Chapter 3

Economic activity

bitre

Chapter 3 Economic activity

This chapter discusses economic growth, employment by industry, and income levels in Northern Australia over the period of 1990–91 to 2005–06. As gross regional product in Australia is not available at a disaggregate level suitable for assessing the economic activity in Northern Australia, a 'surrogate' but practical measure is used here instead.

Firstly, based on data from the Australian Taxation Office, it considers Aggregate Real Taxable Income (ARTI) by region in order to discuss related growth (or decline) in these over time. This parameter is a useful indicator of economic growth over time. No data is available for the most recent period of 2007–09, therefore the impact on Northern Australia of the recent global economic downturn could not be illustrated.

In general, Northern Australia's recent economic performance can be broken down into three distinctive phases: a growth phase from 1990–91 until 1995–96; a phase of stagnation and decline from 1995–96 until 2000–01; and then a final phase of resource driven growth from 2000–01 until 2005–06 (the final year for which figures are available). This three phase growth pattern is evident through the analysis of each of the measures available in BITRE's *Regional Economic Growth Database*. This is in contrast with the broader Australian growth pattern, where during the middle phase of stagnation and decline in Northern Australia, Australia as a whole still grew strongly. In addition, during Northern Australia's growth phases, the Australian economy was growing, but at lower rate than Northern Australia.

The decline in the economic performance of Northern Australia appears to begin in 1997–98, which corresponds to the Asian financial crisis and the subsequent reduction in minerals exports from Australia to the affected countries. Also, the final phase of economic growth from 2000 corresponds to the most recent mining boom in Australia. This is consistent with the economy of Northern Australia being closely linked to the mining and natural resources markets.

The chapter then considers employment by industry, and growth (or decline) within industries between 2001 and 2006. In 2006, relative to Australia, the industries of mining and government administration and defence were larger employers in Northern Australia. On the other hand, less people were employed by the industries of manufacturing, and finance, insurance, property and business services in Northern Australia in comparison with the rest of Australia.

There were a greater number of people employed in Northern Australia in 2006 than there were in 2001. An increase in employment was observed across almost all industries in Northern Australia, the largest being in construction, primarily due to the substantial increase in building activity within northern Queensland.

The chapter then analyses individual incomes for all adults by region as captured in the 2006 Census, covering low income earners and recipients of government allowances as well as all taxpayers. The median individual income for Northern Australia shows many SLAs having a high number of people earning a low income.

These figures also reveal a greater numbers of males earning a higher than average weekly income, and a greater number of females earning an income in the lower income brackets.

Finally, we look at different types of taxable income earned by taxpayers by region in 2006. It shows whether incomes were earned from salaries, business returns, investments, superannuation, or other sources. Broadly speaking, much of Northern Australia had a higher dependence on wage and salary income than Australia as a whole, and a comparatively lower dependence on superannuation, annuities and investments.

In this chapter we also discuss a number of different indicators of economic activity in Northern Australia, each of which provides a different snapshot of Northern Australia's economy. Although each indicator has different caveats, it illustrates different aspects of the economic activity. For instance, BITRE's *Regional Economic Growth Database* provides long-term data on the working/taxpaying population of Northern Australia and is more suited to economic analysis. In contrast, the income data derived from the 2006 Census lends itself more to social analysis due to the inclusion of incomes derived from government benefits.

3.1 Economic growth in Northern Australia

Measures of regional economic performance

BITRE measures regional economic performance using the *Regional Economic Growth Database*. The most important measure in this database is Aggregate Real Taxable Income (ARTI), the dynamics of which can be used to assess regional economic performance. ARTI has been used for a number of years, and has been proven a good indicator of regional economic performance (BITRE 2005a).

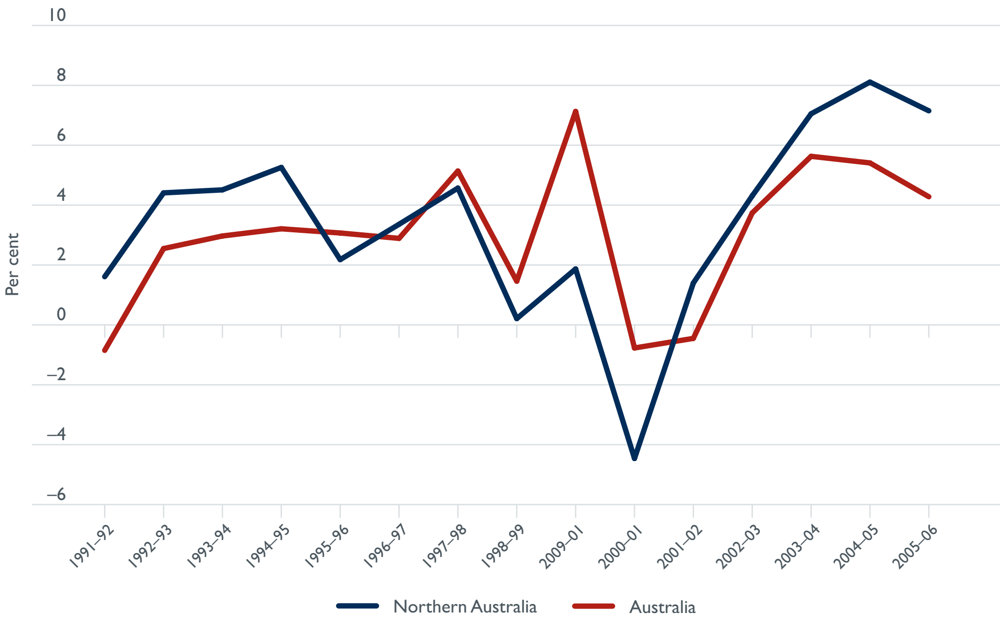
The other measures in the *Regional Economic Growth Database* which can be used to analysis regional economic performance are the Number of Taxable Individuals (NTI) which measures the number of people in a region who submitted a tax form that were required to pay tax on their income and Real Income per Taxpayer (RIPT) which is simply the ARTI for a region divided by the NTI of the region, or the average taxable income for the region.

Aggregate Real Taxable Income (ARTI) to measure regional growth

ARTI is a measure that indicates the total level of economic activity for the region and its dynamics can be used as an indicator of regional economic growth. Changes in ARTI arise for two reasons: either the number of people earning income in the region changes as shown by changes in NTI or the income of the current workers in a region changes (changes in RIPT).

Figure 3.1.1 shows that there were three phases of economic growth in Northern Australia between 1990–91 and 2005–06. During the first phase, from 1990–91 to 1995–96, Northern Australia experienced a period of strong economic growth. The second phase was from 1995–96 when economic growth began to slow, concluding with a significant contraction in 2000–01 (a fall of 4.5 per cent). The third phase in the economic performance of Northern Australia was a period of strong growth from 2000–01, due to the most recent mining boom.

Figure 3.1.1 Northern Australia—ARTI annual growth 1990–91 to 2005–06



Note: This figure shows growth and decline (per cent) in ARTI between 1990–91 and 2005–06, comparing Northern Australia with Australia.

Source: BITRE (2009a).

Over this period, Northern Australia had higher average annual growth in ARTI (3.4 per cent per year) than the rest of Australia (3.0 per cent per year). In the 2000s, Northern Australia's ARTI growth (5.6 per cent) has been substantially faster than that of Australia as a whole (3.7 per cent). Northern Australia appears to have a much more volatile economic pattern than Australia. The growth periods of the early 1990s and the 2000s saw Northern Australia grow considerably faster than Australia as a whole, while in the late 1990s with the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis of 1997, Northern Australia exhibited a deeper downturn than the whole of Australia.

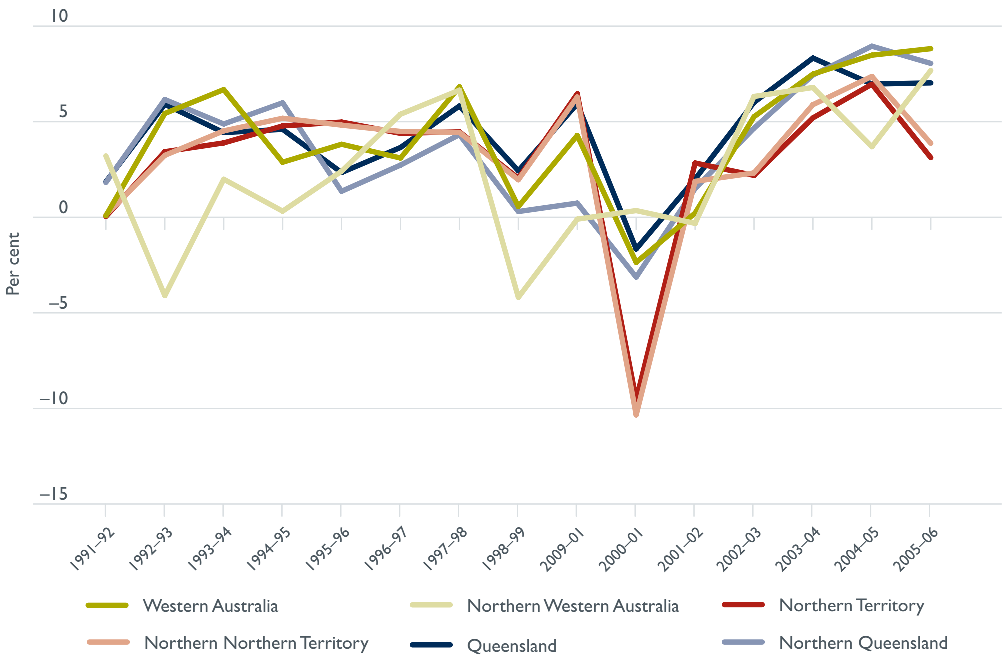
With respect to annual ARTI growth, at the state level the northern part of Queensland tracked Queensland as a whole between 1990–91 and 2005–06, but demonstrated slightly lower annual growth percentages (see Figure 3.1.2). The northern part of Western Australia did not exhibit similar growth patterns to Western Australia as a whole, and generally had lower annual growth in comparison. There was a negligible difference between the growth rates of the north of the Northern Territory and the Northern Territory as a whole.

The northern regions of Queensland contributed 20.8 per cent of Queensland's ARTI in 2005–06 and 74.9 per cent of the ARTI of Northern Australia. In the same year, the northern regions of Western Australia contributed 3.8 per cent of ARTI for Western Australia as a whole, whereas almost all (98.5 per cent) of the Northern Territory's

ARTI comes from the north of the Northern Territory. These proportions explain why the patterns of economic activity in northern regions of Queensland and the Northern Territory are a closer match to their state than northern Western Australia is to whole of Western Australia.

The Northern Territory experienced a sudden and severe drop in ARTI between 1999–00 and 2000–01 (see Figure 3.1.2). Western Australia and Queensland also experienced a sudden decline at this time, but it was not as severe as the one exhibited in the Northern Territory.

Figure 3.1.2 Northern Australia—ARTI annual growth by state, 1990–91 to 2005–06



Note: This figure shows growth and decline (per cent) in ARTI between 1990–91 and 2005–06, comparing the northern regions of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory with their respective state totals.

