



Chapter

12

Indicators of Australia's welfare

12.1	Introduction	362
12.2	Healthy living	363
12.3	Autonomy and participation	372
12.4	Social cohesion	382
12.5	Indicator definitions	389
	References	395

12 Indicators of Australia's welfare

12.1 Introduction

Welfare is difficult to define in specific and universally agreed terms. Nonetheless, some tangible and measurable aspects of welfare can be delineated, and, in earlier volumes of *Australia's welfare*, a conceptual framework for welfare was outlined.

The framework specifies three domains of welfare (AIHW 2007):

- Healthy living, which embodies the most basic human needs—good health, shelter and freedom from harm.
- Autonomy and participation, a concept which reflects the value people place on the opportunity to realise their potential, to be self-sufficient, and to participate in their community.
- Social cohesion, which attests to the importance to individuals of relationships, both at the personal and the societal level.

Figure 12.1 illustrates the framework and specifies 12 indicator topics that relate to these domains—this chapter will present a series of indicators relating to these 12 topics. It is important to note that the indicators which will be presented are not exhaustive and do not exist in isolation. Rather, they were chosen for their ability to provide sensitive, reliable, robust and readily understood statistical information that reflects issues of importance to the Australian population (AIHW: Bricknell S. et al. 2004).

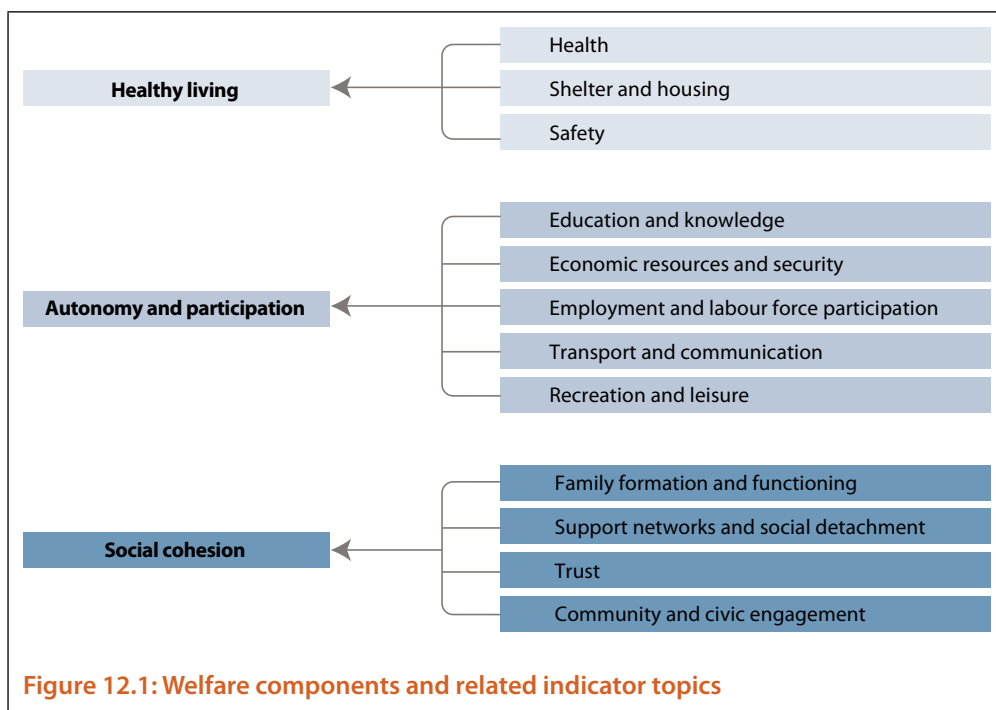
As far as is possible and meaningful, three types of measures are presented:

- measures of level (for example, the proportion of adults who were obese in 2007–08)
- measures of distribution (for example, the proportion of males and females, or persons by age group, or persons by income group, who were obese in 2007–08)
- measures of changes in levels over time (for example, the change in the proportion of adults who were obese between 2001 and 2007–08).

The welfare of Australians, how it is distributed throughout society, and how it has changed over time, are important topics of community discussion. Issues currently being debated in the public sphere include:

- How has the global financial crisis (GFC) impacted the welfare of Australians?
- Do Australians enjoy balance in their lives—that is, are they able to live healthy lives and build healthy relationships while generating enough income to live and participate in society?
- Do disadvantaged Australians—in particular Indigenous Australians—experience an adequate standard of living?

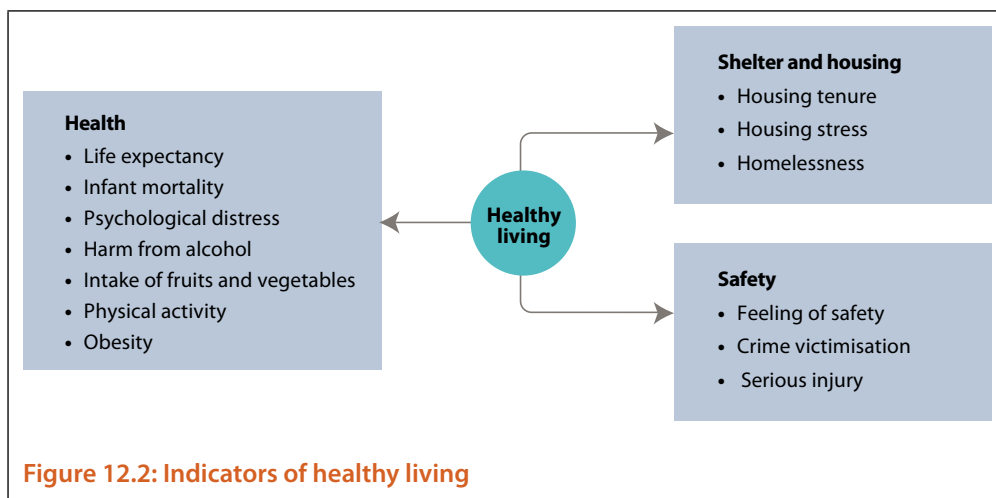
This chapter attempts to contribute to these discussions by presenting current national data on a diverse array of topics related to Australia's welfare. Each of the following three sections contains a brief description of one of the three domains of welfare, the components of each domain, and the indicators related to each component; followed by indicator results. Statistical definitions for each indicator are provided in the final section of this chapter.



12.2 Healthy living

Healthy living embodies the most basic needs of human beings—good health, shelter and freedom from harm. These factors play an important role in the promotion and maintenance of physical, mental and social wellbeing.

The conceptual framework defines three components of healthy living—health, shelter and housing, and safety.



Good health represents quality of life in terms of longevity and functioning. Health can influence participation in many aspects of life, including education, work and recreation; it is thus an important resource for personal, social and economic development and participation, as well as being important in its own right (AIHW 2010).

Seven indicators of healthy living are presented:

- Life expectancy at birth. Life expectancy is a well-established and widely accepted indicator of the general health of a population.
- Infant mortality rate. Infant mortality is also a well-established and widely accepted indicator of population health.
- Proportion of adults reporting very high levels of psychological distress. Reported psychological distress may be a useful proxy for the existence of a mental health problem, which can cause considerable suffering and may contribute to individuals experiencing social isolation, poor quality of life and higher mortality rates, as well as having negative effects on families and the wider community (WHO 2006a).
- Proportion of people aged 14 years or over at risk of lifetime harm from alcohol. Excessive alcohol use is a major risk factor for morbidity and mortality, and has wider social and economic costs.
- Proportion of people aged 15 and over that usually consume the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables. Eating sufficient fruits and vegetables plays an important role in maintaining good health, contributing to the prevention of many chronic diseases, as well as overweight and obesity (WHO 2003).
- Proportion of people aged 15 years or over who reported sedentary levels of exercise. Regular physical activity also plays an important role in maintaining good health, and can also provide social and mental health benefits (WHO 2006b).
- Proportion of adults who are obese. Obesity has many negative consequences, including increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure and some cancers (WHO 2000).

A more thorough investigation of these indicators and other determinants of health are provided in *Australia's health 2010*.

Access to adequate shelter and housing is recognised as a basic human need. As well as providing protection from environmental elements and access to facilities such as heating and sanitation, housing gives people a place to enjoy security and privacy, and to form and maintain relationships with family and friends. Having a home also enables people to engage with the wider community—socially, recreationally and economically—and may influence both physical and mental health. In addition, housing equity is a major component of wealth.

Three indicators of shelter and housing are presented:

- Proportion of households with selected tenure types. Stable tenure brings security and a sense of permanence; home ownership also brings autonomy and an opportunity to build wealth, and is a goal to which many Australians have traditionally aspired.
- Proportion of lower income households that spent more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. This is a commonly used indicator of housing affordability.

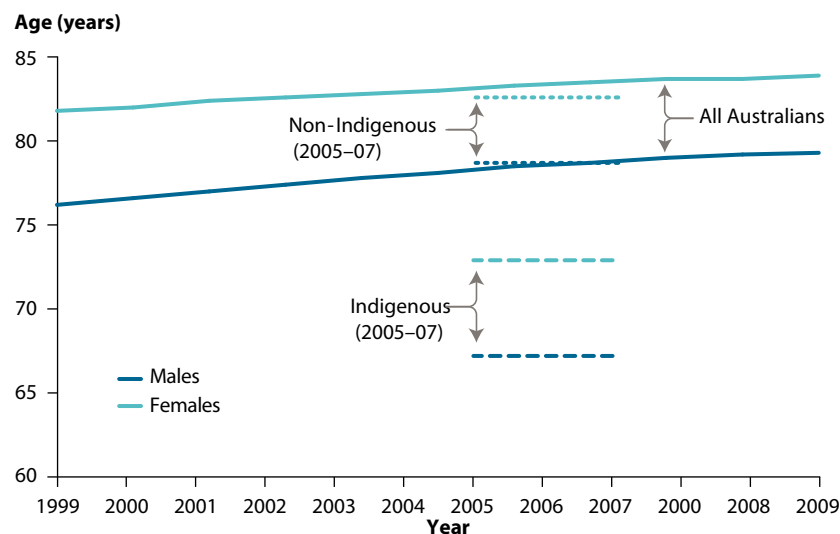
- Number of homeless people. Homeless people are among Australia's most disadvantaged. Contemporary definitions of homelessness refer not only to the absence of conventional accommodation (for instance, those sleeping rough or living in makeshift dwellings), but also to people with transient accommodation—those staying with friends or relatives, using Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) services, and living in boarding houses.

Safety is an important indicator for both physical and mental wellbeing. Issues surrounding safety not only reflect protection from actual harm, but also from perceived harm. Fear, crime and injury can have serious detrimental effects, both for those directly affected and for those involved through family, friendship or community ties.

Three indicators of safety are presented:

- Proportion of people aged 15 years or over who feel safe in various situations. As well as having a negative effect on mental wellbeing, feeling unsafe may also have an impact on people's ability to engage with their communities.
- Victimisation rate of selected crimes. Experiences of crime, as well as being traumatic for victims in their own right, may have a negative effect on feelings of safety, both for the victims and for the community. In addition, there are costs involved in treating victims and apprehending and sentencing perpetrators.
- Rate of hospitalisation due to injury. Serious injuries can have a considerable negative impact on physical and mental wellbeing, and also represent costs to the health system (AIHW 2010).

