



Demographics



Main findings

- 50.1% of Queensland's total population are female.
- 18.1% were born overseas.
- The median age of Queensland women at June 2002 was 35.
- A baby girl born in Queensland in 2001 can expect to live to 82.6 years.
- An Indigenous baby girl born in Queensland in 2001 can expect to live to 54.1 years.
- Indigenous women in Queensland have a fertility rate of 2.2 babies, compared with 1.8 babies for all Queensland females.
- 43.2% of Queensland females live with a partner.
- A further 20.1% live as dependants, aged under 15 years.
- There are proportionately more weddings – and more divorces – in Queensland than any other Australian state.



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Queensland's population bulge of 35 to 54 year olds will have significant future impacts on government, community and business services.

Introduction

Queensland is the third most populous of Australia's states and territories with 19% of the nation's people. In 2002, it was the fastest growing state in terms of population growth.

In September 2003, 3,840,111 people lived in Queensland.¹ Females made up 50.1% of the population (1,924,963 people).

The median age of all Queenslanders at June 2002 was 35 years. Table 1 below shows the numbers of males and females in each age range, as at June 2003.

Table 1

Age by sex, Queensland, June 2003.				
Age	Females	Males	Persons	% Female
0-14	384,019	405,225	789,244	48.7
15-24	263,118	273,668	536,786	49.0
25-34	273,995	271,242	545,237	50.3
35-44	286,548	279,284	565,832	50.6
45-54	259,512	257,198	516,710	50.2
55-64	191,904	200,011	391,915	49.0
65-74	122,662	121,498	244,160	50.2
75-79	50,678	42,485	93,163	54.4
80-84	37,837	26,272	64,109	59.0
85-89	21,524	11,692	33,216	64.8
90 +	11,691	4,712	16,403	71.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Cat. No. 3101.0. September quarter 2003. Australian Demographic Statistics.

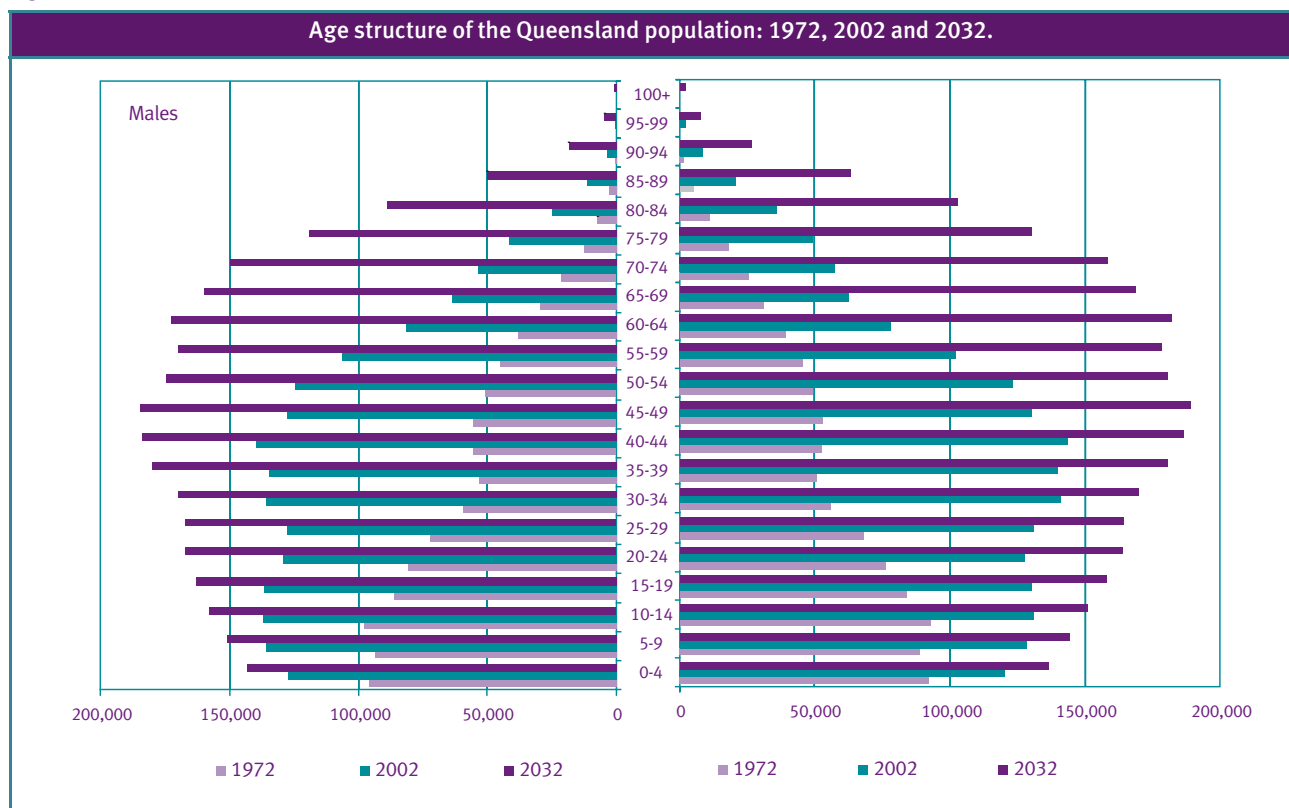
Girls born in Queensland between 2000 and 2002 can expect to live to 82.6 years, while boys can expect to live to 77.4 years. Since 1981, life expectancy at birth has increased by just over four years for females and almost six years for males.²

