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Title:

The components of Indigenous intercensal population change, 1996-2001

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Abstract:

Australia is one of the countries of the world with good data on the size of its total population and the components of change over time. However, the same cannot be said for its indigenous population. Despite efforts to improve the quality of population data for indigenous Australians, there still remains uncertainty about the total size of the indigenous population and the components of its growth between any two consecutive censuses. The growth of the indigenous population of Australia has three main components, a positive component due to births to indigenous women, an overlapping positive component due to births to indigenous fathers and non-indigenous mothers, and a negative component due to deaths to indigenous Australians. In addition, changes in propensities to identify and in census edits to indigenous status, as well as variable enumeration coverage, are also factors that have a bearing on indigenous population counts. The purpose of this paper is to examine the dynamics of each of these components in the 1996-2001 intercensal period.