

Why Women Don't Like Darwin?

An update based on 2011 Census data

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Introduction

This document updates the original 2008 research brief “Why Don’t Women Like Darwin?” (2009 No.36 - [access here](#)) based on 2011 Census data. The intention is to provide the reader with a short summary on new or significantly modified findings.

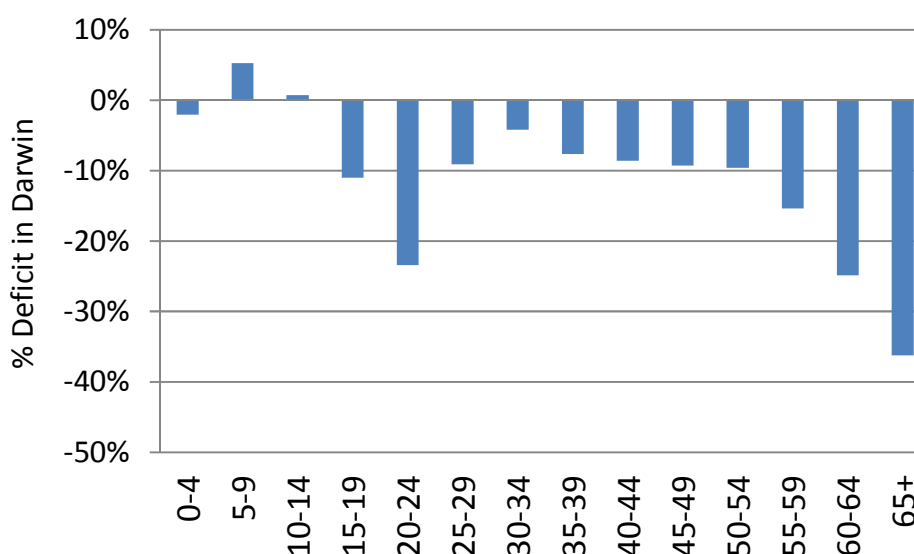
Updated sex ratios:

- In 2011 there were 121,500 males and 109,900 females in the NT which corresponds to a sex ratio of 111 (111 males for every 100 females), an increase from 2006 (106) and 2001 (110).
- In comparison, the sex ratio for Australia in 2011 was 99, up from 2006 (97) and 2001 (98). In 2011 males outnumber females only in the NT and Western Australia (101).
- In Greater Darwin there were 62,900 males and 57,700 females, a sex ratio of 109, down from 110 in 2006.

Updated Figure 1:

The updated Figure 1 shows that Darwin still has unusually high sex ratios (when compared with Australia) in all age groups, except among children (5-9 years). In 2006 this exception was found for children 0-4 years and 5-9 years. This means that the sex ratio of young children (0-4) in Darwin has changed and was about as high as the Australian average in 2011. As in 2006, the biggest differences are in the 20-24 year age group, and in the ages 55 years and over.

Figure 1: Darwin’s ‘missing’ women 2011 (compared to Australia)



Undated employment sector:

According to the 2011 Census, the largest sector of employment in Darwin was public administration and defence (22% of the working population, a slight increase from 2006), followed by research and education (13%, slight decrease from 2006), retail trade (9%, slight decrease), construction (9%, slight increase), accommodation (6%, slight increase), and transport (5%, stable). Mining provided employment for only 2% of the working population of Darwin, an increase from 1% in 2006 (Table 1).

The construction and transport sectors have high rates of male employment both in Darwin and in Australia generally, although all these sectors experienced slight decreases in this ratio in Darwin. In the Darwin construction industry, for example, in 2011 there were 640 men employed

for every 100 women employed, down from 678 men for every 100 women (Table 1). The ratio for Australia increased slightly to 656 men for every 100 women, up from 600 men for every 100 women. In the transport industry, the Darwin ratio was 309 and the national ratio was 330. The ratio for employment in public administration and defence was 128 in 2011, closing the gap on the national ratio of 117 in this sector. This is mainly due to a 22% increase of the share of women employed in the public administration sector while the defence sector remained male dominated. The sex ratios in the retail and accommodation sectors are still similar to national ratios and still indicating that these sectors employ more women than men. The research and education sector employs more women in Darwin than nation-wide, with only a slight change in sex ratios between 2006 and 2011.

Table 1: Percentage of people employed in sector in Darwin in out of the total working population in Darwin (%) and sex ratios in different employment sectors in Darwin and Australian-wide – comparison between 2006 and 2011

Employment sector:	%		Sex ratio Darwin		Sex ratio Australia	
	2006	2011	2006	2011	2006	2011
	20	22	148	128	128	117
Public administration and safety / defence						
<i>Defence</i>			507	578	367	347
<i>Public administration</i>			71	55	91	81
<i>Public Order & Safety (Police)</i>			227	184	235	220
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services & Education and Training	14	13	56	57	71	73
Retail trade	10	9	79	76	75	73
Construction	8	9	678	600	640	656
Accommodation	7	6	71	74	76	78
Transport	5	5	309	301	330	331
Mining	1	2	526	441	565	473

Concluding remark:

Where to for women in Darwin's workforce? While Darwin continues to be attractive for male employment, the share of jobs in the key sectors providing jobs for women (education, accommodation and retail) have all declined since the last census in 2006. However there have been some minor improvements in some of the male-dominated sectors. There are 30% more women, for instance, in public administration and defence than six years ago and construction, transport and mining all now have a higher percentage of women in their workforces. So while traditional employment options may be declining, opportunities are increasing for women prepared to work in the industries that men have always dominated.