Source: BITRE (2009a).

The northern region which saw the lowest level of growth over this period was the North West Region (0.3 per cent per annum) in Queensland, the only region to have growth of less than 1 per cent per annum. The regions which saw the strongest growth were Mackay (4.4 per cent) and the Far North Region (5.1 per cent), both in Queensland.

Table 3.1.1 shows that from 2000–01, the MacKay Region was the fastest growing region in Northern Australia (8.7 per cent per year), whilst the Longreach Region experienced negative growth (–0.1 per cent per year). The regional breakdown is consistent with the growth in mining and construction industries (with high growth in the Pilbara in Western Australia and the Northern Region in Queensland) and the decline of the agriculture industries in regions such Longreach and Queensland's North West (with the exception of Mt Isa and Winton SLAs in the North West Region).

Table 3.1.1 Northern Australia—average annual ARTI growth by region 2000–01 to 2005–06

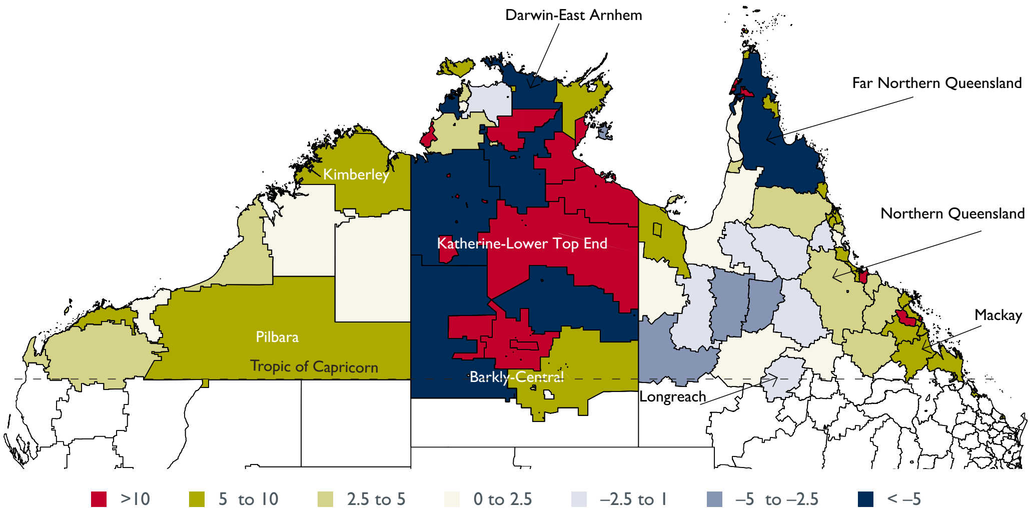
Region	*2000–01 to 2005–06*
Northern Australia (WA)	4.792
Pilbara Region	5.022
Kimberley Region	4.191
Western Australia state total	6.008
Northern Australia (NT)	4.243
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	4.612
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	2.846
Barkly-Central NT Region	3.025
Northern Territory total	4.048
Northern Australia (QLD)	6.085
Mackay Region	8.675
Northern Region	5.668
Far North Region	5.299
North West Region	0.864
Longreach Region	–0.093
Queensland state total	6.044
Northern Australia subtotal	5.577
Australia total	4

Notes: ARTI by region in 1000s.
Source: BITRE (2009a).

As shown in Map 3.1.1, at the SLA level, the pattern of growth closely followed regional growth patterns shown in Table 3.1.1 after 2000–01. However, growth at the SLA level was subject to greater variation (small projects or business can have a large impact on a single SLA while not greatly affecting the region which the SLA is in). Statistical Local Areas with strong mining, construction and tourism industries saw stronger growth, while SLAs based on agriculture exhibited less growth. The SLAs with the highest growth in ARTI from 2000 were the Darwin City SLAs of Gunn-Palmerston City and Bayview-Woolner, largely due to large influx of people to these growth centres of Darwin City. The SLAs which had the largest reduction in ARTI since 2000 were West Arnhem (Northern Territory), Elsey (Northern Territory) and the Indigenous communities within these SLAs, again, largely to do with a reduction in the number of taxable individuals in these SLAs.

It should be noted here that the ARTI measure is based on the place of residence of the taxpayer when they submit their tax return, and may not reflect the region where they actually work. This means that 'fly-in, fly-out' employees in the mining industry may be recorded at their home SLA instead of their SLA of work. ARTI figures from SLAs that are heavily reliant on the mining and resources industries could be affected by this.

Map 3.1.1 Northern Australia—ARTI growth, 2000–01 to 2005–06



Source: BITRE (2009a).

Number of Taxable Individuals (NTI)

Changes in the number of taxable individuals (NTI) can also be used as an indicator of economic performance of a region. Changes in NTI can be caused by migration to and from a region due to individuals seeking employment, changes in the participation of people in the economic activities of a region (people within a region moving in or out of the workforce) or increasing incomes so that those people earning income below the taxable level begin to earn more than the minimum tax threshold.

An analysis of the changes in NTI for the regions of Northern Australia show the same three phase growth pattern exhibited in the ARTI measure.

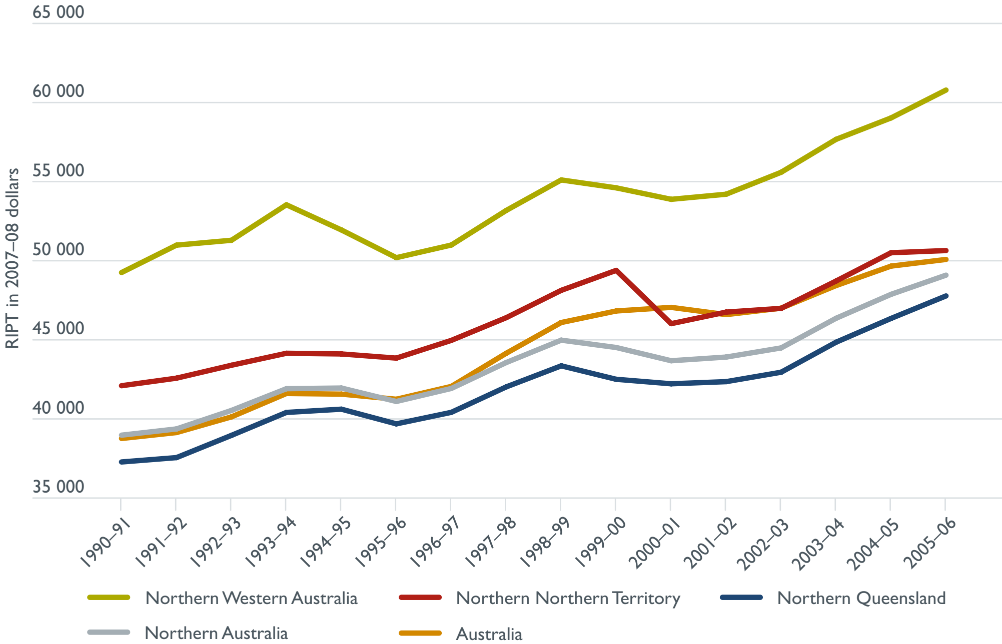
A more detailed analysis of NTI changes in Northern Australia can be found in Chapter 4.

Real Income per Taxpayer (RIPT)

Real Income per Taxpayer (RIPT) for a region is simply the ARTI for a region divided by the NTI of the region. It is therefore a measure of average income of the taxpaying population for a region, which for most regions is closely related to overall average income.

In Figure 3.1.3, it can be seen that real income per taxpayer growth trends for Northern Australia followed the Australian trend, although in the late 1990s a gap started to appear, with Northern Australia falling behind due to falling mining incomes from a slowdown in exports due to the Asian financial crisis. From 2002–03, this gap has began to close again.

Figure 3.1.3 Northern Australia—real income per taxpayer (RIPT), 1990–91 to 2005–06



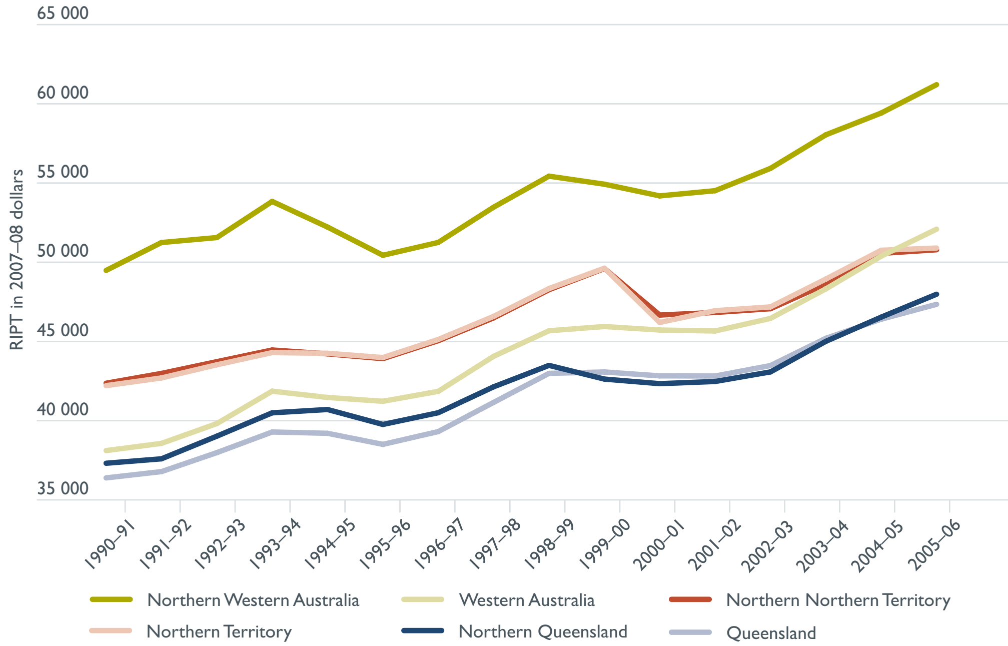
Note: This figure shows RIPT between 1990–1991 and 2005–2006, comparing the northern regions of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory with Northern Australia and Australia.

Source: BITRE (2009a).

Between 1990–91 and 2005–06, northern Western Australia's RIPT remained considerably higher than the Australia RIPT, and the north of the Northern Territory generally had a higher RIPT than Australia. Northern Queensland's RIPT growth pattern tracked the Australia RIPT growth pattern between 1990–91 and 2005–06, but the region's RIPT was consistently below the national RIPT. This indicates that residents of northern Western Australia and the north of the Northern Territory have historically commanded a higher income than the rest of Australia but residents of northern Queensland earned a lower average income than the rest of Australia.

Figure 3.1.4 shows that northern Queensland RIPT closely resembled Queensland RIPT as a whole, while northern Western Australia's RIPT was significantly higher than the RIPT of Western Australia, but tracked the state's overall growth movements. There is almost no discernable difference between the Northern Territory as a whole and its northern parts, since more than 98 per cent of the Northern Territory's population resides in the north. The northern parts of the states generally had higher RIPT than their respective states, though the gaps between Queensland and its north and Western Australia and its north were closing by 2005–06. For example, in 1990–91 northern Western Australia had just under \$12 500 more income per taxpayer than Western Australia, but the gap had closed to just under \$9000 by 2005–06.

