

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN QUEENSLAND

December 2003

This bulletin contains information on children and young people aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland. The data in this bulletin mainly come from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and are based on place of usual residence unless otherwise stated. Where other sources of data have been used, these have been referenced. The topics covered in this bulletin include general demography, education, labour force and use of computers and the internet.

Key points

- There were about 1,260,000 children and young people aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland in 2001, representing 34.4% of the State's total population. Highest proportions were in Northern and North West statistical divisions and the lowest in Moreton and Wide Bay-Burnett. The State's Indigenous population had a much younger profile with 58.3% in this age group.
- The number of people aged 0 to 24 year is increasing, but their proportion of the total population is declining. In 1971 there were about 850,000 persons in Queensland in this age group, making up 46.6% of the total population. By 2051, a projected 1.6 million people in Queensland will be aged 0 to 24 years, but they will comprise only 25% of the population.
- Over 100,000 persons aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland in 2001 were born overseas, while more than 140,000 spoke a language other than English at home, indicating the cultural diversity of the population.
- Increasing numbers of young persons are attending infants/primary and secondary educational institutions in Queensland. These increases are largely based on population growth. Also, retention rates in Queensland secondary schools are increasing, and are higher than for Australia as a whole.
- Large increases have been recorded in the number of persons attending a technical and further education (TAFE) institution, university or other tertiary institution in Queensland in recent years.
- Persons aged 15 to 19 years are more likely to be employed part-time compared with the overall workforce. Part-time employment rates for persons aged 20 to 24 years are more comparable with the rest of the workforce.
- The retail trade industry and accommodation, cafes and restaurants industry had the highest proportions of their workforce aged 15 to 24 years.
- The occupation with the highest proportion of persons aged 15 to 24 years was elementary clerical, sales and service workers. The lowest proportion was in the managers and administrators occupation category.
- Youth unemployment rates in Queensland have been trending downwards in recent years, especially among the 15 to 19 years age group.

- Proportionally, more persons aged 10 to 14 years used a computer at home compared with any other age group. Use of the internet peaked in the age groups between 10 and 24 years.

Demography

The Census of Population and Housing 2001 counted 3,655,139 persons in Queensland. Of this total, there were 1,257,777 persons aged 0 to 24 years, representing 34.4% of the population. Males slightly outnumbered females in the 0 to 24 years age group (641,200 males compared with 616,577 females, or a ratio of 51.0 to 49.0).

A long-term trend in Queensland has been for an increasing number of children and young people but as a declining proportion of the total population. At the 1971 Census there were 851,960 persons aged 0 to 24 years counted in Queensland, representing 46.6% of the population. By 1991 the number had increased to 1,139,058 persons, but the proportion had fallen to 38.3% of the total. In 2001 there were 1,257,777 persons aged 0 to 24 years, comprising 34.4% of the total population.

These trends are projected to continue. Medium series population projections released by the Queensland Government in 2003 show that there are projected to be 1.6 million persons aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland by 2051, representing just 25% of the total population.¹

The Indigenous population has a much younger profile compared with the overall population. This is reflected in the proportion of Indigenous persons aged 0 to 24 years. In the 2001 Census, 58.3% of Queensland's Indigenous population were aged 0 to 24 years compared with 34.4% of the total population. The disparity was even greater for the 0 to 14 years age group. Of the total Indigenous population, 40.1% were counted in this age group compared with only 20.9% of the overall Queensland population.

The proportion of children and young people in Queensland varies between statistical divisions. Northern and North West statistical divisions recorded the highest proportions of persons aged 0 to 24 years in their total populations in the 2001 Census (37.2% and 37.0% respectively) while Moreton and Wide Bay-Burnett statistical divisions had the lowest proportions (31.0% and 32.1% respectively) (see Table 1).

