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# 12 Outcomes for Torres Strait Islander people

## Box 12.1 Key messages

- Around 6 per cent of the Indigenous population identify as Torres Strait Islander only, while an additional 4 per cent identify as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- Fifty-nine per cent of Torres Strait Islander people live in Queensland.
- In 2004-05:
  - the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults with a long term health condition were similar (tables 12A.1.5 and 12A.1.6)
  - a higher proportion of Torres Strait Islander adults (21.7 per cent) than Aboriginal adults (13.6 per cent) had year 12 as their highest level of education (figure 12.1.1), but similar proportions had completed a post-secondary qualification of certificate level 3 or higher (table 12A.1.1)
  - the labour force participation rate for Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 to 64 years (69.7 per cent) was higher than for Aboriginal people (61.9 per cent) (figure 12.1.2). The proportions of people who were unemployed or who were participating in CDEP were similar (tables 12A.1.4 and 12A.1.6)
  - the median (mid point) weekly income of Torres Strait Islander adults (\$400) was higher than for Aboriginal adults (\$303) but lower than for non-Indigenous adults (\$518) (figure 12.1.3).
  - the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults living in homes someone in their household owned or was purchasing were similar (table 12A.1.2).

## 12.1 Selected outcomes for Torres Strait Islander people

The estimated Indigenous population of Australia in at 30 June 2001 was 458 500, of whom 48 791 (10.6 per cent of the Indigenous population) were Torres Strait Islanders. People who identified solely as Torres Strait Islander comprised around 6 per cent of the Indigenous population, while the remaining 4 per cent identified as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Fifty-nine per cent of Torres Strait Islander people lived in Queensland (ABS 2004).

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Torres Strait Islander people comprise a small proportion of the Australian population (and of the Indigenous population), and it is difficult to extract reliable data on Torres Strait islander people from surveys and administrative data collections. The five-yearly ABS Census provides the most reliable data on Torres Strait Islander people. Data from the 2006 Census were not available for this Report but will be available for the next edition.

This chapter presents a selection of results from the ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS showing outcomes for Torres Strait Islander, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people. In these data, 'Torres Strait Islander' includes both people who identified as 'Torres Strait Islander only' and people who identified as 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander'. 'Aboriginal' includes people who identified as 'Aboriginal only'. More detailed results for Torres Strait Islander people in the Torres Strait area, Queensland and the remainder of Australia are included in tables 12A.1.1 to 12A.1.6.

### **Long term health conditions**

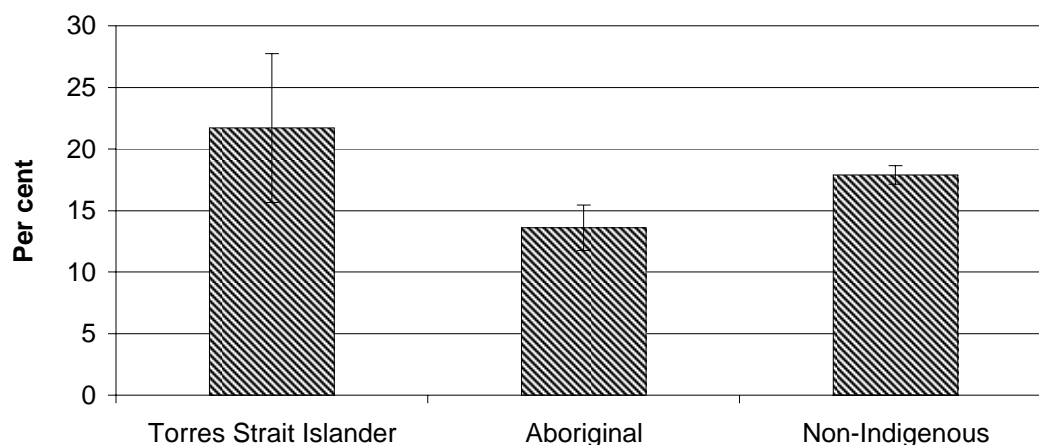
- Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years and over reported having a long term health condition in 2004-05 (tables 12A.1.5 and 12A.1.6). For more information on Indigenous people with a long term health condition and comparisons with non-Indigenous people, see section 3.2.

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## Education

Figure 12.5.1 Proportion of people aged 18 or over whose highest level of education was year 12, 2004-05 <sup>a, b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Excludes people still attending secondary school and people who have a post school qualification. <sup>b</sup> Torres Strait Islander includes persons who identified as being Torres Strait Islander only or of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. Aboriginal includes persons who identified as being of Aboriginal origin and not Torres Strait Islander origin.

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS; ABS 2004-05 NHS; table 12A.1.1.

- In 2004-05, a higher proportion of Torres Strait Islander (21.7 per cent) than Aboriginal (13.6 per cent) people aged 18 years and over had year 12 as their highest level of education (figure 12.1.1).
- Similar proportions of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people had completed a post-secondary qualification of certificate level 3 or higher in 2004-05 (table 12A.1.1).

