



Australian Government

Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare

A young girl with long brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a yellow t-shirt and blue shorts, is captured in a dynamic pose on a green badminton court. She is looking upwards and to the left, holding a badminton racket. In the background, a boy is also playing badminton on the same court. The scene is set outdoors on a grassy area with trees and a cloudy sky. The image is overlaid with large, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of blue and orange.

Australia's welfare **2019** in brief



The image features abstract geometric shapes in teal and orange. In the top right corner, there are three teal shapes: a long thin rectangle, a smaller square, and a larger square. To their right is a large orange trapezoidal shape. In the bottom right corner, there are three orange shapes: a square, a long thin rectangle, and another square. A large teal shape occupies the bottom left and middle of the page, containing the text.

Australia's
welfare **2019**
in brief

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is a major national agency whose purpose is to create authoritative and accessible information and statistics that inform decisions and improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair Chief Executive Officer

Mrs Louise Markus Mr Barry Sandison

Any enquiries relating to copyright or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 6244 1000

Email: info@aihw.gov.au

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About Australia's welfare 2019

This edition of the AIHW's biennial flagship report on welfare introduces a new format and an expanded product suite:

Australia's welfare 2019: data insights is a collection of articles on selected welfare topics, including an overview of the welfare data landscape, and contributions by academic experts. It is available as a print report and online as a PDF.

Australia's welfare snapshots are 41 web pages that present key facts on housing, education and skills, employment and work, income and finance: government payments, social support, justice and safety, and Indigenous Australians. They are available online in HTML (updated when new data are available) and as a compiled PDF.

Australia's welfare 2019: in brief presents key findings and concepts from the snapshots to tell the story of welfare in Australia. It is available as a print report and online as a PDF.

Australia's welfare indicators is an interactive data visualisation tool that measures welfare system performance, individual and household determinants and the nation's wellbeing. It is available online in HTML.

All products can be viewed or downloaded at www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare.



*Australia's welfare 2019:
data insights*



*Australia's welfare 2019:
in brief*



Australia's welfare snapshots



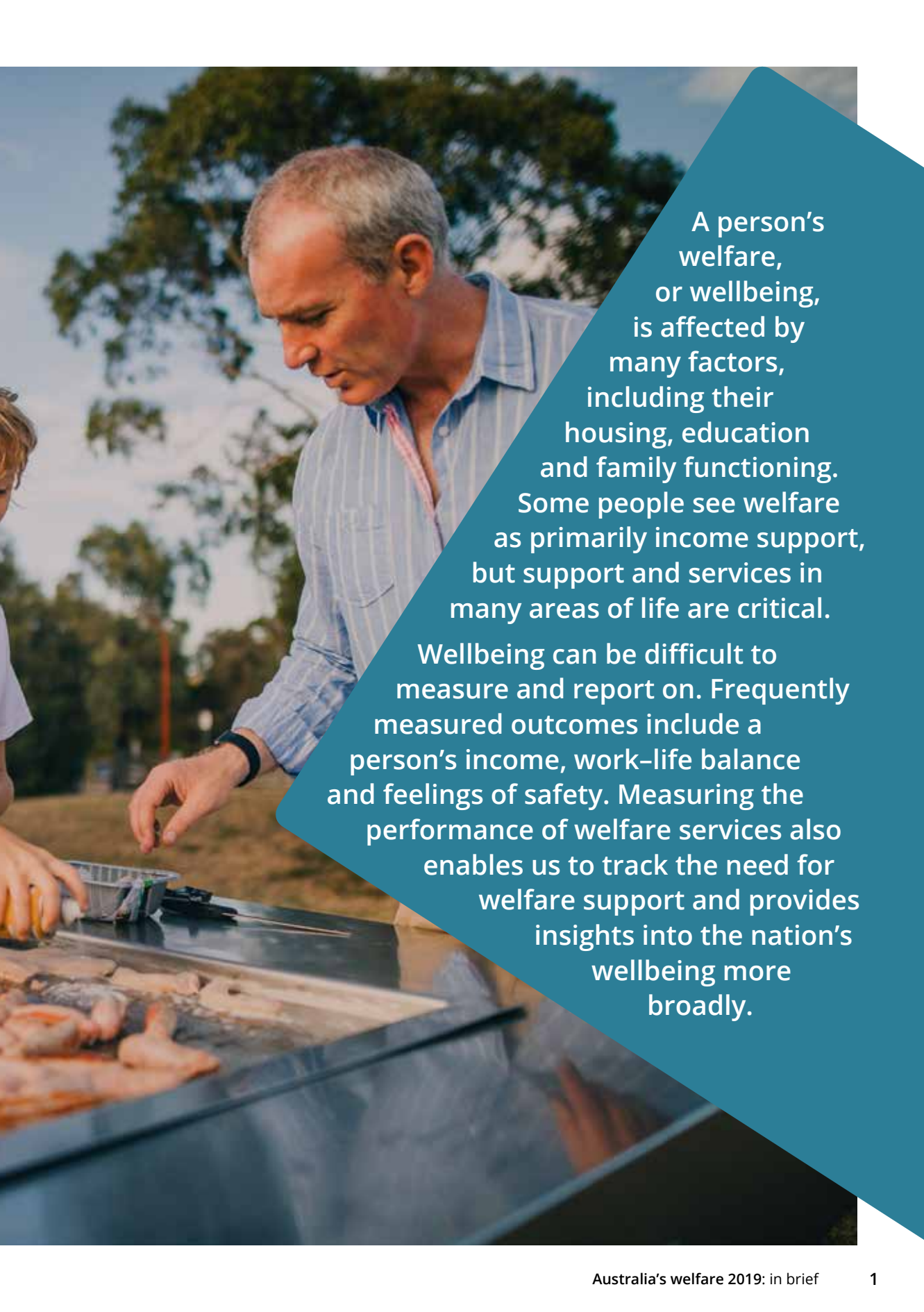
Australia's welfare indicators



1

Welfare in Australia





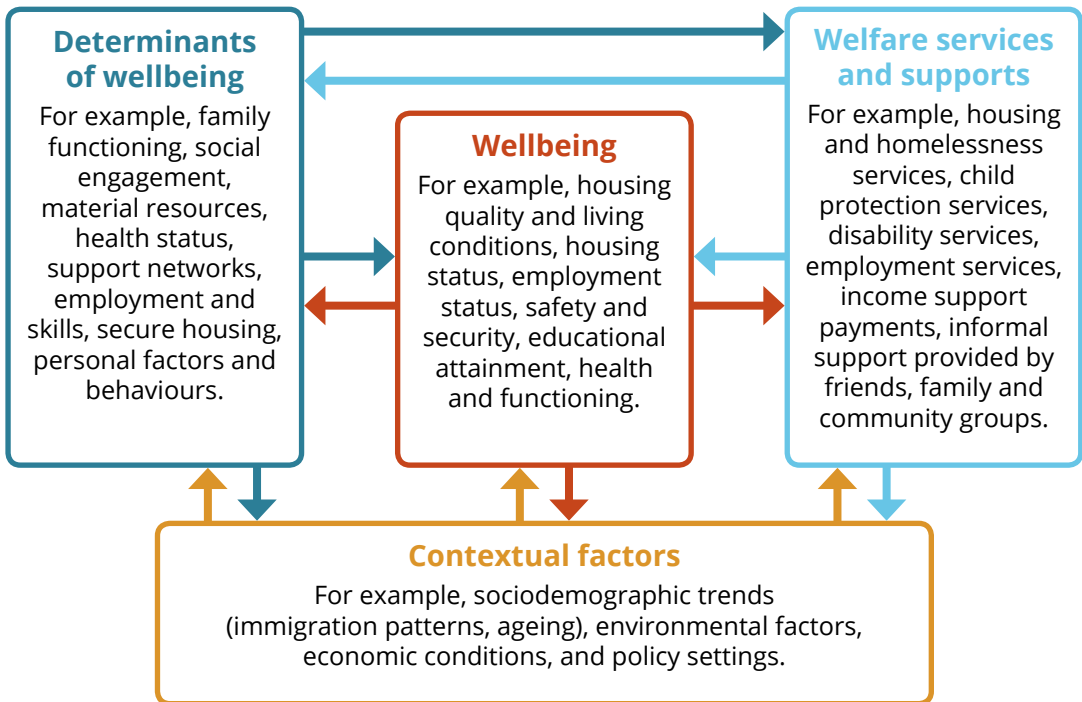
A person's welfare, or wellbeing, is affected by many factors, including their housing, education and family functioning. Some people see welfare as primarily income support, but support and services in many areas of life are critical.

Wellbeing can be difficult to measure and report on. Frequently measured outcomes include a person's income, work-life balance and feelings of safety. Measuring the performance of welfare services also enables us to track the need for welfare support and provides insights into the nation's wellbeing more broadly.

What is welfare and wellbeing?

In the broadest sense, welfare refers to the wellbeing of individuals, families and the community. The terms welfare and wellbeing are often used interchangeably. Positive wellbeing is associated with being comfortable, happy or healthy.

A person's wellbeing is the result of many interrelated factors:





A person's wellbeing can be bolstered by the help they receive in a time of need. This can come from family, friends and the community, or from government and/or non-government organisations. Services and support can include:

- government payments, such as income support, family assistance payments and supplementary payments—for example, Age Pension and Family Tax Benefit
- tax concessions
- welfare services, such as employment services, child protection services, homelessness services, and social housing



Find out more: Understanding welfare and wellbeing
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots


What do Australia's welfare indicators show?



Australia's welfare indicators summarise the performance of welfare services, track individual and household determinants of the need for welfare support, and provide insights into the nation's wellbeing more broadly.


Overall, **Australia is faring well** on many indicators:

Fewer people are working very long hours

2009		2018
16%		14%


of employed people worked 50 hours or more a week

Civic engagement has increased

2010		2019
90%		97%


of eligible people were enrolled to vote

More homes have internet access

2007-08		2016-17
67%		86%

The measures in some other areas are **not as encouraging**:

One in 4 unemployed people are long-term unemployed

2009		2018
15%		25%

of unemployed people aged 15 and over had been looking for work for more than a year

One in 9 families with children are jobless

2012		2017
12%		12%

of families with children under 15 had no one in the family who was employed

Find out more: Australia's welfare indicators
www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/indicators/australias-welfare-indicators

How do we compare internationally?

Comparing welfare data between Australia and the other member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) helps to inform policy, planning and decision-making.

Australia has a relatively high life satisfaction, ranking **10th out of 35** OECD countries.

Australia's ranking in 2018 (or based on the latest year of data):



Find out more: International comparisons of welfare data www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Health and welfare links

Our personal circumstances are key drivers of our health and wellbeing. How we grow, live, work and age all play a role.



Social determinants are among the many factors that can influence our health. For example, people with **lower levels of education** have **higher rates of death** due to cardiovascular disease.

In 2011–12, if all Australians aged 25–74 had the same cardiovascular disease death rate as people with a bachelor's degree or higher:

- the death rate for the disease would have **fallen by 55%**
- there would have been **7,800 fewer deaths** from the disease

Many issues involve both health and welfare services; for example, **family, domestic and sexual violence** can have a serious impact on a person's health, but also on other aspects of their life, such as their job or housing status.

In 2016–17, **4,600 women** and **1,700 men** were hospitalised due to family and domestic violence.

In 2017–18, **121,000 people** who sought specialist homelessness services were experiencing family and domestic violence.

Find out more: Health and welfare links www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

How much do we spend on welfare services and support?

Welfare expenditure reported here covers cash payments, unemployment benefits and spending on welfare services. Expenditure on welfare services does not include spending on employment services and education. National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) expenditure is not currently included. Expenditure data are adjusted for inflation.

In 2017–18, governments in Australia spent nearly \$161 billion on welfare services and support.

Cash payments

2001–02	2017–18
\$74 billion	\$102 billion

Welfare services

2001–02	2017–18
\$21 billion	\$48 billion

Unemployment benefits

2001–02	2017–18
\$7.5 billion	\$10 billion

Between 2001–02 and 2017–18, welfare spending in real terms (adjusted for inflation) grew slightly faster than the population, with per person spending rising an average of 1.3% a year (from \$5,287 in 2001–02 to \$6,482 in 2017–18).

Welfare spending as a proportion of GDP, selected OECD countries, 2016

Finland (highest)	23.0%
OECD median	13.3%
United Kingdom	12.2%
Australia	10.9%
New Zealand	10.6%
United States	10.0%
Canada	9.8%
Mexico (lowest)	3.8%

There are challenges in comparing welfare spending across countries. For example, the social support structures in many countries are complex, and not necessarily comparable.

Find out more: Welfare expenditure www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More people are working in welfare

The welfare workforce comprises people who provide community services to the Australian population. These services are provided by public and private organisations and vary widely, from care for the elderly in residential aged care facilities, to counselling and social assistance for students in educational settings.



The welfare workforce has **increased by 72%** between 2008 and 2018 and now **employs more than 550,000 people**, or **4.4% of the working population**. Over the same period, the total workforce grew by 18%.

The welfare workforce comprises:

- **179,000** workers in residential care services
- **185,000** workers in preschool education and child care
- **186,000** workers in other social assistance services

Profile of welfare workers:



87% are female, compared with 47% of all employed people



64% work part time, compared with 32% for all Australian workers



\$840 is their average weekly earnings, compared with \$1,106 for workers in similar occupations in other industries

Find out more: Welfare workforce www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

2

Housing



Home ownership is the dream of many Australians, but fewer people are purchasing their own homes and more are renting—especially young people.

Some people face barriers in accessing secure housing. A range of government programs exist to provide financial assistance, accommodation or other services to help these people secure safe, affordable and stable housing.

How many Australians own the home they live in?

Many Australians aspire to own their own home, with home ownership providing security and a range of social and economic benefits to home owners.

The proportion of Australians who own their own home, with or without a mortgage, has been around 67–70% since the mid-1960s, with **two-thirds of people owning a home in 2016**.



However, **fewer younger people** (aged under 35) own their own home.

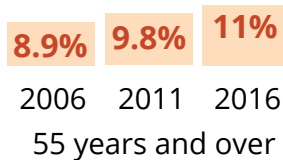
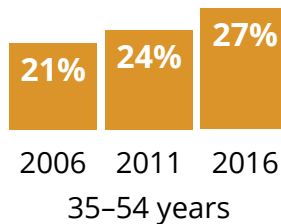
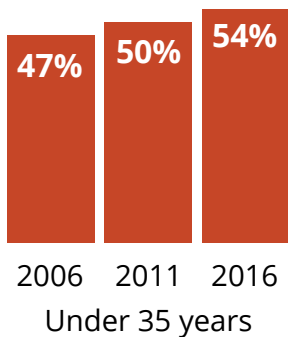
Age 25–29

50% in 1971
37% in 2016

Age 30–34

64% in 1971
50% in 2016

More people are renting (private rental market)—especially younger age groups.



Find out more: Home ownership and housing tenure
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

How much do Australians spend on housing?



People are spending a **higher proportion of their incomes on housing** than in the past.

The proportion of households spending less than a quarter of their income on housing **is shrinking**. The proportion spending more than half **is growing**.

Percentage of income spent on housing costs	1994-95	2005-06	2017-18
More than 50%	4.6	5.1	5.5
30-50%	9.2	11	12
25-50%	5.8	7.0	7.6
Less than 25%	80	77	75

What are low-income households?


Put simply, these are households with the lowest 40% of household disposable income.

What is housing stress?

When households with lower incomes spend more than one-third of their income on rent or mortgage repayments, they are considered to be in 'housing stress'.

More than 1 million low-income households were in housing stress in 2017–18. **Housing stress is particularly common among renters.**



A woman with blonde hair tied up, wearing a grey t-shirt and a colorful striped skirt, stands in a kitchen. She is looking out a large window. The background shows a brick building and a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

What proportion of their income do low-income households spend on housing?

Housing costs as a percentage of gross household income, low-income households, 2017-18

Private renter	32%
Owner with a mortgage	29%
Owner without a mortgage	6.0%

Housing stress is most common among low-income renters in capital cities and has increased over time.

Low-income households considered to be in rental stress

	2007-08	2017-18
Capital cities	39%	48%
Outside capital cities	30%	36%

Find out more: Housing affordability
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Who lives in social housing?



At 30 June 2018, there were almost 804,000 people living in social housing.

Social housing tenants are more likely to be **female**, and it is common for tenants to have a **disability** or be **single adults**.



6 in 10 (56%) tenants are **female**



4 in 10 (38%) households include someone with a **disability**



6 in 10 (55%) households consist of **single adults**

Housing assistance programs help Australians on low incomes secure affordable housing. Depending on their situation, assistance might involve the government providing financial assistance to help with the cost of privately renting, or providing accommodation via social housing programs—including public housing, state owned and managed Indigenous housing, and community housing.



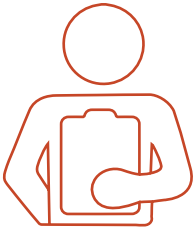
Most new **social housing** spots are filled by households considered in **greatest need**—many of which were experiencing homelessness.

Percentage of new spots filled with households in greatest need:

- Public Housing—**76%**, up from 74% in 2013–14
- Community Housing—**82%**, up from 75% in 2013–14
- State owned and managed Indigenous housing—**63%**, up from 59% in 2013–14

Find out more: Housing assistance www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Who experiences homelessness and what help do they receive?



On Census night in 2016, **more than 116,000 people were experiencing homelessness** in Australia.

The most **common** form of homelessness is **living in severely overcrowded housing**.

Of those who were homeless on Census night:

- **44%** were living in severely overcrowded dwellings
- **18%** were living in supported accommodation for the homeless
- **15%** were staying temporarily with other households
- **15%** were living in boarding houses
- **7%** were sleeping rough
- **1%** were living in other temporary lodgings





Specialist Homelessness Services assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In 2017–18, **Specialist Homelessness Services supported 288,800 people**—or about 1% of the Australian population.

Who received Specialist Homelessness Services support?

- **3 in 5** were female
- **1 in 5** were aged 25–34
- **1 in 6** were children aged under 10
- **1 in 4** were Indigenous
- **2 in 5** were seeking help because of family and domestic violence

Find out more: Homelessness and homelessness services
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots



3

Education and skills



Generally, the higher a person's level of education, the more opportunities they have in their working life. Completing Year 12 or higher education can also improve a person's social opportunities and overall health and wellbeing.

The groundwork for educational attainment starts in a child's early years. Participation in early childhood education can help to develop a child's cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social skills, and prepare them for formal schooling.

More children are in preschool and child care

Child care and early childhood education is provided by a range of formal and informal services, including kindergartens, preschools, child care centres, before and after school care programs, family day carers, babysitters, and family friends or relatives.

In 2017, **nearly half** (49%, or 2 million) of all children aged 0–12 attended formal or informal child care and early childhood education.



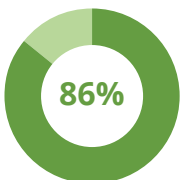
The proportion of children aged 0–11 attending formal child care **has risen.**

28%
in 2017

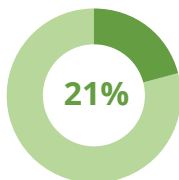


17%
in 1999

In 2018, **more than 342,000 Australian 4 and 5 year olds** were enrolled in a preschool program, either at a preschool or through a child care centre.



4 year olds

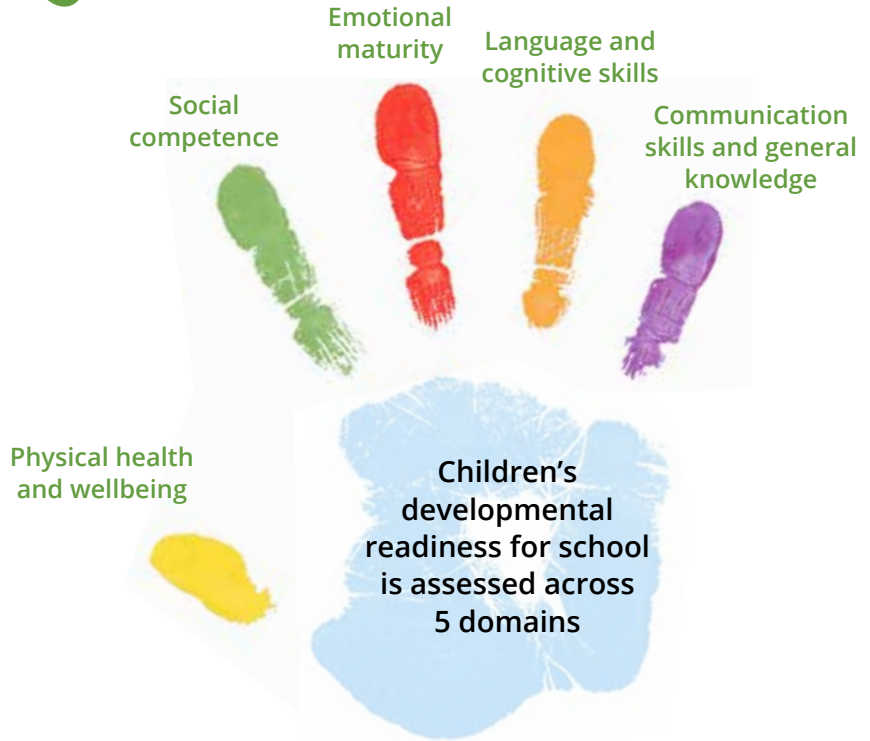


5 year olds

Find out more: Early childhood education and care
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapsots

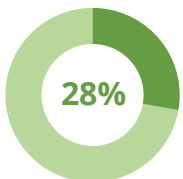
Are our children ready for school?

In 2018, **4 in 5** (78%) children were on track developmentally when they started primary school, according to assessments made by teachers.

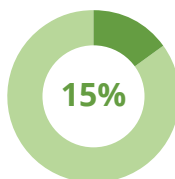


Developmental vulnerability differs by **sex**, **socioeconomic area**, and **remoteness area**. For example:

Boys are **nearly twice as likely** to be developmentally vulnerable on 1 or more domains as girls.



Boys



Girls



Find out more: Transition to primary school
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

How are our students performing?

In Australia, children must attend school until they complete Year 10. They must then participate in full-time education, employment, training or a mix, until they are 17.

Since national literacy and numeracy tests (National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy, or NAPLAN) began in 2008, the average scores have generally **improved** across different domains, except in writing.