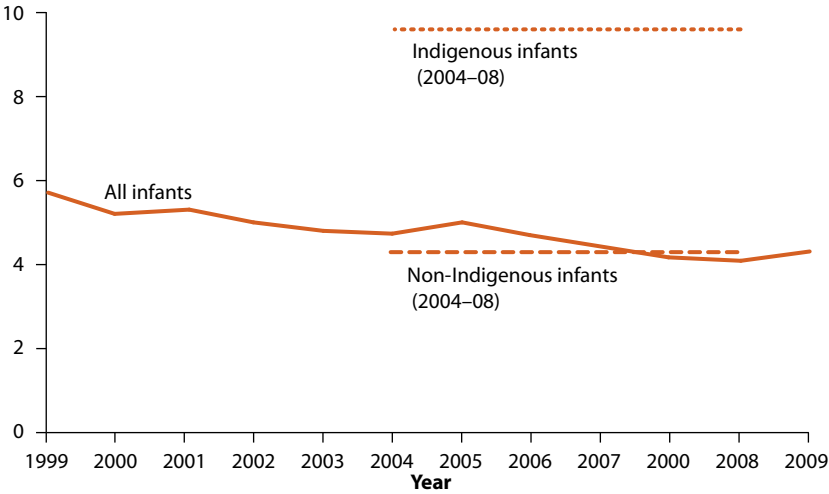
Life expectancy at birth



- Australian life expectancy in 2009 was 79.3 years for males and 83.9 years for females—among the highest in the world for both sexes.
- Between 1999 and 2009 life expectancy rose by 3.1 years for males and 2.1 years for females.
- Life expectancy for Indigenous Australians over the period 2005–2007 was 67.2 years for males and 73.2 years for females.

Infant mortality rate

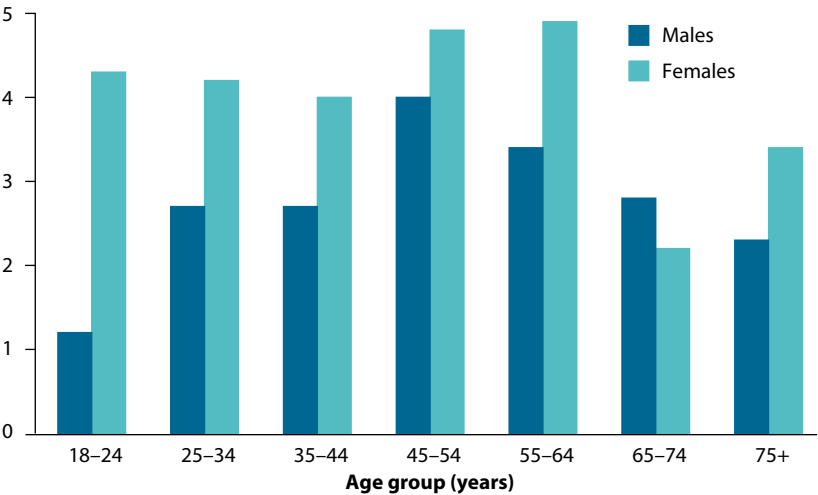
Per 1,000 live births



- In 2009, there were 4.3 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.
- The rate fell 25% between 1999 and 2009.
- Mortality was twice as high for Indigenous infants (9.6 per 1,000 births) as non-Indigenous infants (4.3 per 1,000 births) over the period 2004–2008

Adults reporting very high levels of psychological distress

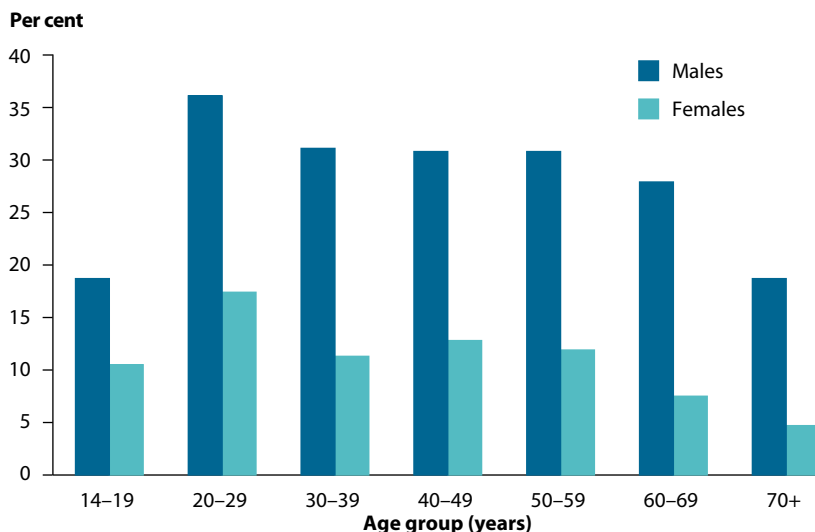
Per cent



Source: Table A12.3.

- In 2007–08, 2.8% of males and 4.1% of females reported very high levels of psychological distress.
- Psychological distress was most prevalent for males aged 45–54 years and females aged 55–64 years.
- Rates were lower than in 2004–05 for both sexes.

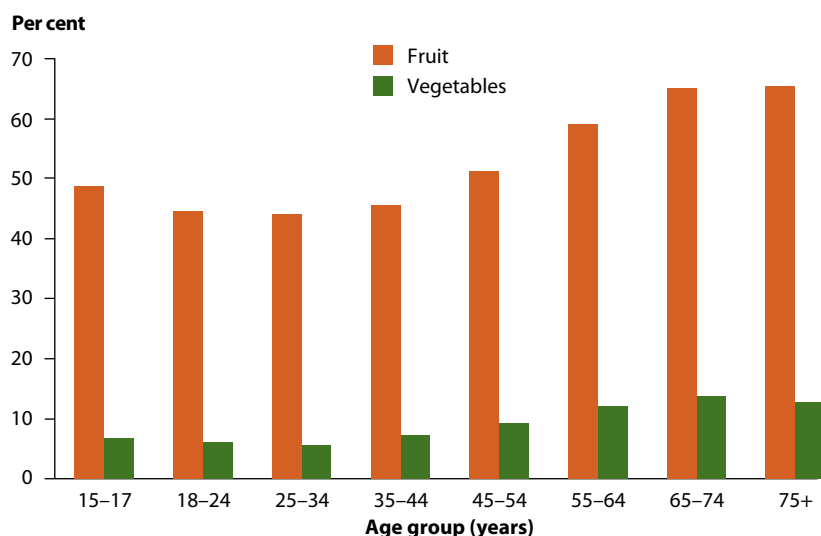
People aged 14 years or over at risk of lifetime harm from alcohol



Source: Table A12.4.

- In 2010, 20% of people aged 14 years or over consumed alcohol in quantities that put them at risk of harm from alcohol-related disease over injury over their lifetime—the same as in 2007.
- Males were more likely than females to be at risk (29% compared to 11%)
- Risky drinking was most common among people aged 20–29 years.

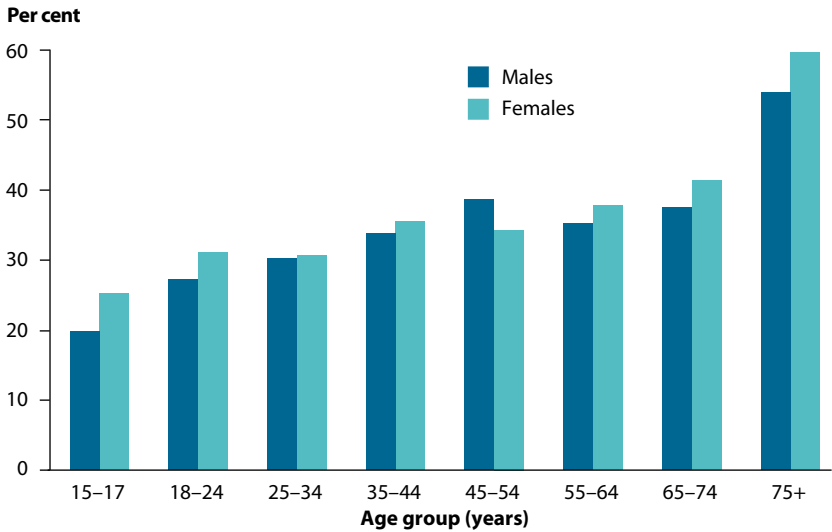
People aged 15 years or over who usually eat the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables



Source: Table A12.5.

- In 2007–08, 51% usually ate enough fruit and 9% ate enough vegetables.
- Females were more likely than males to consume recommended amounts—56% and 46% of female and males, respectively, ate enough fruit; 10% and 7% enough vegetables.
- Sufficient consumption was lowest for people aged 25–34 years, and highest for those aged over 65 years.

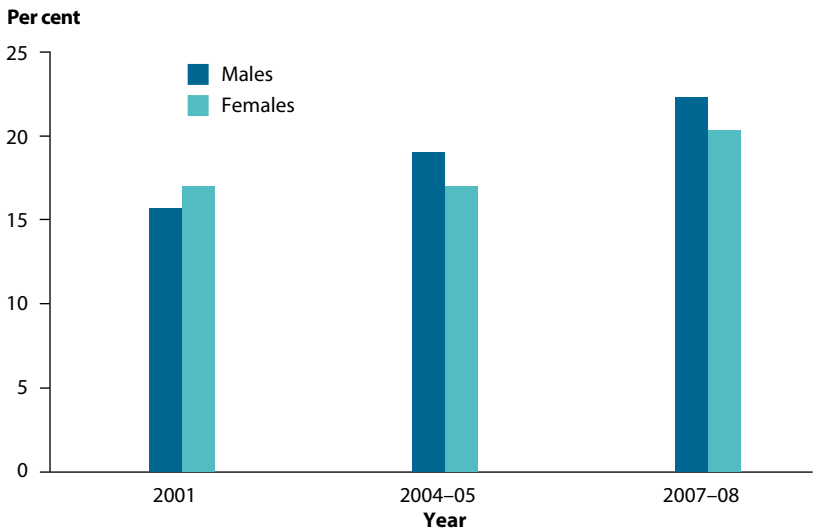
People aged 15 years or over who reported sedentary levels of exercise



- In 2007–08, 35% of people aged 15 years or over were sedentary—that is, they did no or very little exercise.
- People aged 15–17 years (23%) were least likely to be sedentary; and people aged 75 years or over (57%) mostly likely.

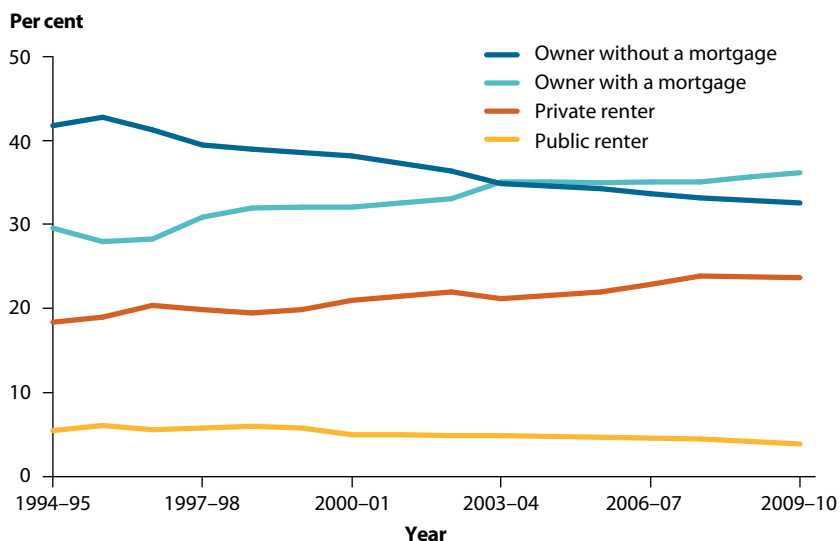
12

Adults who are obese



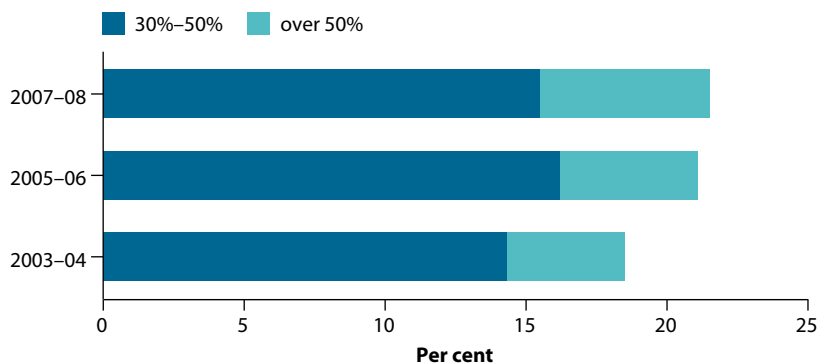
- In 2007–08, 21% of adults were obese—22% of males and 20% of females.
- Both males and females aged 18–24 years were least likely to be obese (10% and 8%, respectively); and middle-aged people most likely (28% of each sex).
- The obesity rate has increased from 16% in 2001.

