



# Australia's richest towns

## Census 2011

- **New detailed Census data:** The latest release of Census data permits comparisons to be made across states, regions and even postal areas (postcodes). While more data is still to be released, the comparisons that can be made include income, housing status (proportion of renters or those with a mortgage) and the number of unoccupied homes.
- **Western Australia dominates the rich list:** Western Australia occupies the first 13 spots of the ranking of Australia's towns with highest personal incomes.
- **Highest household incomes:** Dampier in Western Australia is the town that has the highest proportion of households earning more than \$4,000 a week (22.3 per cent).
- **Vacant homes:** The towns with the highest number of vacant homes can be found on the NSW central coast, NSW south coast and on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria.
- **Household size:** In major capital cities, the highest number of people per household can be found in western Sydney in suburbs such as Cecil Hills, Bossley Park and Hoxton Park (3.4-3.6 persons per household).

### The value of the data

- The latest Census data enables researchers to easily compare results across regions – even down to postcode. The Bureau of Statistics calls the regions “postal areas”. Postal areas are “ABS approximations of Australia Post Postcodes originally created by allocating whole Collection Districts (CDs) on a 'best fit' basis to Postcodes.”
- But whether you focus on postal areas or other geographical areas, the important point for businesses, individuals and governments is that key comparisons can be made on a range of criteria. If you wanted to know where incomes are the highest, where the biggest grouping or “owner occupiers” is or even the male/female make-up of areas, it is now possible with the Datasets results from the Census.
- Clearly if you are starting a business you want to know where your customers are. If you are in business, you want to know if the area in which you operate is changing. Even the Reserve Bank would have interest knowing which regions are most affected by interest rate decisions.

#### The ABS regions are:

- o Mesh Block (MB)
- o Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1)
- o Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2)
- o Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3)
- o Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)
- o State/Territory (S/T)
- o Australia (AUS)
- o Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSA)
- o Urban Centre/Locality (UC/L)
- o Section of State Range (SOSR)
- o Section of State (SOS)
- o Indigenous Location (ILOCL)
- o Indigenous Area (IARE)
- o Indigenous Region (IREG)
- o Significant Urban Areas (SUA)
- o Remoteness Area (RA)

#### The Non-ABS regions are:

- o Local Government Area (LGA)
- o Postal Area (POA)
- o Commonwealth Electoral Division (CED)
- o State Electoral Division (SED)
- o State Suburb (SSC)
- o Natural Resource Management Region (NRMR)
- o Australian Drainage Division (ADD)
- o Tourism Region (TR).

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- There is more Census data to be produced in October including employment by industry and data showing how people travel to work. But the simple message is that if you are serious about planning and understanding your market, then the Census data is worth dissecting. There are various ways that the ABS cuts and dices the data by region, as noted in the accompanying table.

### Australia's richest towns

- Before the mining boom it was a fairly easy exercise to determine the regions with highest incomes. The high income areas were generally found in northern or eastern Sydney and the inner suburbs of Melbourne. But now Western Australia dominates the regions of highest median personal income. Overall the top 13 regions for highest median personal income are in Western Australia.

#### Highest Median Personal Incomes

Per week, Census 2011

Cane, Onslow, Peedamulla, WA 6710	\$2,000
Newman, WA 6753	\$1,915
Bullfinch, Ennuin, WA 6484	\$1,885
Tom Price, Rocklea, WA 6751	\$1,824
Fortescue, Hamersley Range, WA 6716	\$1,824

Source: ABS, CommSec

- The postcode with the highest median personal income is 6710 – towns including Cane, Onslow and Peedamulla in Western Australia. The median weekly personal income of the 2,379 residents in the postal area was \$2,000 or \$104,000 a year.

#### Highest Median Personal Incomes

Per week, Census 2011

WA	Cane, Onslow, Peedamulla, WA 6710	\$2,000
NT	Alyangula, 0885	\$1,552
Qld	May Downs, 4746	\$1,512
SA	Roxby Downs, 5725	\$1,466
NSW	Kirribilli, Milsons Point, 2061	\$1,311
VIC	East Melbourne, 3002	\$1,164
ACT	Canberra, 2600	\$1,213
TAS	Cremorne, 7024	\$749

