



State of Australian Cities 2013

Toowoomba



Population and Settlement

- Toowoomba's population grew by 2.8% between 2006 and 2011, to 109,449. This was the slowest growth rate of the major cities for this period; during the previous five year period the city experienced population growth of 9.0%.
- In 2010–11, 74 more people moved to Toowoomba from other parts of Australia than departed for other parts of Australia. Additionally, births (1,897) outnumbered deaths (902) in the city in 2010-11. Internal migration as a proportion of the population in Toowoomba was one of the lowest of all major cities.
- International education has grown to become Australia's fourth largest export industry. In 2011, 1,100 international students enrolled in the vocational education and training or the higher education sectors were living in Toowoomba, 1.0% of the city's population. It is estimated that international students in higher education, vocational and English language courses spend an average of \$42,531 per annum while studying in Australia.

Productivity

- In 2011, 83.3% of Toowoomba's employed males worked full-time, up from 80.7% in 2001 and above the national average of 81.7%. The proportion of Toowoomba's employed females that were working full-time was 51.1%, below the national average of 53.0%, but up slightly from 48.9% in 2001.
- The sectors that employed the most males in Toowoomba in 2011 were manufacturing (13.8%), construction (13.6%) and retail trade (9.4%). Nationally, the construction and manufacturing sectors employed the most males in 2011 (13.8% and 12.8%).
- The sectors that employed the most females in Toowoomba in 2011 were health care and social assistance (24.3%), education and training (15.9%) and retail trade (14.2%). Nationally, the health care and social assistance sector employed more Australians than any other sector (11.6%) in 2011, including one in five working women.
- Of the major cities, Toowoomba had the highest proportion of females employed in the education and training sector in 2011 (15.9%) and the highest proportion of the non-capital major cities in the health care and social assistance sector (24.3%).
- Of the non-capital major cities, Toowoomba in 2011 had the lowest proportion of males (4.7%) and females (7.9%) employed in the accommodation and food services sector.
- Employment by industry changed noticeably in Australia's major cities between 2001 and 2011. Reflecting the experience of all major cities during this period, the proportion of people employed in the retail trade sector in Toowoomba declined substantially (15.1% to 9.4% for males; 20.1% to 14.2% for females) and so did the proportion of people employed in the manufacturing sector (18.3% to 13.8% for males; 5.7% to 4.1% for females).
- The proportion of males employed in the construction and mining sectors increased significantly between 2001 and 2011 in Toowoomba (9.5% to 13.6%; and 0.5% to 2.9%). Most major cities saw

significant increases in the proportion of males employed in the construction sector during this period.

- The proportion of females employed in the health care and social assistance sector increased significantly in Toowoomba between 2001 and 2011 (21.5% to 24.3%). Most major cities saw significant increases in the proportion of females employed in this sector during this period.
- Higher education qualifications play a key role in Australia's productivity and there is an increasing demand for higher skill levels in the Australian workforce. In Toowoomba in 2011, 51.1% of males aged 15 and over had a post-school qualification, below the national average of 54.1%. The proportion with post-school qualifications included 29.3% with a certificate, 6.9% with a diploma or advanced diploma and 14.9% with a bachelor degree or above. Nationally, 26.8% of males had a certificate, 7.8% had a diploma or advanced diploma and 19.5% had a bachelor degree or above. The rate of increase in the proportion of males with post-school qualifications in Toowoomba between 2001 and 2011 was the highest of all the major cities. Over this period, Toowoomba also had the highest increase in the proportion of males with certificate-level qualifications.
- In 2011, 43.6% of females aged 15 and over had a post-school qualification, below the national average of 46.9%. The proportion with post-school qualifications included 15.7% with a certificate, 9.1% with a diploma or advanced diploma and 18.8% with a bachelor degree or above. Nationally, 14.0% of females had a certificate, 10.1% had a diploma or advanced diploma and 22.7% had a bachelor degree or above. The rate of increase in the proportion of females with post-school qualifications in Toowoomba between 2001 and 2011 was the third highest of the major cities, behind the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast-Tweed.

Liveability

- The median household income in Toowoomba increased by 9.6% between 2006 and 2011 to \$1,052 per week but it was still below the national median of \$1,234. Toowoomba had the second lowest income growth rate of the major cities between 2006 and 2011 and this may reflect the impact of severe flooding both in the city and surrounding areas towards the end of the period. Nationally, income has increased across all income groups; however it has increased more at the top and bottom.
- Toowoomba's estimated homeless population was 514 in 2011, approximately 0.5% of the city's population.
- Active travel can improve liveability in cities by increasing health and wellbeing, and reducing traffic congestion. In 2011, 5.1% of Toowoomba commuters walked or rode a bicycle to work. While this was on par with the average for all major cities, it was down from 5.9% in 2006.
- In 2011 the city had 6.3 male bicycle commuters for every female bicycle commuter, above the average ratio of 3.3:1 across the major cities. This was the highest ratio of all the major cities; though well down from 2006 when the ratio was greater than 10:1.
- In 2011, 21.3% of people in Toowoomba volunteered their time. This was the highest proportion of volunteering of the major cities and well above the national average of 17.8%. As with most non-capital major cities, the proportion of volunteering declined slightly between 2006 (22%) and 2011. Nationally, volunteering is more prevalent in the non-capital major cities than in the capitals.

Governance

- In Toowoomba, strategic planning is guided by the Queensland Government's *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031*. This plan provides high level policy direction for the greater Brisbane area as well as the major urban centres of Ipswich, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Logan and Toowoomba. The next review of the Plan is scheduled to commence in late 2013.