

HEALTH GAINS PLANNING – FACT SHEET

NORTHERN TERRITORY DEMOGRAPHY, 2015

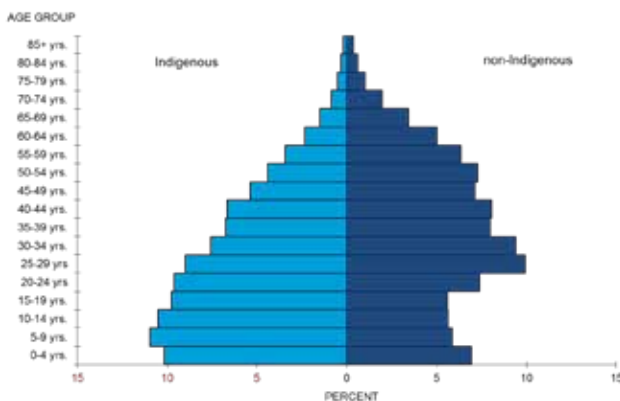
NT population

The estimated resident population of the Northern Territory on 31 March 2015 was 243 826 persons. This was an increase of 501 persons from 31 March 2014. Over the previous five years the population increased by 13 602 (5.9%); an annual population growth rate of 1.18%. The Northern Territory has a relatively young population, with a median age of 31.8 years, compared with the national median age of 37.3 years. Males outnumber females, with 112.4 males for every 100 females.¹

Indigenous population

There was estimated to be 68 850 Indigenous people residing in the NT at the time of the 2011 Census, which was 29.8% of the total Northern Territory population and 10.3% of the total Australian Indigenous population. The NT Indigenous population was younger than the NT non-Indigenous population (Figure 1). In the Indigenous population, the highest proportion, by age group, was the age group aged 5-9 years. By contrast, the age group with highest proportion of the non-Indigenous population was aged 25-29 years (Figure 1). The median age for the Indigenous population was 23.8 years compared with a median age of 34.8 years in the non-Indigenous population.²

Figure 1: Population distribution by age group and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2013.



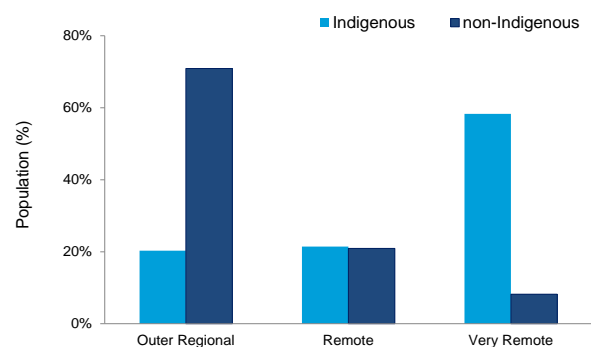
Data sources: (1). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014. Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2013. ABS. Cat.No.3101.0; (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014. Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2016. Projected population, Series B, Northern Territory. ABS. Cat.No.3228.0.

Population distribution by regional centres and relative remoteness

The NT comprises a land area of 1 346 200 km², representing 17.5% of the total Australian landmass.³ It is the third largest of the states and territories after Western Australia and Queensland, yet has only 1.0% of the Australian population. In June 2014, more than three-quarters (76.6%) of the NT population lived in seven major population centres: Darwin (84 751 persons or 34.6% of the total NT population); Palmerston (33 949, 13.9%); Alice Springs (28 667, 11.7%); Litchfield Shire (21 686, 8.8%); Katherine (11 187, 4.6%); Nhulunbuy (3 906, 1.6%) and Tennant Creek (3 634, 1.5%). The balance (57 299 or 23.4%) lived in remote and very remote areas such as discrete Aboriginal communities, outstations, mine sites and cattle stations.⁴

The NT population lives in three of the five national remoteness categories, with no areas ranked as a Major Metropolitan or an Inner Regional area. Within the Outer Regional remoteness areas, (Darwin City, Palmerston and Litchfield Shire) Indigenous people represent 10.8% of the total population, compared to 30.3% in Remote and 75.1% in Very Remote areas of NT (Figure 2).^{2,5} Overall, in 2011, 58.3% of the NT Indigenous population lived in a Very Remote area compared with 8.2% of the NT non-Indigenous population.

Figure 2: Population distribution by Indigenous status and Remoteness Area, Northern Territory, 2011.