¹ Queensland Government, *Population Projections to 2051: Queensland and Statistical Divisions*, 2003 (see www.oesr.qld.gov.au)

Table 1: Persons aged 0 to 24 years by statistical division, Queensland, 2001

Statistical Division	Persons aged 0 - 24 years	% of total population
Brisbane	581,584	35.7
Moreton	230,585	31.0
Wide Bay-Burnett	75,937	32.1
Darling Downs	74,986	36.9
South West	9,374	34.8
Fitzroy	67,071	36.8
Central West	4,625	33.9
Mackay	49,080	34.2
Northern	71,238	37.2
Far North	78,624	32.1
North West	14,460	37.0
Queensland (a)	1,257,777	34.4

(a) Includes off-shore areas and migratory.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Some 100,402 persons aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland in 2001 were born overseas. This is probably understated due to the large number of persons in this age group who had a 'not stated' birthplace. Main overseas countries of birth for this age group were New Zealand (31,157 persons), United Kingdom (12,074), South Africa (4,596), Philippines (3,521), Hong Kong (2,682), United States (2,516), Malaysia (2,121) and Fiji (2,014).

A further indication of the cultural diversity of children and young people in Queensland is the number who speak a language other than English at home. At the time of the 2001 Census, 143,960 persons aged 0 to 24 years spoke another language at home.

Education

Increasing numbers of young persons are attending infants/primary and secondary educational institutions in Queensland. These increases can be explained mainly by an increase in the number of persons of schooling age. Between the 1991 and 2001 Censuses, attendance at an infants or primary educational institution increased from 293,097 persons to 347,676 persons (up 18.6%), while attendance at a secondary educational institution increased from 192,807 persons to 225,258 persons (up 16.8%). However, over the same period, the number of persons aged 5 to 17 years of age in Queensland increased by only 14.7%.

The number of persons attending a tertiary educational institution in Queensland has increased greatly in recent years, well above what would be expected from population increase alone. According to the 1991 Census, there were 47,944 persons attending a technical or further education (TAFE) institution and 88,817 persons attending a university or other tertiary institution in Queensland. By the 2001 Census, these numbers had increased to 73,542 and 137,486 persons respectively, representing increases of 53.4% and 54.8% over this period.

More people are studying full-time. Between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of students studying full-time at TAFE increased from 23.6% to 33.5% and the proportion of students studying full-time at a university rose from 58.9% to 63.5%.

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that secondary school retention rates are higher in Queensland than in Australia as a whole, and that these rates are increasing. The proportion of Queensland students remaining at secondary school until Year 12 rose from 76.5% in 1996 to 81.3% in 2002 compared with an increase from 71.3% to 75.1% for Australia over the same period (see Table 2).

Table 2: Apparent retention rates for secondary students, Queensland and Australia, 1996 to 2002

	Years 7/8 to Year 12		Year 10 to Year 12	
	Qld	Australia	Qld	Australia
	%	%	%	%
1996	76.5	71.3	76.5	73.6
1997	77.9	71.8	77.9	74.5
1998	77.3	71.6	77.7	74.1
1999	77.5	72.3	78.3	74.4
2000	77.3	72.3	78.7	74.4
2001	79.0	73.4	79.7	75.4
2002	81.3	75.1	81.1	77.0

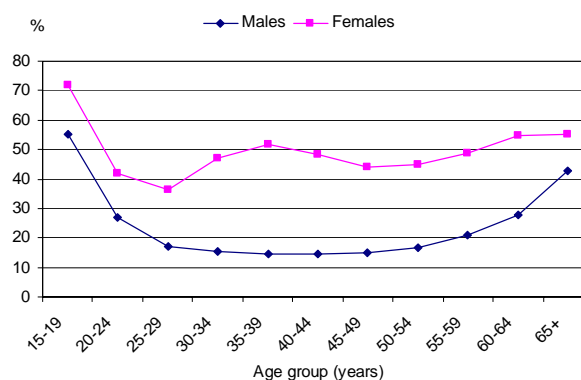
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools, Australia, Cat. no. 4221.0

Labour force

Labour force data are collected from persons aged 15 years and over in the Census of Population and Housing and in the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

In the 2001 Census there were 276,229 employed persons aged 15 to 24 years counted in Queensland, representing 17.6% of all employed persons. In this age group, there were 140,058 employed males and 136,171 employed females. Females constituted 45.3% of the total workforce, but represented 49.3% of the workforce aged 15 to 24 years.