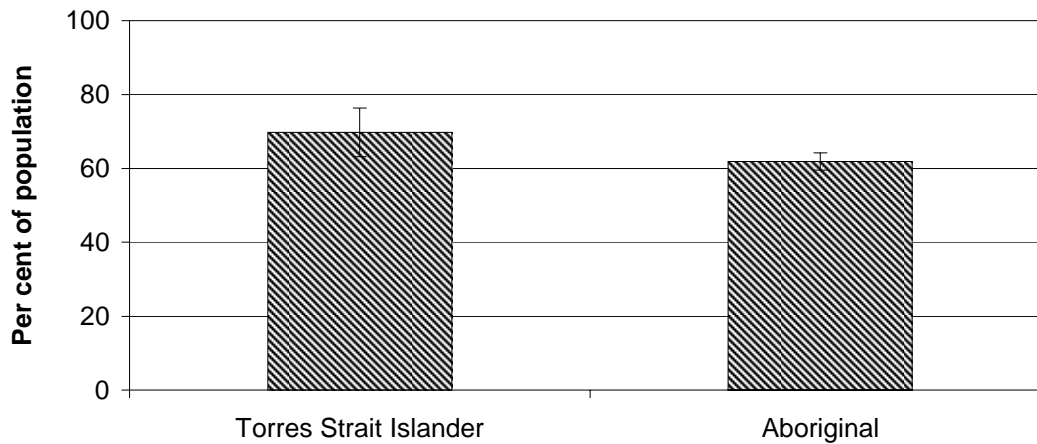
For more information on year 10 and 12 participation and attainment and post-secondary education participation and attainment, including comparisons with non-Indigenous people, see sections 3.3 and 3.4.

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## Labour force participation and unemployment

Figure 12.1.2 Labour force participation rate, 2004-05<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Torres Strait Islander includes persons who identified as being Torres Strait Islander only or of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. Aboriginal includes persons who identified as being of Aboriginal origin and not Torres Strait Islander origin.

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS; table 12A.1.4.

- In 2004-05, the labour force participation rate for Torres Strait Islander people (69.7 per cent of the population) was higher than for Aboriginal people (61.9 per cent) aged 18 to 64 years (figure 12.1.2).
- In 2004-05, the proportions of people who were unemployed and proportions of people participating in CDEP were similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 to 64 years (tables 12A.1.4 and 12A.1.6).

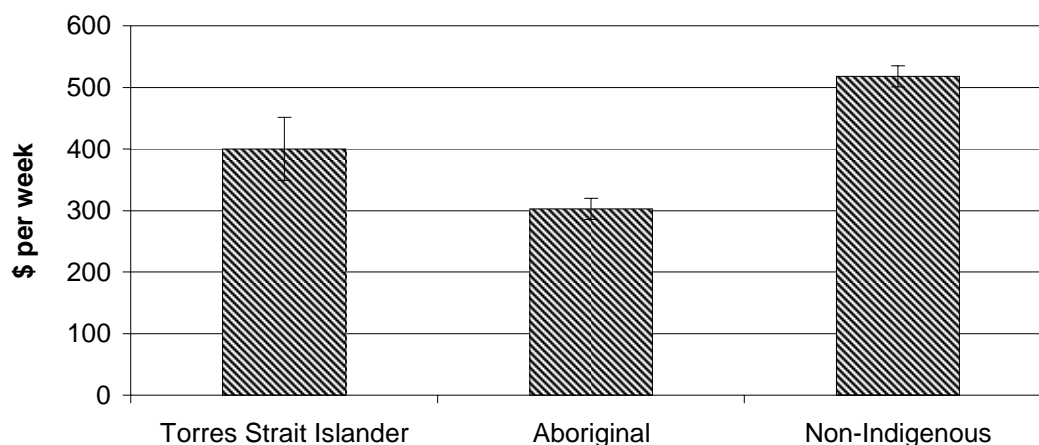
For more information on labour force participation and unemployment for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, see section 3.5.

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## Income

Figure 12.1.3 **Median individual income, people aged 18 years or over, 2004-05<sup>a</sup>**

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<sup>a</sup> Torres Strait Islander includes persons who identified as being Torres Strait Islander only or of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. Aboriginal includes persons who identified as being of Aboriginal origin and not Torres Strait Islander origin.

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS; ABS 2004-05 NHS; table 12A.1.3.

- In 2004-05, the median weekly income of Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years or over (\$400) was higher than for Aboriginal people (\$303) but lower than for non-Indigenous people (\$518) (figure 12.1.3).

More information on household and individual incomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is included in section 3.6.

## Home ownership

- Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years and over were living in homes someone in their household owned or was purchasing in 2004-05 (table 12A.1.2).

More information on home ownership by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is included in section 3.7.

## 12.2 Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 12A.1.2 is table 2 in the attachment tables for

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section 12.1). The files containing the attachment tables can also be found on the Review web page ([www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp)). Users without access to the Internet can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

## 12 Outcomes for Torres Strait Islander people

- Table 12A.1.1** Highest level of education completed by people aged 18 or over, by Indigenous status, 2004-05
- Table 12A.1.2** Home ownership of people aged 18 or over, by Indigenous status, 2004-05
- Table 12A.1.3** Individual weekly income of people aged 18 or over, by Indigenous status, 2004-05
- Table 12A.1.4** Employment status of Indigenous people aged 18 to 64 years, 2004-05
- Table 12A.1.5** Proportion of Indigenous people aged 18 years or over with a long term health condition, 2004-05
- Table 12A.1.6** Selected indicators for people aged 18 or over, by Indigenous status, age standardised, 2004-05

## 12.3 References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2004, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2009*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra.