

2.15 Transport

The use of transport, including walking, access to motor vehicles and perceived difficulty with transport among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Data sources

Data for this measure come from the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the 2001 ABS Census of Population and Housing.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)

The 2004–05 NATSIHS collected information from 10,439 Indigenous Australians of all ages. This sample was considerably larger than the supplementary Indigenous samples in the 1995 and 2001 National Health Surveys. The survey was conducted in remote and non-remote areas of Australia and collected a range of information from Indigenous Australians about health-related issues including health-related actions, health risk factors, health status, socioeconomic circumstances and women's health. It is planned to repeat the NATSIHS at six-yearly intervals, with the next NATSIHS to be conducted in 2010–11. Selected non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the 2004–05 National Health Survey (NHS).

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)

The 2002 NATSISS collected information from 9,400 Indigenous Australians across all states and territories of Australia. The sample covered persons aged 15 years or over who were usual residents of private dwellings. It collected information on a wide range of subjects including family and culture, health, education, employment, income, financial stress, housing, as well as law and justice. The 2002 NATSISS is the second national social survey of Indigenous Australians conducted by the ABS. Selected non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS). The ABS plans to conduct the NATSISS every 6 years. The next survey is planned for 2008.

Census of Population and Housing

The ABS Census of Population and Housing is conducted by the ABS at five-yearly intervals with 2006 the most recent and is designed to include all Australian households. The Census uses the ABS standard Indigenous status question and it is asked for each household member.

While the Census data are adjusted for undercounts at the person level to arrive at the Estimated Resident Population, no such adjustment is done at the household level. This affects the accuracy of the person counts at the household level to provide adjusted household estimates.

Indigenous households are defined as households with at least one Indigenous person, of any age, resident on Census night.

Data analyses

Motor vehicle access

The Census collects details on the number of registered motor vehicles garaged at the household.

- In 2001, households with Indigenous persons were more likely than non-Indigenous households to be without a vehicle. Approximately 30% of Indigenous households and 16% of non-Indigenous households did not have access to a motor vehicle.
- Excluding motorbikes, the ratio of persons aged 17 years and over to vehicles in 2001 was 1.3 in Indigenous households and 1.1 in non-Indigenous households (Table 2.15.1).

Motor vehicle access by state/territory and remoteness

- The ratio of persons to vehicles for Indigenous households was highest in the Northern Territory (1.9) and lowest in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory (1.1).
- The ratio of persons of driving age to vehicles in Indigenous households was higher in very remote areas (2.1) than in major cities (1.2).
- In 2001, approximately 70% of Indigenous households had at least one motor vehicle compared to 84% of non-Indigenous households. The Northern Territory had the lowest proportion of Indigenous households with at least one vehicle (48%) and Tasmania had the highest (85%).
- Approximately 73% of Indigenous households in non-remote areas reported having at least one vehicle compared to 51% of Indigenous households in remote areas in 2001. In contrast, in non-Indigenous households, access to motor vehicles was similar in both the non-remote and remote areas (84% and 85% respectively).

Table 2.15.1: Households, by number of motor vehicles, Indigenous status and state/territory, 2001

	Ratio of persons 17 years and over in occupied private dwellings to vehicle ^(a)			Proportion of households ^(b) with at least one vehicle		
	Indigenous ^(c)	Other ^(d)	Total	Indigenous ^(c)	Other ^(d)	Total
State/territory						
NSW ^(e)	1.24	1.09	1.09	70.3	81.1	80.9
Vic	1.16	1.07	1.07	76.2	84.9	84.8
Qld	1.28	1.06	1.07	70.3	85.7	85.2
WA	1.33	1.05	1.06	67.9	87.1	86.6
SA	1.22	1.07	1.07	72.4	85.5	85.3
Tas	1.10	1.07	1.07	84.6	85.1	85.1
ACT	1.11	1.05	1.05	81.6	87.6	87.5
NT	1.91	1.05	1.19	47.7	82.2	75.9
Australia ^(f)	1.29	1.07	1.08	69.8	84.1	83.8
Remoteness Area						
Major cities	1.18	1.08	1.08	74.1	82.8	82.7
Inner regional	1.18	1.06	1.06	75.4	86.7	86.5
Outer regional	1.24	1.05	1.06	70.3	86.9	86.2
<i>Subtotal non-remote</i>	<i>1.20</i>	<i>1.07</i>	<i>1.08</i>	<i>73.4</i>	<i>84.1</i>	<i>83.9</i>
Remote	1.41	1.04	1.07	62.6	86.5	84.3
Very remote	2.11	1.06	1.34	42.7	79.8	68.9
<i>Subtotal remote</i>	<i>1.81</i>	<i>1.05</i>	<i>1.15</i>	<i>51.2</i>	<i>84.8</i>	<i>79.8</i>
Australia ^(f)	1.29	1.07	1.08	69.8	84.1	83.8
Total number of households	144,731	6,783,502	6,928,233	144,731	6,783,502	6,928,233

(a) Excludes motorbikes.

(b) Defined as all households (excluding visitor households), in an occupied private dwelling, being Australian usual residents.

(c) An Indigenous household is defined where a family within the household contains one or more persons of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin or where a lone person is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

(d) Includes households where Indigenous status was 'not stated'.

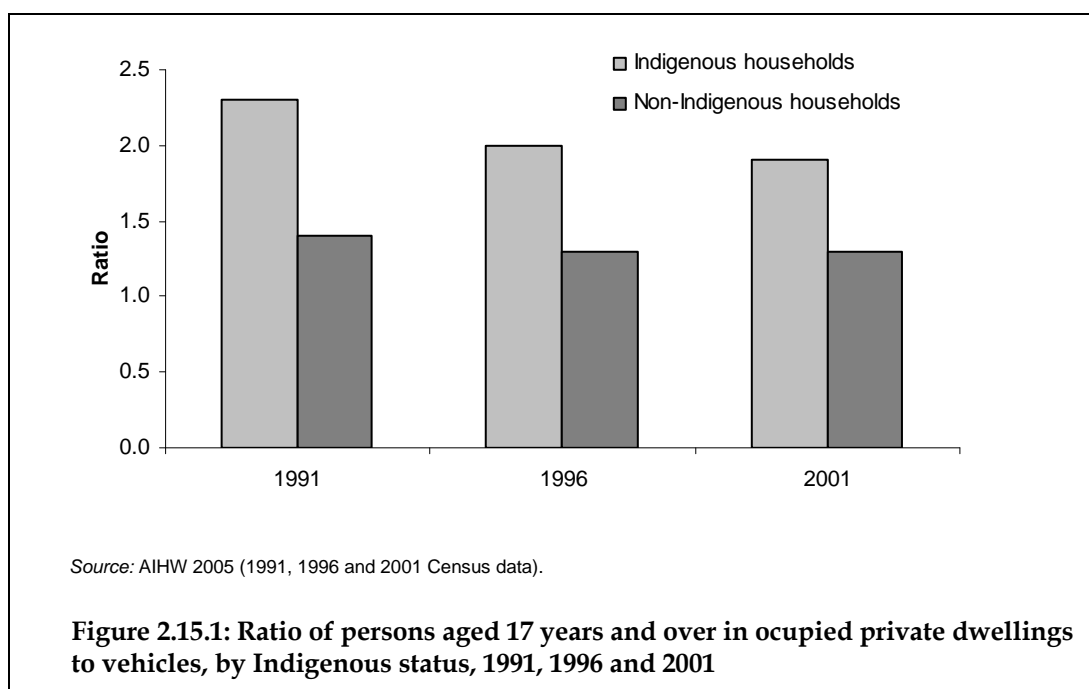
(e) Includes Territory of Jervis Bay.

(f) Includes Territories of Christmas Island and Cocos Islands.

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing, customised data.

Motor vehicle access over time

- Access to vehicles has improved over time, with the ratio of persons to vehicles in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous households being higher in 1991 and 1996 compared to 2001 (Figure 2.15.1). The difference between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates has also reduced over the same period.



Transport access, difficulty and use

The NATSISS collected data on access to motor vehicles, perceived level of difficulty with transport, use of transport, including public transport in the last 2 weeks, modes of transport and reasons why did not use public transport. These data are presented below.

- In 2002, around 60% of Indigenous people aged 18 years or over had access to a motor vehicle to drive compared to 85% of non-Indigenous people.
- Around 12% of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over reported that they could not or often had difficulty getting to the places they needed to, compared with only 4% of non-Indigenous Australians.
- Approximately 26% of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over used public transport in the last 2 weeks and a further 69% used other forms of transport in the last 2 weeks (Table 2.15.2).
- Of those who used transport in the last 2 weeks, the most common mode of transport was a car or 4WD as a passenger (60%), followed by a car/4WD, motorcycle/scooter as a driver (58%) and walking (57%).
- The main reasons given for not using public transport in the last 2 weeks were 'prefer to use own transport or walk' (42%) and 'no service available at all' (40%).
- Approximately 43% of Indigenous Australians who reported they often had difficulty getting to places needed reported they used public transport in the last 2 weeks compared to 22% of Indigenous Australians who reported they could easily get to places needed (Table 2.15.7).

Transport access, difficulty and use by age

- Indigenous people aged 18–24 years were less likely to have access to a motor vehicle (48%) than Indigenous people in older age groups (Table 2.15.2).

- Indigenous Australians aged 18–24 years were more likely to have used public transport in the last 2 weeks (32%) than those in older age groups (Table 2.15.2).