Figure 3.1.4 Northern Australia—RIPT by state, 1990–91 to 2005–06



Note: This figure shows real income per taxpayer (RIPT) between 1990–1991 and 2005–2006, comparing the northern regions of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory with their respective states.

Source: BITRE (2009a).

In 1990–91, northern Queensland had a larger RIPT than the state as a whole but by 1998–99, Queensland's RIPT had become higher than Northern Queensland. This is consistent with the slowdown in the agricultural industries during the 1990s and the reduction in exports associated with the Asian financial crisis. Since then, incomes in the north of the state have been similar to Queensland as a whole.

Table 3.1.2 shows that the regions with the highest RIPT in 2005–06 were the Pilbara (Western Australia) and North West (Queensland) regions. The Pilbara RIPT has been consistently higher than every other region in Australia's north, while Longreach (Queensland) has consistently had the lowest RIPT of the regions. As can be seen in Table 3.1.2, one region, the Pilbara, exhibited absolute growth in RIPT of more than $10 000 from 1995–96 to 2005–06. On the other hand, the Barkly-Central NT Region showed the lowest absolute increase in RIPT.

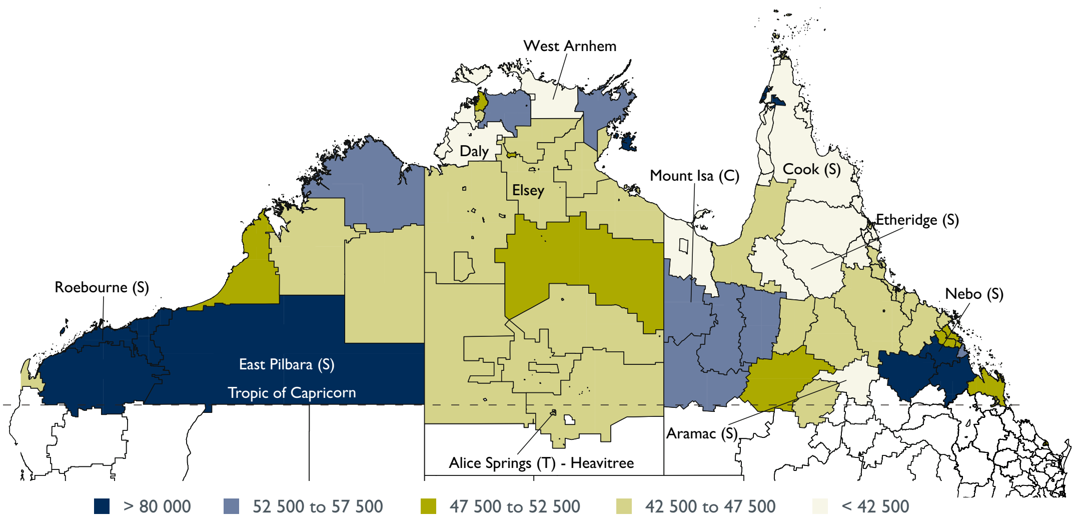
At the SLA level, the spatial distibution of RIPT can be seen in Map 3.1.2. The SLAs with the highest RIPT in 2006 were Nebo (in the Mackay Region), Ashburton (in the Pilbara Region) and Groote Eylandt (in the Darwin-East Arnhem Region). These regions all have a high percentage of mining employment and six of the top nine SLAs in RIPT levels are in the top 7 per cent of employment in mining. This is consistent with the relative prosperity of the mining and resources sector.

Table 3.1.2 Northern Australia—RIPT by region 1995–96 and 2005–06

Region	*1995–96*	*2005–06*	*Absolute change*	*Per cent change*
Northern Australia (WA)	50 195	60 790	10 595	21.1
Pilbara Region	54 304	66 247	11 943	22.0
Kimberley Region	41 015	49 805	8 790	21.4
Western Australia state total	41 128	51 815	10 686	26.0
Northern Australia (NT)	43 845	50 644	6 799	15.5
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	44 723	51 841	7 118	15.9
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	40 817	46 619	5 802	14.2
Barkly-Central NT Region	41 727	46 804	5 076	12.2
Northern Territory total	43 776	50 537	6 761	15.4
Northern Australia (QLD)	40 155	47 775	7 620	19.0
Mackay Region	42 887	52 563	9 676	22.6
Northern Region	40 041	47 535	7 494	18.7
Far North Region	37 396	43 504	6 108	16.3
North West Region	45 640	52 686	7 046	15.4
Longreach Region	36 150	42 756	6 606	18.3
Queensland state total	38 452	47 149	8 697	22.6
Northern Australia subtotal	41 693	49 325	7 632	18.3
Australia total	41 245	50 082	8 837	21.4

Notes: RIPT by region in 2007–08 dollar values.
Source: BITRE (2009a).

Map 3.1.2 Northern Australia—RIPT by SLA, 2006



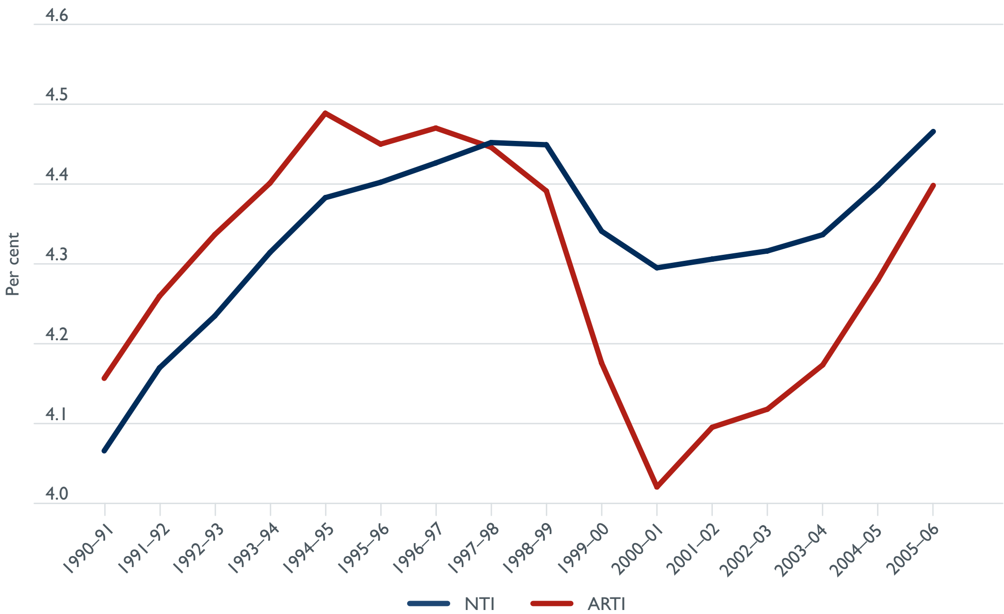
Source: BITRE (2009a).

In using RIPT it must be remembered that this is a per taxpayer measure; as such the exclusion of persons who do not have a taxable income can distort the relative economic welfare of a region, especially if a region has a small percentage of its population paying tax on their income. Also, the same caveat applied to ARTI is to be applied to RIPT. Those that travel between postcodes for work are recorded in their residential postcode, thus some SLAs may be distorted if a large percentage of their workers or residents travel for work.

Importance of Northern Australia to Australia

Figure 3.1.5 shows that in the early to mid-1990s, the proportion of Australia's economic activity generated by Northern Australia was increasing. The NTI and ARTI of Northern Australia were both growing as a proportion of the whole of Australia. Northern Australia contributed 4.1 per cent of Australia's NTI and 4.2 per cent of Australia's ARTI in 1990–91 and then grew to contribute approximately 4.4 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively in 1994–95, as can be seen in Figure 3.1.1. The economic importance of Northern Australia stabilised in the mid-1990s and then started to decline in the late 1990s. In 2000–01, at the end of the decline, Northern Australia contributed 4.3 per cent of Australia's NTI and just over 4 per cent of Australia's taxable income.

Figure 3.1.5 Northern Australia—number of taxable individuals (NTI) and aggregate real taxable income (ARTI) as percentage of Australia, 1990–91 to 2005–06



Note: This figure shows Northern Australian NTI and ARTI between 1990–91 and 2005–06, as a percentage of Australia's number of taxable individuals and aggregate real taxable income during the same years.

Source: BITRE (2009a).

But this trend reversed from that point and by 2005–06, Northern Australia contributed just under 4.5 per cent of Australia's taxpaying population and approximately 4.4 per cent of Australia's ARTI. This reversing of the trend is consistent with the mining boom, with the relative prosperity of the mining, construction and resource industries leading to higher wages, and the increase in employment in these sectors.

3.2 Employment by industry

The industries of manufacturing, and finance, insurance, property and business services employ less people in Northern Australia as compared with the rest of Australia. On the other hand, mining and government administration and defence are larger employers within Northern Australia. This reflects the dominant contribution of regions within northern Western Australia and Queensland to Australia's mining sector.

At the state or territory level, government administration and defence (19.7 per cent) is the major source of employment within the north of the Northern Territory. This is in part due to the state's system of governance, along with the multiple military bases which are located in the area. For example, there are several Australian Defence Force bases in the Darwin-East Arnhem Region including the Robertson and Larrakeyah barracks, and Naval and RAAF bases, all of which are located in and around Darwin. Mining (19.3 per cent) is the most significant source of employment within northern Western Australia, reflecting this area's reliance on the resource sector for employment. The largest source of employment within northern Queensland (17.9 per cent) is in retail and wholesale trade. Retail and wholesale trade is likely to be related to farm produce, building supplies, and mineral, metal and chemical wholesaling which is generated by other industries in the state.

At the regional level, employment in mining is particularly dominant in the Pilbara and North West Queensland regions. This is to be expected given the dominance of these regions in the Australian resource sector. In particular, the Pilbara Region is one of Australia's best known mining regions and is responsible for the vast majority of the nation's iron ore exports. The agriculture, forestry and fishing industry is the strongest in Longreach and North West Queensland. On the other hand, in the Kimberley, Darwin-East Arnhem, Katherine-Lower Top End, and Barkly-Central NT regions, over 75 per cent of employment by industry is generated by other areas such as retail and wholesale trade, services, health and community services, and government administration and defence (see Figure 3.2.2 and Table 3.2.1).

Within Northern Australia, some SLAs are dominated by key industries such as mining, construction, manufacturing and agriculture, forestry and fishery. For example, in the Tableland (Northern Territory—79.3 per cent), Boulia (Queensland—54.0 per cent) and Aramac (Queensland—52.0 per cent) SLAs the dominant source of employment is in the agriculture, forestry and fishing. Mining is dominant in the Ashburton (Western Australia—50.6 per cent), Broadsound (Queensland—44.0 per cent) and East Pilbara (Western Australia—42.2 per cent) SLAs, while manufacturing is the largest employer in Weipa (Queensland—36.0 per cent), and Nhulunbuy (Northern Territory—29.9 per cent).