Women's longer life expectancy is reflected in their proportional representation once they are aged more than 65. In June 2003, women made up 54.2% of Queensland's "over 65s", equating to 120 women for every 100 men. Women represented 71.3% of the Queensland population aged 90 and over (250:100).³ This compares with girls making up only 48.7% of the 0-14 age group (95:100).⁴

The figure below shows the changing age structure of Queensland's population between 1972 and 2032.

The large population "bulge" in the 35-54 age group will progressively move into older age groups over the next 30 years. There are fewer people in younger age groups to replace the one preceding it. This will have significant implications for government, community and business services into the future. For example, if current work practices and patterns continue, fewer people will be actively involved in the workforce. This has the consequence of a smaller tax base from which to provide services and sustain economic growth.

Figure 1



Source: OESR, Queensland Treasury. Queensland Government Population Projections, 2003.



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Indigenous women

The 2001 Census counted 112,722 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, representing 3.1% of the total State population, and 27.5% of all Indigenous Australians. 51.6% of Indigenous Queenslanders are female.⁵

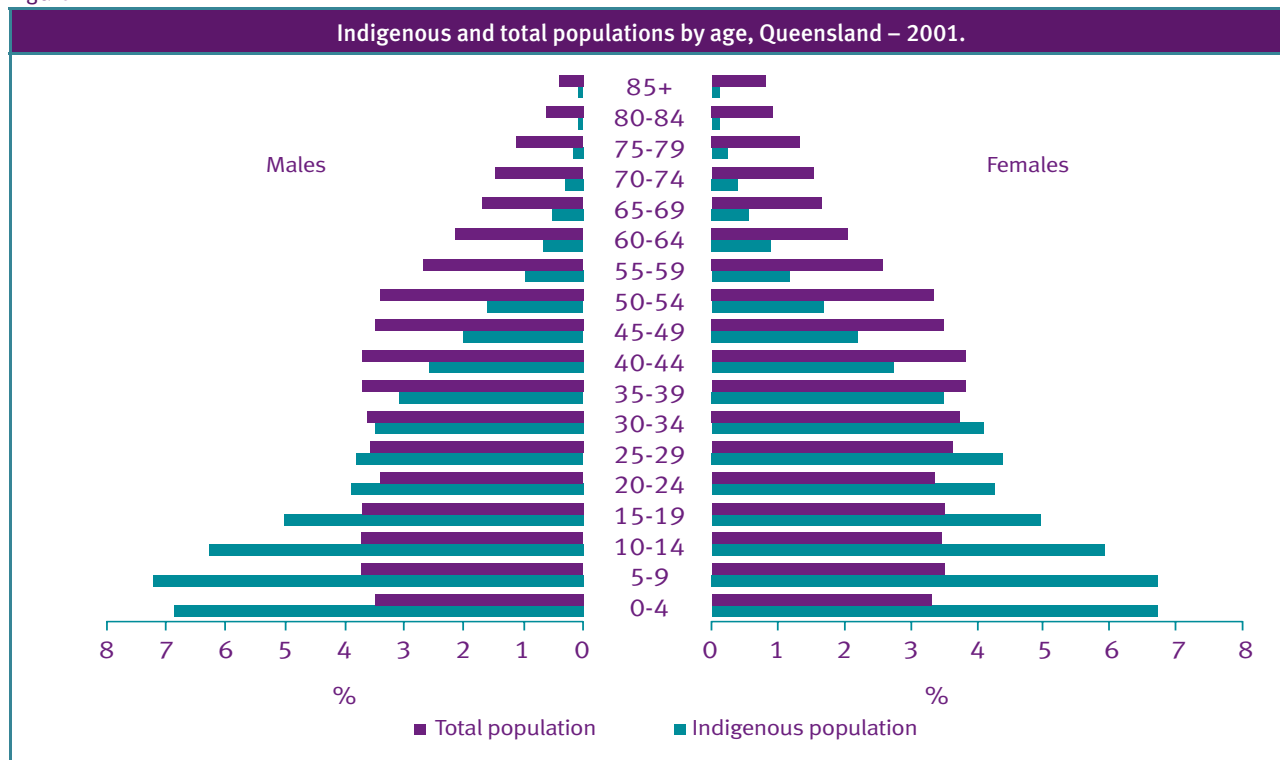
The age structure of the Indigenous population is quite different from that of the whole population, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