Table 2.15.2: Transport, by Indigenous status and age group, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	18–24 years			25–34 years			35–44 years			45–54 years			55 years and over			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Access to motor vehicle																		
Access to motor vehicle	47.8	77.8	0.6	63.7	89.2	0.7	67.8	92.4	0.7	64.9	91.5	0.7	49.6	76.5	0.6	59.7	85.2	0.7
No access	52.0	22.2	2.3	36.0	10.8	3.3	31.8	7.6	4.2	34.9	8.5	4.1	49.7	23.5	2.1	39.9	14.8	2.7
Total^(a)	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0
Total number ('000) ^(a)	52	1,869	..	71	2,848	..	58	2,907	..	38	2,630	..	32	4,099	..	251	14,354	..
Perceived level of difficulty with transport																		
Can easily get to the places needed	66.5	74.3	0.9	72.3	85.5	0.8	71.5	88.3	0.8	76.2	87.7	0.9	70.2	83.5	0.8	71.2	84.4	0.8
Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed	21.8	22.1	1.0	15.3	11.6	1.3	16.7	9.0	1.9	13.7	9.2	1.5	15.1	10.9	1.4	16.7	11.8	1.4
Cannot or often have difficulty getting to the places needed	11.5	3.6	3.2	12.4	3.0	4.1	11.7	2.7	4.3	9.4	3.1	3.0	4.2	4.4	1.0	11.6	3.6	3.2
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100	100.0	1.0
Use of transport in last 2 weeks^(c)																		
Used transport in last 2 weeks	93.6	n.a.	n.a.	95.5	n.a.	n.a.	95.3	n.a.	n.a.	95.0	n.a.	n.a.	94.4	n.a.	n.a.	94.8	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use transport in last 2 weeks	6.4	n.a.	n.a.	4.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.7	n.a.	n.a.	5.0	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Grand total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.2 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and age group, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	18–24 years			25–34 years			35–44 years			45–54 years			55 years and over			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Use of public transport in last 2 weeks^{(c) (d)}																		
Used public transport in last 2 weeks	32.1	n.a.	n.a.	24.7	n.a.	n.a.	25.4	n.a.	n.a.	22.8	n.a.	n.a.	23.4	n.a.	n.a.	25.9	n.a.	n.a.
Used transport but not public transport in last 2 weeks	61.4	n.a.	n.a.	70.8	n.a.	n.a.	69.9	n.a.	n.a.	72.1	n.a.	n.a.	71.0	n.a.	n.a.	68.9	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use any transport in last 2 weeks	6.4	n.a.	n.a.	4.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.7	n.a.	n.a.	5.0	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Grand total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Modes of transport^{(c)(d)}																		
Bus	30.4	n.a.	n.a.	22.7	n.a.	n.a.	21.5	n.a.	n.a.	21.1	n.a.	n.a.	22.0	n.a.	n.a.	23.6	n.a.	n.a.
Train, tram/light rail ^(e)	19.0	n.a.	n.a.	11.5	n.a.	n.a.	12.5	n.a.	n.a.	11.6	n.a.	n.a.	8.8	n.a.	n.a.	12.9	n.a.	n.a.
Taxi	24.2	n.a.	n.a.	17.4	n.a.	n.a.	14.4	n.a.	n.a.	14.5	n.a.	n.a.	19.6	n.a.	n.a.	17.9	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD/motorcycle/motorised scooter as driver	46.1	n.a.	n.a.	62.6	n.a.	n.a.	66.7	n.a.	n.a.	62.1	n.a.	n.a.	44.1	n.a.	n.a.	57.7	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD as passenger	69.6	n.a.	n.a.	56.2	n.a.	n.a.	56.8	n.a.	n.a.	54.1	n.a.	n.a.	61.8	n.a.	n.a.	59.5	n.a.	n.a.
Bicycle	10.5	n.a.	n.a.	7.2	n.a.	n.a.	4.7	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	n.a.	n.a.	6.0	n.a.	n.a.
Walk	67.5	n.a.	n.a.	59.8	n.a.	n.a.	57.0	n.a.	n.a.	48.1	n.a.	n.a.	42.6	n.a.	n.a.	56.7	n.a.	n.a.
Other	3.3	n.a.	n.a.	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	4.1	n.a.	n.a.	4.7	n.a.	n.a.	3.6	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number used transport	48,592	n.a.	n.a.	67,929	n.a.	n.a.	55,028	n.a.	n.a.	36,439	n.a.	n.a.	30,406	n.a.	n.a.	238,394	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.2 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and age group, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	18–24 years			25–34 years			35–44 years			45–54 years			55 years and over			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Main reason did not use public transport^{(c) (f)}																		
Prefer to use own transport or walk	42.8	n.a.	n.a.	45.1	n.a.	n.a.	41.5	n.a.	n.a.	42.5	n.a.	n.a.	34.0	n.a.	n.a.	41.9	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at all	39.3	n.a.	n.a.	38.9	n.a.	n.a.	39.3	n.a.	n.a.	43.6	n.a.	n.a.	43.5	n.a.	n.a.	40.4	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at right/convenient time	4.0	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	n.a.	n.a.	7.3	n.a.	n.a.	6.4	n.a.	n.a.	6.6	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	n.a.	n.a.
Takes too long	3.1	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.	n.a.
Concerned about own personal safety	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	0.7	n.a.	n.a.	0.8	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
Cost considerations	3.7	n.a.	n.a.	1.6	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	0.9	n.a.	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	n.a.
Racial discrimination	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.
Other	6.7	n.a.	n.a.	6.2	n.a.	n.a.	8.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.2	n.a.	n.a.	13.4	n.a.	n.a.	7.4	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number who did not use public transport ^(g)	35,247	n.a.	n.a.	53,594	n.a.	n.a.	43,096	n.a.	n.a.	29,611	n.a.	n.a.	24,673	n.a.	n.a.	186,221	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Includes persons who did not state whether they have access to a motor vehicle.

(b) Includes persons who were housebound.

(c) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

(d) Proportion out of people who used transport in last 2 weeks.

(e) Calculation based on non-remote areas only.

(f) Proportion calculation excludes 'used public transport in last 2 weeks' or 'not applicable'.

(g) Number includes people who chose 'not applicable' for 'Main reason did not use public transport'.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSISS and 2002 General Social Survey (GSS).

Transport access, difficulty and use by sex

- A higher proportion of Indigenous males than Indigenous females reported having access to a motor vehicle (65% compared to 55%) (Table 2.15.3).
- A higher proportion of Indigenous females reported using public transport in the last 2 weeks than Indigenous males (29% compared with 22%) (Table 2.15.3).

