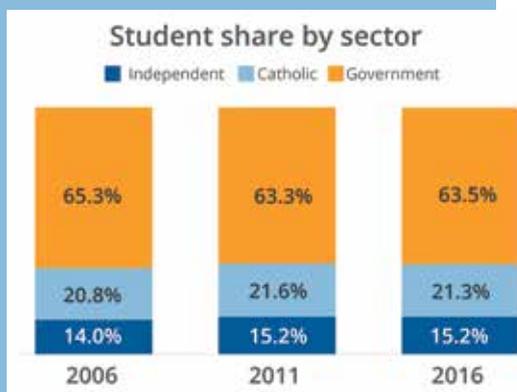


## The 2016 Census: the changing face of Australian schooling

### ENROLMENTS

Enrolments in the Independent, Catholic and government sectors have all grown since 2011. The Independent sector has been growing the fastest at 10 per cent, the Catholic sector at 8 per cent and government schools at 9 per cent.

Despite media reports of a significant shift to government schools in recent years, the 2016 Census shows that since 2011 the Independent sector enrolment share has remained unchanged at 15.2 per cent. Catholic schools have experienced a slight decline from 21.6 per cent to 21.3 per cent, while government schools have increased from 63.3 per cent to 63.5 per cent.



Looking at the state makeup, the highest proportion of Independent sector students can be found in South Australia with 18 per cent attending Independent schools, the highest proportion of Catholic enrolments is in the ACT with 25 per cent, and the Northern Territory has the highest proportion of government sector students at 70 per cent.

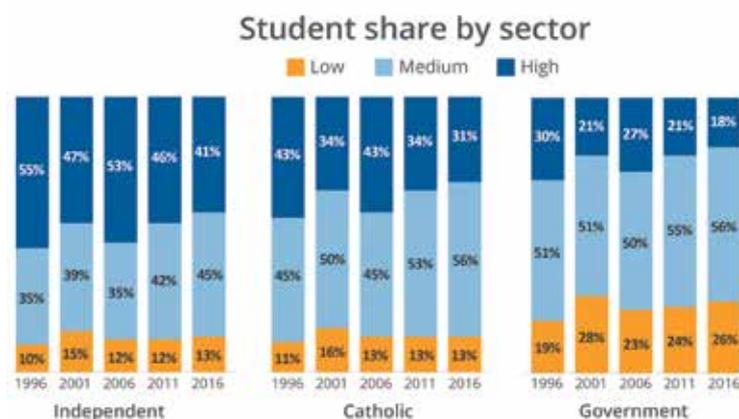
### FAMILY INCOME

The 2016 Census results show an increasing similarity in income between the Independent and Catholic sectors.

There has been a continuation in the trend of strong Independent sector growth for medium-income families (\$52,000 to \$155,999). In the previous Census high income earners were the greatest share of Independent enrolments, but in 2016 medium-income families have now become most common at 46 per cent.

A similar trend is evident for Catholic schools, with 56 per cent coming from middle-income families.

Over time the proportion of low-income families (below \$52,000) in the Independent and Catholic sectors has remained fairly constant at around 13 per cent. Government schools show a distinctly different trend with 26 per cent of their students from low-income families.



### DEPENDENT CHILDREN PER FAMILY

Census results show that the average number of dependent children in an Australian family has remained relatively stable at 2.42 from 2011 to 2016.

Islamic families have shown a significant increase in dependent numbers (from 3.07 to 3.11), but numbers have largely remained consistent across the non-religious and main Christian religions.

Independent schools remain unchanged at an average of 2.40 children, while Catholic schools have had a slight decline in family size, dropping from 2.42 to 2.39 children. Government schools have the largest families with an average of 2.43 children.

THE RELEASE OF THE RESULTS OF THE 2016 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING BRINGS SIGNIFICANT NEW DATA TO HELP UNDERSTAND ONGOING DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND CHANGES IN THE EVER-EVOLVING MAKEUP OF AUSTRALIA'S THREE EDUCATION SECTORS.