Source: ABS, CommSec

- Also note the following definition of income from the ABS. *"Total income, also referred to as gross income, is the sum of income received from all sources before any deductions such as income tax, the Medicare Levy or salary sacrificed amounts are taken out. It includes wages, salaries, regular overtime, business or farm income (less operating expenses), rents received (less operating expenses), dividends, interest, income from superannuation, maintenance (child support), workers' compensation, and government pensions and allowances (including all payments for family assistance, labour market assistance, youth and student support, and support for the aged, carers and people with a disability)."*
- As income from most sources is reported before deduction of expenses incurred in the earning of the income, these incomes are always a positive figure. However, income from some sources may be negative. Income from own unincorporated businesses and income from rental property are collected net of operating expenses. If the operating expenses are greater than receipts, total income is negative."
- Not surprisingly other key mining regions featured in the highest income areas including Newman, Fortescue, Tom Price and Hamersley.
- While the highest median personal income in Western Australia was \$2,000 a week, in Tasmania the highest income was \$749 a week in Cremorne, south-east of Hobart (461 residents).

### Household income greater than \$4,000 a week

Excludes Universities, Census 2011

Dampier, WA 6713	22.3%
Karratha, WA 6714	18.9%
Port Hedland, WA 6721	17.6%
Northbridge, NSW 2063	17.3%
Forrest, Manuka ACT 2603	17.2%
Barton, Deakin ACT 2600	16.2%
City Beach, WA 6015	16.1%
Finucane, South Hedland, WA 6722	16.0%
Rozelle, NSW 2039	15.9%
Jerrabomberra, NSW 2619	15.7%

Source: ABS, CommSec

- The postal area with the highest median personal weekly income in NSW was postcode 2061 covering Kirribilli and Milsons Point with the 5,680 residents earning \$1,311 a week. In Victoria, East Melbourne (postcode 3002, 4,714 residents) has a median personal income of \$1,164.
- Of note, in terms of personal income, the ABS collected data on income for every person over 15 years of age. *"The relevant median value for each family/household member is then*

*summed to produce family or household income."*

- Ranking **median family weekly incomes by postal area**, rather than personal incomes produced less useful results with Universities topping the list: University of Queensland (\$4,250), University of Melbourne (\$3,650) and Monash University (\$3,333). But Dampier (WA), Alyangula (NT), Forrest (ACT) and Port Hedland (WA) were next highest on the list.
- Another useful comparison of income is to rank the towns with **households earning more than \$4,000 a week**. Excluding universities (Monash University and University of Melbourne), Dampier (WA, 6713) tops the list with 22.3 per cent of households earning more than \$4,000 a week. Again mining areas dominate the list. But ACT suburbs also dominate including Forrest, Manuka, Barton, Deakin and Jerrabomberra (the latter actually just outside the ACT, in NSW).
- The Sydney suburbs of Northbridge and Rozelle also are in the top 10 towns of households earning more than \$4,000 a week.

## Housing tenure

- To identify the towns by housing tenure – that is, whether homes are rented, fully-owned or being purchased, we limited the sample to postal areas with more than 500 people. Interestingly however there are a large number of small towns in western Victoria with much higher levels of home ownership than in the rest of the nation.
- Sorrento (1,448 residents) had the highest home ownership of larger localities with 67.3 per cent, followed by postal area 3518, including Wedderburn and Borung in western Victoria with 63.2 per cent home ownership.
- The town that has the highest proportion of people paying off home loans is The Ponds (postcode 2761, 875 residents) near Kellyville in Sydney with 81.6 per cent of households holding a mortgage. Next highest is Lyndhurst and Lynbrook (postcode 3975, 3,380 residents) in south eastern Melbourne at 75.1 per cent and Doreen and Mernda (postcode 3754, 5,672 residents) in northern Melbourne with a mortgage rate of 71.3 per cent.
- There are 184 towns in Australia where more than 50 per cent of properties are rented and actually 33 towns having a rental rate of more than 90 per cent.
- By contrast there are 84 towns where the rental rate is less than 10 per cent. Park Orchards (3114, Victoria) with 1,075 residents in eastern Melbourne has a rental rate of just 3.5 per cent.

## Unoccupied private dwellings

- The 2011 Census revealed that there were almost 8.7 million private dwellings in Australia. Almost 7.8 million dwellings or 89.3 per cent were occupied but 934,471 dwellings or 10.7 per cent were unoccupied.
- The proportion of unoccupied dwellings has risen from 10.4 per cent in 2006 to 10.7 per cent in 2011. So if we have so many unoccupied homes, where are they?
- While the definitive break-down is not yet available on the reasons why so many homes are vacant, the primary reason is more than likely that they are used for holiday homes or holiday rentals or are properties available for rent.