Other areas' employment is dominated by education, services, and the retail trade. Such areas are often more densely populated, and hence there is higher demand for health, retail, transport and services. There are also a number of SLAs in which employment by industry is almost solely provided by government administration and defence. Many of these areas are Indigenous communities. The high employment in government administration may be related to high levels of participation in the Community development Employment Projects (CDEP) program, which is financed by the Australian Government.[6]

6. This is discussed in further detail in the Employment, Unemployment and Labour Force Participation section (Chapter 4).

Table 3.2.1 Northern Australia—percentage of people employed by industry, by region, 2006

Region	Agriculture, forestry and fishing (per cent)	Mining (per cent)	Manu-facturing (per cent)	Infra-structure (per cent)	Cons-truction (per cent)	Retail and wholesale trade (per cent)	Accom-modation, cafes and restaurants (per cent)	Finance, Insurance, property and business services (per cent)	Govern-ment adminis-tration and defence (per cent)	Education (per cent)	Health and community services (per cent)	Other services (per cent)	Not stated (per cent)	Total number of people
Northern Australia (WA)	2.8	19.3	4.3	6.4	9.4	12.5	5.5	7.5	7.1	7.7	9.8	5.9	1.7	32 716
Pilbara Region	1.2	28.5	4.9	6.0	11.0	12.4	4.8	8.2	4.4	6.9	6.7	3.9	1.2	20 246
Kimberley Region	5.4	4.4	3.5	7.0	6.9	12.6	6.7	6.5	11.5	9.1	14.9	9.0	2.4	12 470
Western Australia state total	3.4	4.3	10.1	6.1	9.1	18.8	4.4	13.8	5.1	7.6	10.5	5.6	1.3	922 317
Northern Australia (NT)	2.4	2.0	5.0	6.1	7.2	14.5	5.1	10.1	19.7	8.7	10.2	7.1	2.0	84 154
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	1.6	2.3	5.9	6.3	7.8	14.7	4.8	10.6	19.6	8.5	9.0	7.0	1.8	62 449
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	8.1	1.0	1.4	4.1	5.1	10.8	4.4	5.0	28.9	8.1	14.3	4.8	3.9	6 167
Barkly-Central NT Region	3.2	1.2	3.1	5.8	5.8	15.0	6.4	10.1	16.1	9.7	13.5	8.5	1.8	15 538
Northern Territory total	2.5	2.0	5.0	6.1	7.2	14.4	5.5	10.0	19.6	8.6	10.2	7.0	2.0	86 106
Northern Australia (QLD)	6.1	5.4	7.9	7.3	9.0	17.9	6.7	9.0	7.8	7.2	9.4	4.9	1.5	298 548
Mackay Region	6.6	10.9	8.5	7.1	9.9	18.6	7.0	9.0	3.4	6.5	7.5	3.8	1.3	82 045
Northern Region	4.2	3.0	9.3	7.0	9.0	17.9	4.7	9.4	9.8	8.1	11.1	5.1	1.4	93 226
Far North Region	6.1	1.3	6.7	8.0	8.9	18.0	8.5	9.3	9.3	6.9	9.6	5.8	1.7	105 843
North West Region	12.9	18.5	4.9	6.7	5.6	13.0	4.8	4.8	7.7	7.3	8.5	3.4	1.9	15 603
Longreach Region	15.8	0.3	3.7	5.4	4.6	18.1	6.0	5.7	9.4	10.9	12.0	6.0	2.1	1 831
Queensland state total	3.5	1.7	10.4	7.0	9.1	19.5	5.3	13.0	5.5	7.5	10.6	5.6	1.3	1 799 364
Northern Australia subtotal	5.1	5.8	7.0	7.0	8.7	16.7	6.3	9.1	10.1	7.5	9.6	5.4	1.6	415 418
Australia total	3.2	1.2	11.1	6.7	7.8	19.3	4.8	14.7	5.5	7.5	10.9	5.8	1.4	8 990 738

Note: This table shows the percentage of people employed by the various industries in each region. BITRE summed the data for all SLAs in order to produce state and national totals. The other services category includes cultural, recreational, and personal and other services. Infrastructure includes the electricity, gas and water supply, communication services, and transport and storage industries.

Source: ABS (2006d).

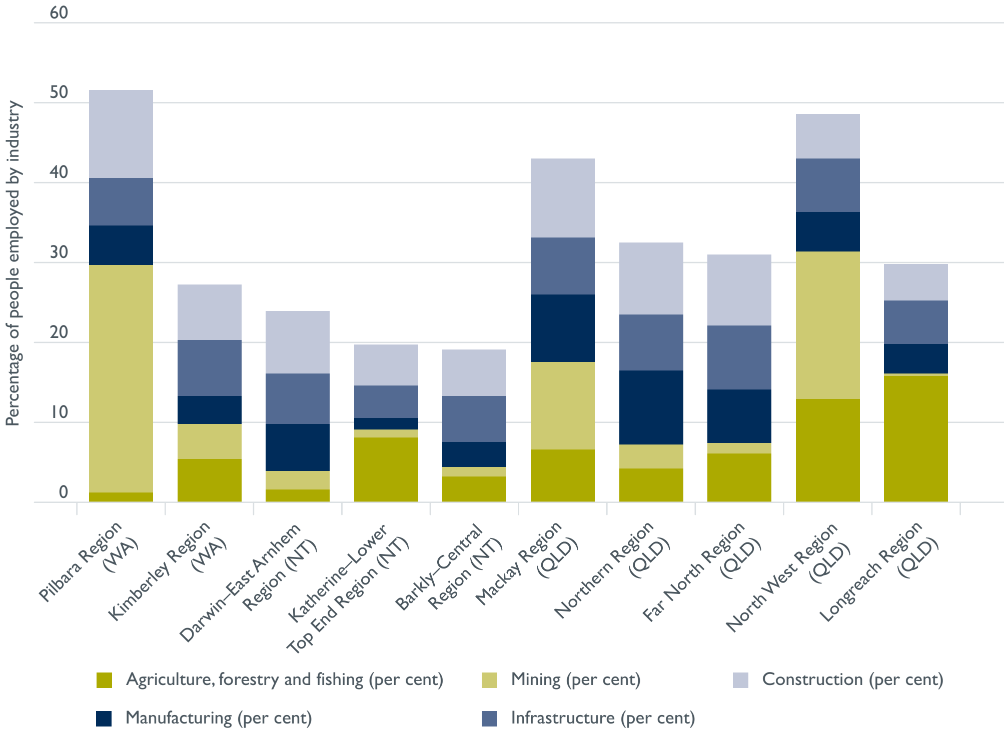
Table 3.2.2 Northern Australia—number of people employed by industry, 2006

Region	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Mining	Manu-facturing	Infra-structure	Cons-truction	Retail and wholesale trade	Accom-modation, cafes and restaurants	Finance, insurance, property and business services	Govern-ment adminis-tration and defence	Education	Health and community services	Other services	Not stated	Total number of people
Northern Australia (WA)	922	6 319	1 416	2 079	3 087	4 079	1 805	2 466	2 331	2 524	3 213	1 921	554	32 716
Pilbara Region	243	5 766	984	1 205	2 224	2 508	971	1 654	892	1 394	1 355	799	251	20 246
Kimberley Region	679	553	432	874	863	1 571	834	812	1 439	1 130	1 858	1 122	303	12 470
Western Australia state total	31 460	40 067	92 697	56 093	84 341	172 938	40 256	126 961	47 059	69 770	97 180	51 878	11 617	922 317
Northern Australia (NT)	1 984	1 671	4 246	5 103	6 080	12 166	4 272	8 515	16 556	7 332	8 620	5 961	1 648	84 154
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	991	1 432	3 681	3 954	4 867	9 168	3 004	6 636	12 264	5 330	5 644	4 346	1 132	62 449
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	500	60	87	251	315	664	274	311	1 784	502	880	296	243	6 167
Barkly-Central NT Region	493	179	478	898	898	2 334	994	1 568	2 508	1 500	2 096	1 319	273	15 538
Northern Territory total	2 112	1 691	4 288	5 295	6 185	12 371	4 763	8 584	16 854	7 408	8 794	6 062	1 699	86 106
Northern Australia (QLD)	18 118	16 032	23 498	21 941	26 874	53 310	20 002	26 788	23 176	21 498	28 152	14 641	4 518	298 548
Mackay Region	5 449	8 962	6 989	5 788	8 099	15 247	5 736	7 344	2 768	5 305	6 139	3 150	1 069	82 045
Northern Region	3 942	2 826	8 634	6 492	8 429	16 694	4 428	8 785	9 145	7 512	10 320	4 729	1 290	93 226
Far North Region	6 433	1 351	7 047	8 517	9 390	19 013	8 985	9 804	9 886	7 338	10 139	6 122	1 818	105 843
North West Region	2 005	2 887	760	1 046	871	2 025	743	751	1 205	1 143	1 334	531	302	15 603
Longreach Region	289	6	68	98	85	331	110	104	172	200	220	109	39	1 831
Queensland state total	62 693	30 657	186 816	126 029	163 622	350 315	96 152	233 690	99 672	135 045	190 218	101 166	23 289	1 799 364
Northern Australia subtotal	21 024	24 022	29 160	29 123	36 041	69 555	26 079	37 769	42 063	31 354	39 985	22 523	6 720	415 418
Australia total	285 393	106 540	998 482	606 536	705 209	1 734 868	433 687	1 323 938	493 729	678 116	976 485	524 713	123 042	8 990 738

Note: This table shows the number of people employed by the various industries in each region. BITRE summed the data for all SLAs in order to produce state and national totals. The other services category includes cultural, recreational, and personal and other services. Infrastructure includes the electricity, gas and water supply, communication services, and transport and storage industries.

Source: ABS (2006d).

