



Education, training and economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

The Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) report measures the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

This fact sheet includes selected measures from the strategic framework of indicators in the OID report that are particularly relevant to education, training and economic participation. Whilst some preschool and school outcomes are concerning, other outcomes (such as post-secondary education and some areas of economic participation) are encouraging.

Attendance in early childhood and school education

Lower rates of preschool attendance, but increases with remoteness

In 2013, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the year before full time schooling, enrolment rates ranged from 67 per cent in major cities to 85 per cent in remote/very remote areas. Attendance rates varied similarly, from 65 per cent in major cities to 75 per cent in remote/very remote areas.

This compares to overall 91 per cent enrolment and 89 per cent attendance for non-Indigenous children. Comparable time series data not yet available.

Lower rates of school attendance

In 2013, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students generally had lower attendance rates than non-Indigenous students across school sectors in each State and Territory (difference larger in year 10 than year 5).

School education outcomes

Few improvements in learning outcomes against national minimum standards

In 2013, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the *national minimum standard* are outlined below.

	Year 3 (%)	Year 5 (%)	Year 7 (%)	Year 9 (%)
Reading	82	83	73	74
Writing	79	66	61	51
Numeracy	82	73	78	66

From 2008 to 2013, for reading and numeracy¹, improvements were seen for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in year 3 reading and year 5 reading, with the gap to non-Indigenous students narrowing. There were no changes for year 7 or 9 reading or numeracy.

In 2013, achievement for non-Indigenous students for all subjects and year levels was greater than 90 per cent, with the exception of year 9 writing (84 per cent).

¹ Data for writing from 2011 onwards are not comparable to prior years due to a change in the type of writing text used.

Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

Key Indicators 2014



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Increase in year 12 attainment

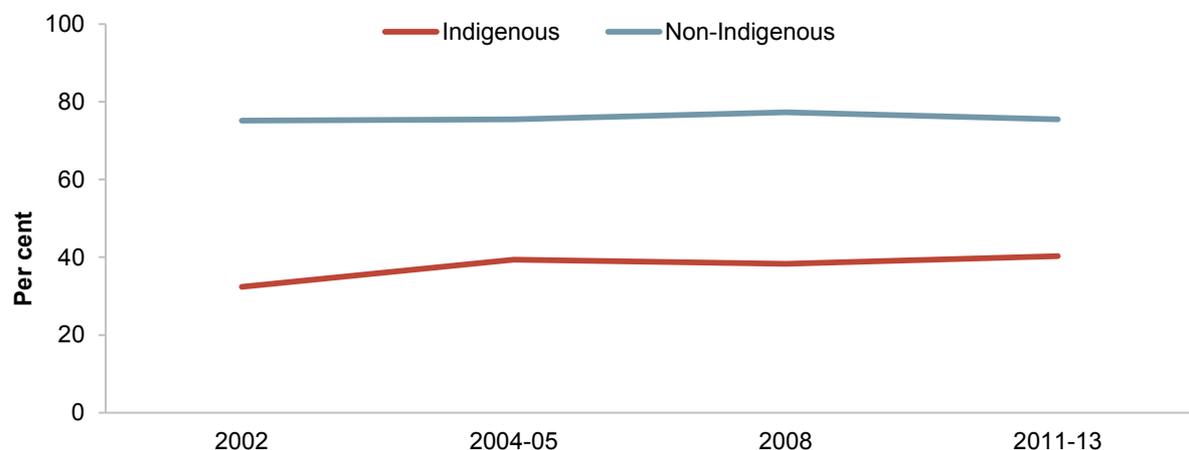
From 2008 to 2012-13, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 20–24 year olds who had completed year 12 or equivalent or above increased from 45 to 59 per cent. The non-Indigenous rate remained stable between 86 and 88 per cent.

Post-secondary education

Improvement in transition from school to further education, training or work

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 17–24 year olds participating in post-school education, training or employment increased from 32 per cent in 2002 to 40 per cent in 2011–13. The non-Indigenous rate was stable over the period (75 per cent), leading to a narrowing of the gap.

People aged 17–24 years fully engaged in post-school education, training or employment, 2002 to 2011–13



Increase in rates of completion for VET and higher education

In 2013, the national VET pass rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 75 per cent, an increase from 65 per cent in 2004. Over the same period the rate for non-Indigenous students increased from 79 to 83 per cent.

In 2012, the higher education success rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 73 per cent, an increase from 65 per cent in 2001. Over the same period the rate for non-Indigenous students remained stable around 87 per cent.

Increase in attainment of higher level skills

In 2012-13, 43 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 20–64 year olds had a Certificate level III or above or were studying, a 17 percentage point increase from 2002. The gap between non-Indigenous Australians remained steady around 25 percentage points.