Household tenure types



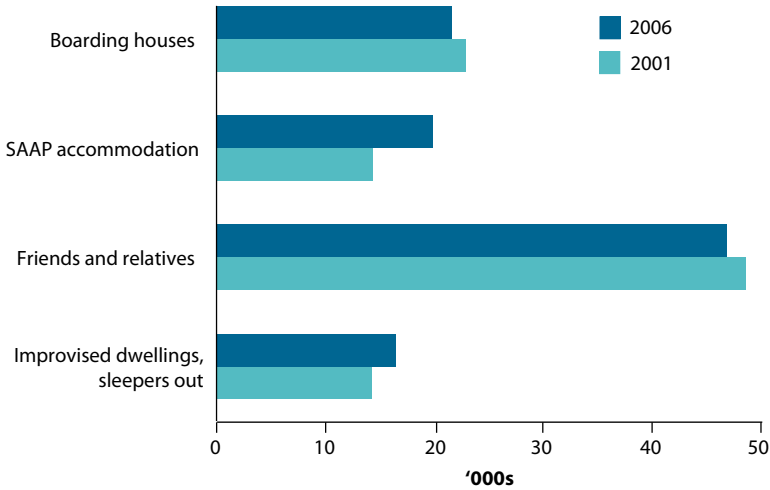
- In 2009–10, 69% of households were owner–occupiers (36% with a mortgage; 33% without), 4% were public renters, and 24% private renters.
- Tenure type varied considerably with household composition.
- Patterns of tenure have undergone appreciable change since 1994–95—there are now more owners with a mortgage than without.

Lower income households that spent more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs



- In 2007–08, 22% of lower income households spent more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs, including 6% that spent more than 50%.
- 45% of lower income private renters, and 42% of lower income owners with a mortgage, spent more than 30%.
- The share of lower income households spending over 30% increased from 19% in 2003–04.

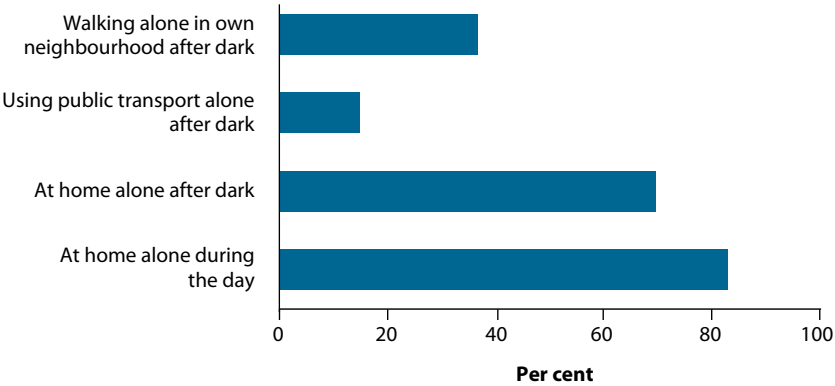
Number of homeless people



Source: Table A12.10.

- In 2006, there were 104,676 people estimated to be homeless according to the broad social definition (see Chapter 8)—53 per 10,000 population.
- Homeless people were most likely to be staying temporarily with friends or relatives (45%).
- The number increased since 2001 (from 99,900), but the population rate was unchanged.

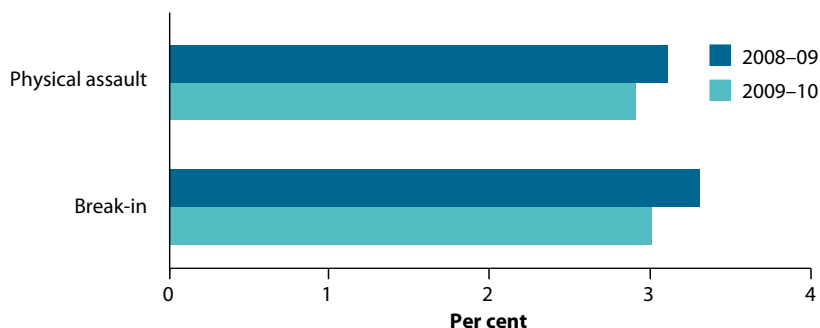
People aged 15 years or over who feel safe in various situations



Source: Table A12.11.

- In 2008–09, 83% felt ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’ alone at home during the day, and after dark 70% felt safe or very safe at home, 37% walking in their neighbourhood and 15% using public transport.
- Because of safety concerns, 10% did not use public transport alone after dark and 15% did not walk alone in their neighbourhoods after dark.
- Since 2005 the proportion feeling safe alone at home has not changed markedly.

Victimisation rate for selected crimes

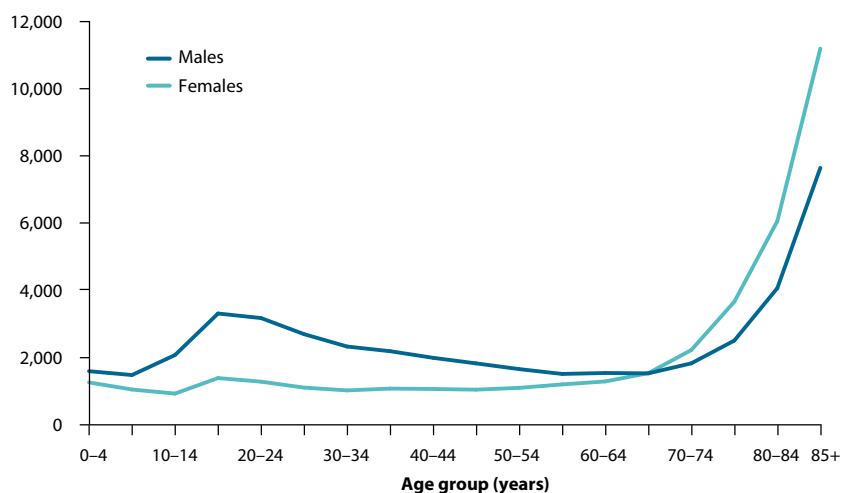


Source: Table A12.12.

- In 2009–10, 2.9% of people aged 15 years or over were victims of a physical assault, and 3.0% of households were victims of a break-in.
- Males (3.4%) were more likely to be assault victims than females (2.4%); people aged 15–19 years were the most likely to be assault victims (6.0%), and people aged 65 years and over the least likely (0.8%).
- Since 2008–09, there has been a slight decrease in victimisation rates for physical assault (from 3.1%), and for break-ins (3.3%).

Hospitalisation due to injury

Per 100,000



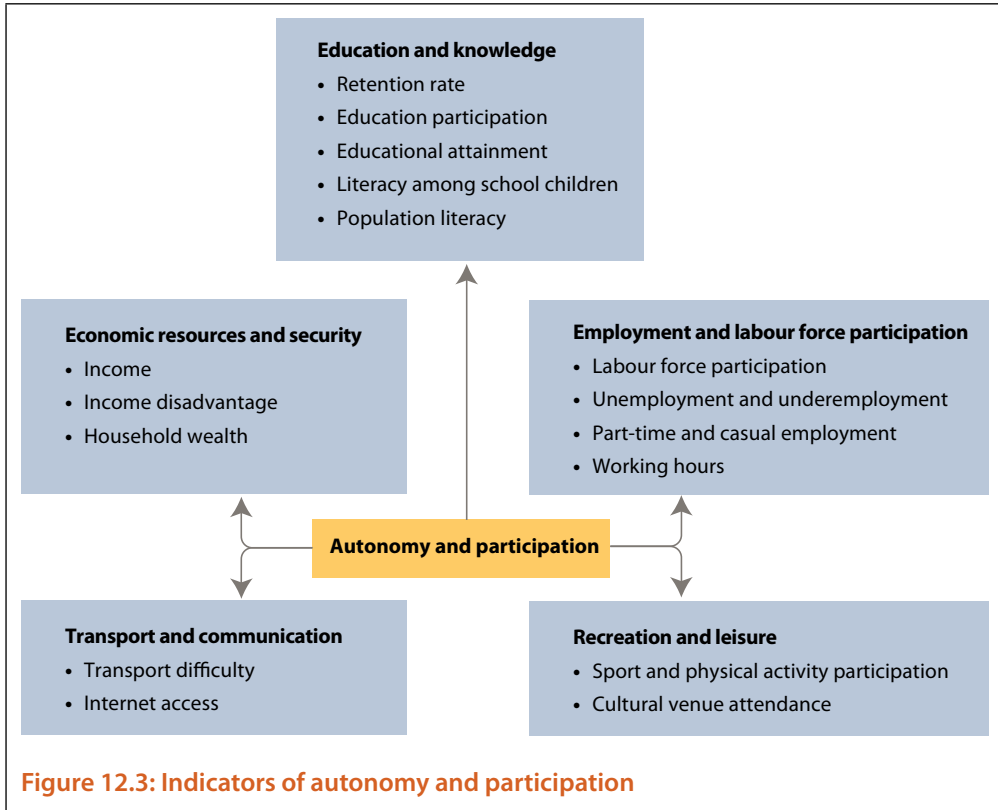
Source: Table A 12.13.

- In 2008–09, the hospitalisation rate due to injury was 1,865 separations per 100,000 population.
- Hospitalisation due to injury is much more prevalent among those aged 75 years and over, and also disproportionately affects males aged 15–24 years.
- Since 2001, the age-standardised injury hospitalisation rate increased by 8%.

12.3 Autonomy and participation

Autonomy and participation are concepts which reflect the value people place on the opportunity to be self-sufficient, to realise their potential, and to participate in their community. Autonomy—the opportunity to make and implement choices and to develop the capabilities to do so—and active participation in the economy and in society are thus vital for wellbeing.

The conceptual framework defines five components of autonomy and participation—education and knowledge, economic resources and security, employment and labour force participation, transport and communication, and recreation and leisure.



Education and knowledge help to empower individuals and allow them to become more autonomous within society. Education is considered to be a lifelong process by which both individuals and their communities benefit from the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Education relates to many other facets of society, including employment, health and participation in the civic, cultural and social life of communities.

Five indicators of education and knowledge are presented:

- Apparent retention rate to Year 12—an approximate measure of the proportion of students who remain at school until the final year of secondary education.
- Proportion of people aged 15–64 years studying for a qualification.
- Proportion of people aged 15–64 years with a non-school qualification.

- Proportion of Year 5 school children not meeting literacy benchmarks.
- Proportion of persons aged 15–74 years with insufficient levels of literacy. The concept of literacy in developed countries has evolved into a term that describes the ability to use various forms of information to function in society. 'Sufficient literacy' encompasses the ability to appropriately use information contained in various written formats, to effectively respond to the mathematical demands of diverse situations, and to apply goal-directed thinking in situations where no routine solution is available (ABS 2008).

Education is discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 4.

The material standard of living enjoyed by individual Australians primarily depends on their command of economic resources, both in the immediate and long term. Economic factors are related to all aspects of the welfare framework, including health, education, employment, and social networks.

Three indicators of economic resources and security are presented:

- Equivalised disposable household income. Household income is considered because, while income is usually received by individuals, it is generally shared between co-resident family members and, to a lesser extent, other household members who benefit from economies of scale. Equivalence scales are applied to account for different income levels required by households of different size to achieve a similar standard of living.
- Proportion of people living in households with low income—the proportion of the population with equivalised disposable household income below 40%, 50% and 60% of the median. People with income at these levels are commonly regarded as income disadvantaged (see OECD 2008).
- Household wealth. Wealth is a source of economic security, as accumulated assets can buffer material living standards during periods of low income.