Figure 3.2.1 Northern Australia—employment by key industries, by region, 2006

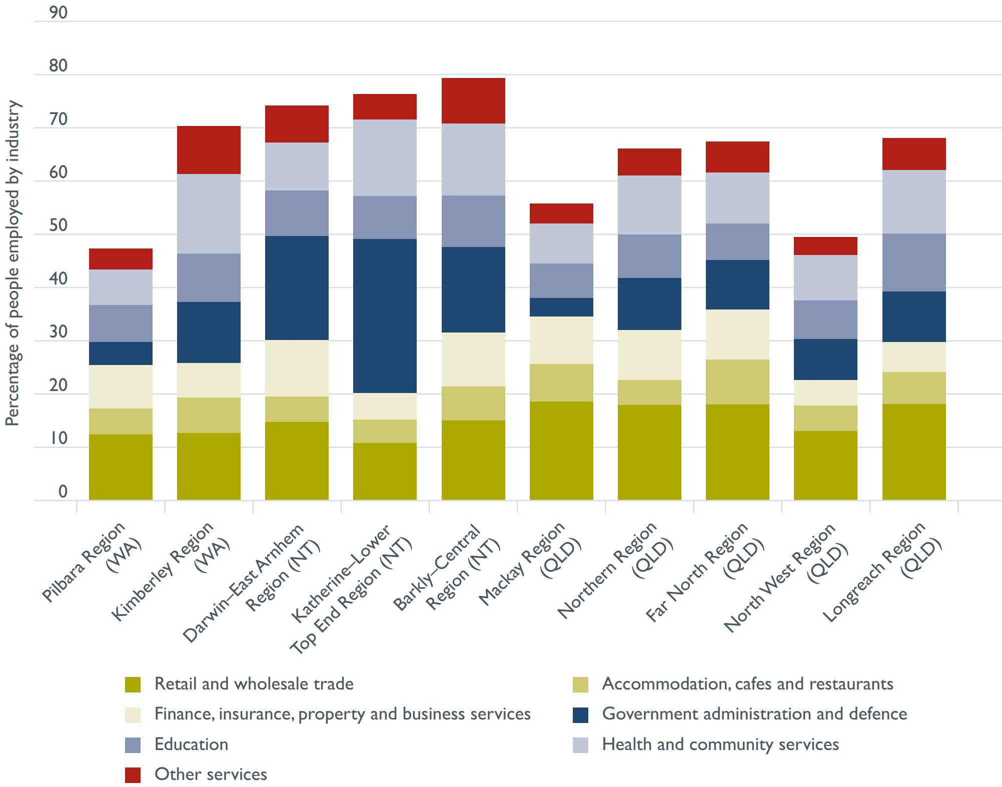


Source: ABS (2006d).

Overall, there were a greater number of people employed in Northern Australia in 2006 than there were in 2001 (Table 3.2.3). An increase is observed across all categories in Northern Australia, with the exception of a small decrease in other services, and in line with the national trend, a substantial decrease in agriculture, forestry and fishing (see Table 3.2.3). This decrease is likely to have been influenced by the drought experienced throughout Australia over this period. Within Northern Australia, the largest increase in the number of people employed by industry between 2001 and 2006 was in construction, due to a substantial increase in northern Queensland (Far North and Mackay regions), the Northern Territory (Darwin-East Arnhem) and Western Australia (Pilbara). The boom in construction is related to the increased demand in the resource sector which occurred during this period.

Within Northern Australia, the greatest increases in the percentage of people employed by industry were seen in construction and mining. These industries have benefited from the increasing demand for resources over this time period. In comparison with the rest of Australia, the increases observed in Northern Australia were larger in these areas. On the other hand, there was a decrease in the number of people being employed by agriculture, forestry and fishing in 2006 compared to 2001, and this decrease was larger than the corresponding decrease in the rest of Australia.

Figure 3.2.2 Northern Australia—employment by remaining industries, by region, 2006



Notes: Figure 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 show the percentage of people which each industry employs, by region. BITRE summed the data for all SLAs in order to produce state and national totals. The other services category includes cultural, recreational, and personal and other services. Infrastructure includes the electricity, gas and water supply, communication services, and transport and storage industries.

Source: ABS (2006d).

At the regional level, some places showed little change compared with 2001, while in others, the percentage of people employed by industry shifted between industries quite dramatically. Northern Western Australia had large increases in the percentage of people employed by mining, particularly in the Pilbara Region, reflecting the increased demand for resources over this time period, and the Pilbara's dominant contribution to Australia's iron ore exports. Within the north of the Northern Territory there was growth in the government administration and defence industry, reflecting the reliance on the government sector in this area for employment and the provision of services. In northern Queensland, there was a large decrease in the percentage of people employed by agriculture, forestry and fishing, especially in the MacKay Region. On the other hand, growth was seen in the construction industry, which was particularly strong in the MacKay Region, and in the mining industry within the North West and Mackay regions. Growth in construction is likely to be related to the need for infrastructure within the coal industry in the MacKay Region and also the smelting industry in areas immediately outside northern Queensland such as Gladstone.

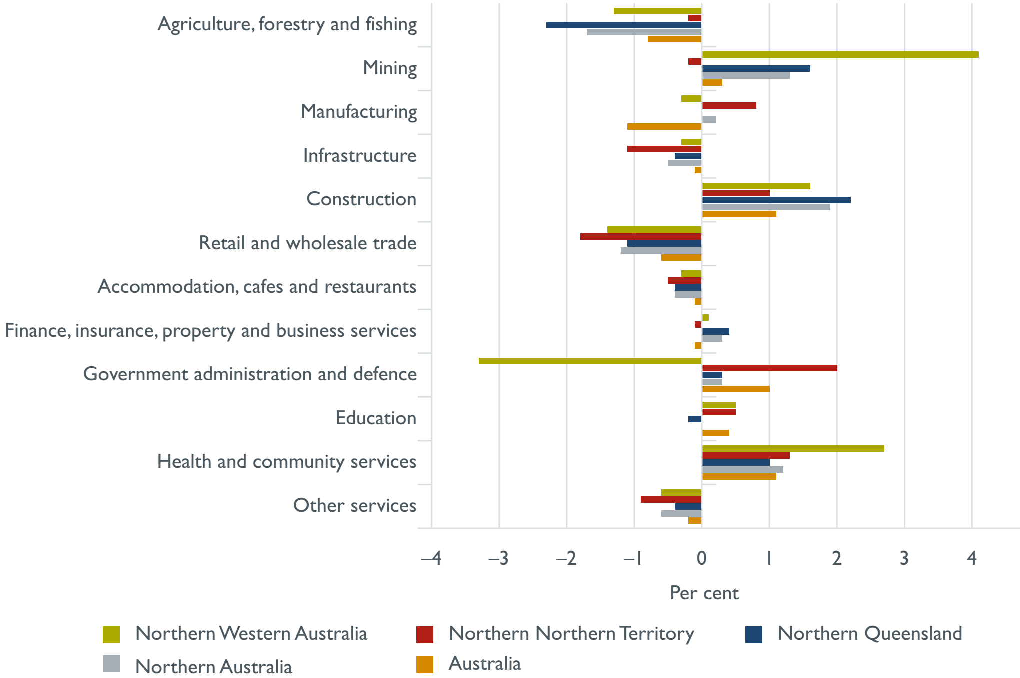
Table 3.2.3 Northern Australia—difference in the number of people employed by industry, 2001–06

Region	*Agriculture, forestry and fishing*	*Mining*	*Manu-facturing*	*Infra-structure*	*Cons-truction*	*Retail and wholesale trade*	*Accom-modation, cafes and restaurants*	*Finance, insurance, property and business services*	*Govern-ment adminis-tration and defence*	*Education*	*Health and community services*	*Other services*	*Total number of people*
Northern Australia (WA)	–420	1 288	–104	–103	516	–506	–109	3	–1 110	135	850	–209	–264
Pilbara Region	–116	1 126	–64	–98	436	–426	–63	20	–155	83	190	–153	421
Kimberley Region	–304	162	–40	–5	80	–80	–46	–17	–955	52	660	–56	–685
Western Australia state total	–5 027	11 045	8 465	4 611	22 350	7 386	1 910	12 772	10 329	9 589	17 973	735	93 254
Northern Australia (NT)	–89	–114	778	–670	1 024	–986	–245	254	2 270	644	1 385	–495	3 197
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	–107	–38	820	–340	1 256	–540	–105	19	2 092	582	868	–36	4 097
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	25	–21	–18	–31	–11	–138	–68	–52	–234	42	272	–112	–312
Barkly-Central NT Region	–7	–55	–24	–299	–221	–309	–72	286	412	20	245	–347	–588
Northern Territory total	–155	–155	762	–769	1 016	–973	–380	197	1 993	605	1 405	–579	2 375
Northern Australia (QLD)	–4 366	5 819	2 366	1 263	8 698	2 442	924	3 889	3 270	1 739	5 645	364	30 436
Mackay Region	–1 461	4 109	1 127	390	3 302	1 726	861	1 489	846	430	1 057	285	13 635
Northern Region	–907	1 118	942	566	2 571	432	426	1 152	947	631	2 144	–90	9 483
Far North Region	–1 700	170	463	490	3 215	641	–223	1 481	1 796	663	2 236	347	9 027
North West Region	–222	419	–165	–150	–357	–358	–123	–211	–350	26	175	–176	–1 568
Longreach Region	–76	3	–1	–33	–33	1	–17	–22	31	–11	33	–2	–141
Queensland state total	–12 270	11 485	20 950	13 990	52 860	33 129	8 322	38 093	25 039	16 841	40 950	7 252	245 078
Northern Australia subtotal	–4 875	6 994	3 039	490	10 238	950	570	4 146	4 430	2 519	7 880	–339	33 369
Australia total	–43 659	31 779	–9 946	42 619	148 046	88 768	24 444	93 298	124 861	83 382	171 576	22 693	709 006

Notes: This table shows the difference between the numbers of people who were employed by industry in 2006 compared to 2001. BITRE summed the data for all SLAs in order to produce state and national totals. The other services category includes cultural, recreational, and personal and other services. Infrastructure includes the electricity, gas and water supply, communication services, and transport and storage industries.

Source: ABS (2006d).

Figure 3.2.3 Northern Australia—difference in the percentage of people employed by industry, 2001–2006



Notes: The table and graph show the difference between the percentages of people who were employed by industry in 2006 compared to 2001. BITRE summed the data for all SLAs in order to produce state and national totals. The other services category includes cultural, recreational, and personal and other services. Infrastructure includes the electricity, gas and water supply, communication services, and transport and storage industries.

Source: ABS (2006d).

3.3 Median individual income

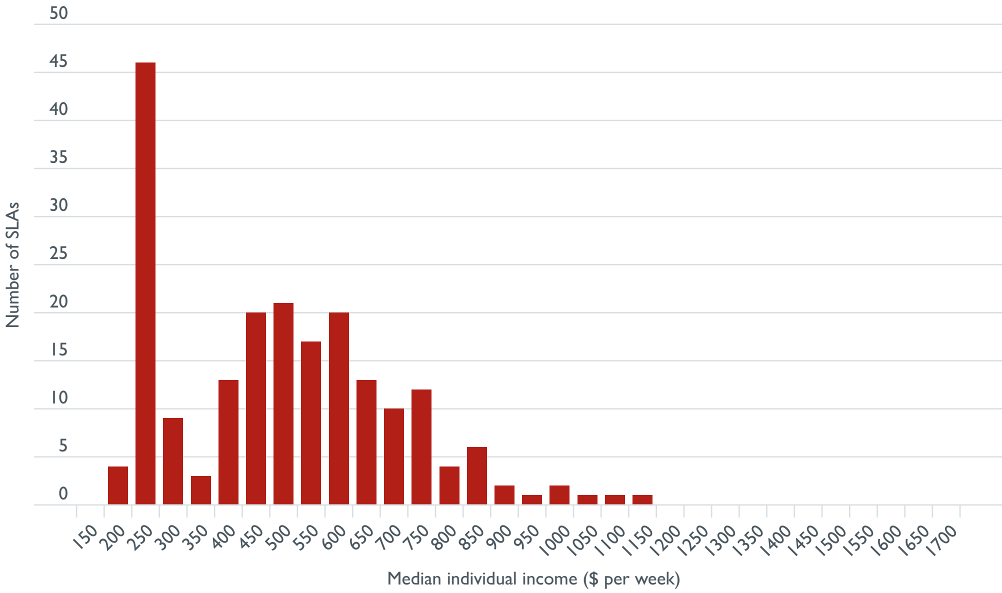
As shown in Figure 3.3.1, the median individual income for Northern Australia is bimodal. The first peak is at the $200–250 per week bracket, and the second is at the $450–500 per week bracket. The lower peak is likely to be related to welfare payments; the highest possible welfare payment for a single unemployed adult falls into this income bracket (Centrelink 2008). Many of the SLAs low income have significant Indigenous communities.[7] The second peak in the data is very similar to the Australian mode ($400–450 per week; Figure 3.3.1).