Younger persons in the 15 to 19 years age group are more likely to be employed part-time compared with the overall workforce. Nearly three-quarters (71.9%) of employed females and more than half (55.2%) of employed males aged 15 to 19 years in Queensland were employed part-time in 2001. Part-time employment rates for persons aged 20 to 24 years were 41.8% for females and 26.8% for males, more comparable with the rest of the workforce (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment, by sex, Queensland, 2001

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

According to the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, 17.7% of employed persons in Queensland were aged 15 to 24 years. Persons in this age group were most prevalent in the retail trade industry (36.2% of total industry employment) and the accommodation, cafes and restaurants industry (33.1% of total industry employment). Only 8.5% of persons employed in mining and 8.7% of persons employed in education were aged 15 to 24 years (see Table 3).

Table 3: Employment by industry, persons aged 15 to 24 years as a percentage of total persons, by sex, Queensland, 2001

Industry	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	13.2	9.0	11.9
Mining	7.8	13.7	8.5
Manufacturing	16.3	12.0	15.3
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	8.4	12.7	9.1
Construction	14.3	9.2	13.6
Wholesale Trade	15.2	15.6	15.3
Retail Trade	34.5	37.7	36.2
Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants	32.0	33.9	33.1
Transport and Storage	6.5	13.4	8.3
Communication Services	8.1	12.7	9.8
Finance and Insurance	9.1	15.7	13.1
Property and Business Services	12.3	17.6	14.8
Government Administration and Defence	13.3	12.2	12.8
Education	8.3	8.8	8.7
Health and Community Services	7.9	11.4	10.6
Cultural and Recreational Services	20.6	24.0	22.2
Personal and Other Services	9.2	21.3	15.1
Total (a)	16.5	19.3	17.7

(a) Includes non-classifiable economic units and not stated responses.
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

In the 2001 Census, employed persons aged 15 to 24 years were greatly under-represented as managers and administrators, representing only 3.3% of total persons in this occupation category. In contrast, 42.1% of persons employed as elementary clerical, sales and service workers were aged 15 to 24 years (see Table 4).

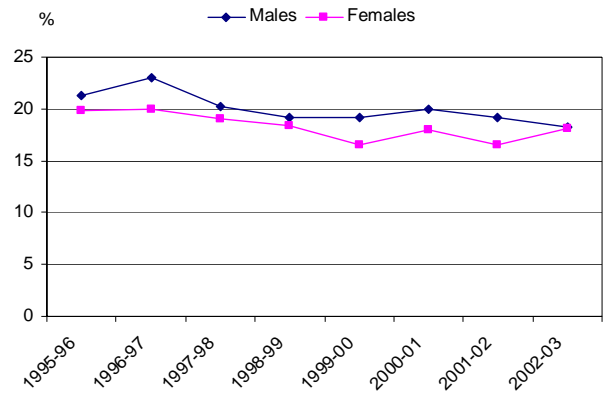
Table 4: Employment by occupation, persons aged 15 to 24 years as a percentage of total persons, by sex, Queensland, 2001

Occupation	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%
Managers and Administrators	3.0	3.9	3.3
Professionals	8.1	9.9	9.1
Associate Professionals	8.8	11.7	10.1
Tradespersons and Related Workers	20.5	23.3	20.8
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	11.2	11.3	11.3
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	17.5	21.7	20.6
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	14.2	16.2	14.4
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	40.3	43.0	42.1
Labourers and Related Workers	29.4	17.2	25.0
Total (a)	16.5	19.3	17.7

(a) Includes inadequately described and not stated responses.
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Youth unemployment rates in Queensland have been trending downwards in recent years, especially for the 15 to 19 years age group. Female unemployment rates have been lower than those recorded for males. The male unemployment rate fell from 21.3% in 1995-96 to 18.3% in 2002-03, compared with a decline from 19.9% to 18.1% for the female rate over the same period (see Figure 2 and Table 5).