Employment provides avenues for income and, as such, is a major factor influencing material wellbeing. In addition, employment is strongly related to other aspects of the welfare framework—lack of work is associated with crime, poor health, and decreased social cohesion, in addition to reduced financial wellbeing (Borland & Kennedy 1998). Describing employment, however, is not simply a matter of counting the number of unemployed persons—the basis and conditions under which people are employed also have an impact on Australians' sense of autonomy and participation.

Four indicators of employment and labour force participation are presented:

- Labour force participation rate.
- Unemployment and underemployment.
- Part-time and casual employment.
- Average hours worked by full-time workers.

More detailed statistics about employment are described in Chapter 3.

Transport and communication are fundamental to autonomy and participation. Having access to reliable transport allows people to participate in the community. As well as enhancing social wellbeing, access to transport can broaden access to jobs, which in turn may increase financial security. Access to means of communication is also beneficial to many aspects of welfare, enabling, for example, greater access to educational and social resources.

Two indicators of transport and communication are presented:

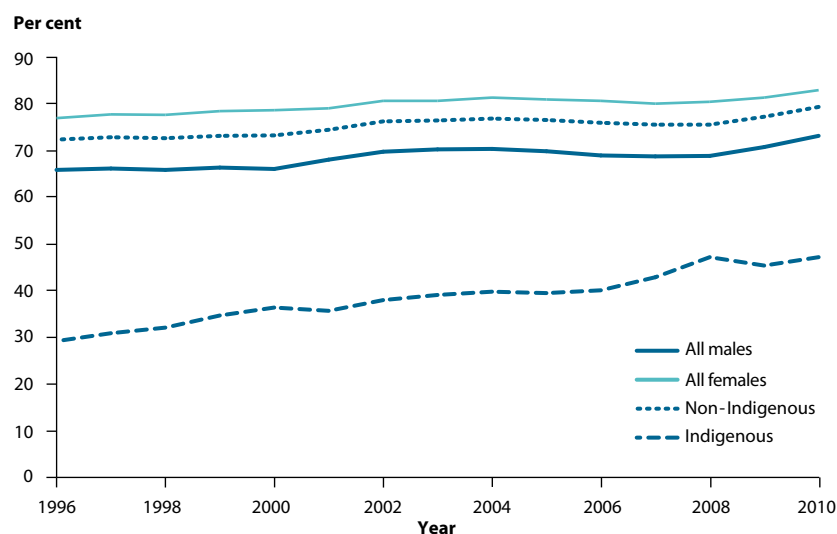
- Proportion of adults who report difficulty with transport.
- Proportion of households with access to the internet at home.

Participation in recreational and leisure activities contributes to overall wellbeing through benefits to physical and mental health, and by providing opportunities for social interaction and community engagement. The importance of leisure time is recognised by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that 'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure' (UN 1948).

Two indicators of recreation and leisure are presented:

- Proportion of people aged 15 years or over who participated in sport and physical activities.
- Proportion of people aged 15 years or over who attended selected cultural venues.

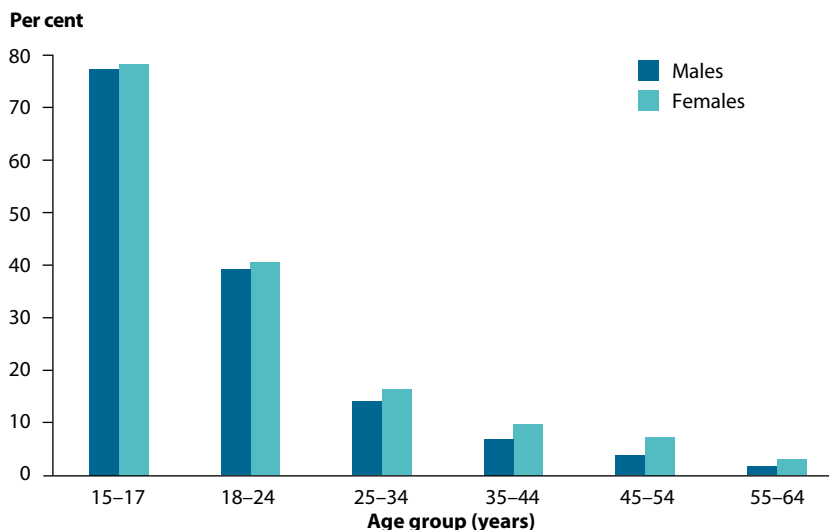
12 Apparent retention rate to Year 12



Source: Table A12.14.

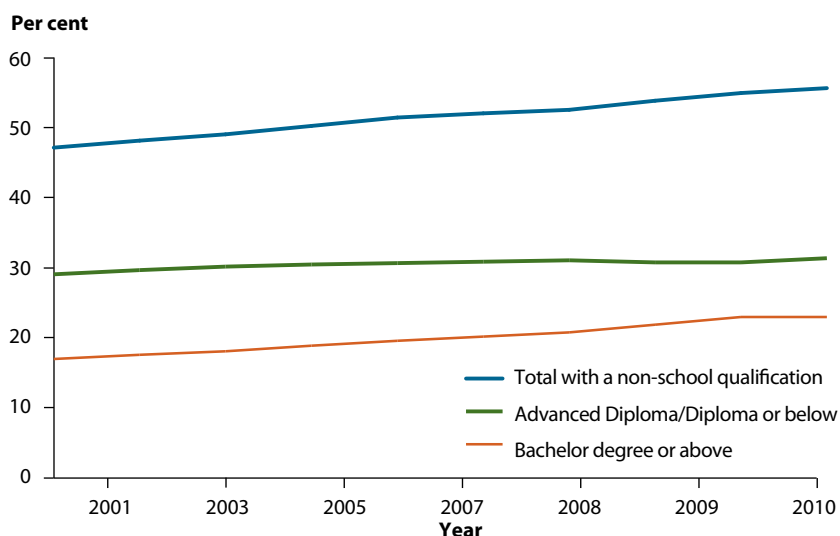
- The apparent retention rate was 78% in 2010—higher for females (83%) than males (73%).
- Retention to Year 12 was much higher for non-Indigenous students (79%) than for Indigenous students (47%).
- Since 1996 the apparent retention rate increased by 8 percentage points for non-Indigenous students and 18 percentage points for Indigenous students.

People aged 15–64 years studying for a qualification



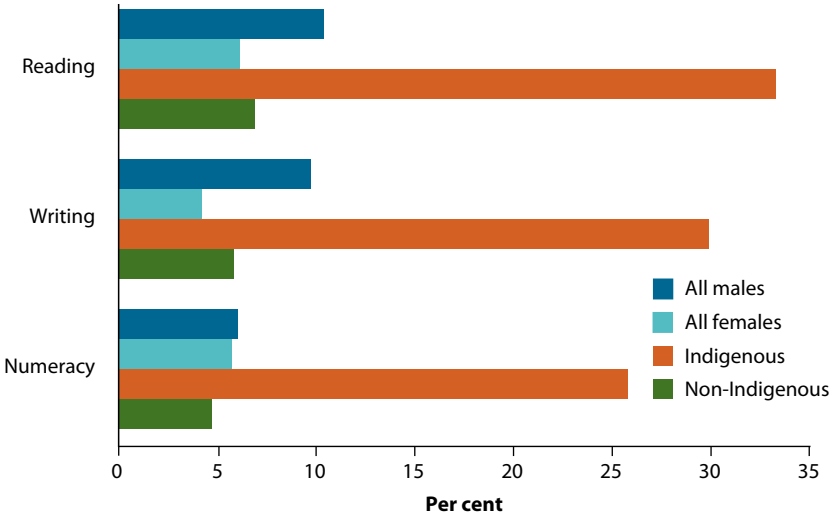
- In 2010, 19% of people aged 15–64 years were studying for a qualification (including school students).
- Participation declined with age, and was more common for females than males in each age group.
- Enrolment in formal study increased from 17% in 2001.

People aged 15–64 years with a non-school qualification



- In 2010, 56% of people aged 15–64 years had a non-school qualification.
- People aged 25–34 years were the most likely to have a non-school qualification (67%).
- Attainment of non-school qualifications increased from 47% in 2001, with attainment of a Bachelor degree or above rising from 17% to 23%.

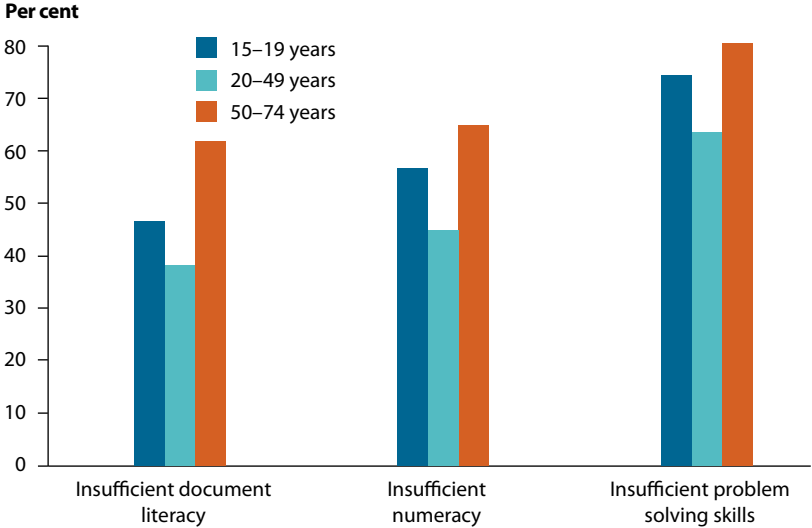
Year 5 school children not meeting literacy benchmarks



Source: Table A12.17.

- In 2010, 9% of Year 5 students had skills below the national minimum standard for reading; 7% for writing; and 6% for numeracy.
- Boys were less likely than girls to meet minimum standards, and Indigenous students less likely than non-Indigenous students, across all three domains.

People aged 15–74 years with insufficient levels of literacy

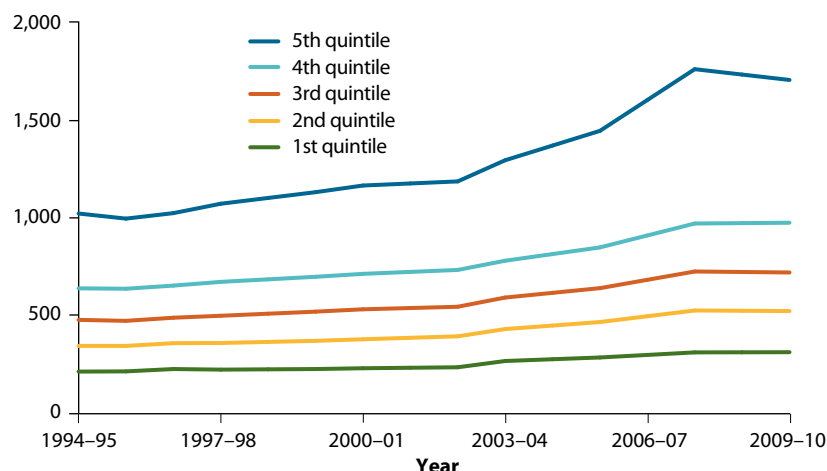


Source: Table A12.18.

- ‘Sufficient literacy’ means having the knowledge and skills required to use various types of information.
- In 2006, 47% had insufficient levels of document literacy, 53% had insufficient levels of numeracy, and 70% had insufficient problem-solving skills.
- People aged 50–74 years were most likely to have insufficient levels of literacy, across all three domains.

Equivalised disposable household income

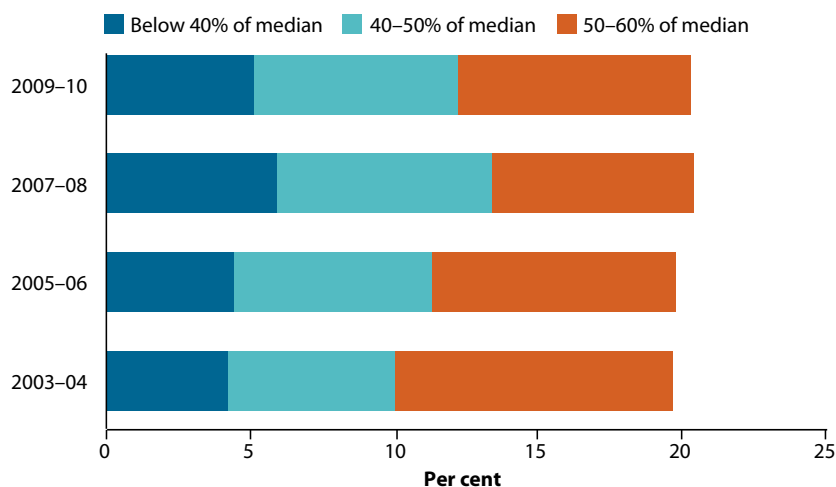
\$ per week



Source: Table A12.19.