Average NAPLAN score, change between 2008 and 2018

NAPLAN domain	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
Reading	↑	↑	↑	↑
Writing*	↓	↓	↓	↓
Spelling	↑	↑	↑	↑
Grammar & punctuation	↑	↑	↑	↑
Numeracy	↑	↑	↑	↑

↑ Statistically significant increase

↓ Statistically significant decrease

↑ Increase (not statistically significant)

↓ Decrease (not statistically significant)

* Writing comparison is for 2011 and 2018

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a 3-yearly survey of 15-year-old students around the world that focuses on science, reading and maths. Australian students continue to **perform above** the OECD average, but the gap has narrowed.

Average PISA score, Australia compared with OECD average, 2015

PISA subject areas	Australia	OECD average
Reading	503	493
Maths	494	490
Science	510	493

The latest survey took place in 2018 and results will be published in December 2019.

Find out more: School student engagement and performance
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

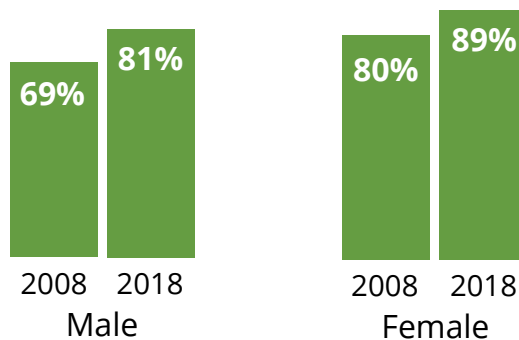
How many students are staying in school?

Participating in secondary education enables young people to develop skills and knowledge that can lead to improved health and wellbeing, and social and economic opportunities.




In 2018, **more than three-quarters (78%)** of people aged 15–64 had a Year 12 or equivalent qualification.

The proportion of students staying in school until Year 12 **has risen**.

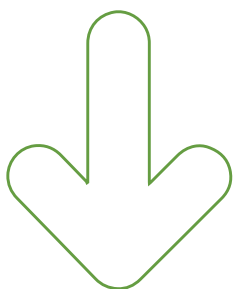


Find out more: Secondary education: school retention and completion
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Fewer people are studying to be apprentices or trainees



Apprenticeships and traineeships are central components of vocational education and training. They can be full time, part time or undertaken while still at school.



The number of Australians undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships **has been falling**.

2014

336,600 apprentices/trainees

3 in 10 (30%) were female

1 in 50 had disability

2018

267,400 apprentices/trainees

1 in 4 (25%) were female

1 in 50 had disability

161,700 people started apprenticeships and traineeships in 2018—this was **the lowest number of new starts since 1998** and less than half of the 377,000 in 2012.

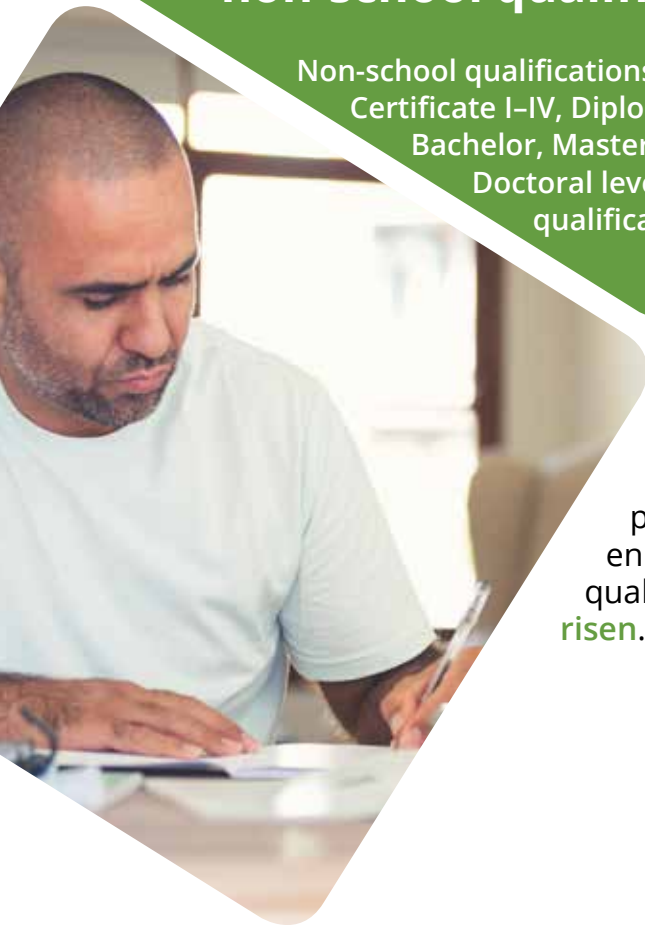


8 in 10 (80%) apprentices and trainees are employed after completing their training.

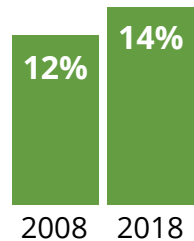
Find out more: Higher education and vocational education
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More Australians have non-school qualifications

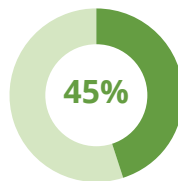
Non-school qualifications include Certificate I–IV, Diploma, Bachelor, Master and Doctoral level qualifications.



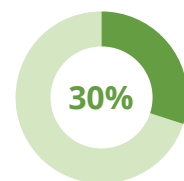
The proportion of people aged 15–64 enrolled in non-school qualifications **has risen.**



In 2018, **3 in 5** (60%, or 11 million) Australians aged 15–74 had a non-school qualification.



Bachelor degree or higher



Certificate III/IV

Roughly **the same proportion** of males and females have a non-school qualification.



Males (61%)



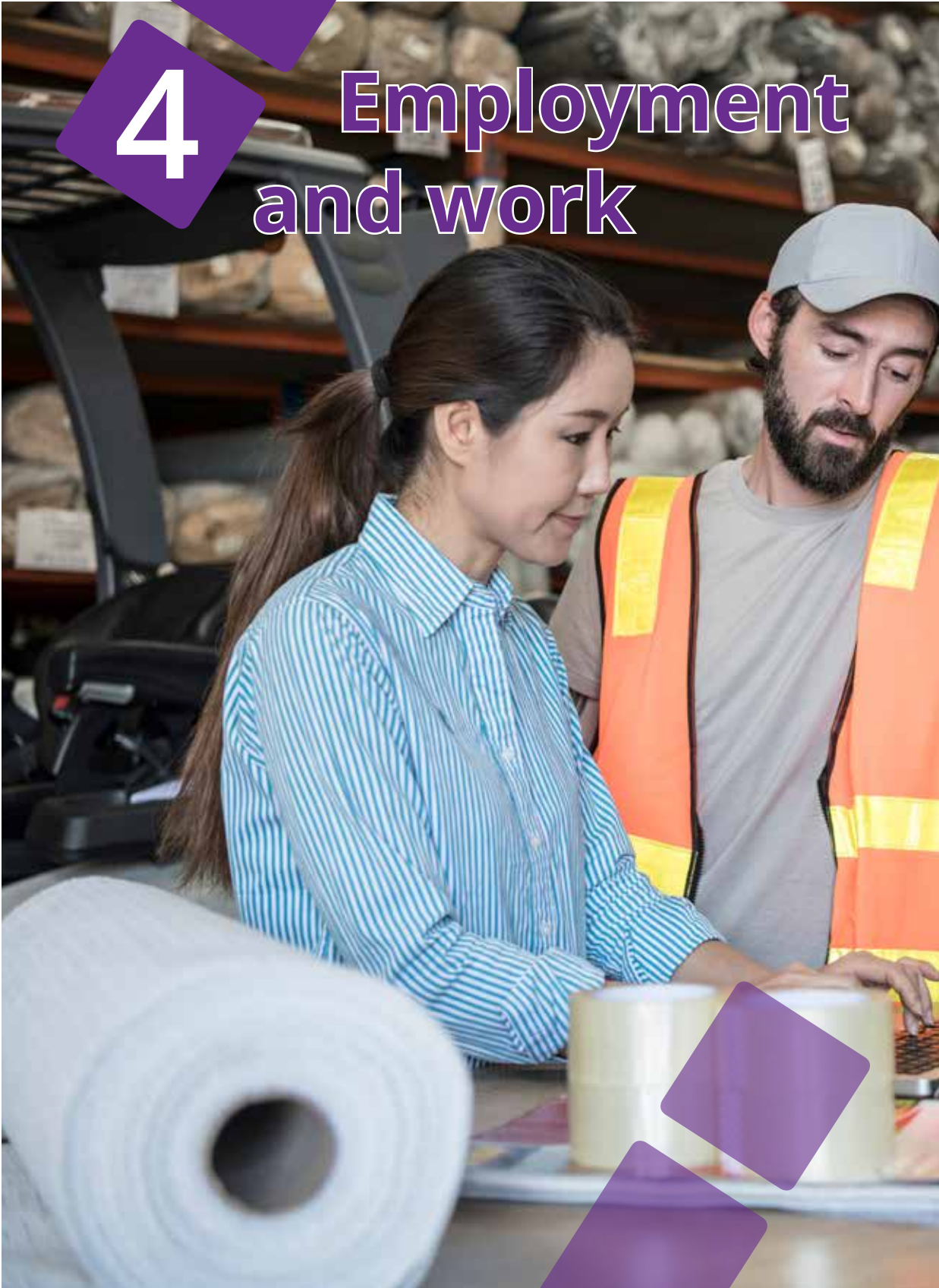
Females (60%)