Table 2.15.3: Transport, by Indigenous status and sex, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Males			Females			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Access to motor vehicle									
Access to motor vehicle	64.9	89.9	0.7	55.0	80.6	0.7	59.7	85.2	0.7
No access	34.7	10.1	3.4	44.7	19.4	2.3	39.9	14.8	2.7
Total^(a)	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0
Total number ('000) ^(a)	119	7,118	..	132	7,236	..	251	14,354	..
Perceived level of difficulty with transport									
Can easily get to the places needed	72.4	86.8	0.8	70.2	82.1	0.9	71.2	84.4	0.8
Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed	16.0	10.4	1.5	17.4	13.2	1.3	16.7	11.8	1.4
Cannot or often have difficulty in getting to the places needed	11.4	2.7	4.2	11.8	4.5	2.6	11.6	3.6	3.2
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	100.0	100.0	1.0
Use of transport in last 2 weeks^(c)									
Used transport in last 2 weeks	95.2	n.a.	n.a.	94.5	n.a.	n.a.	94.8	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use transport in last 2 weeks	4.8	n.a.	n.a.	5.5	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Grand total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Use of public transport in last 2 weeks^{(c)(d)}									
Used public transport in last 2 weeks	22.4	n.a.	n.a.	29.1	n.a.	n.a.	25.9	n.a.	n.a.
Used transport but not public transport in last 2 weeks	72.8	n.a.	n.a.	65.4	n.a.	n.a.	68.9	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use any transport in last 2 weeks	4.8	n.a.	n.a.	5.5	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Grand total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.3 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and sex, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Males			Females			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Modes of transport^{(c)(d)}									
Bus	19.8	n.a.	n.a.	27.2	n.a.	n.a.	23.6	n.a.	n.a.
Train, tram/light rail ^(e)	11.0	n.a.	n.a.	14.7	n.a.	n.a.	12.9	n.a.	n.a.
Taxi	14.5	n.a.	n.a.	21.0	n.a.	n.a.	17.9	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD/motorcycle/ motorised scooter as driver	63.8	n.a.	n.a.	52.2	n.a.	n.a.	57.7	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD as passenger	56.0	n.a.	n.a.	62.6	n.a.	n.a.	59.5	n.a.	n.a.
Bicycle	9.1	n.a.	n.a.	3.1	n.a.	n.a.	6.0	n.a.	n.a.
Walk	49.0	n.a.	n.a.	54.2	n.a.	n.a.	51.7	n.a.	n.a.
Other	4.1	n.a.	n.a.	3.3	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number used transport	113,572	n.a.	n.a.	124,822	n.a.	n.a.	238,394	n.a.	n.a.
Main reason did not use public transport^{(e)(f)}									
Prefer to use own transport or walk	40.9	n.a.	n.a.	43.0	n.a.	n.a.	41.9	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at all	41.6	n.a.	n.a.	39.3	n.a.	n.a.	40.4	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at right/convenient time	6.2	n.a.	n.a.	6.0	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	n.a.	n.a.
Takes too long	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.	n.a.
Concerned about own personal safety	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.8	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
Cost considerations	1.7	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	n.a.
Racial discrimination	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.
Other	7.1	n.a.	n.a.	7.7	n.a.	n.a.	7.4	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number who did not use public transport ^(g)	92,518	n.a.	n.a.	93,704	n.a.	n.a.	186,221	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Includes persons who did not state whether they have access to a motor vehicle.

(b) Includes persons who were housebound.

(c) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

(d) Proportion out of people who used transport in last 2 weeks.

(e) Calculation based on non-remote areas only.

(f) Proportion calculation excludes 'used public transport in last 2 weeks' or 'not applicable'.

(g) Number includes people who chose 'not applicable' for 'Main reason did not use public transport'.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSISS and 2002 GSS.

Transport access, difficulty and use by state/territory

- Indigenous Australians in every state and territory were much more likely to report not having access to a motor vehicle(s), and to report having difficulty getting to the places they needed to, than non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous Australians living in the Northern Territory were five times as likely, and in Western Australia four times as likely, to be without access to a motor vehicle as non-Indigenous Australians in these states and territories (Table 2.15.4).
- Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory were less likely to have used transport in the last 2 weeks as those in other states and territories.
- Around 72% of Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory reported that the main reason they did not use public transport in the last 2 weeks was because no service was available at all. This was higher than that reported in the other states and territories (Table 2.15.4).