- In 2009–10, median equivalised disposable household income was \$715 per week.
- The average income of the lowest-income 20% of households was \$314 per week, compared to \$1,704 for the highest-income households.
- There was no significant change in income between 2007–08 and 2009–10; however, inflation-adjusted household income rose by 48% in the 15 years to 2009–10.

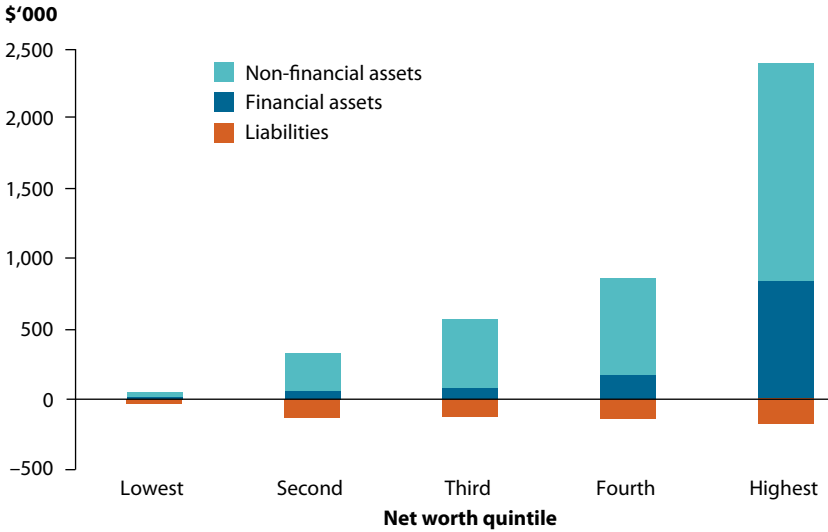
Low income households



Source: Table A12.20.

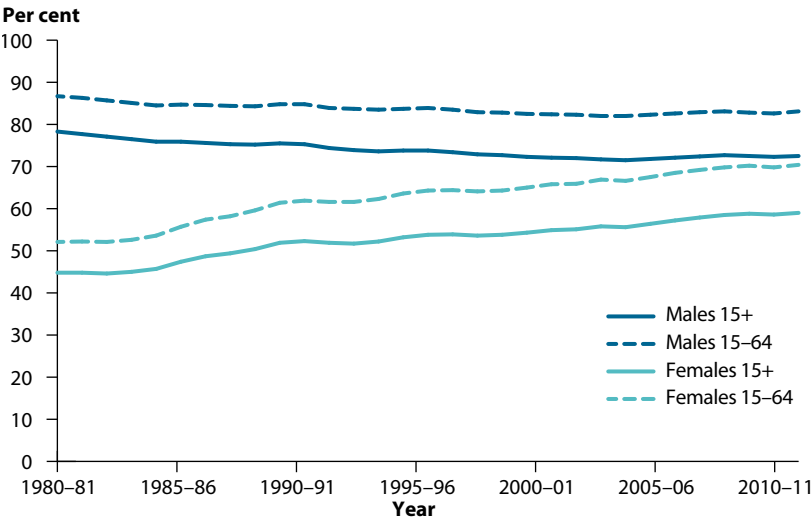
- In 2009–10, 12% of people lived in households with an equivalised disposable income less than 50% of the national median. This includes 5% whose income was less than 40% of the median.
- One in five people (20%) lived in households with an equivalised disposable income less than 60% of the median.
- The percentage of people living with less than half the median household income increased (from 10% in 2003–04), but the total with less than 60% of the median income did not change.

Average household wealth



- In 2009–10, average household net worth was \$719,600, comprising \$233,500 in financial assets (such as shares, superannuation and savings); \$605,900 in non-financial assets (such as property or owned businesses); and \$119,800 in liabilities (such as money owed on a mortgage or other loan).
- The largest component of household wealth was equity in owner-occupied dwellings (on average, \$296,500 per household).
- The average net worth of the wealthiest 20% of households (\$2.2 million) was 3 times the average of all households.

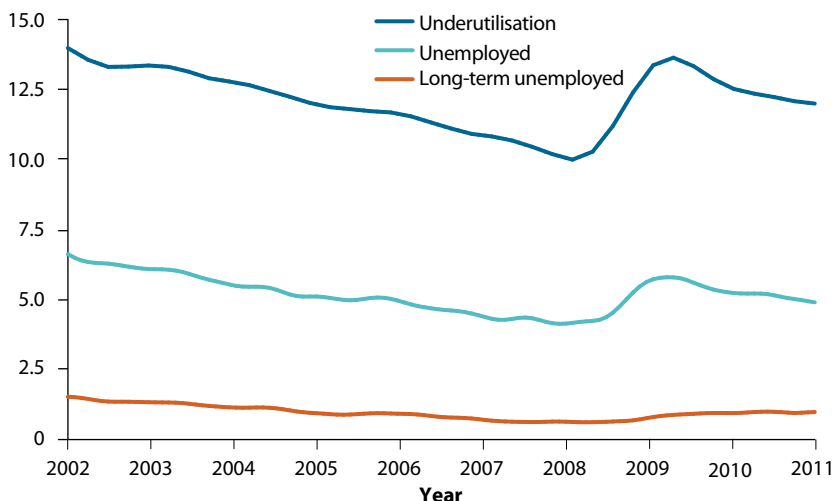
Labour force participation rate



- In 2010–11, the participation rate of people aged 15 years or over was 73% for males and 59% for females. Excluding people aged 65 years or over, participation among people of 'traditional working age' was 83% for males and 70% for females.
- Participation for females continues to rise. Male participation has stabilised among the 'traditional working age' population after falling in the 1980s and 1990s.

Unemployment and underemployment

Per cent

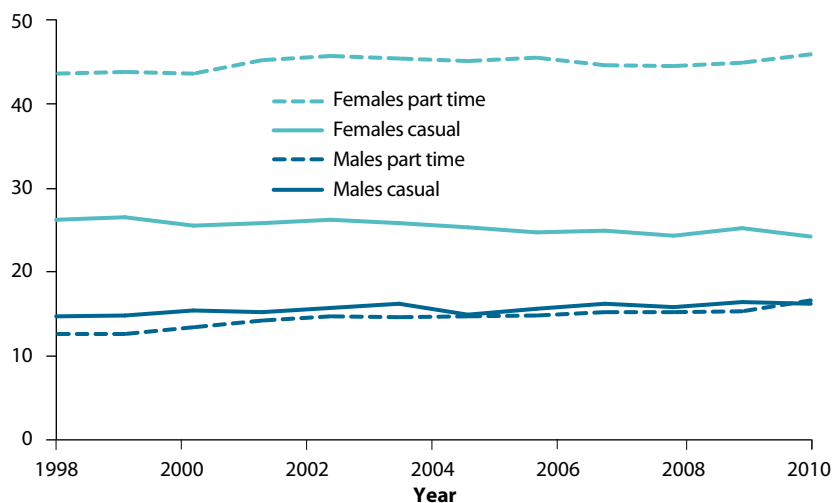


Source: Table A12.23.

- In February 2011, 12% of the labour force was underutilised (unemployed or underemployed); this has been falling since late 2009, following a rise due to the global financial crisis.
- The unemployment rate (5.1% in 2010–11) has also fallen from 5.8% in July 2009.
- Almost 1% of the labour force had been unemployed for 12 months or more in 2010–11.

Part-time and casual employment

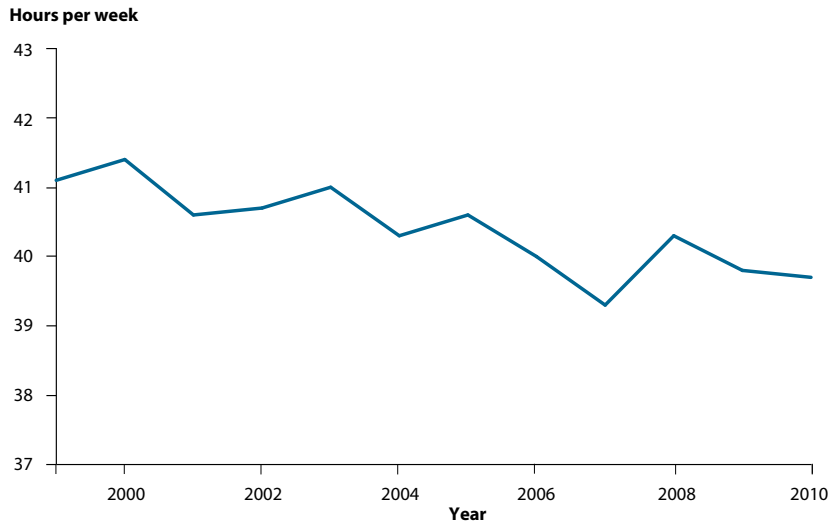
Per cent



Source: Table A12.24.

- In 2010, 30% of employed people worked part time: 17% of males and 46% of females.
- Casual workers (employees without leave entitlements), whether on full-time or part-time hours, comprised 16% of employed males and 24% of employed females.
- Since 1999, part-time work increased for both sexes, while casual work rose slightly among males but fell for females.

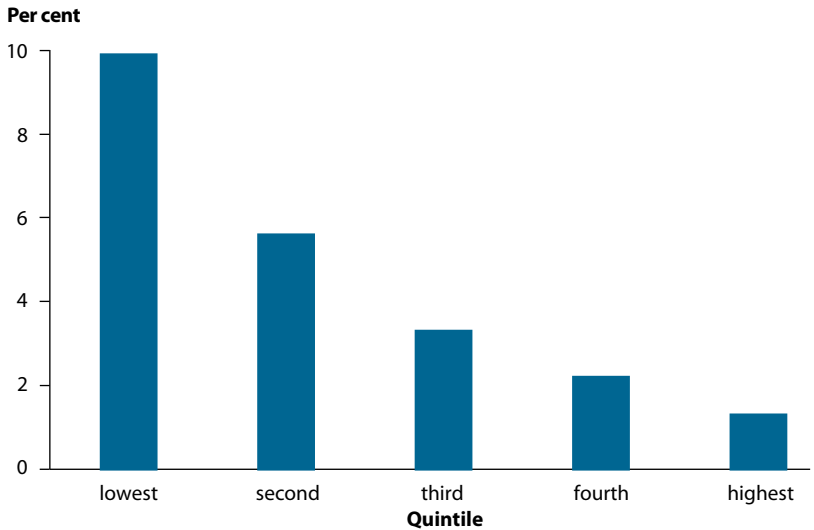
Average hours worked by full-time workers



Source: Table A12.25.

- In 2010, full-time workers worked an average of 39.7 hours a week.
- Average full-time working hours fell from 41.1 hours per week in 1999.
- The proportion of workers working more than 50 hours a week also fell (from 25% to 22% of full-time workers).