Find out more: Higher education and vocational education
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots



4

Employment and work





Most Australians get all or at least some of their income from employment and, increasingly, that employment is part time. Working part time enables some people to balance work with other activities, including caring responsibilities. However, some people are ‘underemployed’—they are working fewer hours than they prefer.

Activities undertaken by volunteers are also very valuable. Volunteering benefits the economy and the health and wellbeing of volunteers.

Most of us have a job

Having a job enables people to support themselves, their families and their communities. Employment is also tied to physical and mental health outcomes and is important to a person's overall wellbeing.



The level of overall employment in Australia has risen since the 1970s—mostly driven by the increase in females joining the workforce.

In December 2018, the employment rate for females aged 15–64 was 70%—the highest point recorded in Australia.

In contrast, the rate for males was 79%, which was slightly lower than the 82% in 1978.



Females

1978	1988	1998	2008	2018
46%	55%	60%	67%	70%



Males

1978	1988	1998	2008	2018
82%	79%	76%	79%	79%

In December 2018, the unemployment rate was 5.1%.

Find out more: Employment trends
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More of us are working part time

For many people, working part time enables them to balance work with other activities, including caring for children, parents or those with disability. It can also help older Australians to stay in work while transitioning to retirement, and enables students to have a part-time job while studying.

Three in 10 Australians work part time.



The proportion of people working part time has **risen** over the past decade.

2008	2018
28%	31%

And more of us are underemployed



Not everyone who is employed is working the hours they are willing and available to work. These people are considered to be 'underemployed'.

Since the late 1970s, the **underemployment rate has trended upwards** for both males and females.

In December 2018, **1 in 11 (9.0%)** employed people aged 15–64 were underemployed—7.0% and 11.2% of the male and female labour force, respectively.



7.0%



11.2%

Find out more: Employment trends www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Employment services

Employment services help people to find a job and/or acquire the skills needed to find and maintain work. They primarily provide support to people who receive income support payments, such as Newstart Allowance. The main employment services program for Australian job-seekers receiving income support is *jobactive*. Other services include the Disability Employment Service and Transition to Work.

More than **364,000 job placements** were recorded in *jobactive* from April 2017 to March 2018.

Of people who left the *jobactive* program in the 12 months to March 2018:

- **64%** were employed 3 months later
- **21%** were unemployed
- **16%** had left the labour force

There were more than **49,300 job placements** under the **Disability Employment Service** in 2017–18.

Nearly **1 in 3 (32%)** people were in employment 3 months after taking part in the program.

About **2 in 5 (42%)** young people who have started the **Transition to Work** program since it began in 2016 have had a job placement.



How many Australians volunteer?

Volunteering benefits both the community and the people volunteering. Volunteers can bring new insights to organisations, helping to improve efficiency and effectiveness. For volunteers, benefits include greater social engagement, feeling happier and personal satisfaction.

Three in 10
Australians are
volunteers.



Find out more: Volunteers
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots



In 2014, **31%** of Australians aged 15 and over—5.8 million people—did some voluntary work. Of these, 54% were female and 46% were male.

How much time did they contribute? About **743 million hours**.

Who is most likely to volunteer?

- **15–17 year olds (42%)** followed by people aged 35–44 (39%) and 65–74 (35%)
- **Couples with children (38%)** compared with couples without children (29%) and individuals without children (25%)
- **People in *Outer regional and remote areas* (39%)** followed by *Inner regional* (33%) and *Major cities* (30%)
- **People in households with highest income (39%)** compared with lowest income (23%)
- **People who work part time (38%)** compared with those who work full time (30%), are not in the labour force (30%) or who are retired (27%)

5

Income and finance: government payments



Earning an income helps a person support themselves, their family and the community more broadly. However, some people may not be able to earn enough money to meet the everyday costs of living and require government assistance. Government payments, such as income support and family assistance, help those who may not be able to fully support themselves or would benefit from financial assistance at different stages of their life.

Fewer people are receiving unemployment and parenting payments

Income support payments assist people with the everyday costs of living. Unemployment payments provide assistance to those who cannot find work. Parenting payments are paid in recognition of the impact caring for a young child can have on a parent's capacity to work.



At 29 June 2018, about **7% or 1.1 million people** aged 18–64 were receiving unemployment or parenting payments, down from 13% or 1.3 million people in 2001.

The proportion of people aged 18–64 receiving **unemployment payments has remained relatively stable** over the past 2 decades, while the proportion receiving **parenting payments has fallen**.

Proportion of people aged 18–64 receiving **unemployment payments**

2001 5.3%  2018 5.2%

Proportion of people aged 18–64 receiving **parenting payments**

2001 5.1%  2018 2.1%



2 in 3 recipients of unemployment or parenting payments at 29 June 2018 had been receiving income support for 2 or more years.

Unemployment payment recipients

40% for less than 2 years

60% for 2 or more years

Parenting payment recipients

24% for less than 2 years

76% for 2 or more years

Find out more: Unemployment and parenting income support payments
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More women are receiving Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment

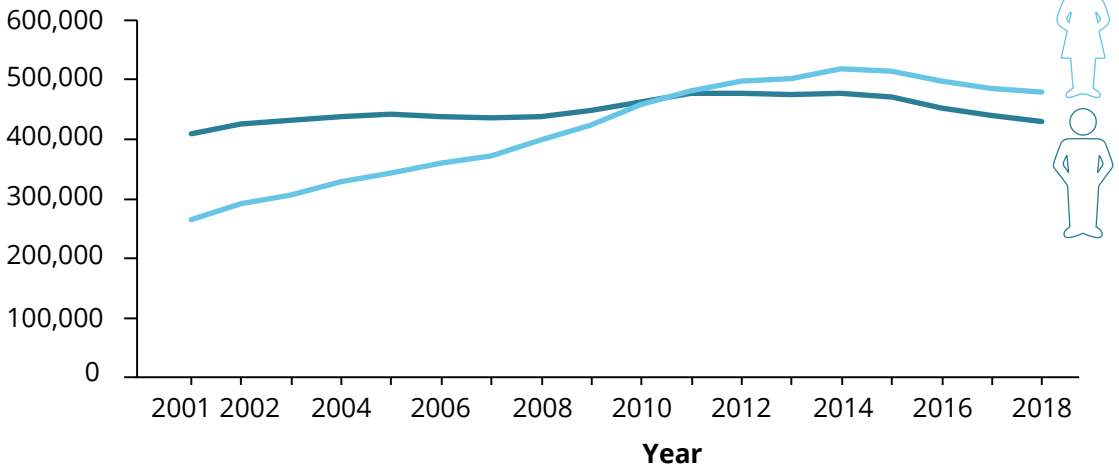
Disability Support Pension assists people who have a reduced capacity to work because of impairment. Carer Payment assists people who cannot fully support themselves through work because of their caring role.