Table 2.15.4: Transport, by Indigenous status and state/territory, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	NSW			Vic			Qld			WA			SA			Tas ^(a)			ACT ^(a)			NT		
	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Access to motor vehicle																								
Access to motor vehicle	61.4	82.0	0.7	67.5	85.2	0.8	59.7	87.6	0.7	60.0	90.0	0.7	61.2	85.8	0.7	80.2	86.5	0.9	77.5	89.4	0.9	44.0	89.8	0.5
No access	38.6	18.0	2.1	32.5	14.8	2.2	40.3	12.4	3.3	39.9	10.0	4.0	38.8	14.2	2.7	19.8	13.5	1.5	22.5	10.6	2.1	53.4	10.2	5.2
Total^(b)	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0
Perceived level of difficulty with transport																								
Can easily get to the places needed	74.9	81.0	0.9	72.5	84.6	0.9	70.2	86.7	0.8	66.9	86.6	0.8	68.2	87.7	0.8	78.4	87.9	0.9	82.4	90.9	0.9	67.6	88.8	0.8
Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed	16.2	14.5	1.1	15.6	11.6	1.3	17.7	9.8	1.8	19.5	9.9	2.0	19.4	10.1	1.9	13.9	8.2	1.7	12.6	7.9	1.6	13.3	8.7	1.5
Cannot or often have difficulty	8.8	4.4	2.0	11.2	3.7	3.0	11.6	3.2	3.6	13.2	3.4	3.9	12.3	2.1	5.9	7.7	3.6	2.1	5.0	1.2	4.2	18.2	2.4	7.6
Total^(c)	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0	100	100	1.0
Use of transport in last 2 weeks^(d)																								
Used transport in last 2 weeks	96.6	n.a.	n.a.	97.4	n.a.	n.a.	96.5	n.a.	n.a.	97.0	n.a.	n.a.	98.0	n.a.	n.a.	98.8	n.a.	n.a.	98.8	n.a.	n.a.	80.9	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use transport in last 2 weeks	3.4	n.a.	n.a.	2.6	n.a.	n.a.	3.5	n.a.	n.a.	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	19.1	n.a.	n.a.
Grand Total	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.4 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and state/territory, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	NSW			Vic			Qld			WA			SA			Tas ^(a)			ACT ^(a)			NT		
	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio	Non-Indig.		Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Use of public transport in last 2 weeks^{(b)(c)}																								
Used public transport in last 2 weeks	27.1	n.a.	n.a.	32.6	n.a.	n.a.	28.1	n.a.	n.a.	26.0	n.a.	n.a.	35.9	n.a.	n.a.	22.5	n.a.	n.a.	22.5	n.a.	n.a.	12.7	n.a.	n.a.
Used transport but not public transport in last 2 weeks	69.6	n.a.	n.a.	64.8	n.a.	n.a.	68.5	n.a.	n.a.	71.0	n.a.	n.a.	62.1	n.a.	n.a.	76.4	n.a.	n.a.	76.4	n.a.	n.a.	68.2	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use any transport in last 2 weeks	3.4	n.a.	n.a.	2.6	n.a.	n.a.	3.5	n.a.	n.a.	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	19.1	n.a.	n.a.
Grand total	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.
Modes of transport^{(d)(e)}																								
Bus	23.7	n.a.	n.a.	23.3	n.a.	n.a.	25.0	n.a.	n.a.	23.3	n.a.	n.a.	32.6	n.a.	n.a.	20.7	n.a.	n.a.	20.7	n.a.	n.a.	17.5	n.a.	n.a.
Train, tram/light rail ^(f)	12.9	n.a.	n.a.	21.6	n.a.	n.a.	11.1	n.a.	n.a.	20.0	n.a.	n.a.	15.6	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	0	n.a.	n.a.
Taxi	18.5	n.a.	n.a.	19.0	n.a.	n.a.	23.1	n.a.	n.a.	15.2	n.a.	n.a.	17.5	n.a.	n.a.	10.9	n.a.	n.a.	10.9	n.a.	n.a.	10.1	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD/motorcycle/motorised scooter as driver	58.7	n.a.	n.a.	61.8	n.a.	n.a.	58.1	n.a.	n.a.	55.7	n.a.	n.a.	55.9	n.a.	n.a.	73.8	n.a.	n.a.	73.8	n.a.	n.a.	48.4	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD as passenger	58.2	n.a.	n.a.	55.1	n.a.	n.a.	57.1	n.a.	n.a.	65.2	n.a.	n.a.	63.4	n.a.	n.a.	61.8	n.a.	n.a.	61.8	n.a.	n.a.	60.8	n.a.	n.a.
Bicycle	5.0	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.	9.1	n.a.	n.a.	6.5	n.a.	n.a.	3.4	n.a.	n.a.	4.3	n.a.	n.a.	4.3	n.a.	n.a.	3	n.a.	n.a.
Walk	46.1	n.a.	n.a.	43.6	n.a.	n.a.	54.0	n.a.	n.a.	50.4	n.a.	n.a.	52.0	n.a.	n.a.	41.7	n.a.	n.a.	41.7	n.a.	n.a.	71.8	n.a.	n.a.
Other	2.9	n.a.	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	4.2	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	5.1	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.4	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.
Total number used transport	72,166	n.a.	n.a.	15,212	n.a.	n.a.	64,885	n.a.	n.a.	34,088	n.a.	n.a.	13,839	n.a.	n.a.	11,607	n.a.	n.a.	11,607	n.a.	n.a.	26,599	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.4 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and state/territory, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	NSW			Vic			Qld			WA			SA			Tas ^(a)			ACT ^(a)			NT		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Main reason did not use public transport^{(c)(d)(g)}																								
Prefer to use own transport or walk	49.1	n.a.	n.a.	55.1	n.a.	n.a.	41.5	n.a.	n.a.	37.5	n.a.	n.a.	42.2	n.a.	n.a.	56.1	n.a.	n.a.	56.1	n.a.	n.a.	23.4	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at all	29.9	n.a.	n.a.	18.8	n.a.	n.a.	38.0	n.a.	n.a.	45.8	n.a.	n.a.	45.1	n.a.	n.a.	23.6	n.a.	n.a.	23.6	n.a.	n.a.	71.9	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at right/convenient time	6.1	n.a.	n.a.	10.8	n.a.	n.a.	7.2	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	n.a.	n.a.	3.8	n.a.	n.a.	10.3	n.a.	n.a.	10.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	n.a.	n.a.
Takes too long	2.5	n.a.	n.a.	2.9	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	n.a.	0.6	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	2.3	n.a.	n.a.	2.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.	n.a.
Concerned about own personal safety	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	0.9	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.
Cost considerations	2.9	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.7	n.a.	n.a.	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	n.a.
Racial discrimination	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.
Other	8.9	n.a.	n.a.	9.4	n.a.	n.a.	9.5	n.a.	n.a.	7.6	n.a.	n.a.	6.7	n.a.	n.a.	5.3	n.a.	n.a.	5.3	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.
Total number who did not use public transport ^(h)	54,486	n.a.	n.a.	10,532	n.a.	n.a.	48,348	n.a.	n.a.	26,024	n.a.	n.a.	9,048	n.a.	n.a.	9,100	n.a.	n.a.	9,100	n.a.	n.a.	28,683	n.a.	n.a.