2014

Information in this fact sheet is from *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2014*, published by the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. The report can be found on the Review website: www.pc.gov.au/gsp. For further information contact the Secretariat: (03) 9653 2100, gsp@pc.gov.au. Image by Wayne Quilliam, courtesy of Reconciliation Australia and the 2012 Indigenous Governance Awards and finalist Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care. CAUTION: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this publication may contain images of deceased people. No inference is intended that the people or communities shown are the subject of any issue raised in the report.

Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

Key Indicators 2014



Fact Sheet #8

Economic participation

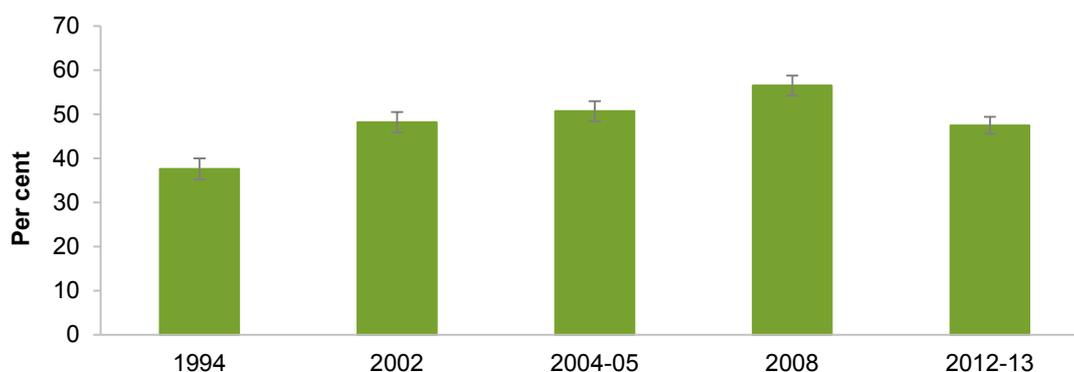
Employment to population ratio increased to 2008 before declining

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 15–64 years who were employed increased from 38 per cent in 1994 to 54 per cent in 2008 before declining to 48 per cent in 2012-13. The non-Indigenous rate increased from 74 per cent in 2004-05 to 77 per cent in 2011-12.

The decline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians from 2008 to 2012-13 was possibly due to:

- a decrease in the employment rate for males, particularly those aged 15–17 years (a corresponding decrease in labour force participation shows they were not actively looking for work, and may have been in education or training).
- changes in the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP)² — some participants may have been classified as employed in one period and as unemployed in another period.

Employment to population ratio for Indigenous Australians aged 15–64 years



For those employed, an increase in full time and managerial positions

For employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians:

- the proportion aged 18–64 years who were in full time employment increased from 55 per cent in 2002 to 65 per cent in 2012-13 (around 5 percentage points lower than the proportion for non-Indigenous Australians — 70 per cent in 2011-12)
- the proportion aged 15–64 years who were in professional or managerial positions increased from 16 per cent in 2001 to 20 per cent in 2011 (the proportion for non-Indigenous Australians increased from 33 to 35 per cent)
- the proportion aged 18–64 years who were self-employed was 6 per cent in 2012-13 — stable since 1994. The proportion for non-Indigenous Australians almost halved from 21 per cent in 2001 to 11 per cent in 2011-12.

² An employment and training program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

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Reliance on income support has decreased

From 2002 to 2012-13, there were marked decreases in the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 18–64 years whose main source of income was government pensions/allowances and CDEP/other cash income, with the proportion whose main source of income was employee income increasing from 32 to 41 per cent.

Native title coverage has increased

Nationally in 2013, native title had been determined to exist in full or in part in 21 per cent of Australia, up from 5 per cent in 2004 (with proportions highest in very remote areas).

Home ownership has increased

In 2012-13, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults living in a home owned by a member of their household was 30 per cent (72 per cent in 2011-12 for non-Indigenous adults) — an increase from 22 per cent in 1994.

Things that work – case studies

The OID report includes case studies of programs that are making a difference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Some of the education, training and economic participation case studies are summarised below. The main report includes more detailed information.

Sporting chance program (national)

- The Sporting Chance Program aims to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through school-based sports academies in secondary schools, and education engagement strategies for primary and secondary school students.
- A 2010 evaluation found that school staff considered that the program was having a moderate (positive) impact on school engagement (although the degree and nature of improvement varied between schools).

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (national)

- The Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience program was established in 2005, with university students mentoring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 7 to 12.
- A 2012 evaluation found that the program was effective in strengthening school and post-school aspirations, sense of engagement, and sense of identity. Mentored student outcomes were better than the national average.

Working on Country (national)

- The Working on Country program provides employment and training opportunities to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in rural and remote areas to undertake work in natural resource management.
- A 2011 evaluation found that the rangers saw the jobs as ‘real jobs’ that provided better income and conditions, more interesting work and ongoing employment, than the CDEP alternative.

This fact sheet summarises information about a selection of indicators from the OID report. The overview and main report include more detailed information.

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