



# KEY DATA – NSW ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

September 2020

This four-page summary presents key data on Aboriginal peoples in NSW, including population characteristics, education, employment, housing and crime. Where possible it compares data with non-Aboriginal people.

**Population:** in 2016, the estimated resident population of Aboriginal people in NSW was 265,685, representing 3.4% of the total NSW population and 33.3% of the Aboriginal population of Australia.

**Population growth:** by 2026, the NSW Aboriginal population is expected to grow to 282,962 people.

**Age:** in 2016, the median age of the NSW Aboriginal population was 22 years, compared with 38 years for the non-Aboriginal population. 53% of the Aboriginal population was aged 24 years and below, compared with 31% of the non-Aboriginal population.

**Location:** in 2016, 46.3% of the NSW Aboriginal population lived in major cities, 34.5% in inner regional areas, 15.5% in outer regional areas, 2.8% in remote, and 0.9% in very remote areas.

**Population mobility:** between 2011 and 2016, an estimated 9,645 Aboriginal people left NSW and an estimated 7,959 Aboriginal people moved into NSW.

**Identification change:** in 2016, 55,354 of the NSW Aboriginal population had not identified as Aboriginal in 2011, and 16,052 of those who had identified as Aboriginal in 2011 did not in 2016, resulting in a net inflow of 19.6%.

# KEY DATA – NSW ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

**Life expectancy:** life expectancy at birth in 2015-17 for Aboriginal people in NSW is 70.9 years for males and 75.9 years for females, compared with 80.2 years for non-Aboriginal males and 83.5 years for non-Aboriginal females.

**Infant mortality:** between 2016 and 2018, the rate of infant mortality was 4.4 per 1,000 for Aboriginal infants, compared with 2.9 per 1,000 for non-Aboriginal infants.

**Health:** in 2018-19, more than four in 10 Aboriginal people (47%) in NSW assessed their own health as very good or excellent.

**Disability:** in 2016, the disability rate for Aboriginal people was 7.6% compared with 5.4% for the NSW population overall.

**Transition to primary school:** in 2015, 34.1% of Aboriginal children were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain on school entry, compared with 19.4% of non-Aboriginal children.

**Reading and numeracy:** between 2008 and 2018, there was a significant increase in the proportion of Aboriginal students who achieved the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in reading in Years 3 and 5 and in numeracy in Years 5 and 9. For non-Aboriginal students the significant increases across this time period were in the proportion of students in Years 3 and 5 scoring above the NMS in reading and students in Year 5 for numeracy. Between 2017 and 2018 there was no statistically significant change in the proportion of non-Aboriginal or Aboriginal students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in either reading or numeracy. In 2018, there was a lower proportion of Aboriginal students achieving the NMS than non-Aboriginal students in reading and numeracy in all years assessed (Years 3, 5, 7 and 9).

**Year 12 attainment:** in 2016, 67.1% of Aboriginal people in NSW aged 20-24 years had completed Year 12 or higher, compared with 89.3% of the non-Aboriginal population.

**Post-school education:** in 2018, 2,782 Aboriginal people commenced university in NSW, compared with 972 Aboriginal students in 2004. In 2016 45% of Aboriginal people and 59% of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years or over had a post school qualification.

**Child protection:** At 30 June 2019, there were 6,754 Aboriginal children and young people in out of home care in NSW. In 2018-19, 196.8 in every 1,000 Aboriginal children and young people were the subject of a Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) report. This is more than 4 times the rate for non-Aboriginal children and young people, which was 44.7.

**Language:** in 2016, less than 1% of Aboriginal people in NSW spoke an Aboriginal language at home, compared with 15% for the rest of Australia.

**Community safety:** in 2019, Aboriginal people in NSW were 2.6 times more likely to be a victim of assault compared with non-Aboriginal people.

**Employment:** in 2016, 46% of Aboriginal adults in NSW (15 years and over) were employed, compared with 59% of non-Aboriginal people.

**Unemployment:** in 2016, the unemployment rate in NSW for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people was 15% and 6% of the total labour force respectively. Unemployment amongst Aboriginal people was highest for 18-24 year olds, at 24%.

**Self-employment:** in 2011, 8% of employed Aboriginal people in NSW were owner/managers or contributing family workers compared with 17% of the non-Aboriginal workforce. Between 2006 and 2011, there was a 33% increase in the number of Aboriginal employers.

**Housing and home ownership:** in 2016, 42% of Aboriginal households in NSW owned or were purchasing their home, compared with 65% of non-Aboriginal households.

**Household income (equivalised<sup>1</sup>):** in 2014-15, the median weekly household income for Aboriginal households in NSW was \$550, compared with \$850 for non-Aboriginal households.

**Incarceration:** in 2019, Aboriginal people in NSW were 9.3 times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be imprisoned; and 74% had experienced prior imprisonment, compared with 47% of non-Aboriginal people. In the June quarter of 2019, Aboriginal 10-17 year olds were detained at 13 times the rate of non-Aboriginal young people (19.7 per 10,000 compared with 1.5).

