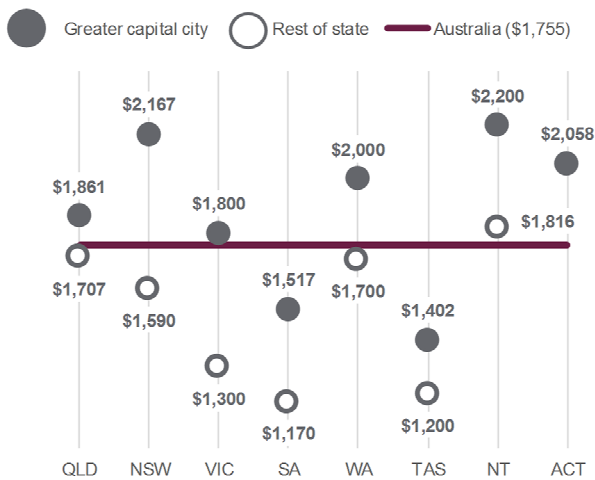
## Mortgage and rent

As with incomes, median mortgage repayments and rents vary considerably between greater capital city and regional areas. In 2016, the median monthly mortgage repayment for Greater Brisbane was \$1,861 per month, above the national average of \$1,755 per month (Figure 8). Across Australia, mortgage repayments were higher in greater capital city areas than in rest of state regions. Except for the Northern Territory (\$1,816), all rest of state median mortgages were below the national average. Queensland's median mortgage repayment for the rest of state region (\$1,707) was the highest after the Northern Territory.

In 2016, the median weekly rent for Greater Brisbane was \$355 per week, above the Australian average of \$335 (Figure 9). New South Wales had the highest median weekly rent of all greater capital cities (\$440), while those for the greater capitals of Western Australia (\$360) and Victoria (\$350) were close to that for Queensland.

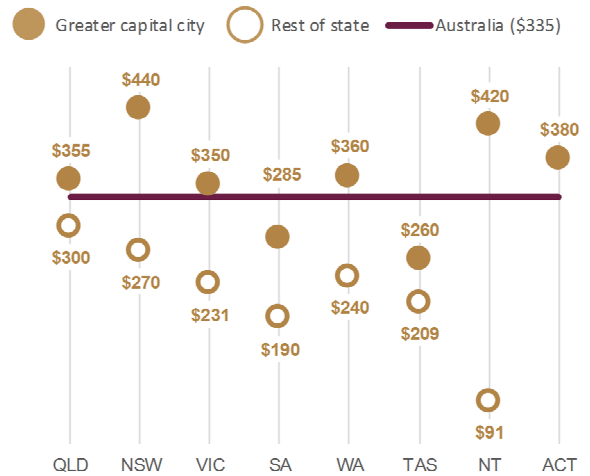
Across Australia, median weekly rents for rest of state regions were below the national average. Queensland had the highest median weekly rent of all rest of state regions (\$300).

**Figure 8 Median mortgage repayment<sup>(a)</sup> (\$/monthly) by GCCSA, 2016**



(a) Applicable to occupied private dwellings being purchased.

**Figure 9 Median rent<sup>(a)</sup> (\$/weekly) by GCCSA, 2016**



(a) Applicable to occupied private dwellings being rented.

**Notes**

All data in this report are sourced from the [ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016](#). All data are based on place of usual residence unless otherwise stated. Count of occupied private dwellings excludes 'Visitors only' and 'Other non-classifiable' households.

Greater capital city statistical areas (GCCSA) are geographical areas that are designed to represent the functional extent of each of the eight state and territory capital cities. They are built up from whole statistical areas level 4 (SA4). Within each state and territory, the area not defined as being part of the greater capital city is represented by a 'rest of state' region. This excludes the Australian Capital Territory, where there is only one GCCSA region for the entire territory.

The Greater Brisbane GCCSA comprises the SA4s of Brisbane – East, Brisbane – North, Brisbane – South, Brisbane – West, Brisbane Inner City, Ipswich, Logan – Beaudesert, Moreton Bay – North and Moreton Bay – South.

The Rest of Queensland GCCSA comprises the SA4s of Cairns, Darling Downs – Maranoa, Central Queensland, Gold Coast, Mackay – Isaac – Whitsunday, Queensland – Outback, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville and Wide Bay. See the [GCCSA fact sheet](#) for further information on geographies for other states and territories.

Total populations for each state and territory include 'Migratory – Offshore – Shipping' and 'No usual address' SA4s that are not detailed specifically in this report. As such, the sum of greater capital city and rest of state regions is not equivalent to the state / territory total.

The total population for Australia includes 'Other Territories' that are not detailed specifically in this report. As such, the sum of states and territories listed is not equivalent to the national total.