

DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 16 Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) in the Northern Territory across 21 different indicators of disadvantage. The indicators, based on statistics collected from a number of government agencies, reflect factors that may limit life opportunities in the broad areas of social wellbeing, health, community safety, access to housing, education and employment.

SLAs were ranked on each indicator, with high rankings indicating the SLA was significantly affected by the particular limiting factor (eg unemployment or disability). These results were then used to produce a 'rank average' taking into account aspects of disadvantage to which the locality is particularly vulnerable, and those aspects to which it is less vulnerable, and combining them into a single score.

Dropping off the Edge 2015 builds on similar reports released in 2007, 2004 and 1999. However, the latter two were based on data from Victoria and NSW only, while only limited data was available from the Northern Territory in 2007, so comparisons with the past are more difficult for this region.

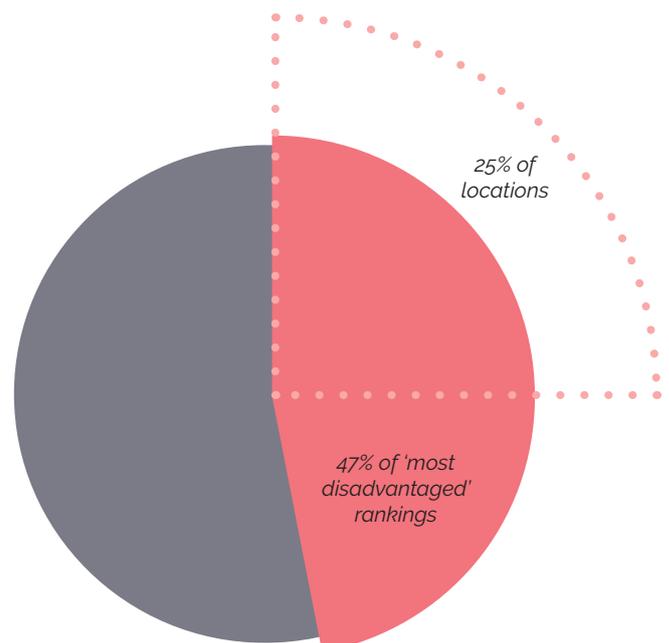
Key findings

- While certain localities account for a disproportionate level of disadvantage in the Northern Territory, disadvantage is nevertheless shown in different forms across the Territory, with only one SLA showing no extreme disadvantage on any indicator.
- Compared with other regions, disadvantage in the Northern Territory is more dispersed.
- Remote communities reflect different forms of disadvantage compared with more populated areas.

Locational disadvantage is concentrated, although less so than other states/territories

A limited number of SLAs account for a disproportionate number of 'top ranked' (ie most disadvantaged) positions:

- 25% of SLAs account for nearly 47% of the 'top rankings' across the range of indicators.
- 38% of SLAs account for nearly 70% of the 'top rankings' across the range of indicators.



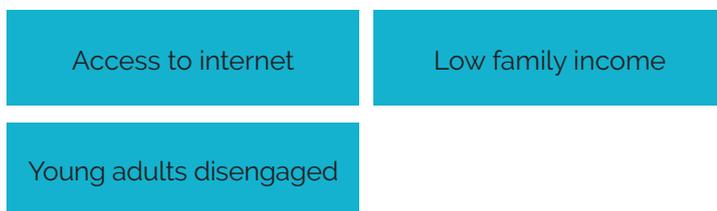
A complex web of disadvantage

The study examined SLAs which ranked in the 'most disadvantaged' group on more than five indicators and suggested that:

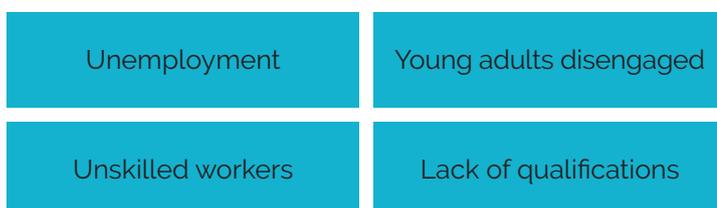
- Unlike many other states or territories, disadvantage in the Northern Territory is more dispersed. It was common for SLAs to experience both high and low rankings on different indicators. Only one of the 21 SLAs recorded no 'top 3' (highly disadvantaged) ranking on any indicator.
- The four most disadvantaged localities have quite different patterns of disadvantage. For example:
 - In the Tiwi Islands, disadvantage is felt in the lack of internet access, low family incomes and young adults not engaged in work or study - ranked first on all of these indicators. Economic indicators therefore showed disadvantage while social indicators (criminal convictions, prison admissions) were less prominent.
 - East Arnhem ranked second on unemployment and long-term unemployment, young adults not engaged in work or study, unskilled workers, and the level of post-school qualifications. Again, the issue is around income and skills.
 - In Katherine, disadvantage is reflected in the rankings for criminal convictions, domestic violence and prison admissions (ranked first on each of these). On the other hand, skills appear to be at a higher level than in many other locations.

Characteristics of the Northern Territory's most multiply-disadvantaged locations

Tiwi Islands



East Arnhem



Katherine



 Economic indicators
 Social indicators

Average ranks across all indicators for the Northern Territory SLAs

The following table presents the rank averages for the 16 SLAs; the smaller that average the more susceptible the locality is to the problems represented by the indicators. From that perspective, Tiwi Islands, MacDonnell, Barkly, Victoria-Daly, Central Desert, Roper Gulf and Belyuen are among the most cumulatively disadvantaged places.

SLAs (Listed alphabetically)	Av. Ranks	Estimated Population (2011)
Alice Springs (T)	10.1	36066
Barkly (S)	6.4	5722
Belyuen (S)	6.6	181
Central Desert (S)	6.5	3720
Coomalie (S)	7.8	1106
Darwin	12.8	120586
East Arnhem (S)	7.5	9098
Katherine (T)	8.2	17823
Litchfield	13.7	18620
MacDonnell (S)	6.3	5829
Palmerston	13.0	27618
Roper Gulf (S)	6.5	6121
Tiwi Islands (S)	6.1	2580
Victoria-Daly (S)	6.4	5925
Wagait (S)	7.9	368
West Arnhem (S)	7.9	6228
Unincorporated NT	13.2	n.a.

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DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015
Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia

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