

CUMMINGS ECONOMICS

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NOTE ON YOUTH & INDIGENOUS UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CAIRNS REGION

1.0 Introduction

The recent availability of 2016 Census workforce data throws light on the real youth and indigenous unemployment situation.

2.0 Youth Unemployment Overall

Examination of employment data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census gives the following statistics for the Cairns region compared with Queensland as a whole.

Table #5: Youth Unemployment, 2016 Census

Youth overall	Cairns region	Queensland
% unemployed aged 15 – 24 years	15.0%	15.8%
% unemployed total population	7.8%	7.6%

Source: ABS 2016 Census data (usual place of residence).

Overall unemployment in the Cairns region was only slightly higher than the State overall at the time of the Census in August 2016. Youth unemployment at 15% was slightly lower than the State average.

Youth unemployment at 15% is about twice the average level for both the Cairns region and Queensland overall.

By comparison, at the time of the Census, the ABS Labour Force Series was recording extremely large youth employment in the 20s and over 30% range, again reflecting the unreliability of the ABS Labour Force Series.

3.0 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Unemployment

The following gives unemployment rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander population recorded in the Census.

Table #6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unemployment, Census 2016

Aboriginal & TSI	Cairns region	Queensland
% unemployed aged 15 – 24 years	35.3%	29.5%
% unemployed total population	26.0%	20.0%

Source: ABS 2016 Census data (usual place of residence).

The rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unemployment is extremely high in both the Cairns region and Queensland as a whole with the Cairns region being higher. Youth unemployment in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is higher still at the Queensland and Cairns region level.

4.0 Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Population Unemployment

The following gives unemployment rates when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is deducted from the total.

Table #7: Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unemployment, Census 2016

Non-Aboriginal & TSI	Cairns region	Queensland
% unemployed aged 15 – 24 years	12.3%	15.2%
% unemployed total population	6.5%	7.2%

Source: ABS 2016 Census data (usual place of residence).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population forms a higher proportion of population and the workforce in the Cairns region.

Unemployment rates of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for both youth and total populations were lower in the Cairns region than for Queensland overall, but the youth unemployment rate was still double the unemployment rate of the total population.

5.0 Conclusions

Youth unemployment rates are about double those for the total population but the Cairns region's rates are no higher than for Queensland overall.

The youth and total unemployment rates are extremely high for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

If the higher proportion of workforce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the Cairns region is taken into account, the Cairns region's youth and total population unemployment rates were lower than the State average.