

Homelessness in Western Australia

Homelessness

- **8 per cent increase** in the number of people experiencing homelessness in WA, up by **724 people**
- The **rate of homelessness in Western Australia** has also slightly **increased**, from 36.4 per 10,000 people in 2016 to 36.6 per 10,000 people in 2021
- **WA was only one of four states or territories** where the **rate of homelessness increased** between 2016 and 2021 (VIC, SA, WA, TAS). Despite this, WA has the **lowest rate of homelessness in Australia**
- The overall **rate of homelessness in Australia slightly decreased** from 49.8 per 10,000 people in 2016 to 48 per 10,000 in 2021

Types of homelessness

People experiencing homelessness by homeless operational groups(a), state and territory, 2021

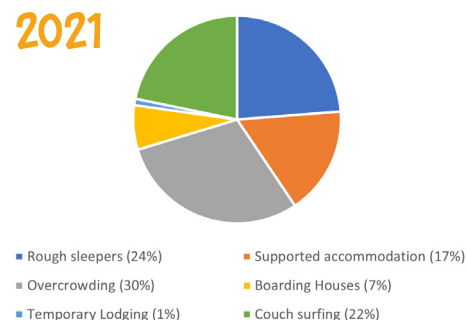


Please note that there are small random adjustments made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality of data. These adjustments may cause the sum of rows or columns to differ by small amounts from table totals.
a. Categories are mutually exclusive, therefore people will only appear in one category.
b. Data for 2021 is not directly comparable with previous Censuses due to improvements in data quality through greater use of administrative data.
c. Usual residents in dwellings needing 4 or more extra bedrooms under the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS). See the 'Methodology' section of this publication for more information.
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Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021.

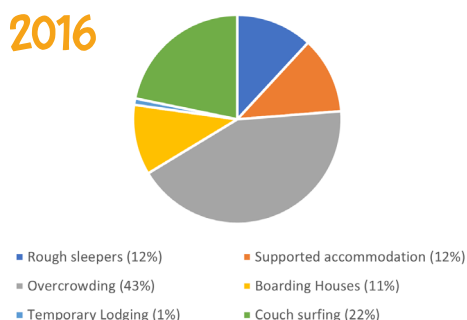
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Estimating Homelessness: Census 2021

Homelessness in WA

2021



2016



Rough sleeping

- **More than double** the number of people sleeping rough from 1,083 in 2016 to 2,315 in 2021
- **WA has the highest proportion of rough sleeping** in Australia
- **23.8 per cent** - almost a quarter - of the total homelessness population in WA are **rough sleepers**
- **6.2 per cent is the Australian average proportion of people rough sleeping**, down from 7 per cent in 2016



Homelessness in Western Australia

Other types of homelessness

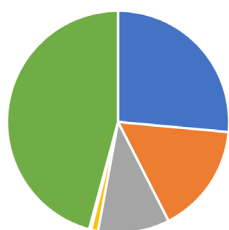
- **24.2 per cent decrease** in **severe overcrowding** in WA, dropping from 3,871 in 2016 to 2,935 in 2021 ¹
- **8.9 per cent increase** in **couch surfing** from 1,950 in 2016 to 2,125 in 2021 ²
- **53.1 per cent increase** in the number of people staying in **supported accommodation for the homeless** from 1,054 in 2016 to 1,614 in 2021
- **109.8 per cent increase** in the number of people staying in **temporary lodging** from 51 in 2016 to 107 in 2021
- **36.3 per cent decrease** in the number of people staying in **boarding houses** from 991 in 2016 to 631 in 2021

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) homelessness

- **29 per cent increase** in **ATSI people experiencing homelessness** from 2,618 in 2016 to 3,378 in 2021
- **WA** has the **second highest rate of ATSI homelessness** in Australia, at 381 per 10,000 people
- **ATSI people** account for **35 per cent of all homeless in WA**, despite being 3.3 per cent of the population
- **5.8 per cent decrease** in the number of people experiencing homelessness who **do not identify as ATSI**
- The number of people who **did not state their ATSI identity increased** from 585 in 2016 to 904 in 2021
This effectively means the rise in homelessness in WA between 2016 and 2021 reflects an increase in ATSI homelessness
- **60.7 per cent** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing homelessness can be found **outside of the Greater Perth area**, compared to **31 per cent of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing homelessness**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Homelessness

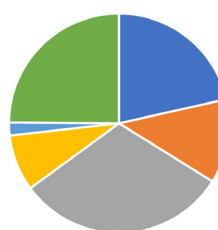
2021



■ Improvised Dwelling 26.4% ■ Supported Accommodation 16%
■ Staying Temporarily with Others 10.4% ■ Boarding Houses 1%
■ Temporary Lodging 0.3% ■ Severely Overcrowded 45.7%

Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Homelessness

2021



■ Improvised Dwelling 21.5% ■ Supported Accommodation 12.4%
■ Staying Temporarily with Others 31.1% ■ Boarding Houses 8.3%
■ Temporary Lodging 1.9% ■ Severely Overcrowded 24.9%

¹ 'Severely overcrowded' means living in a house requiring four or more bedrooms to accommodate the people living there. Anything less is considered by the ABS as 'other overcrowded' and categorised as marginal accommodation rather than homelessness.