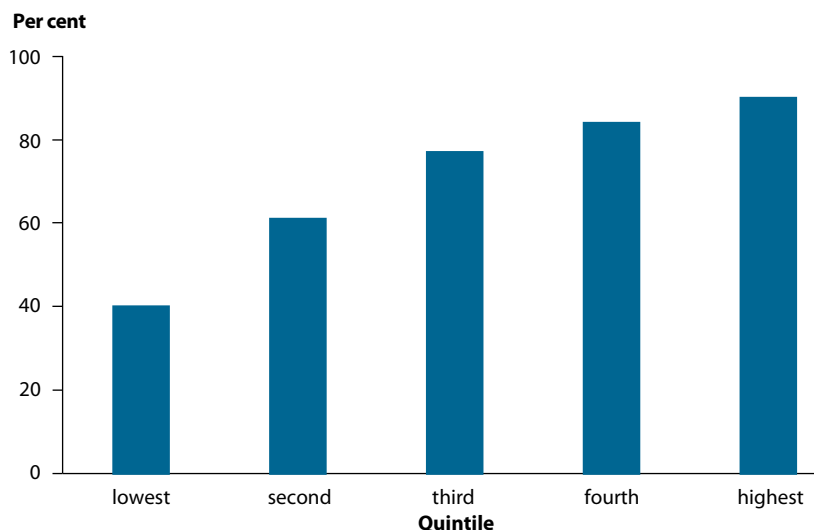
Adults who report difficulty with transport



Source: Table A12.26.

- In 2006, 4% of adults reported that they cannot, or often have difficulty, getting to places needed—however 10% of those in the lowest quintile of equivalised gross household income reported such difficulty.
- Older people and people who did not speak English well were also more likely to report such difficulty.

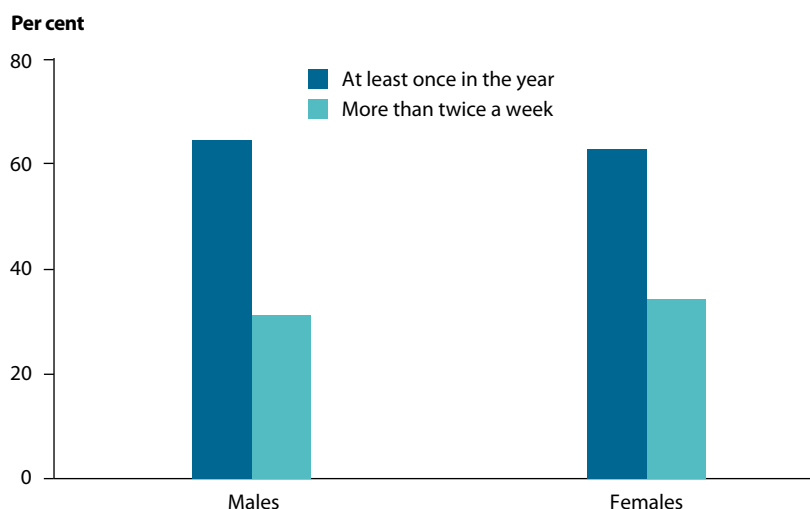
Households with access to the internet at home



Source: Table A12.27.

- In 2008–09, 72% of households had access to the internet at home; however, only 40% of households in the lowest quintile of equivalised gross household income had internet access.
- Home internet access was higher in metropolitan (76%) than non-metropolitan (65%) areas.
- Access increased markedly over the previous decade, from 16% in 1999.

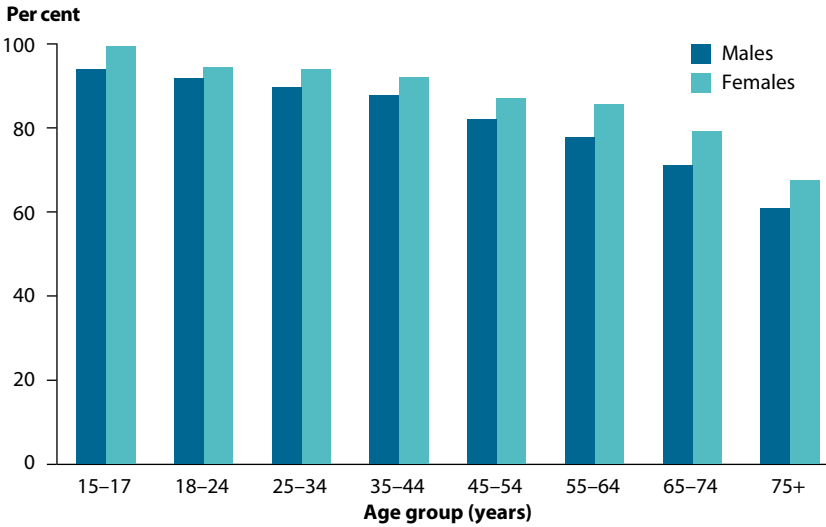
People aged 15 years or over who participated in sport and physical recreation



Source: Table A12.28.

- In 2009–10, 64% participated in sport and physical recreation at least once; 33% participated more than twice a week on average.
- Non-participation increased with age—52% of people aged 65 years and over did not participate.
- Regular participation did not vary greatly with age.

People aged 15 years or over who attended selected cultural venues

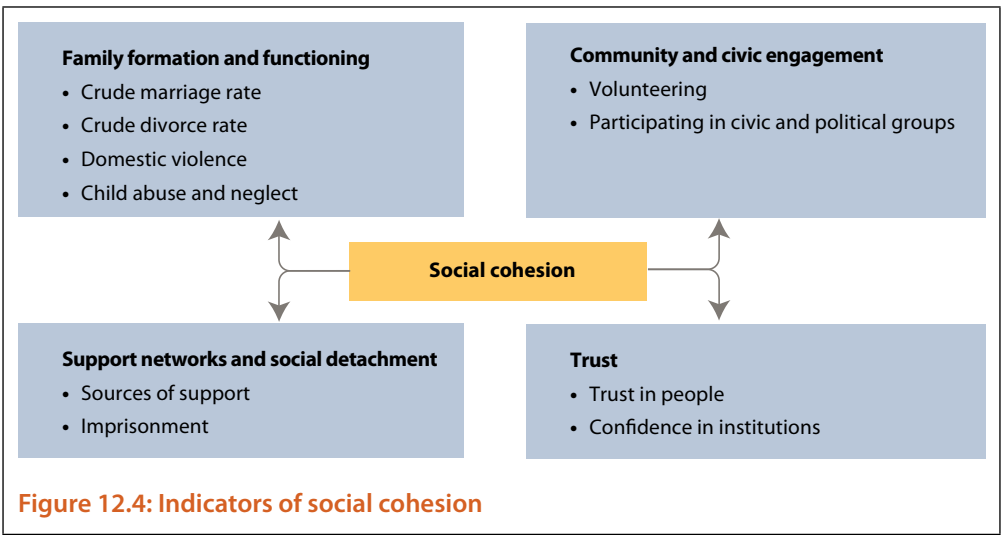


- In 2009–10, 86% attended a selection of cultural venues at least once in the year.
- Attendance was higher for females than males at all ages and declined with age.
- The most common venues were cinemas (67%), zoos and aquariums (37%), and botanic gardens (35%).

12.4 Social cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the interrelatedness and unity between the individuals, groups and associations that exist within society. This unity is established through social relationships based on trust, shared values, feelings of belonging and the expectation of reciprocity.

The conceptual framework defines four components of social cohesion—family formation and functioning, support networks and social detachment, trust, and community and civic engagement (Figure 12.4).



Families are the core unit of society in which people are supported and cared for and social values are developed. The structure of Australian families has undergone considerable transformation over recent years, reflecting wider social, demographic and economic changes. The role of each member within a family can be affected by changes in family situations and changes in the formation of the family itself. How well families function is a key factor in their ability to nurture personal wellbeing and serve as the basis for a cohesive society.

Four indicators of family formation and functioning are presented:

- Crude marriage rate.
- Crude divorce rate.
- Proportion of adults who experienced violence by a current or previous partner. Partner violence can have severe negative consequences, both for victims and for children who witness the violence.
- Proportion of children who were the subject of a child protection substantiation.

Family formation and functioning is further discussed in chapters 2 and 4.

Support networks describe the connections between individuals and groups. As well as providing a sense of belonging, support networks can provide tangible benefits such as informational, emotional, and financial support. Being disengaged from support networks—‘socially detached’—can have significant negative impacts.

Two indicators of support networks and social detachment are presented in this section:

- Proportion of adults who feel able to access support outside the household in times of crisis.
- Imprisonment rate. People in prison may be severely socially detached and may have difficulty re-joining society. Social detachment may also be a precursor to criminal behaviour (Colvin et al. 2002).

The incidence of crime and prevalence of homelessness, both discussed in Chapter 12.2, are also indicators of social detachment.

Trust lies at the heart of all positive relationships, whether between individuals or groups, and as such is a key dimension of social capital. People's trust in others is often described with reference to the type of relationship: interpersonal trust refers to individuals well known to them; social trust refers to casual acquaintances or strangers, and civic trust refers to public or high-profile institutions.

Two indicators of trust are presented:

- Proportion of people aged 17 years or over who agree that most people can be trusted—a measure of social trust. Social trust is perceived as a more sensitive measure of acceptance than interpersonal trust (Cox & Caldwell 2000).
- Proportion of people aged 17 years or over who have confidence in selected institutions—a measure of civic trust. Civic trust promotes better access to resources and socially useful links (Anheier & Kendall 2000; Black & Hughes 2001).

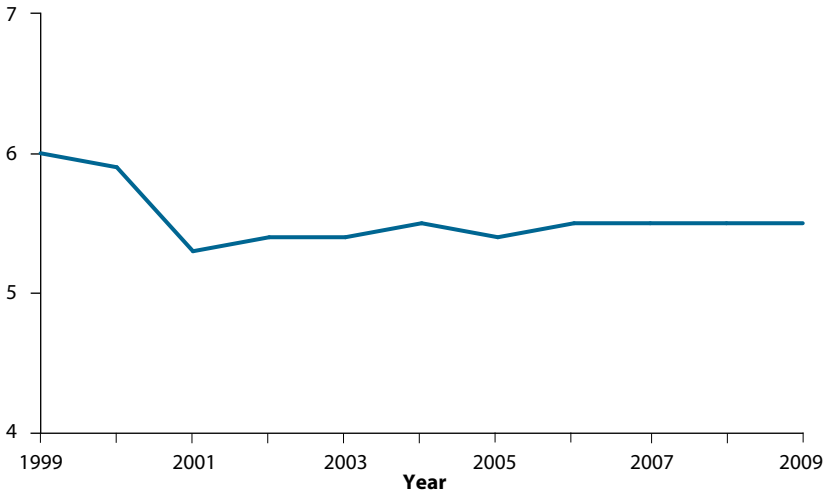
Community and civic engagement creates cohesive networks of people from various backgrounds, as well as allowing individuals to have a say in the future direction of their communities. Community and civic engagement can be expressed in various ways, such as being involved in the community or political life, or simply through volunteering.

Two indicators of community and civic engagement are presented:

- Proportion of adults volunteering.
- Proportion of adults participating in civic and political groups.

Crude marriage rate

Per 1,000

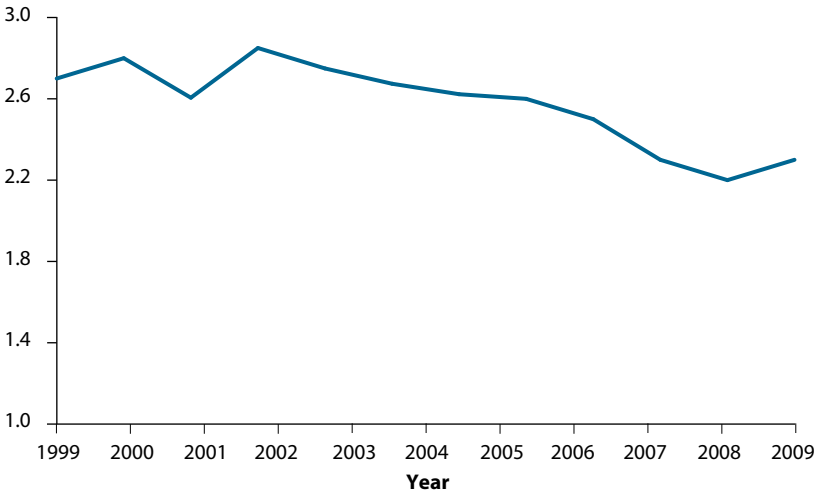


Source: Table A12.30.

