

# 2016 Census shows growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

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The first results of the 2016 Census of Population and Housing, released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today, show that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represented 2.8 per cent of the population counted in the 2016 Census – up from 2.5 per cent in 2011, and 2.3 per cent in 2006.

Of the 649,200 people who reported being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in 2016, 91 per cent were of Aboriginal origin, 5 per cent were of Torres Strait Islander origin, and 4.1 per cent reported being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

While the Northern Territory has Australia's highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (25.5 per cent of the NT population), New South Wales is home to the highest number, with more than 216,000 people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

The Census also revealed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is younger than Australia's overall population, with a median age 23 years in 2016. This is substantially younger than the median age for non-Indigenous Australians, who had a median age of 38 years in 2016.

There have been increases in income levels within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population since the 2011 Census, with median weekly household income increasing from \$991 to \$1,203.

One in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reported speaking an Australian Indigenous language at home in the 2016 Census. A total of 150 Australian Indigenous languages were spoken in homes in 2016, reflecting the linguistic diversity of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

Australian Statistician David W. Kalisch said Census data is high quality, thanks to the participation of Australians.

"The Independent Assurance Panel I established to provide extra assurance and transparency of Census data quality concluded that the 2016 Census data can be used with confidence," Mr Kalisch said.

"The 2016 Census had a response rate of 95.1 per cent and a net undercount of 1.0 per cent. This is a quality result, comparable to both previous Australian Censuses and Censuses in other countries, such as New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

“Furthermore, 63 per cent of people completed the Census online, embracing the digital-first approach and contributing to faster data processing and data quality improvements.

“2016 Census data provides a detailed, accurate and fascinating picture of Australia, which will be used to inform critical policy, planning and service delivery decisions for our communities over the coming years,” he said.

Census data is available free online. Use one of our easy tools such as QuickStats and Community Profiles to access the latest data for your area or topic of interest.

For more information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, please see a data summary [here](#).

You can also attend one of our free Seminars. To find out more about Census Data Seminar series, or to register, go to the [ABS website](#).

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

	2016	2011
<b>Total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population</b>	649,200	548,400
<b>% of total Australian Population</b>	2.8%	2.5%
<b>Median age</b>	23	21
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	322,171 (49.6%)	270,333 (49.3%)
Female	326,996 (50.4%)	278,039 (50.7%)
<b>State of residence</b>		
NSW	216,176	172,625
QLD	186,482	155,826
WA	75,978	69,664
NT	58,248	56,779
VIC	47,788	37,992
SA	34,184	30,432
TAS	23,572	19,625
ACT	6,508	5,184
<b>Languages spoken at home (other than English) %</b>		
1. Arnhem Land and Daly River Region Languages	16.1%	18.2%
2. Torres Strait Island Languages	11.7%	11.0%
3. Western Desert Languages	11.1%	14.0%
4. Yolngu Matha	10.6%	11.2%
<b>Median household income (weekly)</b>	\$1,203	\$991

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