1. Median equivalised household income is not a measure of the total income of a household. It is a measure of the income a lone person in a household would need to have the same standard of living as the household in question (see Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2016, p 4.81)

## Population

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018). *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016*. Catalogue number 3238.0.55.001. Table 1 Estimated resident Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, States and territories – 5 year age groups (to 85 and over) – 30 June 2016; Table 3 Estimated resident population, States and territories – 5 year age groups (to 85 and over) – 30 June 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3238.0.55.001June%202016?>

## Population growth

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014). *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001-2006*. Canberra, ABS, catalogue no 3238.0 [estimated and projected, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, series B, 18 years and over, Australia, states and territories] Table 1.3 estimated and projected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, series B, single year of age, New South Wales, Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3238.02001%20to%202026?>

## Age

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *2016 Census of population and housing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile* (catalogue number 2002.0)

Table I 01a Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous status by sex (1 of 2); Table I 04 Selected Medians and Averages. Retrieved from [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocumentLocation](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocumentLocation)

## Location

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018). *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016*. Catalogue number 3238.0.55.00, 1.

Table 1 Estimated resident Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, States and territories, Remoteness Areas – 5-year age groups (to 75 and over) – 30 June 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3238.0.55.001June%202016?OpenDocument>

## Population mobility

Biddle, N. (2019). Customised calculations based on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing and ABS estimates of the 2016 Census Undercount (unpublished).

## Identification change

Biddle, N., Allen, L., & Markham, F. (2018). *2006-16 Aboriginal population change in NSW* p.14: para. 2 (calculation) Aboriginal Affairs NSW. Retrieved from <https://csrcm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/2006-16-aboriginal-population-change-new-south-wales>

## Life expectancy

Productivity Commission (2020). *Report on Government Services 2020 – Part E Health*. Canberra: Productivity Commission. Table EA.30, Estimated life expectancies at birth, by Indigenous status and sex (years). Retrieved from <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2020/health>

## Infant mortality

Productivity Commission (2020). *Report on Government Services 2020 – Part E Health*. Canberra: Productivity Commission. Table EA.34, Infant mortality rate by Indigenous status, three year average (per 1000 live births). Retrieved from <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2020/health>

## Health

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020) *National Health Survey: First Results, 2018-19*. Catalogue number 4715.0. Table 3.3 Selected health characteristics, by State/Territory, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, 2018-19, Proportion of persons. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4715.02018-19?OpenDocument>

## Disability

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016). *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*. Unpublished data from Tablebuilder.

## Transition to Primary School

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018). *Children's headline indicators (CHI) 2018* [Indicator 10: Transition to primary school]. Children Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the Australian Early Development Census (per cent) - 2015. Canberra. Retrieved from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/chi/#data>

## Reading and Numeracy

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (2019). *NAPLAN results – Time series* [Achievement of Students in Numeracy, by Indigenous Status, NSW, 2008-2018; Achievement of Students in Reading, by Indigenous Status, NSW, 2008-2018]. Retrieved from <http://reports.acara.edu.au/Home/TimeSeries>

## Year 12 attainment

ACARA *National Report on Schooling in Australia* Data Portal. Participation and attainment in education and work. Retrieved from <https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia-data-portal/participation-and-attainment-in-education-and-work#View3>

## Post school education

Department of Education and Training (DET) (2019). *2018 Indigenous students, Higher Education statistics*. Table 6.2 Commencing and all Indigenous students by State, Higher Education Institution and Gender, Full Year 2018. Australian Government: Canberra. Retrieved from <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/2018-section-6-indigenous-students>

Department of Education and Training (DET) (2004). *2004 Indigenous students, Higher Education statistics*. Table 2: Commencing and All Indigenous Students by State, Institution and Gender, 2004. Australian Government: Canberra. Retrieved from <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/34399>

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016). *Census of Population and Housing 2016*. Unpublished data from Tablebuilder.

## Child protection

Productivity Commission (2020). *Report on Government Services 2020 – Part F Community Services*. Canberra: Productivity Commission. Table 16A.1 Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status. Table 16A.6 Children in care by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, at 30 June. Retrieved from <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2020/community-services/child-protection>

## Language

Australian Bureau of statistics (2016). *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples QuickStats.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016). *Census of population and housing, 2016*. Unpublished data from Tablebuilder.

## Community safety

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020). *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia 2018*. Catalogue number 4510.0. Table 17 Victims of Assault, Selected characteristics by Indigenous status, Selected states and territories, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4510.02019?OpenDocument>

## Employment

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile (catalogue number 2002.0) NSW [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument)

## Unemployment

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile (catalogue number 2002.0) NSW. I14 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Retrieved from [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument)

## Self-employment

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006, 2011). *Census of Population and Housing, 2006, 2011*. Unpublished data from Tablebuilder.

## Housing and home ownership

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile (catalogue number 2002.0) NSW. Tables I 10(A) AND I 10 (B). Retrieved from [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/1?opendocument)

## Household income

Productivity Commission. (2016). *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key indicators 2016*. Canberra, Productivity Commission, Chapter 4: COAG Targets and Headline Indicators, attachment tables, Table 4A. 10.1. Retrieved from <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/2016>

## Incarceration

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019). *Prisoners in Australia, 2019*. Canberra, ABS. catalogue no 4517.0. [Prisoner characteristics, states and territories (tables 14 to 35)] Table 18: Age standardised imprisonment rate – Indigenous status by state/territory, 2009-19; Table 29: Prisoners, Indigenous status, sex and prior imprisonment by state/territory. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4517.0>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2020). *Youth detention population in Australia 2019*, Table S10: Young people aged 10-17 in detention on an average night by Indigenous status, states and territories, June quarter 2019 (rate). Canberra: AIHW. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2019/data>