Seventy-five per cent of the SLAs in Australia with a median individual weekly income amounting to less than $250 per week lie within Northern Australia. Many of these areas have relatively high unemployment rates, and a large number of these areas are Indigenous communities. The Australian graph has a longer 'tail' to the right than the Northern Australian graph, indicating a greater number of SLAs with a higher

7. The SLAs which have a median individual income of $200–250 per week are: East Arnhem–Balance Marngarr (CGC), New Mapoon (S), Lajamanu (CGC), Jilkminggan (CGC), Mornington (S), Numbulwar Numburindi (CGC), Tiwi Islands (CGC), Angurugu (CGC), Belyuen (CGC), Kunbarllanjnja (CGC), Tennant Creek—Bal, Tanami, West Arnhem, Binjari (CGC), Hanson, Aurukun (S), Yugul Mangi (CGC), Palm Island (S), Daguragu (CGC), Injinoo (S), Umagico (S), Sandover, Anmatjere (CGC), Yarrabah (S), Saibai (IC), Lockhart River (S), Napranum (S), Hope Vale (S), Doomadgee (S), Yuendumu (CGC), Mabuiag (IC), Mapoon (S), Gulf, Halls Creek (S), Wujal Wujal (S), Mer (IC), Boigu (IC), Hammond (IC), Kubin (IC), Warraber (IC), Badu (IC), Kowanyama (S), Pormpuraaw (S), Daly Walangeri Ngumpinku (CGC).

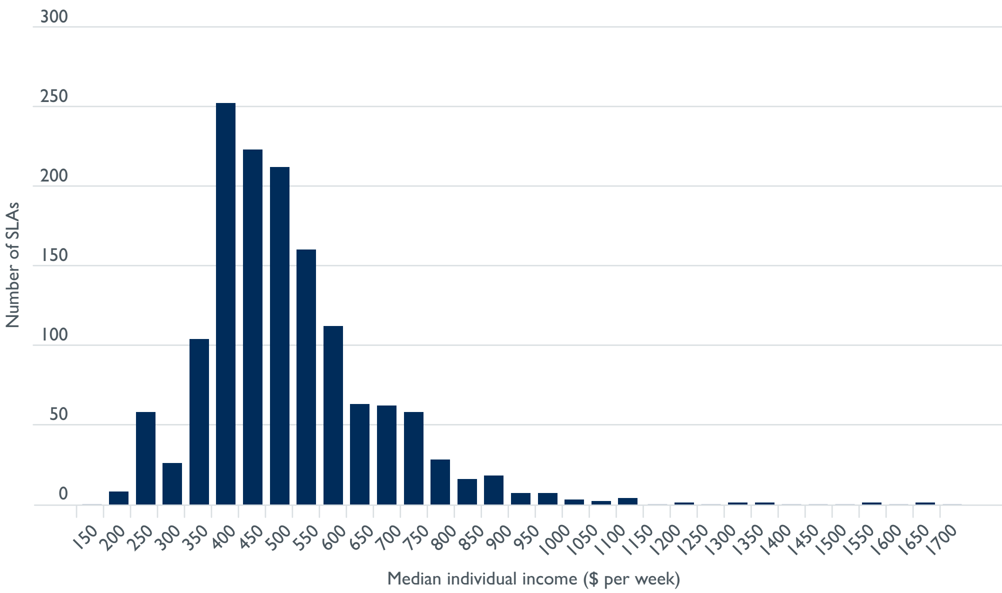
median individual income (see Figures 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). The highest median income bracket for an Australian SLA is $1650–1700, while the highest bracket within Northern Australia is $1100–1150. This is in Nhulunbuy, which is located in the Darwin-East Arnhem Region. The majority of people in this area are employees of, or contractors to, the bauxite mining operation (Urbis Keys Young 2006).

Figure 3.3.1 Northern Australia—median individual income by SLA, 2006



Notes: This graph shows the median individual income of each SLA in Northern Australia.
Source: ABS (2006b).

Figure 3.3.2 Australia—median individual income by SLA, 2006



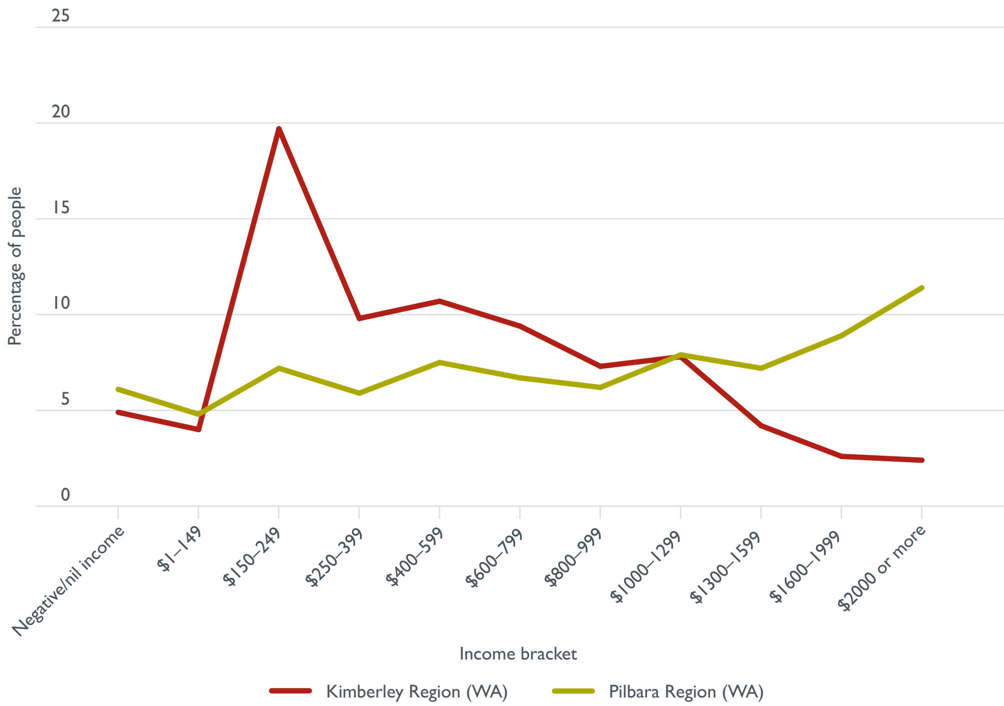
Notes: This graph shows the median individual income of each SLA in Australia.
Source: ABS (2006b).

3.4 Weekly income by income bracket

Different patterns in the distribution of weekly income were observed across the Northern Australian states and territory. In northern Queensland, the distribution of weekly income resembled a bell-shaped curve, with a greater percentage of people earning in the middle income bracket (Figure 3.4.3). In contrast, the Kimberley Region followed the pattern observed in the Northern Territory, where there were a high percentage of people earning an income in the lower brackets and then a steady decrease in the percentage of people earning a high weekly income. The Pilbara Region had a steady increase in the percentage of people earning a high weekly income (Figure 3.4.1).

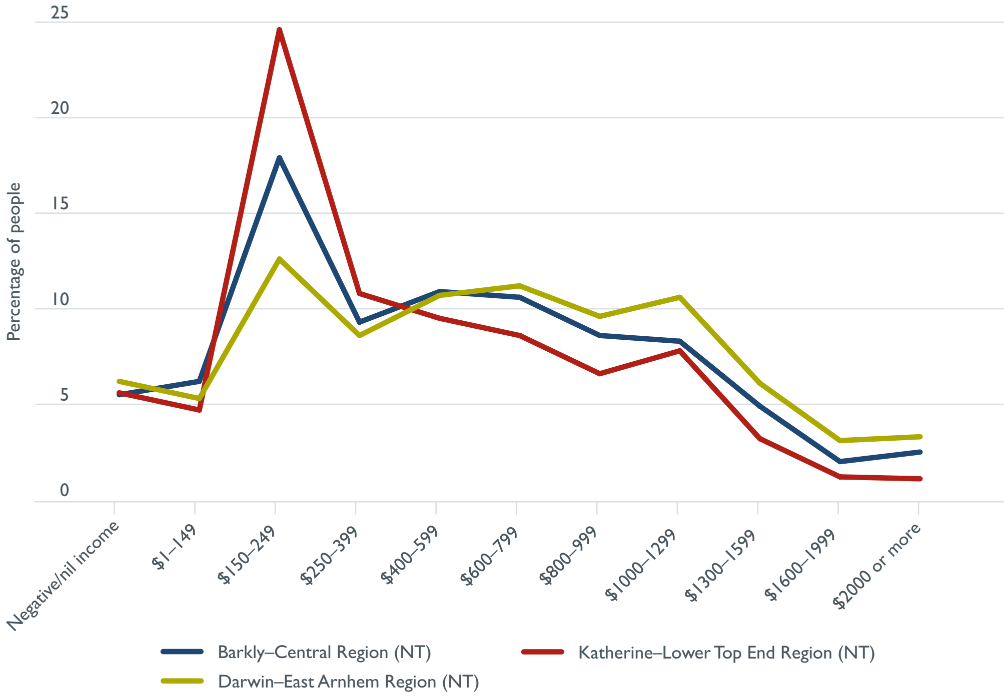
In the Pilbara (Figure 3.4.1), the percentage of people in the lower income brackets is smaller, and the percentage of people in the higher income brackets is higher, as compared with other regions. This reflects the dominance of industries such as mining, which offer high weekly incomes to workers. The Pilbara Region with a dominant resource sector, has by far the highest percentage (11.4 per cent) of people earning in the top two income brackets ($2000 per week or more and $1600–$1999 per week).

Figure 3.4.1 Northern Australia (Western Australia)—weekly income by income bracket, by region, 2006



Source: ABS (2006b).