(a) The 'Use of transport', 'Use of public transport', 'Mode of transport' and 'Reasons did not use public transport' parts for these columns are calculated with Tas and ACT data combined, due to small numbers in each jurisdiction.

(b) Includes persons who did not state whether they have access to a motor vehicle.

(c) Includes persons who were housebound.

(d) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

(e) Proportion out of people who used transport in last 2 weeks.

(f) Calculation based on non-remote areas only.

(g) Proportion calculation excludes 'used public transport in last 2 weeks' or 'not applicable'.

(h) Number includes people who chose 'not applicable' for 'Main reason did not use public transport'.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSISS and 2002GSS.

Transport access, difficulty and use by remoteness

- A higher proportion of Indigenous Australians in non-remote areas reported having access to a motor vehicle to drive than Indigenous Australians in non-remote areas (64% compared with 48%) (Table 2.15.5).
- Indigenous Australians in remote areas were more likely to report that they could not or often had difficulty getting to the places they needed to (16%) than Indigenous Australians in non-remote areas (10%) (Figure 2.15.2).
- Indigenous Australians in remote areas were much more likely to report not having used transport in the last 2 weeks (14%) and to report no service available (74%) as the main reason why they did not use public transport than Indigenous Australians in non-remote areas (2% and 25% respectively) (Table 2.15.5).

Table 2.15.5: Transport, by Indigenous status and remoteness, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Non-remote			Remote			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Access to motor vehicle									
Access to motor vehicle	64.4	85.1	0.8	47.5	n.a.	n.a.	59.7	85.2	0.7
No access	35.6	14.9	2.4	51.3	n.a.	n.a.	39.9	14.8	2.7
Total ^(a)	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	100.0	..
Total number ('000) ^(a)	182.1	14,164.1	..	21.2	n.a.	n.a.	251	14,354.0	..
Perceived level of difficulty with transport									
Can easily get to the places needed	73.5	84.3	0.9	65.2	n.a.	n.a.	71.2	84.4	0.8
Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed	16.3	11.9	1.4	17.7	n.a.	n.a.	16.7	11.8	1.4
Cannot or often have difficulty	9.8	3.2	1.4	16.4	n.a.	n.a.	11.6	3.6	3.2
Total ^(b)	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	100.0	..
Use of transport in last 2 weeks^(c)									
Used transport in last 2 weeks	98.0	n.a.	n.a.	86.4	n.a.	n.a.	94.8	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use transport in last 2 weeks	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	13.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	na	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Use of public transport in last 2 weeks^{(c)(d)}									
Used public transport in last 2 wks	30.6	n.a.	n.a.	13.8	n.a.	n.a.	25.9	n.a.	n.a.
Used transport but not public transport in last 2 wks	67.5	n.a.	n.a.	72.7	n.a.	n.a.	68.9	n.a.	n.a.
Did not use any transport in last 2 wks	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	13.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.
Grand Total	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

Table 2.15.5 (continued): Transport, by Indigenous status and remoteness, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Non-remote			Remote			Total		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Modes of transport^{(c)(d)}									
Bus	26.3	n.a.	n.a.	15.6	n.a.	n.a.	23.6	n.a.	n.a.
Train, tram/light rail ^(e)	12.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	12.9	n.a.	n.a.
Taxi	19.8	n.a.	n.a.	12.2	n.a.	n.a.	17.9	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD/motorcycle/motorised scooter as driver	60.6	n.a.	n.a.	49.2	n.a.	n.a.	57.7	n.a.	n.a.
Car/4WD as passenger	57.4	n.a.	n.a.	65.7	n.a.	n.a.	59.5	n.a.	n.a.
Bicycle	6.7	n.a.	n.a.	3.9	n.a.	n.a.	6.0	n.a.	n.a.
Walk	45.8	n.a.	n.a.	69.4	n.a.	n.a.	51.7	n.a.	n.a.
Other	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	5.6	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number used transport	178,479	n.a.	n.a.	59,915	n.a.	n.a.	238,394	n.a.	n.a.
Main reason did not use public transport^{(e)(f)}									
Prefer to use own transport or walk	51.9	n.a.	n.a.	20.7	n.a.	n.a.	41.9	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at all	24.6	n.a.	n.a.	74.0	n.a.	n.a.	40.4	n.a.	n.a.
No service available at right/convenient time	7.8	n.a.	n.a.	2.5	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	n.a.	n.a.
Takes too long	2.5	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	n.a.	n.a.
Concerned about own personal safety	0.7	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
Cost considerations	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	0.4	n.a.	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	n.a.
Racial discrimination	0.1	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	n.a.
Other	9.9	n.a.	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	7.4	n.a.	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	n.a.
Total number who did not use public transport ^(g)	126,420	n.a.	n.a.	59,801	n.a.	n.a.	186,221	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Includes persons who did not state whether they have access to a motor vehicle.