## Highest percentage of home owners

Postcodes more than 500 people, Census 2011

Sorrento, VIC 3943	67.3
Wedderburn, Borung, VIC 3518	63.2
Ardrossan, Petersville, SA 5571	61.2
Port Broughton, Fisherman Bay, SA 5522	60.8
Bayview, NSW 2104	59.4

Source: ABS, CommSec

## Highest percentage of mortgages

Postcodes more than 500 people, Census 2011

The Ponds, NSW 2769	81.6
Lyndhurst, Lynbrook, VIC 3975	75.1
Doreen, Mernda, VIC 3754	71.3
Angle Vale, SA 5117	69.3
Banksia Grove, Carramar, WA 6031	68.9

Source: ABS, CommSec

## Highest number of unoccupied homes

Census 2011

Sussex Inlet, Basin View, NSW 2540	7535
Rye, St Andrews Beach, VIC 3941	6573
Mandurah, Dudley Park, WA 6210	6510
Surfers Paradise, QLD 4217	5512
Surf Beach, Smiths Beach, VIC 3922	5142
Bawley Point, NSW 2539	4087
Bateau Bay, Long Jetty, NSW 2261	3769
Batemans Bay, NSW 2536	3638
Toowoomba, QLD 4350	3548
Forster, NSW 2428	3513

Source: ABS, CommSec

## Highest percentage of males

Postcodes more than 500 people, Census 2011

Holtze, Pinelands, NT 0829	84.1
Wooroloo, WA 6558	81.1
Telfer, WA 6762	77.7
Keysbrook, WA 6126	74.7
Cane, Onslow, Peedamulla, WA 6710	73.6
HMAS Cerebus, VIC 3920	71.8
Christmas Island, WA 6798	70.7
Wiluna, Lake Carnegie, WA	70.4
Leinster, Sir Samuel, WA 6437	70.1
Berrimah, Knuckey Lagoon, NT 0828	70.1

Source: ABS, CommSec

- The highest number of unoccupied dwellings can be found on the NSW central coast and south coast, Victorian Mornington Peninsula, Queensland Gold Coast and Western Australian south coast near Mandurah.

### Gender gap

- The highest concentration of males in a postal area (more than 500 people) is in the Northern Territory – postcode 0829, encompassing Holtze and Pinelands near Robertson Barracks. The ratio of males in the population of 1,137 is 84.1 per cent.
- As would be expected, areas with higher than normal concentrations of males in the population include military sites, prisons, and where male-dominated industries are located such as mining and energy areas.
- Areas with higher than normal concentrations of women are dominated by universities: Gatton College, Queensland (74.4 per cent), Charles Sturt University, NSW (64.3 per cent), Latrobe University, Victoria (60.4 per cent) and Macquarie University, NSW (56.3 per cent). But also high up on the list is Double Bay in Sydney where 56.3 per cent of the residents of the postal area are women.

### Household size

- One interesting result that was produced from the Census was an increase in household size. Between 2006 and 2011 the number of people per household increased from 2.61 to 2.63 persons – the first increase ever reported in 100 years of Census results.
- As has traditionally been the case, remote towns with large indigenous populations in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland dominate the rankings of household size. Burketown, Bathurst Island, Telfer, Binjari, Forrest (WA), Alice Springs and King Ash Bay are towns possessing highest household size.
- In capital cities, interestingly suburbs in western Sydney such as Cecil Hills, Bonnyrigg, Bossley Park and Hoxton Park have the highest household size with around 3.4-3.6 persons per household compared with the national average of 2.63 persons.
- In comparison, postal area 2011 including Potts Point and Rushcutters Bay in Sydney has an average household size of 1.6 people per home.

### Implications

- The mining boom has significantly influenced the latest Census results. Not only do mining and energy regions dominate the lists of highest personal income and highest household income, but they are also regions of significant gender imbalance with males dominating industry employment.
- Policymakers should demonstrate in coming months that they are actively using the Census results for a raft of economic and socio-economic purposes. Unlike other surveys, the Census covers the entire population and latest observations and changes over time are invaluable for policy planning and decisions.
- Similarly businesses need to carefully dissect Census results to ensure that opportunities are being embraced.
- The Reserve Bank can utilise the Census results to gauge the regional impact of interest rate decisions. Given high home ownership rates, western Victoria appears to be one region that is relatively less impacted by decisions to change cash rates.

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