- In 2009, there were 5.5 marriages per 1,000 population—a rate that has remained steady since 2004.
- 71% of marriages were the first marriage for both partners.
- The median age at marriage was 32 for males and 29 for females.

Crude divorce rate

Per 1,000

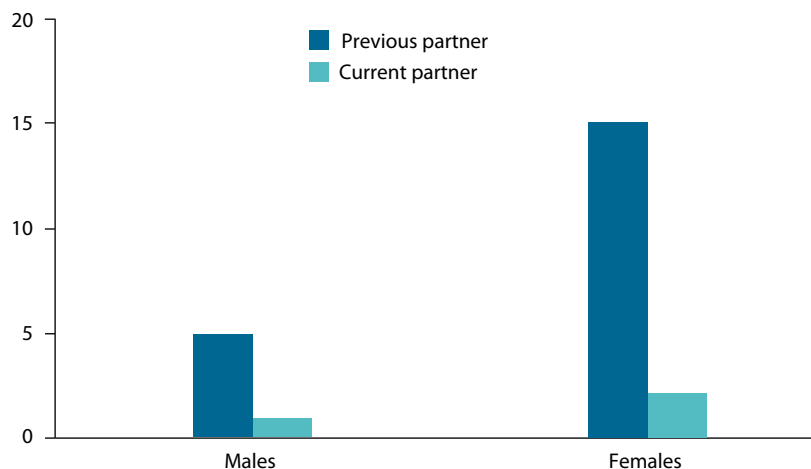


Source: Table A12.30.

- In 2009, there were 2.3 divorces per 1,000 population. Almost half (49%) involved children.
- The median duration of marriage to separation was 8.7 years.
- The crude divorce rate fell slightly over the past decade, from 2.8 per 1,000 population in 1999.

Adults who experienced partner violence at some time since 15 years of age

Per cent

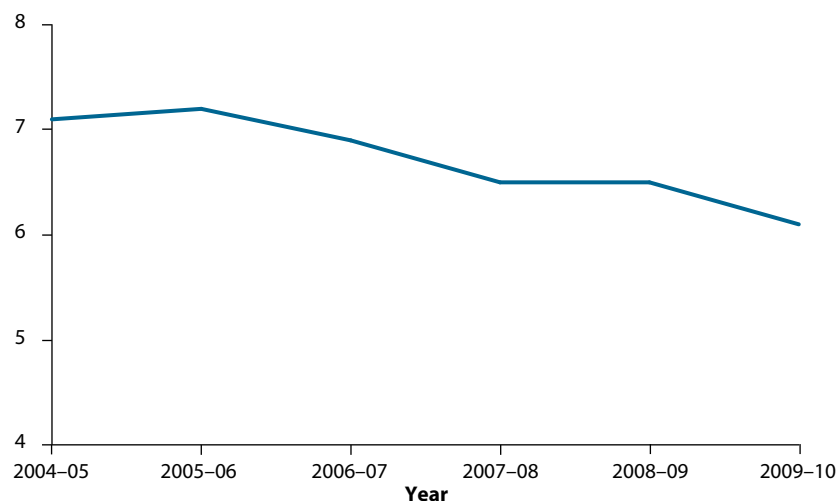


Source: Table A12.31.

- In 2005, 1% of males and 2% of females reported having experienced violence (threats and/or assaults) by their current partner; 5% of males and 15% of females reported violence by a previous partner.
- 49% of people reporting current partner violence, and 61% of those reporting previous partner violence, had children in their care at some time during the relationship.

Children who were the subject of a child protection substantiation

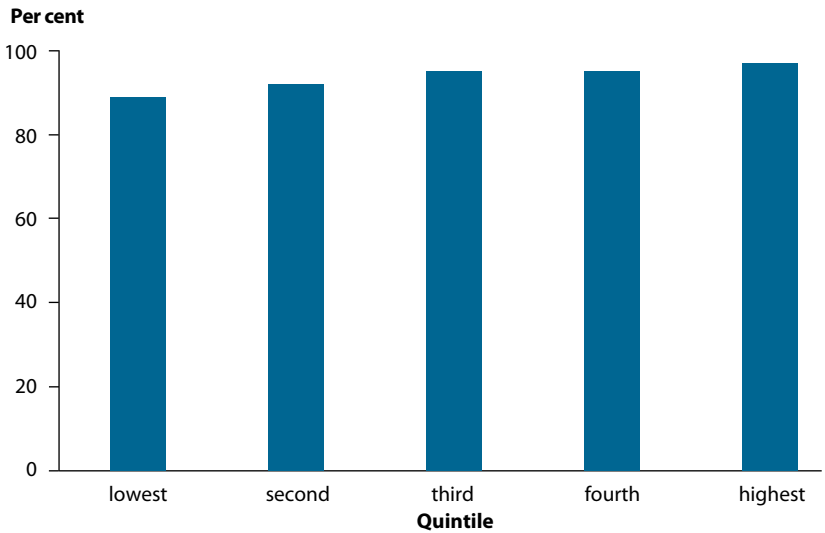
Per 1,000



Source: Table A12.32.

- 6 in every 1,000 children aged 0–17 years were the subject of a child protection substantiation in 2009–10; this included 13 per 1,000 infants.
- Indigenous children were almost 8 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to be the subject of a substantiation.
- Rates have fallen since 2004–05.

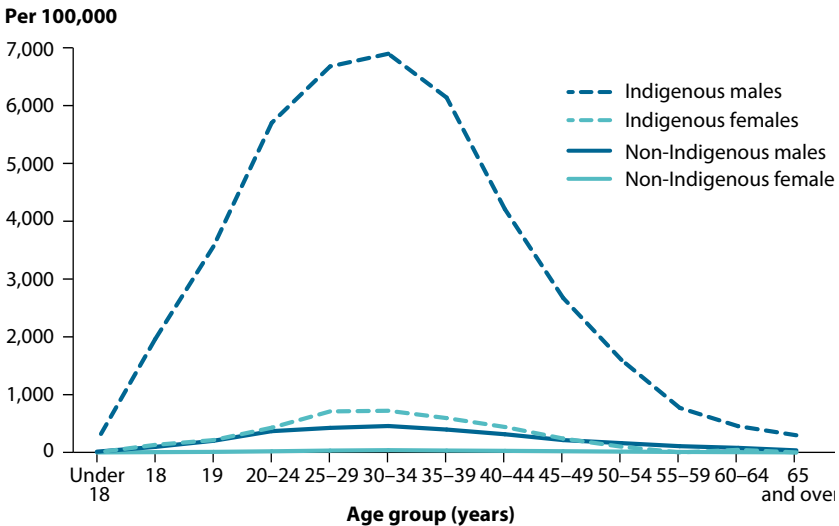
Adults who feel able to access support outside the household



Source: Table A12.33.

- In 2006, 93% of adults reported that they felt able to access support in times of crisis from people living outside the household.
- People with lower equivalised gross household incomes were less likely to feel able to access support.
- Older people and people who did not speak English well were also less likely to feel able to access support.

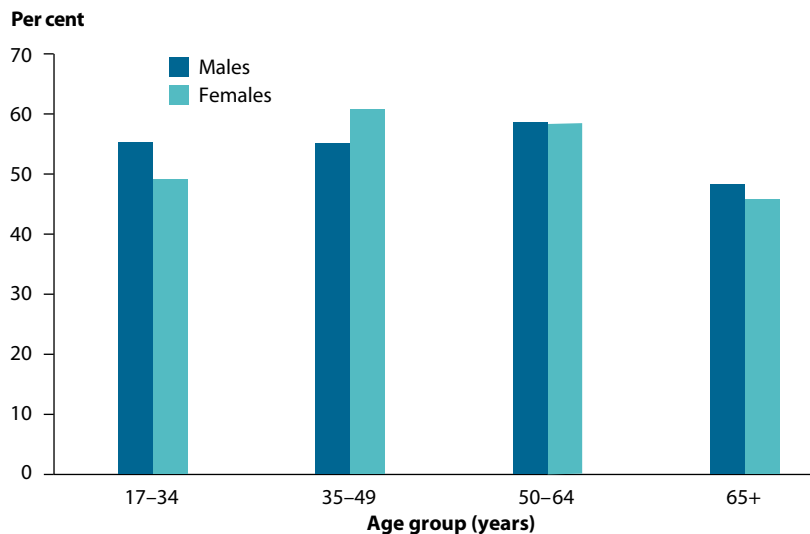
Imprisonment rate



Source: Table A12.34.

- In 2010, the imprisonment rate was 170 per 100,000 population—14 times higher for Indigenous people (1,892 per 100,000) than non-Indigenous people (134 per 100,000).
- Males aged 30–34 years were the most likely to be in prison (609 per 100,000).
- Since 2000, the non-Indigenous imprisonment rate has remained steady, but the Indigenous imprisonment rate has increased by over 50%.

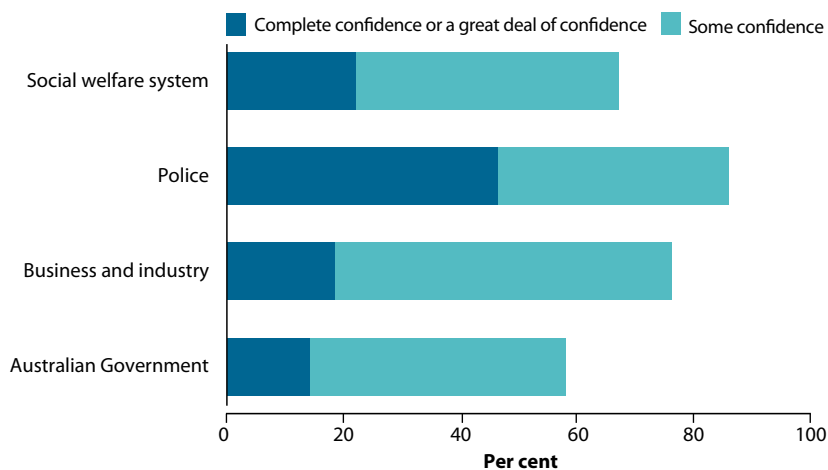
People aged 17 years or over who agree that most people can be trusted



Source: Table A12.35.

- In 2009, 55% agreed that most people can 'almost always' or 'usually' be trusted.
- Males and females had similar levels of social trust.
- People aged 65 years or over had the lowest levels of social trust (47%).

People aged 17 years or over who have confidence in selected institutions

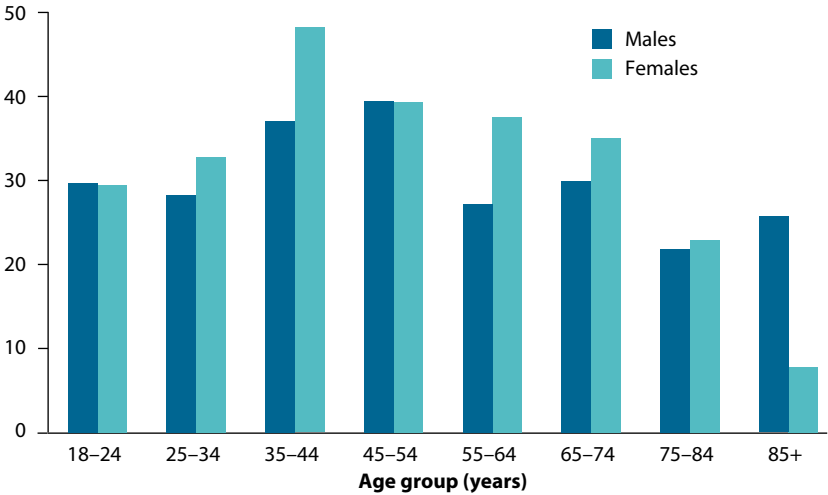


Source: Table A12.36.

- In 2009, 86% expressed at least some confidence in the police; 76% in business and industry; 67% in Australia's social welfare system; and 58% expressed confidence in the Australian Government.
- Males and females were similarly likely to have confidence in these institutions.
- The likelihood of having at least some confidence in the Australian Government, and in business and industry, declined with age.