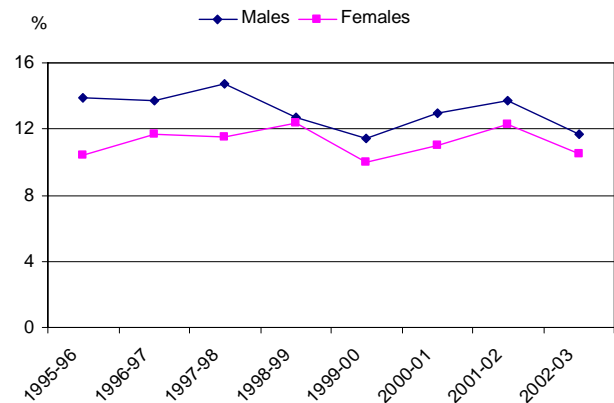
Figure 2: Unemployment rate (a), 15 to 19 years age group, by sex, Queensland, 1995-96 to 2002-03



(a) Average annual rate.
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey

Unemployment rates for males aged 20 to 24 years have declined slightly in recent years, but rates for females have been relatively stable. The unemployment rate for males in this age group declined from 13.9% in 1995-96 to 11.7% in 2002-03. The rate for females was 10.5% in both years (see Figure 3 and Table 5).

Figure 3: Unemployment rate (a), 20 to 24 years age group, by sex, Queensland, 1995-96 to 2002-03



(a) Average annual rate.
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey

Table 5: Unemployment rate (a), persons aged 15 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years, by sex, Queensland, 1995-96 to 2002-03

Financial Year	Males		Females	
	15-19 Years	20-24 Years	15-19 Years	20-24 Years
1995-96	21.3	13.9	19.9	10.5
1996-97	23.1	13.7	20.0	11.7
1997-98	20.2	14.7	19.0	11.6
1998-99	19.2	12.7	18.4	12.4
1999-00	19.2	11.4	16.5	10.0
2000-01	19.9	12.9	18.0	11.0
2001-02	19.2	13.7	16.6	12.3
2002-03	18.3	11.7	18.1	10.5

(a) Average annual rate.
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey

Computer and internet use

Questions on computer use at home and internet use were asked for the first time in the Census of Population and Housing in 2001. The results showed that 606,534 persons aged 0 to 24 years in Queensland used a personal computer at home in the week before the census. Proportionally, more persons aged 10 to 14 years used a computer at home compared with any other age group (67.1%), followed by the 15 to 19 years age group (64.3%) (see Table 6).

Table 6: Persons who used a personal computer at home in the week before census night (a), by age group, Queensland, 2001

Age group (years)	Number	% of total
0-9	158,668	31.5
10-14	173,729	67.1
15-19	165,487	64.3
20-24	108,650	45.7
25-34	235,769	46.2
35-44	277,547	51.8
45-54	214,955	43.8
55-64	101,402	29.1
65-74	34,881	14.2
75+	10,150	5.1
Total	1,481,238	41.3

(a) On an actual location basis.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

In the week before the 2001 Census, there were 473,398 persons aged 0 to 24 years usually resident in Queensland who used the internet anywhere. Internet use peaked in the age groups between 10 and 24 years. About three-fifths (60.9%) of persons aged 15 to 19 years used the internet compared with 53.1% of persons aged 10 to 14 years and 52.1% of those aged 20 to 24 years (see Table 7).

Table 7: Persons who used the internet in the week before census night, by age group, Queensland, 2001

Age group (years)	Number	% of total
0-9	56,325	11.2
10-14	137,247	53.1
15-19	156,562	60.9
20-24	123,264	52.1
25-34	247,714	48.9
35-44	245,882	46.2
45-54	193,092	39.9
55-64	82,312	24.7
65-74	22,307	9.9
75+	5,692	3.0
Total	1,270,397	36.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Queensland Treasury

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