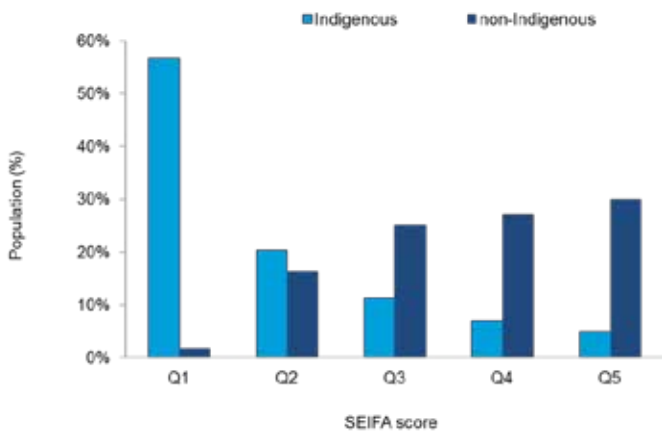


Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013. Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2011. ABS.Cat.No.3238.0.55.00.

Population distribution by Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA)

Socio-economic differences in the population can be reported using Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) scores.⁶ The marked difference in distributions, by quintile, for NT Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations is presented in Figure 3. In 2011, 56.7% of the NT Indigenous population lived in an area of relatively high disadvantage (quintile 1) compared with just 1.7% of the NT non-Indigenous population. By contrast, 4.9% of the NT Indigenous population lived in an area of relatively low disadvantage (quintile 5) compared with 29.9% of NT non-Indigenous people.

Figure 3: Population distribution by Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2011.

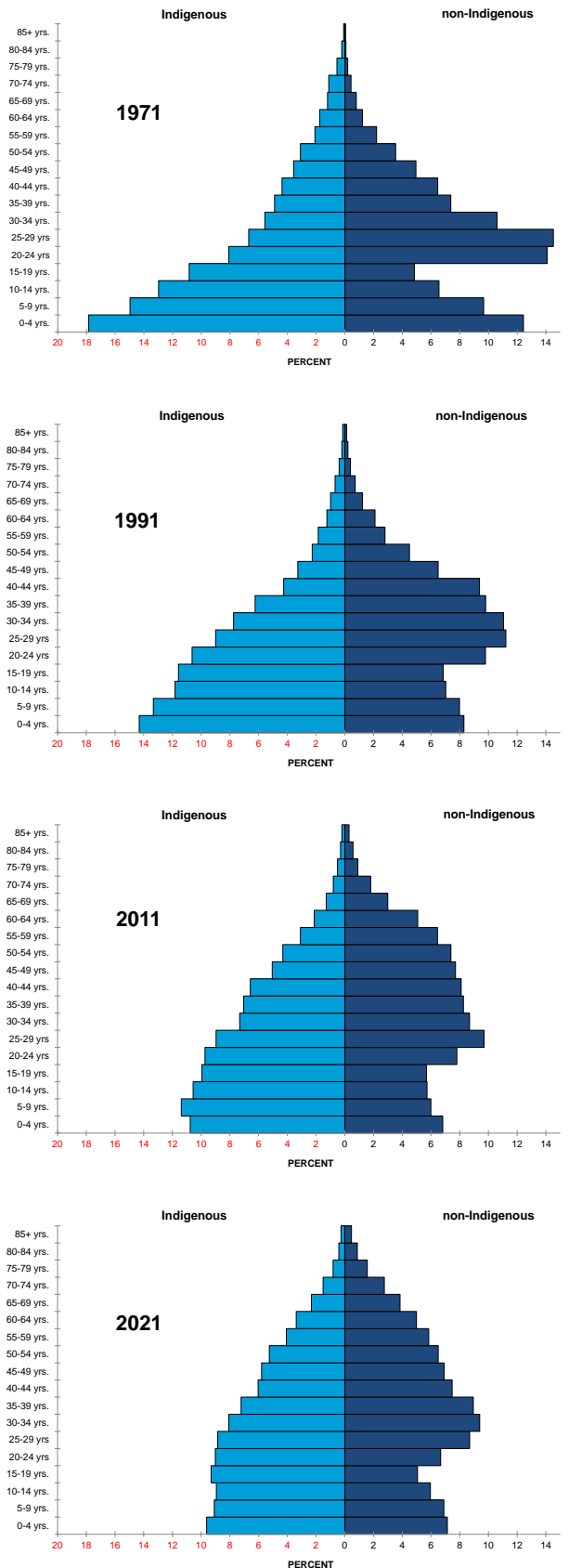


Note: The graph presents population distributions, by quintile, for the Index of Relative Disadvantage (IRSD) at NT Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1) level. The SA1 SEIFA index score was first ordered from lowest to highest, with the lowest 20% of areas given a quintile number of 1 through to the highest 20% being given a quintile number of 5. A lower IRSD score indicates that an area is relatively disadvantaged compared to an area with a higher score. The graph uses the 2011 Census Usual Resident Population (URP) at SA1 level.