Volunteering

Percent

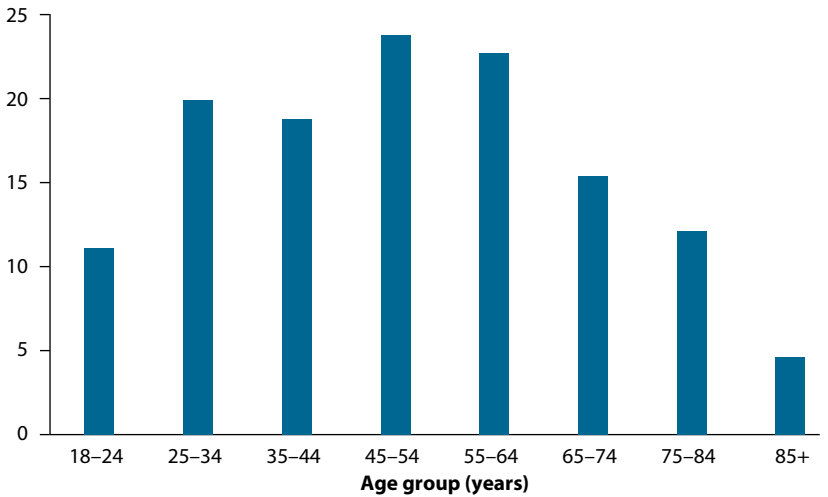


Source: Table A12.37.

- In 2006, 34% of adults performed volunteer work at least once in the year—up from 24% in 1995.
- People aged 35–44 years were the most likely to volunteer (43%); and females (35%) were more likely to volunteer than males (32%).

Participation in civic and political groups

Percent



Source: Table A12.38.

- In 2006, 19% of adults actively participated in civic and political groups at least once in the year.
- Participation was highest among people aged 45–54 years (24%) and 55–64 years (23%).

12.5 Indicator definitions

Indicator	Definition
Life expectancy at birth	The number of years that a baby born in a given year can expect to live, if age-specific death rates do not change.
Infant mortality rate	The number of deaths among infants aged less than 1 year per 1,000 live births.
Adults reporting very high levels of psychological distress	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years or over scoring very high on the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale –10 items (K10). This is a scale of non-specific psychological distress based on 10 questions about negative emotional states in the 4 weeks prior to interview.
People aged 14 years or over at risk of lifetime harm from alcohol	The percentage of respondents aged 14 years or over who, in the 12 months prior to survey, consumed alcohol in quantities that put them at risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury over their lifetime (on average, more than two standard drinks per day). This definition relates to Guideline 1 of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 2009 guidelines.
People aged 15 and over that usually consume the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who reported usually consuming the quantities recommended by the NHMRC—two serves of fruit, and five serves of vegetables. One serve is approximately 150 grams of fresh fruit, 50 grams of dried fruit, half a cup of cooked vegetables, or one cup of salad vegetables. Beverages are not included.
People aged 15 years or over who reported sedentary levels of exercise	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who, based on responses regarding the frequency, duration and intensity of exercise undertaken for fitness, recreation or sport, in the two weeks before the survey, were deemed to have done no exercise or 'very low' exercise.
Adults who are obese	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years or over who, based on self-reported height and weight, were deemed obese by World Health Organization (WHO) and NHMRC guidelines—that is, with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or more.

Indicator	Definition
Households tenure types	The percentage of households who were owners with a mortgage, owners without a mortgage, public renters (i.e. renting from a state or territory housing authority) and private renters. Note that two other tenure types are possible—'other landlord type' (1–2% of households) and 'other tenure type' (2–3% of households).
Lower income households that spent more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs	The percentage of lower income households that reported spending more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. Lower income households are households whose equivalised disposable income is ranked between the bottom 10% and bottom 40% of the income. Housing costs comprise rent payments; rates payments; and mortgage or unsecured loan payments if the initial purpose was primarily to buy, add to or alter the dwelling.
Number of homeless people	The number of homeless people estimated from the Census. Includes primary homeless (sleeping on the streets, in derelict buildings, or in cars), secondary homelessness (staying in emergency or transitional accommodation, or temporarily with other households), or tertiary homelessness (living in boarding houses).
People aged 15 years or over who feel safe in various situations	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who reported feeling 'safe' or 'very safe' alone at home during the day, alone at home after dark, walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood, and using public transport alone after dark.
Victimisation rate for selected crimes	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who reported being victims of a physical assault; and the proportion of respondent households that reported being victims of a break-in. Incidents not reported to police are included.
Hospitalisation due to injury	The number of hospital separations due to injury, per 100,000 population. The headline rate is expressed as an age-standardised rate.
Apparent retention rate to Year 12	The percentage of students who remain in secondary education from the start of secondary school to Year 12. To calculate the apparent retention rate in 2010, the total number of full-time students enrolled in Year 12 in 2010 would be divided by the number of full-time students who were in the base year—Year 7 in NSW, Vic, Tas and the ACT in 2005, and Year 8 in Qld, SA, WA and the NT in 2006.

Indicator	Definition
People aged 15–64 years studying for a qualification	The percentage of respondents aged 15–64 years who reported being enrolled in formal learning. A learning activity is formal if it leads to a learning achievement that is possible to position within the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF).
People aged 15–64 years with a non-school qualification	The percentage of respondents aged 15–64 years who reported having a non-school qualification. Non-school qualifications are awarded for educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education.
Year 5 school children not meeting literacy benchmarks	The percentage of Year 5 students that did not meet the national minimum standard in the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) reading, writing and spelling tests.
People aged 15–74 years with insufficient levels of literacy	The percentage of respondents aged 15–74 years whose measured document literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills were deemed below the minimum required to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work in the emerging knowledge-based economy.
Equivalised disposable household income	The reported weekly equivalised disposable household income of respondents. See Chapter 3 for information about equivalised disposable household income.
Low income households	The proportion of respondents whose reported equivalised disposable household income is below 40%, 50% and 60% of median equivalised disposable household income.
Household wealth	The reported average net wealth of respondent households. The net worth of a household is the value of its assets less the value of its liabilities. Assets include property, owned businesses, shares, and superannuation. Liabilities are primarily the value of loans outstanding.
Labour force participation rate	The number of respondents in the labour force—employed or unemployed—expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years or over.

Indicator	Definition
Unemployment and underemployment	The labour force underutilisation rate, the unemployment rate and the long-term employment rate. The labour force underutilisation rate is the sum of the number of unemployed respondents and the number of underemployed—employed and wanting, and available for, more hours of work than they currently have—respondents, expressed as a proportion of the labour force. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed—not employed, actively looking for work and available for work, or waiting to start a new job and able to start—respondents, as a proportion of the labour force. The long-term unemployment rate is the number of respondents unemployed for 12 months or more, as a proportion of the labour force. Trend estimates are presented.
Part-time and casual employment	The number of part-time (working fewer than 35 hours a week) employed respondents as a percentage of all employed people; and the number of respondents who were considered casual workers—employees without leave entitlements—as a percentage of employed persons. The part-time employment rate is an annual average for the year ending 30 June; the casual employment rate is as at November.
Average hours worked by full-time workers	Average actual hours worked, per week, by full-time employed—employed and working 35 hours a week or more—respondents, during the year ending 30 June. Overtime is included; hours paid for but not worked, such as paid annual leave, public holidays or paid sick leave, are not included.
Adults who report difficulty with transport	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years or over who reported, when asked how difficult it is for them to travel to places they may need to go to in normal circumstances, that they 'often have difficulty', or 'can't get to the places needed'. Persons who reported that they never go out or are housebound are not included. Difficulties which may have been taken into account are traffic problems, parking and distances, as well as those difficulties not directly related to transport such as poor health or lack of finances.
Households with access to the internet at home	The percentage of respondent households who report having access to the internet at home.
People aged 15 years or over who participated in sport and physical recreation	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who reported participating, at least once in the year, in sport and physical recreation.

Indicator	Definition
People aged 15 years or over who attended selected cultural venues	The percentage of respondents aged 15 years or over who reported attending, at least once in the year, art galleries, museums, zoological parks and aquariums, botanic gardens, libraries, archives, classical music concerts, popular music concerts, theatre performances, dance performances, musicals and operas, other performing arts, or cinemas.
Crude marriage rate	The number of marriages granted during the calendar year per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 June.
Crude divorce rate	The number of divorces granted during the calendar year per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 June.
Adults who experienced partner violence at some time since 15 years of age	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years and over who reported experiencing violence by a current or previous partner at some time since the age of 15 years. Violence is any incident of sexual assault, threatened sexual assault, physical assault or threatened or attempted physical assault.
Children who were the subject of a child protection substantiation	The number of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of substantiation of a child protection notification received during the relevant year, per 1,000 children. A substantiation occurs when an investigation into a child protection notification concludes that there is reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, is being, or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise harmed.
Adults who feel able to access support outside the household	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years and over who reported being able to get support in a time of crisis from persons living outside the household. Support could be in the form of emotional, physical or financial help. Potential sources of support could be family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and various community, government and professional organisations.
Imprisonment rate	The number of persons in adult prisons on the night of 30 June, per 100,000 adults. Unsentenced prisoners are included; persons held in juvenile institutions, psychiatric custody and police custody are excluded.
People aged 17 years or over who agree that most people can be trusted	The percentage of respondents aged 17 years and over, who, when asked to choose between the statements ‘people can almost always be trusted’; ‘people can usually be trusted’; ‘you usually can’t be too careful in dealing with people’ and ‘you almost always can’t be too careful in dealing with people’, chose one of the first two statements.

Indicator	Definition
People aged 17 years or over who have confidence in selected institutions	The percentage of respondents, aged 17 years and over, who, when asked about their confidence in the Federal government/parliament, in business and industry, in the police in their state or territory, and in Australia's social welfare system, expressed 'complete confidence,' a great deal of confidence' or 'some confidence.'
Volunteering	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years and over who reported performing voluntary work at least once in the year. Voluntary work is the provision of unpaid help, willingly, to an organisation or group. Work done overseas, work experience, and required unpaid community work—for example under the Work for the Dole Program or a Community Service Order—was excluded.
Adults participating in civic and political groups	The percentage of respondents aged 18 years and over who reported actively participating in civic and political groups at least once in the year.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2008. Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, summary results, Australia, 2006 (Reissue). Canberra: ABS.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2007. Australia's welfare 2007. Cat. no. AUS 93. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2010. Australia's health 2010. Cat. no. AUS 122. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW: Bricknell S., N. F & R. M 2004. Indicators of Australia's welfare: development and discussion. Canberra: AIHW.

Anheier HK & Kendall J 2000. Trust and voluntary organisations: three theoretical approaches. London: Centre for Civil Society, London School of Economics.

Black A & Hughes A 2001. The identification and analysis of indicators of community strength and outcomes. Canberra: Department of Family and Community Services.

Borland J & Kennedy S 1998. Dimensions, structure and history of Australian unemployment. In: Borland J & DeBelle G (eds). Unemployment and the Australian labour market. Canberra: Reserve Bank of Australia & The Australian National University.

Colvin M, Cullen FT & Vander Ven T 2002. Coercion, social support, and crime: an emerging theoretical consensus. *Criminology* 40:19–42.

Cox E & Caldwell P 2000. Making policy social. In: Social capital and public policy in Australia. Vol. Winter I. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 43–73.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2008. Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries. Viewed 8 June 2011, <http://www.oecd.org/document/53/0,3746,en_2649_33933_41460917_1_1_1_1,00.html>.

United Nations (UN) 1948. Declaration of human rights, article 24. New York: UN.

World Health Organization (WHO) 2000. Obesity: preventing and managing the global epidemic. Report of a WHO consultation. Geneva: WHO.

WHO 2003. Diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases: Report of a joint WHO/FAO expert consultation. Geneva: WHO.

WHO 2006a. Mental health. Viewed 16 March 2007, <http://www.who.int/mental_health/en>.

WHO 2006b. Physical activity. Viewed 18 September 2006, <<http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/publications/facts/pa/en/index.html>>.