At 29 June 2018, about **6%—or 908,200—**Australians aged 18–64 were receiving Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment.



In 2001, 1.5 times as many men received Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment as women. In 2018, **more women** were receiving one of these payments than men (478,600 and 429,600, respectively).

Number of people receiving Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment



Note: Data may differ from official statistics on income support payments and recipients, due to differences in methodology and/or data source.

Find out more: Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More than 2.6 million older Australians receive income support payments

After retiring, many older Australians (aged 65 and over) receive government assistance—including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment—as their main source of income.



Between 2001 and 2018, the proportion of older people receiving income support has remained **relatively stable**. However, an ageing and growing population means the number of older people receiving income support **rose from 1.6 million to 2.6 million—a 60% increase**.



The proportion of older people receiving **Age Pension** has remained **relatively stable** for most of the past 2 decades, but has fallen in recent years. The proportion of older people receiving **Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment** has **risen**—this is partially due to the incremental increase in the qualifying age for Age Pension.

Proportion of older people receiving **Age Pension**



Proportion of older people receiving **Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment**



At 29 June 2018, **37%** of older income support recipients received **part-rate payment**. The rate of payment is influenced by income earned from work, investments, superannuation and/or substantial assets.

Find out more: Welfare payments for older people
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Family Tax Benefit payments support 2.8 million children

Family Tax Benefit (FTB) is a payment designed to help families with the costs of raising children. If a family is found to be eligible, they may receive FTB Part A (a per child payment) or Part B (a per family payment for single parents or families with 1 main income).

At 29 June 2018, **1.4 million Australians** were receiving FTB payments, supporting **2.8 million children**.

Most FTB recipients received both FTB Part A and Part B.

77% received Part A and Part B

22% received Part A only

1% received Part B only

The number of people receiving FTB payments has fallen.

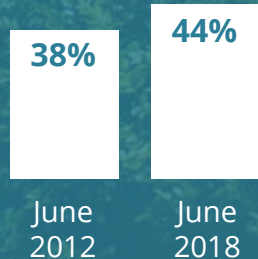
FTB Part A recipients



FTB Part B recipients



The proportion of FTB recipients receiving income support payments has **increased** over time.



Find out more: Family assistance payments
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

6

Social support





Social support in its broadest sense means people and services that you can turn to, or rely on, in times of need. Social support can be in the form of formal services or informal care.

Formal services include programs and payments available to the whole population or targeted to specific groups, such as those with disability or in aged care.

Informal carers can be family, friends or neighbours who provide assistance with activities such as child care, housework, or transport.

3 in 10 older Australians use aged care services

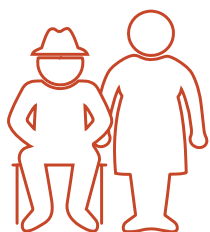


Aged care aims to promote the wellbeing and independence of older people by enabling them to stay in their own homes or by supporting them in residential care.

More than **1.2 million people** (or **3 in 10** older Australians) used aged care services in 2017–18.

Of these:

- **77% (around 927,000)** received support in their home or other setting in the community
- **1.6% (nearly 19,000)** were under the age of 65, including around 9,600 Indigenous Australians



More than **3,000 aged care providers in Australia** deliver care through nearly 9,000 outlets. The **cost to governments** in 2017–18 was **\$18.4 billion**.

Of Australians aged 65 and over in 2017–18:

- **7%** accessed residential aged care
- **22%** accessed some form of support or care at home
- **71%** lived at home without accessing government-subsidised aged care services

Find out more: Aged care www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More males use disability services

Specialist disability support services and payments help people with disability participate fully in all aspects of everyday life. Disability services are provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or the National Disability Agreement (NDA). The NDIS, which is currently being rolled out across Australia, is expected to largely replace the provision of services under the NDA.



In 2015, about **1 in 5 (18%)**—or 4.3 million Australians—**had disability**.

Of these, nearly **1 in 3 (32%)**, had severe or profound disability.

This means that they sometimes or always needed help with day-to-day activities related to self-care, mobility or communication.

Of the 172,000 people using services under the NDIS (having an approved individual support plan and an associated funding package) at June 2018:

- more than **3 in 5 (62%)** were male
- **almost half (47%)** were aged 18 and under
- **1 in 20 (5.4%)** were Indigenous

Of 280,000 people using services under the NDA in 2017–18:

- **almost 3 in 5 (58%)** were male
- the average age was **37**
- **1 in 17 (5.9%)** were Indigenous



Find out more: Supporting people with disability www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

2.7 million Australians are informal carers

Informal care is unpaid and usually takes place in the context of an existing relationship such as a family member, a friend or a neighbour. The type and level of care varies considerably, and can include helping someone with showering, eating or shopping, transport, or providing in-home supervision.



More than **1 in 10** Australians—or 2.7 million people—were informal carers in 2015.

Of these:

- almost **1 in 3 (32%,** or 860,000) were primary carers—meaning they provided the most care to the person needing support
- more than **1 in 3 (37%,** or 991,000) were aged 35–54
- 274,000 carers aged 16 and over received the means-tested **Carer Payment**

Find out more: Informal carers
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

1 in 4 Australians are lonely

Loneliness has been linked to premature death, poor physical and mental health and general dissatisfaction with life.



1 in 4 Australians are currently experiencing an episode of loneliness.



1 in 2 Australians feel lonely at least 1 day a week.



1 in 10 Australians say they lack social support.

Loneliness is more common among people who live alone—**1 in 4 Australian households** are made up of a person living on their own.

Loneliness is also more common among:

- young adults
- males
- people with children



7

Justice and safety





Ensuring the safety of the community can take many forms and involve many systems. The prison and youth justice systems deal with people who have committed—or are alleged to have committed—a crime. Other systems work to protect children from harm, and ensure they grow up in a safe environment.

Who is in prison in Australia?

Prisoners often face a range of social and health challenges before they arrive in prison.

Addressing the health and welfare concerns of prisoners may help them reintegrate into the community.

Prisoners are more likely to be **young, male, and Indigenous** when compared with the general community.



4 in 5 are male
2 in 5 are Indigenous
2 in 3 are aged under 40

Most people entering prison have been **in prison before** and **many are unemployed**.



3 in 4 have been in prison before



1 in 2 are unemployed

Find out more: Adult prisoners www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

How many young people are under youth justice supervision?

The youth justice system manages children and young people (aged 10 years and over) who have committed or allegedly committed a crime. They may be supervised in the community or in detention facilities.

On an average day in 2017–18, there were about **5,500 people aged 10 and over** under youth justice supervision.

Young people from *Very remote* areas were **9 times as likely** as those from *Major cities* to be under supervision.