Population structure and ageing

The NT Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations each have distinct age distributions and growth characteristics. Figure 4 illustrates past (1971 and 1991), present (2011) and projected (2021) age distributions for both NT Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. These two sets of age distribution are remarkably different, but both demonstrate ageing of the respective population.

Figure 4: Age distribution of the NT Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, 1971, 1991, 2011 and 2021.



Data sources: (1). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014. Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026. NT projected population - Series B. ABS. Cat.No.3238.0; (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014. Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2014. ABS. Cat No. 3105.0.65.001. (3). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013. Population Projections, Australia, 2012 (base) to 2101. ABS. Cat. No.3222.0.

Historically, the Indigenous population has consistently been much younger than the non-Indigenous population. In the 1971 Census, information was collected for the first time on a national scale, so that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could be included in official population estimates.⁷ In 1971, the NT population was 85 735, with 29 297 (34.2%) Indigenous people. Twenty years later (1991), the population had doubled, to reach 165 493. In the same period, the Indigenous population grew by 58% (46 431), and the proportion dropped to 28.1% of the total NT population. In 2011, the Indigenous population remained much younger with nearly one-third (32.7%) aged less than 15 years compared with 18.5% of the non-Indigenous population. On the other hand, the proportion of aged Indigenous Territorians (65 years and above) is much less (3.1%) than the non-Indigenous (6.6%) population. Similarly, the dependency ratio within the Indigenous population is much higher (55.8%) than the non-Indigenous population (33.6%) (Table 1). The **dependency ratio** is the number of children (0-14 years) and aged persons (65 years and over) per 100 persons aged 15-64 years.^{8,9}

Table 1: Population distribution (persons and percent) by age-group and Indigenous status, 1971, 1991, 2001, 2011 and 2026.

	0-14 years	15-64 years	65+ years	Total
Indigenous				
1971	13 418 (45.8)	14 941 (51.0)	938 (3.2)	29 297 (100)
1991	18 325 (39.5)	26 978 (58.1)	1 128 (2.4)	46 431 (100)
2001	21 769 (36.5)	36 185 (60.6)	1 748 (2.9)	59 702 (100)
2011	22 520 (32.7)	44 185 (64.2)	2 145 (3.1)	68 850 (100)
2021	22 207 (27.7)	53 820 (67.0)	4 288 (5.3)	80 315 (100)
2026	22 765 (26.5)	57 263 (66.5)	6 032 (7.0)	86 060 (100)
Non-Indigenous				
1971	16 173 (28.6)	39 400 (69.8)	865 (1.5)	56 438 (100)
1991	27 754 (23.3)	88 099 (74.0)	3 209 (2.7)	119 062 (100)
2001	30 458 (21.4)	105 781 (74.5)	5 802 (4.1)	142 041 (100)
2011	30 114 (18.5)	121 632 (74.9)	10 696 (6.6)	162 442 (100)
2021	38 780 (20.0)	136 755 (70.5)	18 604 (9.5)	193 964 (100)
2026	42 139 (20.1)	145 617 (69.6)	21 450 (10.3)	209 206 (100)

Data Sources: (1). Australian Bureau of Statistics Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026. NT projected population - Series B. ABS. Cat.No.3238.0; (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014. Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2014. ABS. Cat No. 3105.0.65.001. (3). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013. Population Projections, Australia, 2012 (base) to 2101. ABS. Cat. No.3222.0.

