



### **2021 Census finds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older population continues to grow**

The 2021 Census provides an updated snapshot of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) said today.

The Census found that 812,728 people (3.2 per cent of the population) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, an increase of over 25 per cent (25.2 per cent) since 2016.

Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people counted, 91.4 per cent identified as Aboriginal, 4.2 per cent identified as Torres Strait Islander, and 4.4 per cent identified as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The Census also revealed growing numbers of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with over 47,000 (47,677) aged 65 years and over in 2021, up from 31,000 in 2016 and 21,000 in 2011. The median age for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people increased slightly to 24 years in 2021, up from 23 years in 2016 and 21 years in 2011.

Traditional languages continue to be an important part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households, with 167 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages spoken at home in 2021 by over 78,000 (78,656) people.

The most widely reported language groups spoken were Arnhem Land and Daly River Region Languages, Torres Strait Island Languages, Western Desert Languages, Yolngu Matha and Arandic.

The 2021 Census introduced a new question on service with the Australian Defence Force (ADF). It found that over 3,000 (3,159 or 3.7 per cent) currently serving members and over 11,000 (11,610 or 2.3 per cent) former serving members identify as having Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Dr David Gruen AO, Australian Statistician, said “The Census collects vitally important information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that will help governments and local organisations plan for health, education and community services into the future.

The ABS is undertaking further analysis of the insights that Census data provides for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We look forward to sharing these in our future releases”.

For further information on 2021 Census data, tune into the 2021 Census data release launch on 28 June at 10am AEST at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census/events> or explore the data at [www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data](http://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data).

## Media notes

- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team on [media@abs.gov.au](mailto:media@abs.gov.au) or **1300 175 070**.
- Further information on 2021 Census is available in the [Census media backgrounders](#).