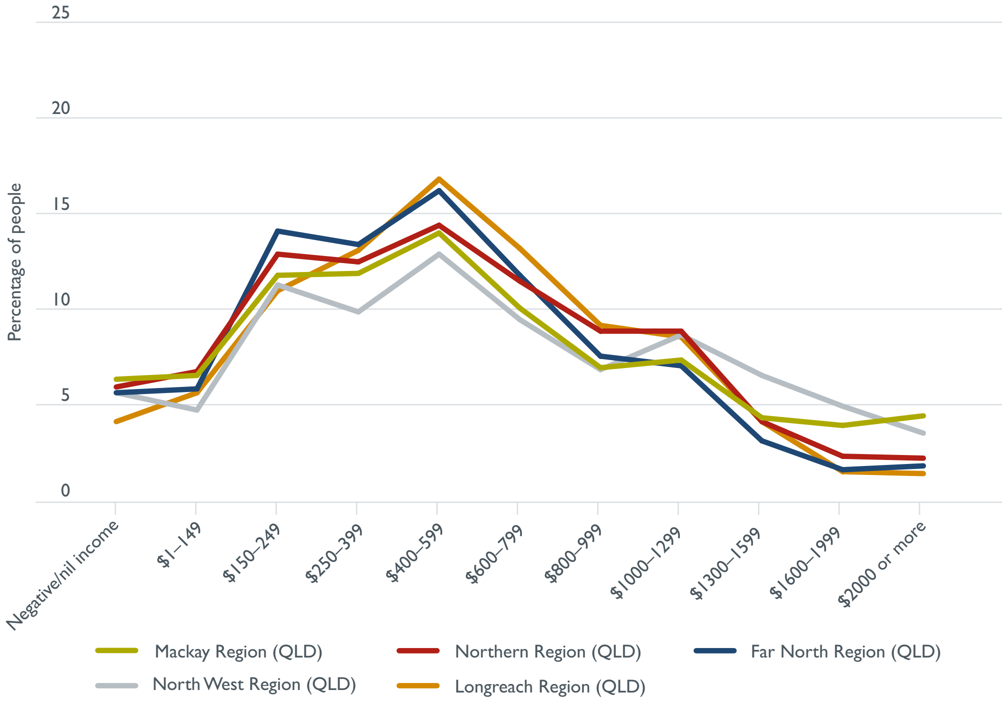
Figure 3.4.2 Northern Australia (Northern Territory)—weekly income by income bracket, by region, 2006



Source: ABS (2006b).

At the other end of the scale, northern Queensland has the highest percentage of people in the lowest income bracket ($1–149 per week), particularly in the Mackay (6.6 per cent) and Northern (6.8 per cent) regions. It should be noted that the census data for weekly income by income bracket does not distinguish between those people who are working full-time, part-time or casually, or not working. Also worth noting is the $150–249 per week income bracket, as this is likely to be influenced by welfare payments, given that the highest possible welfare payment for a single unemployed adult falls into this income bracket (Centrelink 2008). In the Katherine-Lower Top End Region, extremely high numbers are seen in this income bracket (24.6 per cent). High percentages of people in the negative/nil income bracket are seen in the Mackay, Darwin-East Arnhem, Northern (Queensland) and Pilbara regions. This is primarily due to the larger percentage of females who do not earn an income in these areas (Table 3.4.2).

Figure 3.4.3 Northern Australia (Queensland)—weekly income by income bracket, by region, 2006

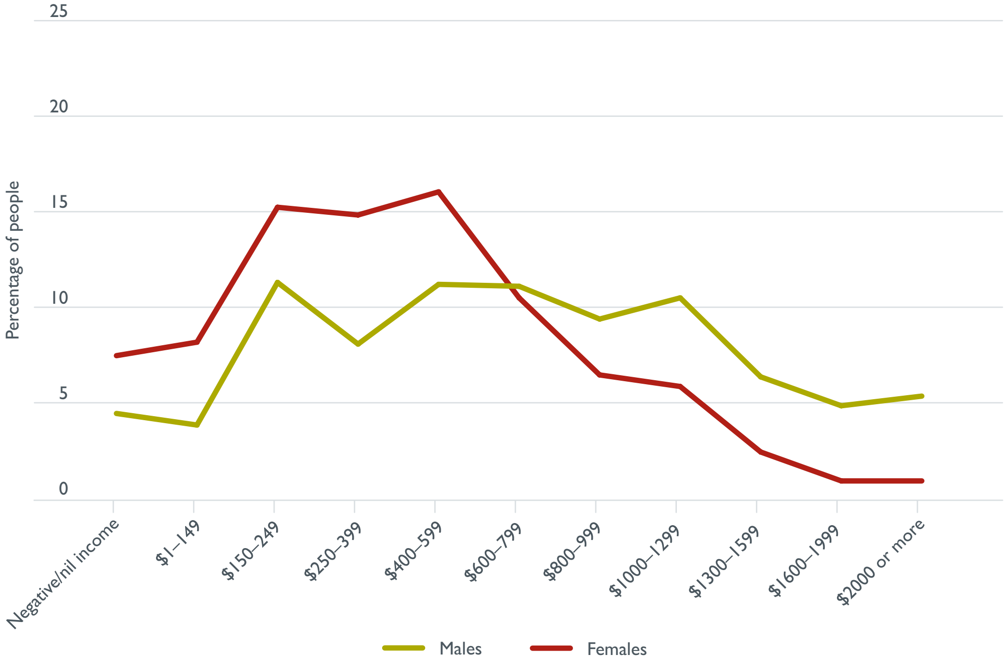


Notes: These graphs show the percentage of people within Northern Australia earning within a given weekly income bracket, by region. The data in this section is drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2006 Census. Due to the larger of respondents who did not state their individual income, this data should be treated with caution.

Source: ABS (2006b).

In Figure 3.4.4, it can be seen that there are greater numbers of males in Northern Australia earning a weekly income in the higher income brackets, and a greater number of females earning an income in the lower income brackets. An example of this is seen in the Pilbara Region, where 50.1 per cent of females earn less than $600 per week, compared with just 16.8 per cent of males (Table 3.4.1 and Table 3.4.2). The gender differences in part reflect the labour force participation rates within Northern Australia, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Figure 3.4.4 Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, by gender, 2006



Notes: This graph shows the percentage of females within regions in Northern Australia who are earning within certain weekly income brackets. The data in this section is drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2006 Census. Due to the larger of respondents who did not state their individual income, this data should be treated with caution.

Source: ABS (2006b).

Table 3.4.1 Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, percentage of males, by region, 2006

Region	*Percentage of males*											
	Negative/nil income	*$1–149*	*$150–249*	*$250–399*	*$400–599*	*$600–799*	*$800–999*	*$1000–1299*	*$1300–1599*	*$1600–1999*	*$2000 or more*	*Individual income not stated*	*Total*
Northern Australia (WA)	3.8	2.3	10.7	4.6	5.6	6.2	6.2	8.8	8.0	10.2	12.9	20.6	29 127
Pilbara Region	3.4	1.8	4.8	3.0	3.8	4.4	5.4	8.6	9.7	14.1	18.8	22.1	17 904
Kimberley Region	4.4	3.2	20.1	7.3	8.5	9.0	7.6	9.2	5.3	3.9	3.5	18.2	11 223
Western Australia state total	5.2	4.3	9.8	8.8	10.8	11.0	9.6	11.1	7.1	5.0	7.0	10.3	772 511
Northern Australia (NT)	5.2	4.3	13.5	6.5	8.7	10.2	9.9	11.7	6.9	4.0	4.6	14.6	72 452
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	5.2	3.9	11.3	6.3	8.7	10.5	10.5	12.4	7.4	4.6	5.1	14.2	52 797
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	5.4	4.2	24.7	8.2	8.0	7.9	7.6	10.0	4.1	1.6	1.7	16.7	5 918
Barkly-Central NT Region	4.9	5.8	17.0	6.3	9.0	9.9	8.9	9.6	6.1	3.0	4.0	15.4	13 737
Northern Territory total	5.2	4.3	13.9	6.5	8.7	10.2	9.8	11.5	6.8	4.0	4.5	14.7	74 854
Northern Australia (QLD)	4.4	4.0	10.7	9.0	12.5	11.9	9.7	10.4	6.1	4.5	4.7	12.2	252 105
Mackay Region	4.0	3.4	8.9	8.2	11.0	10.6	8.8	9.9	6.9	6.8	7.8	13.6	70 931
Northern Region	4.4	4.4	10.4	8.9	12.1	12.6	11.2	11.9	6.3	4.0	3.9	9.9	76 808
Far North Region	4.7	4.2	12.6	10.1	14.3	12.8	9.4	9.2	4.6	2.7	2.9	12.5	89 790
North West Region	4.1	2.9	9.1	6.6	10.0	9.0	7.2	11.1	10.3	8.4	5.8	15.6	13 272
Longreach Region	4.1	3.9	9.6	10.5	15.8	13.3	10.0	10.8	5.4	2.8	2.0	11.7	1 304
Queensland state total	5.1	4.5	11.1	9.8	13.0	12.6	9.9	10.3	5.7	3.6	4.7	9.8	1 521 497
Northern Australia subtotal	4.5	3.9	11.3	8.1	11.2	11.1	9.4	10.5	6.4	4.9	5.4	13.4	353 684
Australia total	5.9	4.8	11.6	9.7	12.2	11.7	9.5	9.9	5.9	3.8	5.6	9.4	7 777 921

Note: This table shows the percentage of males within regions in Northern Australia who were earning within certain weekly income brackets in 2006. The data in this section is drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2006 Census. Due to the larger of respondents who did not state their individual income, this data should be treated with caution.

Source: ABS (2006b).

Table 3.4.2 Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, percentage of females, by region, 2006

Region	*Percentage of females*												
	Negative/nil income	*$1–149*	*$150–249*	*$250–399*	*$400–599*	*$600–799*	*$800–999*	*$1000–1299*	*$1300–1599*	*$1600–1999*	*$2000 or more*	*Individual income not stated*	*Total*
Northern Australia (WA)	7.7	7.1	14.0	10.8	12.5	9.6	7.0	6.7	3.7	1.8	1.7	17.3	24 651
Pilbara Region	9.5	8.7	10.2	9.6	12.1	9.4	7.1	7.1	4.1	2.3	2.0	17.9	14 244
Kimberley Region	5.4	4.9	19.3	12.4	13.0	9.9	6.9	6.3	3.1	1.1	1.3	16.4	10 407
Western Australia state total	8.7	9.6	15.2	15.8	14.9	10.0	6.6	5.7	2.4	1.1	1.3	8.8	790 143
Northern Australia (NT)	6.9	6.6	15.8	11.6	12.7	11.6	8.4	8.0	4.3	1.4	1.2	11.7	68 155
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	7.2	6.8	13.9	11.2	12.8	11.9	8.7	8.6	4.6	1.6	1.3	11.3	48 608
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	5.8	5.3	24.5	13.5	11.2	9.2	5.6	5.5	2.3	0.7	0.6	15.8	5 635
Barkly-Central NT Region	6.1	6.6	18.9	12.3	12.8	11.3	8.2	7.0	3.7	1.0	0.9	11.3	13 912
Northern Territory total	6.8	6.6	16.2	11.6	12.7	11.5	8.3	7.9	4.2	1.3	1.1	11.7	70 442
Northern Australia (QLD)	7.6	8.7	15.2	16.2	17.3	10.3	5.9	5.2	1.9	0.8	0.9	10.0	245 105
Mackay Region	9.0	10.1	14.8	15.9	17.1	9.5	5.1	4.7	1.8	0.9	1.0	10.1	66 157
Northern Region	7.6	9.1	15.4	16.2	16.7	10.3	6.7	5.8	2.0	0.8	0.8	8.5	76 906
Far North Region	6.7	7.6	15.6	16.7	18.0	10.8	5.8	5.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	10.5	89 035
North West Region	7.5	7.1	13.8	13.7	16.2	10.2	6.5	6.0	2.5	1.2	1.1	14.2	11 610
Longreach Region	4.2	7.3	12.4	15.5	17.8	13.0	8.4	6.6	3.0	0.6	1.1	10.1	1 397
Queensland state total	7.6	8.7	15.6	16.7	16.7	10.3	6.2	5.4	2.1	0.9	1.1	8.5	1 576 499
Northern Australia subtotal	7.5	8.2	15.2	14.8	16.0	10.5	6.5	5.9	2.5	1.0	1.0	10.8	337 911
Australia total	8.4	9.0	16.2	16.1	15.0	9.6	6.4	5.7	2.7	1.2	1.5	8.4	8 140 155

Note: This table shows the percentage of females within regions in Northern Australia who were earning within certain weekly income brackets in 2006. The data in this section is drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2006 Census. Due to the larger of respondents who did not state their individual income, this data should be treated with caution.