The NT resident population is projected to increase to 252 934 by 2016, 274 279 by 2021 and 295 266 by 2026; an average annual growth rate of 1.6% per year. The Indigenous population is projected to increase to 74 543 in 2016, 80 315 in 2021 and 86 060 in 2026, with an average annual growth rate of

1.5%. This rate is lower than the total Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population growth rate of 2.2% for the same period. Nationally, the NT Indigenous population is projected to decline as a proportion of the total Indigenous population, from 10.3% in 2011 to 9.3% in 2026.^{10,11}

NT health regions

Top End Health Service

The Top End Health Service (TEHS) region covers 35.3% (475 338 km²) of the total Northern Territory geographic area.³ The TEHS region includes the Greater Darwin (Darwin city, Palmerston and Litchfield), Daly - Tiwi - West Arnhem, East Arnhem and Katherine local geographic areas. The TEHS area shares borders with Queensland and Western Australia (Map 1).

Map 1: Top End Health Service region



Note: The TEHS area is based on ABS 2011 Census geography and remoteness categories. Data sources: (1). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Volume 1-Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011. ABS. Cat.No.1270.0.55.011; (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013. ASGS: Volume 5: Remoteness Structure, July 2011. ABS. Cat.No.1270.0.55.005.

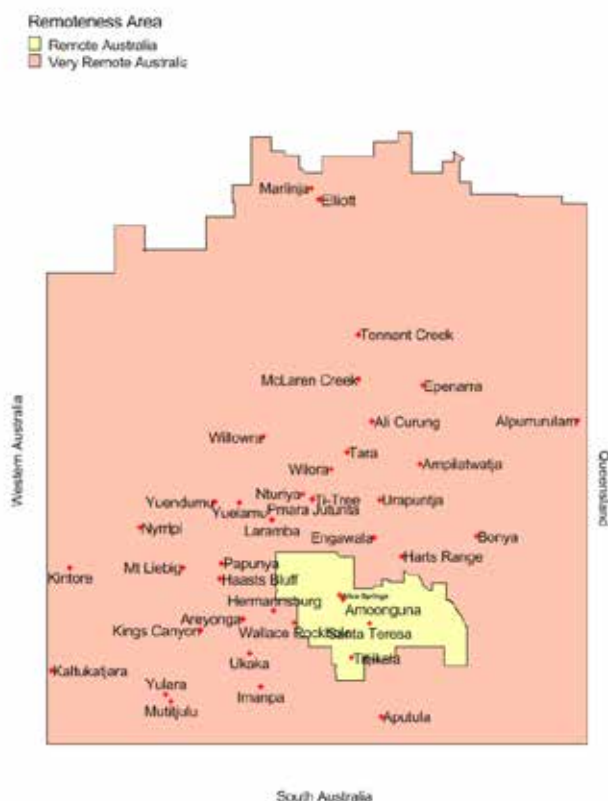
On 30 June 2014, the TEHS region had an estimated resident population of 196 573 people, which was 80.2% of the total NT population.^{4,9} Seventy-one per cent of the population lived in the Greater Darwin area (140 386), with the balance in regional towns (Katherine - 11 187 and Nhulunbuy - 3 906), remote areas and discrete remote communities (Map 1).⁴ The Indigenous population was 26% (50 577) of the total TEHS region population.

Central Australia Health Service

The Central Australia Health Service (CAHS) region covers 64.7% (872 861 km²) of the total Northern

Territory geographic area.³ The CAHS region includes the townships of Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, and major communities including Elliott, Yuendumu, Yuelamu, Mutitjulu, Kaltukatjara (Docker River), Alpurrurulam (Lake Nash), Ali Curung, Ti Tree and many more discrete Aboriginal communities. The CAHS area shares borders with South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia (Map 2).

Map 2: Central Australia Health Service region.



Note: The CAHS area is based on ABS 2011 Census Geography and Remoteness categories. Data sources: (1). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Volume 1-Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011. (2). Australian Bureau of Statistics. Cat.No.1270.0.55.011; (3). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013. ASGS: Volume 5: Remoteness Structure, July 2011. ABS. Cat.No.1270.0.55.005.

On 30 June 2014, the CAHS area had an estimated resident population of 48 506 people, which was 19.8% of total Northern Territory (NT) population.^{4,9} Fifty-nine per cent of the population lived in Alice Springs town (28 667), and a further 7.5% lived in Tennant Creek (3 634). The balance of the population (16 205) was spread between discrete communities and outstations.⁴ The Indigenous population was 44.0% (21 674) of the total CAHS area population.

The age structure of the Indigenous population in both the TEHS and CAHS regions was generally younger than the non-Indigenous population. Among the Indigenous population the highest proportion was in the 5-9 years age group. By contrast, the highest proportion of the non-Indigenous population was in the 25-29 years age group.⁹

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