The Indigenous population is growing at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous population. The median age for the Indigenous population in 2001 was 19 years, compared with 36 years for the rest of the population. This can be attributed, in part, to higher fertility rates and lower life expectancy for Indigenous people.

In 2001, the Indigenous population had nearly twice as many children under 15 years (40.1%) as the total Queensland population (21.3%). Nearly one Indigenous woman in five gave birth when aged under 20, and their fertility rate was higher too (2.2 babies per woman compared with 1.8 for all Queensland women).

At the other end of the lifespan, the median age of death for Indigenous women in Queensland in 2001 was 54.1 years, compared with 81.4 years for the total female Queensland population, and 52.5 years for Indigenous males in Queensland.⁶

Figure 2



Source: ABS, Births, 2001 (Cat. No. 3301.0).

Ethnicity

At the time of the 2001 Census, 18.1% of the population counted in Queensland were born overseas.⁷

Table 2

Top ten countries of birth for women in Queensland, 2001.	
Country	Number
Australia	1,412,762
United Kingdom	90,700
New Zealand	64,033
Philippines	11,734
Germany	9,891
Netherlands	7,618
South Africa	7,360
Italy	7,071
Vietnam	6,057
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan Province)	4,849
United States of America	4,846
Malaysia	4,416
Fiji	4,131

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing, Table B06.

In 2001, there were 131,425 women in Queensland who spoke a language other than English at home. The most commonly spoken languages, other than English, were Chinese languages (14.0%), Italian (9.3%), German (5.7%) and Vietnamese (5.5%).⁸

Marriage

First-time Queensland brides in 2002 were, on average, 26.9 years old. The average age for men marrying for the first time was 28.9. This is in line with the national averages. In 2002, there were 5.7 marriages for every 1,000 Queenslanders. While this was the highest rate in Australia, there has been a steady decline over the past 20 years (7.8 marriages per 1,000 people in 1981). In Queensland in 2001, there were 20,314 marriages.⁹

Of all Queensland couples, 14% defined themselves as being in de facto marriages in 2001, which was above the national average of 12.4%.¹⁰

Of all Queensland couples in 2001, 0.2% identified as being same-sex female couples.¹¹

Queensland's divorce rate is the highest in Australia. There were 3.3 divorces per 1,000 people in 2001, up from 2.8 per 1,000 in 1981. 54.6% of all divorces were couples with children.¹²

There were 12,085 divorces granted in Queensland in 2001. This represents a 19.7% rise in divorces from the previous year, a 35.3% rise since 1991 and an 86.8% jump since 1981. Half the divorce applicants were women: 29.3% were men, and the remaining 20.8% applications were jointly made.¹³

It is estimated that around 32% of Australian marriages in 2001 will end in divorce.¹⁴