Find out more:
Youth justice
[www.aihw.gov.au/
australias-welfare/
snapshots](http://www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots)



1 in every 35 children receives child protection services



In 2017–18, about 159,000 children aged 0–17—or 1 in 35—received child protection services.

- At 30 June 2018, around **45,800 children** were in out-of-home care, such as foster care. Of these children, **82%** had been continuously in out-of-home care for 1 year or more.
- Over the past 5 years, the number of children receiving child protection services **rose by 11%**—from 143,000 children (27.2 per 1,000) in 2013–14 to 158,600 children (28.7 per 1,000) in 2017–18.

A range of factors may be behind the rise in children receiving protection services. Increased public awareness and reporting, legislative changes and inquiries into the child protection processes all play a part, as well as potential rises in the rate of child abuse and neglect.

Find out more: Child protection www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapsots

Most adoptions are by people the child already knows

Known child adoptions are where an Australian child is adopted by Australian adoptive parent(s) who were known to the child prior to adoption. This includes adoptions by step-parents, other relatives and foster parents.

Local adoptions are adoptions of Australian children by Australian parent(s), but where the child and adoptive parents did not already know each other.

Intercountry adoptions are when Australian parent(s) adopt children from overseas.

In 2017–18, **330 children were adopted**, up from 315 the year before.

- The increase is mostly due to a rise in the number of known child adoptions.
- Of the 233 known child adoptions finalised in 2017–18, 63% were by carers, such as a foster parent.



Find out more: Adoptions
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

How common is family, domestic and sexual violence?

Family violence is violence between family members. Violence occurring in intimate partner relationships (either current or previous) is usually referred to as domestic violence. Sexual violence refers to sexual behaviour carried out against a person's will. It can be perpetrated by a current or former partner, other people known to the victim, or strangers.

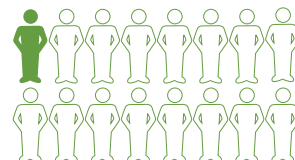


Family, domestic and sexual violence affects people of all ages and backgrounds, but it **mostly affects women and children**.



1 in 6 women
17% or 1.6 million

have experienced **physical or sexual violence** by a current or previous partner since the age of 15

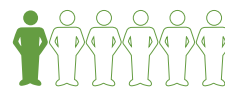


1 in 16 men
6.1% or 548,000



1 in 4 women
23% or 2.2 million

have experienced **emotional abuse** by a current or previous partner since the age of 15

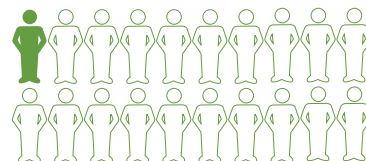


1 in 6 men
16% or 1.4 million



1 in 5 women
18% or 1.7 million

have experienced **sexual violence** since the age of 15

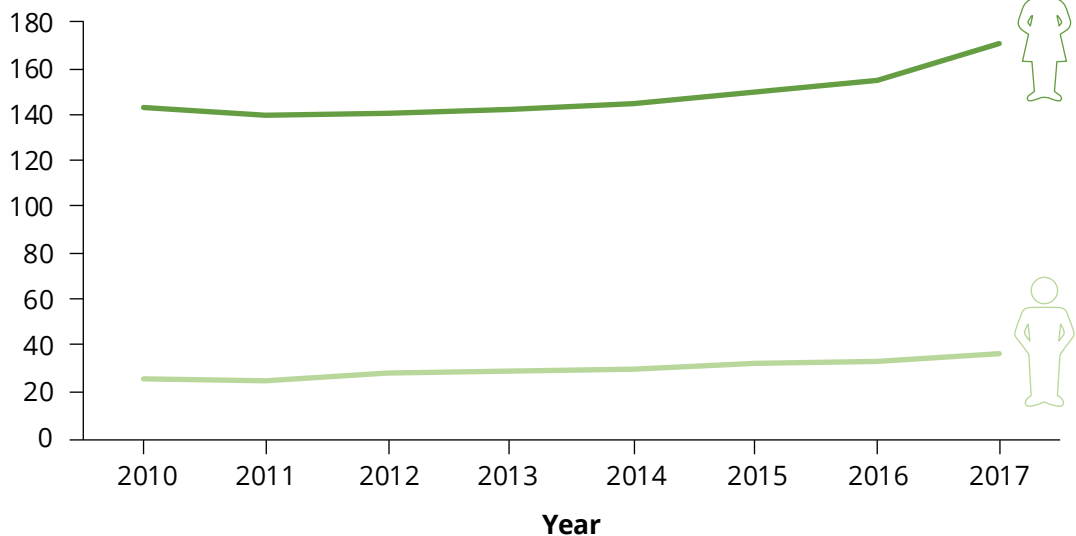


1 in 20 men
4.7% or 429,000

Rates of partner and sexual violence have remained **relatively stable** since 2005, while rates of total violence have fallen, according to survey data.

However, the number and rate of sexual assault victims recorded by police **has risen** each year since 2011. Increases in recording of sexual assault can be caused by an increase in incidents, an increase in reporting to police, or both.

Victims of sexual assault recorded by police per 100,000 people



Nationally, the number of clients reporting that they had experienced family and domestic violence and sought assistance from specialist homelessness services agencies **has risen from 84,800 people in 2013–14 to 121,000 in 2017–18.**

If you are experiencing family, domestic or sexual violence, or know someone who is, call **1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)** or visit the [1800RESPECT website](#) (National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service for people living in Australia).

Find out more: Family, domestic and sexual violence www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapsots



8

Indigenous Australians



For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, wellbeing encompasses not only the wellbeing of the individual, but also the wellbeing of the community. In recent years, improvements in a range of areas for Indigenous Australians are evident. These include home ownership, household overcrowding, and Year 12 completion rates. However, despite this, as a group, Indigenous Australians still experience widespread social and economic disadvantage.

Profile of Indigenous Australians

The Australian Government defines Indigenous Australians as people who: are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin; and are accepted as such in the communities in which they live, or have lived.

In most data collections, a person is considered Indigenous if they identified themselves, or were identified by another household member, as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. For a few programs, information on acceptance of a person as being Indigenous by an Indigenous community may also be required.

In 2016, there were **nearly 800,000** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia—or **3.3% of the total population**.

91% identify as being of Aboriginal origin

5% identify as being of Torres Strait Islander origin

4% identify as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin



Of all Indigenous Australians:

- **1 in 3 (34%)** are under 15



- **4 in 5 (81%)** live in non-remote areas—*Major cities (37%), Inner regional (24%) or Outer regional (20%)* areas



Of Indigenous Australian aged 15 and over in 2014–15:

- **3 in 4 (74%)** recognise an area as homelands or traditional country



- nearly **1 in 5 (18%)** speak an Australian Indigenous language

Find out more: Profile of Indigenous Australians www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

The Stolen Generations fare worse than other Indigenous Australians

Who are the Stolen Generations?

Between about 1910 and 1970, many Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families as part of a systematic policy of various governments in Australia to assimilate Indigenous Australians into mainstream society. These children are now referred to as the Stolen Generations.

In 2014–15, there were an **estimated 20,900 surviving members** of the Indigenous population born before 1972 who reported having been removed from their families.

66% were aged 50 and over

56% were women

79% lived in non-remote areas

The Stolen Generations are a particularly disadvantaged group of Indigenous Australians. Compared with Indigenous Australians who were not removed, those born before 1972 who were removed were:

- **3.3 times as likely** to have been incarcerated in the previous 5 years
- **1.8 times as likely** to have government payments as their main source of income
- **1.7 times as likely** to have experienced actual or threatened physical violence in the previous 12 months
- **1.6 times as likely** to have experienced homelessness in the previous 10 years

Find out more: Understanding Indigenous welfare and wellbeing
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

More Indigenous Australians are home owners

A safe, secure home with working facilities is crucial to a person's overall health and wellbeing.