² Classified as 'people staying temporarily with others' by the ABS



Homelessness in Western Australia

Young people and children

- **1,927 young people** experiencing homelessness between 2016 and 2021
- **19.8 per cent** of the **homeless population in WA** are **young people**, below the Australian average of 23 per cent
- **2.3 per cent increase** in the number of **children experiencing homelessness** from 1,949 in 2016 to 1,994 in 2021
- **20.5 per cent** of the **homeless population in WA** are **children under 18**, below the Australian average of 23.6 per cent

Older Persons 55+

- **23.7 per cent increase** in the number of **older people experiencing homelessness** from 1,500 in 2016 to 1,855 in 2021
- **19.1 per cent** of the **homeless population in WA** are **older people**, higher than the Australian average of 15.8 per cent

Gender

- **2.2 per cent increase** in the number of **men experiencing homelessness in WA** from 5,226 in 2016 to 5,339 in 2021
- **54.9 per cent** of the homeless population in WA are **men**
- **16.2 per cent increase** in the number of **women experiencing homelessness in WA** from 3,778 in 2016 to 4,389 in 2021
- **45 per cent** of the homeless population in WA are **women**, an increase of 3 per cent on 2016

Disability ³

- **46.8 per cent increase** in the number of **people experiencing homelessness who need assistance with core activities**, from 333 in 2016 to 489 in 2021
- **5 per cent** of all **people experiencing homelessness need assistance with core activities**

³ Disability in this instance is limited to "people needing assistance with core activities" in line with the data currently available from the ABS. This figure does not represent the total number of all people with disabilities experiencing homelessness.



Homelessness in Western Australia

Homelessness in the regions ⁴

REGION	Total Population Living in the Region (Infrastructure WA)	2016 # Total Homeless	2021 # Total Homeless	Change # Total Homeless	% Change total Homeless	% of Total Homelessness in WA (9729 people)	% of WA Population living in the region	Rate of Homelessness per 10,000 people
Gascoyne	9,262	123	182	59	48.0	1.9	0.3	196.5
Goldfields-Esperance	53,914	566	571	5	0.9	5.9	2.0	105.9
Great Southern	61,351	145	331	186	128.3	3.4	2.3	54.0
Kimberley	36,054	1,207	1,031	-176	-14.6	10.6	1.4	286.0
Mid-West	52,769	285	352	67	23.5	3.6	2.0	66.7
Peel	146,239	315	314	-1	-0.3	3.2	5.5	21.5
Perth Metro	1,985,640	5,002	5,489	487	9.7	56.4	74.5	27.6
Pilbara	62,841	661	587	-74	-11.2	6.0	2.4	93.4
South West	181,801	415	676	261	62.9	6.9	6.8	37.2
Wheatbelt	73,690	290	224	-66	-22.8	2.3	2.8	30.4
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Regions where homelessness has increased

128.3%	Great Southern
62.9%	South West
48%	Gascoyne
23.5%	Mid-West
9.7%	Perth Metro
0.9%	Goldfields-Esperance

Regions where homelessness has decreased

-22.8%	Wheatbelt
-14.6%	Kimberley
-0.3%	Peel
-11.2%	Pilbara

Regions in order of highest to lowest numbers of homeless 2021

5,489	Perth Metro
1,031	Kimberley
676	South West
587	Pilbara
571	Goldfields-Esperance
352	Mid West
331	Great Southern
314	Peel
224	Wheatbelt
182	Gascoyne

Regions in order of highest to lowest rate of homelessness per 10,000 people 2021

286.0 per 10,000	Kimberley
196.5 per 10,000	Gascoyne
105.9 per 10,000	Goldfields-Esperance
93.4 per 10,000	Pilbara
66.7 per 10,000	Mid-West
54.0 per 10,000	Great Southern
37.2 per 10,000	South West
30.4 per 10,000	Wheatbelt
27.6 per 10,000	Perth Metro
21.5 per 10,000	Peel

⁴ Homelessness data for the regions has been calculated by combining data for all the local government areas located in one region.



Homelessness in Western Australia

Homelessness in the regions

Gascoyne

13.7%	rough sleeping
18.7%	living in supported accommodation
17%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
0%	staying in boarding houses
1.6%	staying in temporary lodgings
39.6%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Great Southern

48.9%	rough sleeping
9.1%	living in supported accommodation
23%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
0%	staying in boarding houses
1.5%	staying in temporary lodgings
14.8%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Mid West

17.6%	rough sleeping
7.1%	living in supported accommodation
27.3%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
4%	staying in boarding houses
0%	staying in temporary lodgings
41.2%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Perth Metro

26.7%	rough sleeping
19.7%	living in supported accommodation
21.6%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
8.1%	staying in boarding houses
1.3%	staying in temporary lodgings
23.2%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

South West

25.3%	rough sleeping
10.2%	living in supported accommodation
28.8%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
9.3%	staying in boarding houses
0.4%	staying in temporary lodgings
23.8%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Goldfields-Esperance

18.4%	rough sleeping
17.5%	living in supported accommodation
18.4%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
10.3%	staying in boarding houses
0%	staying in temporary lodgings
34.2%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Kimberley

10.7%	rough sleeping
11.2%	living in supported accommodation
13%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
1.6%	staying in boarding houses
1.1%	staying in temporary lodgings
63.2%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Peel

19.7%	rough sleeping
25.2%	living in supported accommodation
42.4%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
2.2%	staying in boarding houses
1.6%	staying in temporary lodgings
8.3%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Pilbara

17.9%	rough sleeping
9.7%	living in supported accommodation
14.3%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
0.5%	staying in boarding houses
0%	staying in temporary lodgings
56.6%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

Wheatbelt

8%	rough sleeping
17%	living in supported accommodation
38.8%	temporarily with others (couch surfing)
12.5%	staying in boarding houses
0%	staying in temporary lodgings
15.2%	staying in severely overcrowded dwellings