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Births

In 2002, Queensland women had an average total fertility rate of 1.78 babies per woman, slightly above the national average of 1.75.¹⁵ The average total fertility rate is higher in regional and rural areas, particularly in north-west Queensland where the rate was 2.43 over the years 1999 to 2001. Brisbane City had an average total fertility rate of 1.51 in that period.¹⁶

The median age of Queensland women giving birth in 2002 was 29.5 years, compared with 30.2 years nationally.¹⁷

87.1% of Queensland babies born in 2000 were born to parents who were married or in de facto relationships, 11.5% were born to single women, and 1.4% to divorced, widowed or separated women.¹⁸

Infant mortality rates

Queensland has the third highest infant mortality rate in Australia. In 2002, Queensland's infant mortality rate was 5.8 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to the national average of 5.0. Only the Northern Territory (11.3) and Tasmania (6.2) had higher infant mortality rates. However, Queensland's infant mortality rate had decreased from 10.4 in 1981. Queensland's higher rate can be partly attributed to the higher Indigenous infant mortality rate of 11.5 (for 2000–2002).¹⁹

More baby boys die than baby girls, in the foetal (still-born), neonatal (0 to 4 weeks) and post neonatal (4 weeks to 12 months) categories.²⁰ Baby boys represented 56.0% of deaths in Queensland infants aged under 12 months in 2002.²¹

Household structures

Queensland women most commonly live with a partner in a registered marriage or as dependants aged under 15 years. More women than men are sole parents, and fewer women remain living at home with their parents once they have an independent income.

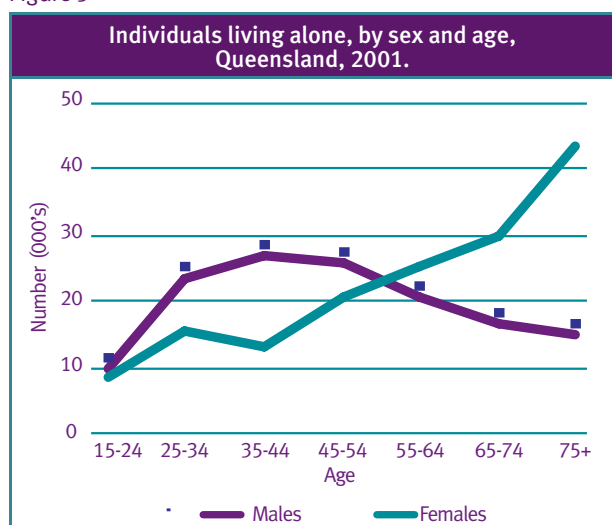
Table 3

Relationship of individuals in household, Queensland, 2001 (%)			
	Females	Males	Persons
Partner in registered marriage	37.2	37.6	37.4
Partner in de facto marriage	6.0	6.1	6.1
Sole parent	7.1	1.5	4.3
Child under 15	20.1	21.8	20.9
Dependent student (15 - 24)	4.3	4.3	4.3
Non-dependent child	3.9	6.7	5.2
Other related individual	2.1	2.0	2.0
Unrelated individual in family household	0.8	1.2	1.0
Group household member	3.3	4.3	3.8
Lone person	9.0	8.2	8.6
Visitor (from within Australia)	4.8	5.2	5.0
Overseas visitors	1.4	1.1	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS 2001, *Census of Population and Housing, Queensland, Table B14.*

The fertility rate in Queensland's remote north-west is 2.43; in Brisbane, it's 1.51.

Figure 3



Source: ABS, 2001 Census of Population and Housing, Queensland, Table B13.

Figure 3 above shows that women are much more likely than men to live alone after the age of 55 years. At the 2001 Census, women aged 75 or more, and living alone, outnumbered men by almost 3 to 1. This reflects women's longer life expectancy.

Of the 1,011,000 families in Queensland in 2002, 41.7% had children aged under 15 years. Of those, 22.6% were sole parent families headed by mothers, and 3% were sole parent families headed by fathers.²² 22.8% of all Queensland children aged under 15 lived in sole parent families.



By 75, Queensland women living alone outnumber men three to one.



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- ¹⁵ ABS, 2003. Cat. No. 3301.0. *Births, Australia*.
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- ¹⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare National Perinatal Statistics Unit, 2003. *Australia's Mothers and Babies 2000*. AIHW, Canberra.
- ¹⁹ ABS, 2003. Cat. No. 3302.0. *Deaths*.
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