

Community report

Cairns (R)

Prepared from Community Explorer topic selections for briefing, planning and reporting use.

AREA

Cairns (R)

COMPARISON

Regional Qld

POPULATION

Persons

GENERATED

30 March 2026

Included sections

1 selected topic will be included in this report.

01 Service age groups

Sources and method

- Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 and, where available, 2016 comparison data.
- Percentages are calculated from the denominator supplied for each topic. Change (pp) is the 2021 percentage minus the 2016 percentage when the topic is comparable across years.
- Usual residence topics describe where people usually live, rather than where they were counted on Census night.

Service age groups

Cairns (R) | Regional Qld comparison | Persons

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Key takeaway

In 2021, Mid-life adults (35 to 49) was the most common category among residents in Cairns (R), accounting for 20.9% (34,918 people). This share was higher than Regional Qld (19%). Since 2016, the biggest change was in Established seniors (70 to 84), which increased by 4,344 people and 2.2 percentage points.

About this topic

Service age groups divide the population into broad life-stage bands such as children, young adults, working-age adults, and older people. The groupings are designed to reflect typical demand for age-based services and facilities rather than exact five-year cohorts.

This view is useful for planning childcare, schools, recreation, aged services, and other community infrastructure. It works best alongside five year age groups, household type, and dwelling data, which add more detail about who is living in an area and how needs may change over time.

Interpretation notes

- This is a derived grouping rather than a direct Census question, so the age bands are planning-oriented summaries built from standard age data.
- Percentages relate to the total population; use five year age groups when exact cohort detail matters.

Age structure - Service age groups

Cairns (R) - Total persons (Usual residence)

Category	2021			2016			Change	
	Count	%	Regional Qld %	Count	%	Regional Qld %	Count	pp
Early childhood (0 to 4)	9,213	5.5%	5.4%	10,218	6.5%	6.1%	-1,005	-1.0
Primary school age (5 to 11)	15,438	9.2%	8.9%	15,601	9.9%	9.4%	-163	-0.7
Secondary school age (12 to 17)	13,810	8.3%	7.8%	12,653	8.1%	7.7%	+1,157	+0.2
Young adults (18 to 24)	12,865	7.7%	7.9%	12,581	8.0%	8.3%	+284	-0.3
Early career adults (25 to 34)	22,027	13.2%	12.4%	21,316	13.6%	12.4%	+711	-0.4
Mid-life adults (35 to 49)	34,918	20.9%	19.0%	34,424	21.9%	19.6%	+494	-1.0
Pre-retirement adults (50 to 59)	22,760	13.6%	13.2%	21,379	13.6%	13.4%	+1,381	0.0
Retirement transition (60 to 69)	18,701	11.2%	12.2%	16,325	10.4%	11.7%	+2,376	+0.8
Established seniors (70 to 84)	14,753	8.8%	11.3%	10,409	6.6%	9.4%	+4,344	+2.2
Advanced age (85 years and over)	2,463	1.5%	2.1%	1,977	1.3%	1.9%	+486	+0.2
Total	166,943	100.0%	100.0%	156,901	100.0%	100.0%	+10,042	0.0

Data basis: usual residence.