(b) Includes persons who were housebound.

(c) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

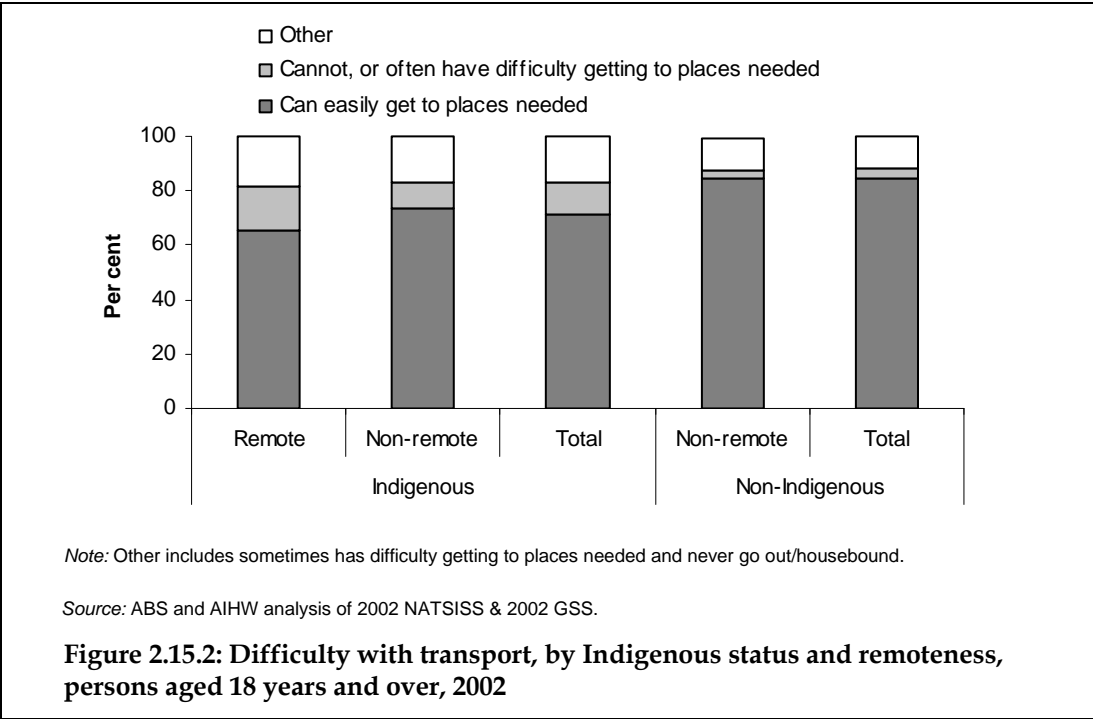
(d) Proportion out of people who used transport in last 2 weeks.

(e) Calculation based on non-remote areas only.

(f) Proportion calculation excludes 'used public transport in last 2 weeks' or 'not applicable'.

(g) Number includes people who chose 'not applicable' for 'Main reason did not use public transport'.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSISS and 2002GSS.



Transport difficulty by selected health and population characteristics

- A higher proportion of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians aged 18 years who could not get to places when needed reported fair/poor health status and having a disability or long-term health condition than Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians who could easily get to places when needed (Table 2.15.6).
- A higher proportion of Indigenous Australians who could not get to places when needed were in the lowest quintile of household income and reported they could not raise \$2,000 within a week for something important than Indigenous Australians who could easily get to places when needed.

Table 2.15.6: Perceived level of difficulty with transport, by selected health and population characteristics and Indigenous status, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Can easily get to the places needed		Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed		Often have difficulty getting to the places needed		Can't get to the places needed	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
	(per cent)							
Self-assessed health status								
Excellent/good	40*	62*	24*	44*	21*	36*	27	25 ^(b)
Good	31*	24*	34	29	30	23	31	41 ^(b)
Fair/poor	28*	13*	41*	27*	49	40	41	35
Disability or long-term health condition^(a)								
Has disability or long-term health condition	51*	37*	68*	52*	76*	61*	70	73
No disability or long-term conditions	49*	63*	32*	48*	24*	39*	30	27 ^(c)
Household income								
1st quintile	30*	15*	44*	28*	53*	38*	47	45
5th quintile	7*	22*	2 ^(c)	17*	4 ^(c)	7*	1 ^(c)	6 ^(c)
Index of disparity								
1st quintile	27*	16*	32*	20*	31*	28*	48*	20 ^(c)
5th quintile	23	23	13*	22*	12*	15*	9	11 ^(c)
Financial stress – unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important								
	47*	11*	68*	25*	72*	36*	82*	33*
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	179,089	12,117,472	42,025	1,695,668	10,792	456,762	18,472	63,211

* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Persons in non-remote areas only.

(b) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

(c) Estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use.

Note: Data for self assessed health status and disability or long term health condition are age standardised.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSISS and 2002GSS.