Source: ABS (2006b).

3.5 Taxpayer income: salaries, businesses, investments, superannuation and other income

The data in this section is taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, 2001–02 to 2005–06. Unlike the previous sections on median and weekly incomes, which discussed the income of all adults as captured in the 2006 Census, this data has been collected from people required to submit tax returns to the Australian Tax Office (ATO) only.[8] It provides a more detailed picture of the types of income which taxpayers relied upon from region-to-region, showing whether incomes were from salaries, business returns, investments, superannuation, or other sources.

As can be seen in Table 3.5.1, in 2005–06, the majority of Northern Australian regions (except Far North Queensland) had a significantly higher taxpayer dependence on wage and salary income amongst taxpayers than Australia as a whole (79.2 per cent of total taxable income). Northern Australia taxpayers also had a higher dependence on salaries and wages than those across Queensland (79.7 per cent) and Western Australia (77.9 per cent).

The Pilbara and North West Queensland regions, both with relatively high proportions of people employed in the mining industry, derive more than 90 per cent of taxpayer income from wages and salaries. Outside Darwin-East Arnhem in the north of the Northern Territory, more than 90 per cent of taxpayer income is also derived from this source. In these regions, in numerous small and remote communities and in the regional centre of Alice Springs, employment is concentrated in the provision of basic services to the local population in the retail, government and administration, and health and community sectors.

The northern regions of Queensland have the highest levels of reliance upon business income as a proportion of total taxpayer income (with the exceptions of the North West Region) in Northern Australia. These levels are well above those for the state of Queensland and Australia as a whole.

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8. Like BITRE's Regional Economic Growth Database, this data does not cover some low income earners, including many pension recipients who are not required to submit tax returns. Information presented should be treated with particular caution in relation to Far North Queensland, Darwin-East Arnhem, Katherine-Lower Top End, and Barkly-Central NT. Within these regions, the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Bureau of Statistics were unable to provide data for a number of SLAs. In Far North Queensland, no data was provided for the following SLAs, all of which are Indigenous communities: Palm Island; Badu; Hammond; Hope Vale; Iama; Injinoo; Kowanyama; Kubin; Lockhart River; Mabuiag; Mapoon; Mer; Napranum; New Mapoon; Pormpuraaw; Poruma; St Pauls; Seisia; Umagico; Warraber; Wujal Wujal; Yarrabah; Boigu; Dauan; Saibai; Yorke; Ugar; Erub; and Doomadgee.

   In the Darwin-East Arnhem Region of the Northern Territory, no data is available for the Indigenous communities of Belyuen; Coomalie; Cox Peninsula; Kunbarllanjnja; Nauiyu Nambiyu; Pine Creek; Thamarrurr; Angurugu; Marngarr; Numbulwar Numburindi. In the Katherine-Lower Top End Region of the Northern Territory, no data was provided for the Indigenous SLAs of Binjari; Borroloola; Daguragu; Jilkminggan; Lajamanu; Mataranka; Nyirranggulung Mardrulk Ngadberre; Timber Creek; Walangeri Ngumpinku and Yugul Mangi. In the Barkly Central NT Region of the Northern Territory, no data was provided for Alpurrurulam, Elliott District, Anmatjere and Yuendumu, all of which had largely Indigenous populations.

Table 3.5.1 Northern Australia—taxpayer income earned (percentage of region total) by income type by region, 2005–06

Region	*Total wage and salary income (per cent of region total income)*	*Total own unincorporated business income (per cent of region total income)*	*Total investment income (per cent of region total income)*	*Total superannuation and annuity income (per cent of region total income)*	*Total other income (per cent of region total income)*
Northern Australia (WA)	93.0	4.6	1.9	0.2	0.3
Pilbara Region	95.7	3.2	0.6	0.2	0.3
Kimberley Region	85.9	8.1	5.2	0.5	0.3
Western Australia state total	77.9	8.8	9.8	2.3	1.1
Northern Australia (NT)	89.8	5.0	2.9	1.9	0.3
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	89.3	5.4	2.8	2.1	0.4
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	93.1	3.0	2.9	0.9	0.1
Barkly-Central NT Region	91.5	3.4	3.4	1.5	0.3
Northern Territory total	89.9	4.9	2.9	1.9	0.3
Northern Australia (QLD)	81.9	8.8	7.0	1.8	0.6
Mackay Region	82.5	8.1	7.4	1.5	0.5
Northern Region	82.2	8.8	6.3	2.2	0.6
Far North Region	79.3	10.3	7.8	2.0	0.7
North West Region	91.0	4.7	3.4	0.6	0.3
Longreach Region	80.8	9.4	8.2	1.1	0.5
Queensland state total	79.7	7.6	9.1	2.9	0.8
Northern Australia subtotal	84.5	7.6	5.7	1.7	0.5
Australia total	79.2	6.9	9.8	3.2	0.9

Note: This table shows different income types as a percentage of the total taxpayer income (excluding government pensions and allowances) earned in each region.

Source: ABS (2008d).

Table 3.5.2 Northern Australia—average incomes (salaries, unincorporated businesses, investment, superannuation, other income) by income type by taxable income earning group by region, 2005–06

Region	*Average wage and salary income ($)*	*Average unicorporated business income ($)*	*Average investment income ($)*	*Average superannuation and annuity income*	*Average other income (excluding government pensions and allowances)*
Northern Australia (WA)	50 084	24 417	3 124	17 351	2 849
Pilbara Region	56 364	23 814	1 113	16 403	2 925
Kimberley Region	37 686	25 083	7 290	18 285	2 656
Western Australia state total	40 209	26 620	9 231	22 027	4 716
Northern Australia (NT)	41 810	20 962	3 732	23 589	2 332
Darwin-East Arnhem Region	43 285	22 655	3 612	23 987	2 479
Katherine-Lower Top End Region	37 833	13 058	3 619	19 862	1 153
Barkly-Central NT Region	36 829	14 572	4 368	21 754	1 860
Northern Territory total	41 136	20 436	3 748	23 485	2 320
Northern Australia (QLD)	38 379	24 414	6 274	20 302	2 209
Mackay Region	42 479	24 676	6 872	20 566	1 974
Northern Region	38 346	27 305	5 695	19 317	2 126
Far North Region	34 114	23 228	6 537	21 501	2 573
North West Region	43 118	15 923	4 276	18 704	1 779
Longreach Region	33 632	14 042	5 512	18 428	1 545
Queensland state total	37 327	22 274	7 570	22 379	2 892
Northern Australia subtotal	40 028	23 903	5 704	20 922	2 256
Australia total	39 807	22 424	8 163	23 506	3 801

Notes: This table shows average incomes (amongst taxpaying earners of each income type only) by income type, by region.
Source: ABS (2008d).

All regions of Northern Australia have relatively low levels of dependence on superannuation and annuities compared with Australia as a whole, particularly in Western Australia, where fewer older people live. Within Northern Australia the highest levels of reliance on superannuation and annuities are evident in Darwin-East Arnhem and Northern Queensland, consistent with higher proportions of retirees living in larger population centres there.

Dependence on investment income was particularly low in the north of Western Australia, compared with the state of Western Australia and the nation as a whole. It was also significantly lower in the Northern Territory than across the whole of Australia. In the northern Queensland regions, investment income features more strongly; however, as a proportion of total taxpayer income, investment returns still typically play a smaller part than in Queensland and the rest of Australia.

In summary, the northern parts of Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia each had higher average salary incomes than the wider populations of their respective states. As a whole, Northern Australia also had a higher average salary income than Australia.

However, there was a great deal of variation between regions in Northern Australia. The highest average salaries were earned in the Pilbara and Darwin-East Arnhem regions, and were well above state and national averages. The lowest salary incomes were earned in Longreach in Queensland, and the Barkly-Central NT Region of the Northern Territory, and were significantly below state and national averages. The highest average business incomes (significantly above Queensland and Australian averages) were recorded in Northern Queensland, and the lowest in Longreach (significantly below). It should be noted that Longreach had a relatively small population and a strong dependence on agriculture, so incomes for the region may fluctuate from year-to-year.

Data relating to economic activity available in the online compendium

3.1 Economic growth in Northern Australia

- Northern Australia—ARTI, by region, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—ARTI, by SLA, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—ARTI growth rates, by region, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—ARTI growth rates, by SLA, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—ARTI average annual growth rates by SLA, 2000–01 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—RIPT, by region, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—RIPT, by SLA, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—NTI, by region, 1990–91 to 2005–06

- Northern Australia—NTI, by SLA, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—NTI growth rates, by region, 1990–91 to 2005–06
- Northern Australia—NTI growth rates, by SLA, 1990–91 to 2005–06.

3.2 Employment by industry

- Northern Australia—employment by industry, by SLA, 2006
- Northern Australia—difference in the percentage of people employment by industry, 2001–2006
- Northern Australia—employment by industry, number of persons, by region, 2001
- Northern Australia—employment by industry, percentage of persons, by region, 2001.

3.3 Median individual income

- Northern Australia—median individual income, by SLA, 2006
- Northern Australia—median individual income, by UCL, 2006.

3.4 Weekly income by income bracket

- Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, by gender, by SLA, 2006
- Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, by gender, by UCL, 2006
- Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, number of persons, by region, 2006
- Northern Australia—weekly income by income bracket, percentage of persons, by region, 2006.

3.5 Taxpayer income: salaries, businesses, investments, superannuation and other income

- Northern Australia—number of taxable earners and aggregate income earned by income type by region, 2005–06
- Northern Australia—taxpayer income earned by income type (percentage of total SLA income) by SLA, 2005–06
- Northern Australia—number of taxable earners and aggregate income earned by income type by region, 2005–06
- Northern Australia—salaries and wages as a percentage of total taxpayer income per region, 2005–06 (excluding government pensions and allowances).