Of the estimated 263,000 Indigenous households in 2016, **nearly 2 in 5** were home owners, **1 in 3** were renting privately and **1 in 5** lived in social housing.

Indigenous home ownership **has risen** over the past decade while home ownership among Other Australian households has fallen.

Indigenous households

2006	2016
34%	38%

In 2016, **1 in 10 (or about 26,400)** Indigenous households and **1 in 5 (or about 114,400)** Indigenous Australians lived in overcrowded conditions. Both of these proportions **have fallen**.

Indigenous households

2001	2016
16%	10%

Indigenous Australians

2001	2016
30%	20%

Find out more: Indigenous housing www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Are we closing the gap in education?

Education is a key focus of the Council of Australian Governments Closing the Gap targets, highlighting its importance in helping to overcome Indigenous disadvantage.



There are 4 education-related Closing the Gap targets and 2 of these are on track to be met:

✓ **on track** to ensure 95% of Indigenous 4-year-olds are enrolled in early childhood education by 2025

In 2017, around **15,700 (95%)** Indigenous 4 year olds were enrolled in early childhood education, in line with the target of 95% enrolment by 2025.

✓ **on track** to halve the gap for Year 12 attainment rates by 2020

In 2016, **65%** of Indigenous 20–24 year olds had a Year 12 or equivalent qualification, in line with the target to halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people by 2020.

Find out more: Indigenous education and skills www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots



Chances of employment fall outside major cities

Having a job is central to improving opportunities for all Australians. Work contributes to higher personal and family incomes, and has a positive effect on a person's health, general wellbeing and social outcomes.

In 2016, **47%** of Indigenous Australians aged 15–64 were employed—**45%** of Indigenous females and **49%** of Indigenous males. This compares with the non-Indigenous employment rate of around **72%**.

Indigenous Australians aged 15–64 were more likely to be employed:

- the closer they lived to *Major cities* (**54%** compared with **31%** in *Very remote areas*)
- the higher their level of education (**83%** for Bachelor degree or higher compared with **22%** for Year 9 or lower)

The employment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians **narrows** as education levels increase—there was no gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians with a Bachelor degree or higher.

The most common occupations for Indigenous Australians were:

- community and personal service workers (18%)
- general labourers (16%)
- technicians and trades workers (14%)
- professionals (14%)

The Closing the Gap target of halving the gap in employment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade **is not on track** to be met.

Find out more: Indigenous employment www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapsots

Fewer Indigenous Australians rely on government payments

Having an adequate level of income, and access to assistance when in need, are essential components in the measurement of individual and household wellbeing. For many disadvantaged Australians, including some Indigenous Australians, having access to income assistance is a key factor in ensuring their economic and social wellbeing.

In 2014–15, **52% of Indigenous Australians** aged 15 and over relied on government payments as their main income source—**down from 65%** in 2002.

Median weekly personal income:









Indigenous Australians		non-Indigenous Australians	
2011	2016	2011	2016
\$362	\$441	\$585	\$670
11% increase (adjusted for inflation)		5% increase (adjusted for inflation)	

At 30 June 2018, around **45% (234,600)** of Indigenous Australians aged 15 and over were receiving some form of **income support payment**. Among them:

   **1 in 3 (76,200)** received Newstart Allowance

     **1 in 5 (48,500)** received Disability Support Pension

      **1 in 6 (36,800)** received Parenting Payment Partnered

            **1 in 12 (19,900)** received Age Pension

Find out more: Indigenous income and finance www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

An elderly Indigenous Australian couple is walking on a green lawn in front of a light-colored house with white window frames. The man is on the left, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. The woman is on the right, wearing a blue sleeveless top and blue jeans, and is smiling. The background shows a clear sky and the side of the house.

More than 20,000 older Indigenous Australians receive aged care support in their home

The Indigenous population has a much younger age structure than the non-Indigenous population. However, as with the general population, the Indigenous population is also ageing.

In 2016, there were about 124,000 Indigenous Australians aged 50 and over.

Among older Indigenous Australians:

- 20,200 received **home support** during 2017–18
- 2,900 were receiving **home care** at 30 June 2018
- 1,700 were living in **residential aged care** at 30 June 2018

Among people aged 65–74, compared with non-Indigenous Australians, Indigenous Australians were:

- **3.1 times as likely** to use home support
- **7.1 times as likely** to use home care
- **2.1 times as likely** to use residential aged care

Find out more: Aged care for Indigenous Australians
www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

1 in 4 Indigenous Australians have disability

Disability can affect a person's participation in work, education and social activities. For Indigenous Australians, having disability can place them at further economic and social disadvantage.

In 2015, **1 in 4 (24%, or 125,000 people)** Indigenous Australians in private households were living with disability, and **7.3%** had severe or profound disability.

Disability rates were higher in older ages. Of Indigenous Australians aged 55 and over:

- **over half (58%)** were living with some form of disability
- **nearly 1 in 5 (18%)** had severe or profound disability

In 2017–18, nearly 16,000 Indigenous Australians were receiving disability support services under the National Disability Agreement (NDA). Disability service users are transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). At 30 June 2018, nearly 9,300 Indigenous Australians were active participants in the NDIS.

Compared with non-Indigenous Australians, Indigenous Australians were:

- **1.8 times as likely** to have disability
- **2.0 times as likely** to use NDA disability support services

Indigenous community safety



Many factors can influence community safety and wellbeing for Indigenous Australians. Positive influences include being connected to Country, land, family and spirit; having strong and positive social networks; and having strong leadership in both the family and the community.

In 2014–15, **87%** of Indigenous Australians aged 15 and over reported they felt **safe** or **very safe** while at home after dark.

68% reported that they felt **safe** or **very safe** walking alone in their local area after dark.

Experiences of violence

- **22%** of Indigenous Australians aged 15 and over reported in 2014–15 they were a victim of **physical or threatened violence** in the last 12 months.
- Rates were similar for Indigenous females (**22%**) and males (**23%**).
- **Actual physical violence** was experienced by **13%** of Indigenous Australians aged 15 and over.

Child protection

- 48,300 Indigenous children aged 0–17 were receiving **child protection services** in 2017–18 (164 per 1,000).
- 17,800 (59 per 1,000) Indigenous children were in **out-of-home care** at 30 June 2018. Of these children, 65% were placed with relatives or kin, or other Indigenous caregivers.



Contact with police and the criminal justice system


- 472 Indigenous youth aged 10–17 were supervised in **youth detention** on an average day in 2017–18, a rate 23 times as high as non-Indigenous youth (37 compared with 1.6 per 10,000).
- 11,800 Indigenous adults were **imprisoned** as at 30 June 2018 (2,481 per 100,000), of which 90% were men.

Find out more: Indigenous community safety www.aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/snapshots

Australia's welfare 2019: in brief tells the story of welfare in Australia with key findings on housing, education and skills, employment and work, income and finance: government payments, social support, justice and safety, and Indigenous Australians.

Australia's welfare 2019 is the 14th biennial welfare report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. This edition introduces a new format and expanded product suite:

- *Australia's welfare 2019: data insights*
- Australia's welfare snapshots
- *Australia's welfare 2019: in brief*
- Australia's welfare indicators

 +61 2 6244 1000

 info@aihw.gov.au

 @aihw

 www.aihw.gov.au

 GPO Box 570
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

 1 Thynne Street
Bruce ACT 2617
Australia

AIHW

Stronger evidence,
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