Table 2.15.7: Perceived level of difficulty with transport, by selected transport characteristics and Indigenous status, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002

	Can easily get to the places needed		Sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed		Often have difficulty getting to the places needed		Can't get to the places needed/never go out/housebound	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.
(per cent)								
Access to motor vehicle								
Access to motor vehicle	72*	91*	35*	59*	21*	39*	26	36 ^(e)
No access	28*	9*	65*	41*	79	61	74	64 ^(e)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number ^(a)	179,089	1,211,472	42,025	1,695,668	10,792	456,762	18,472	63,211
Use of public transport in last 2 weeks^(b)								
Used public transport in last 2 weeks	21.6	n.a.	39.1	n.a.	42.6	n.a.	27.6	n.a.
Used transport but not public transport in last 2 weeks	75.1	n.a.	55.6	n.a.	50.5	n.a.	51.2	n.a.
Did not use any transport in last 2 wks	3.3	n.a.	5.3	n.a.	6.9	n.a.	21.2	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.
Main reason did not use public transport^{(b) (c)}								
Prefer to use own transport or walk	48.6	n.a.	23.5	n.a.	11.4	n.a.	21.4	n.a.
No service available at all	35.2	n.a.	51.7	n.a.	52.2	n.a.	68.3	n.a.
No service available at time	6.1	n.a.	7.5	n.a.	6.6	n.a.	3.6	n.a.
Takes too long	1.8	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	0.2	n.a.	0.8	n.a.
Concerned about own personal safety	0.3	n.a.	0.5	n.a.	2.4	n.a.	0.7	n.a.
Cost considerations	1.2	n.a.	4.6	n.a.	3.1	n.a.	1.7	n.a.
Racial discrimination	0.1	n.a.	0.1	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	0.0	n.a.
Other	6.6	n.a.	9.9	n.a.	24.0	n.a.	3.5	n.a.
Total	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.	100.0	n.a.
Total no. who did not use public transport ^(d)	140,320	n.a.	14,117	n.a.	6,196	n.a.	25,589	n.a.

* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Includes 'not stated'.

(b) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

(c) Proportion calculation excludes 'used public transport in last 2 weeks' or 'not applicable'.

(d) Number includes people who chose 'not applicable' for 'Main reason did not use public transport'.

(e) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

Source: AIHW and ABS analysis of the 2002 NATSIS and 2002 GSS.

The data on vehicles per household and per person suggest that non-Indigenous Australians have better access to personal transport than Indigenous Australians and would therefore be more readily able to reach a health facility or service. Public transportation may compensate for the lack of personal transport, and clinics may provide a transport service for their patients, but these services are not available everywhere. The main reason given by 52% of those who sometimes or often had difficulty in getting to the places they needed to and did not use public transport in the last two weeks was that no service was available at all (Table 2.15.7).

Transport/distance as a barrier to accessing health services

The 2004–05 NATSIHS collected information on reasons why Indigenous Australians didn't visit a dentist, doctor, other health professional or hospital when needed, including transport/distance. These data are presented below.

- In 2004–05, transport/distance was reported as the main reason why Indigenous Australians didn't visit a dentist, doctor, other health professional or hospital in the last 12 months when needed for 11%, 14%, 8% and 19% of Indigenous Australians respectively.
- A higher proportion of Indigenous people living in remote areas reported transport/distance as a reason for not accessing health services than Indigenous people in non-remote areas.
- Indigenous Australians aged 0–14 years were most likely to report transport as the main reason why they didn't access health services when needed than those in the older age groups.
- Indigenous females were more likely to report transport/distance as the main reason why they didn't access a doctor or hospital in the last 12 months when needed than Indigenous males.

Data quality issues

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) and National Aboriginal and Social Survey (NATSISS)

The NATSIHS and NATSISS both use the standard Indigenous status question. The survey samples were specifically designed to select a representative sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and thus overcome the problem inherent in most national surveys with small and unrepresentative Indigenous samples. As with other surveys, the NATSIHS and NATSISS are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Calculations of standard errors and significance testing help to identify the accuracy of the estimates and differences.

Information recorded in these surveys are essentially 'as reported' by respondents. The ABS makes every effort to collect accurate information from respondents, particularly through careful questionnaire design, pre-testing of questionnaires, use of trained interviewers and assistance from Indigenous facilitators. Nevertheless, some responses may be affected by imperfect recall or individual interpretation of survey questions.

Non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the National Health Survey (NHS) and the 2002 General Social Survey. The NHS was conducted in major cities, regional and remote areas, but very remote areas were excluded from the sample. Time series comparisons are available through the 1995 and 2001 National Health Surveys and the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey.

In remote communities there were some modifications to the NATSIHS and NATSISS content in order to address language and cultural appropriateness in traditional communities, as well as to assist respondents in understanding the concepts. Some questions were excluded and some reworded. Also, paper forms were used in communities in remote areas and computer-assisted interview (CAI) instruments were used in non-remote areas. The CAI process included built in edit checks and sequencing.

Further information on NATSIHS and NATSISS data quality issues can be found in the national publications (ABS 2006; ABS 2004).

Transport data

Concerns have been expressed about the appropriateness of the questions in the transport module in the NATSISS and hence the value of the answers (Holcombe 2005).

Census of Population and Housing

The Census uses the National health data dictionary standard Indigenous status question and it is asked for each household member. Measures that are drawn from Census data are subject to broad data concerns relating to the unexplainable growth in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population since the 1991 Census, and limitations of self-identification. Other Census data issues relate to the accuracy of the Census count itself, for example, whether people are counted more than once, or are undercounted (ABS 1996).

For the 2002 NATSISS it was estimated that there were 165,700 Indigenous households compared with 144,700 enumerated in the 2001 Census. While the Census data are adjusted for undercounts at the person level to arrive at the Estimated Resident Population, no such adjustment is done at the household level. This affects the accuracy of the person counts at the household level to provide adjusted household estimates.

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