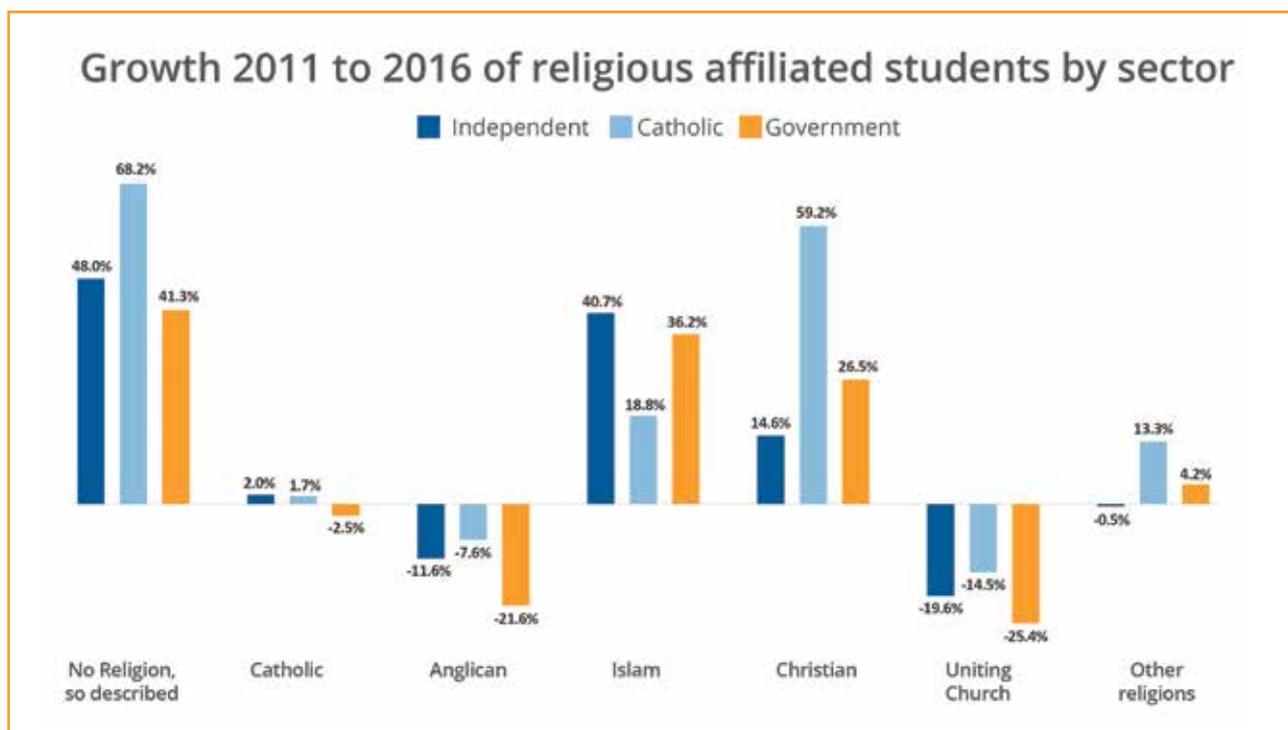
ISCA'S ANALYSIS OF THE CENSUS DATA LOOKS AT TRENDS ACROSS SCHOOL SECTORS IN AREAS INCLUDING ENROLMENT SHARE AND GROWTH, FAMILY INCOME, DEPENDENT CHILDREN AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION.

## RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

When it comes to the religious affiliation of students across the three sectors, probably the most notable trend is the continued growth of the No Religion category.

Since the previous Census, students with no religion have increased from 30 per cent to 37 per cent. Catholic religious affiliation has declined from 30 per cent to 27 per cent, Anglican religious affiliation has changed from 15 per cent to 11 per cent, while other religions have remained constant at 25 per cent.

It would be fair to say that all three school sectors are, on average, becoming increasingly non-religious. In Independent schools the No Religion category grew from 24 per cent in 2011 to 31 per cent in 2016. In Catholic schools families selecting No Religion went from 10 per cent to 14 per cent, and in the Government sector it grew from 38 per cent to 45 per cent.



### SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The 2016 ABS Census result confirms the ongoing trend of recent years that sees the non-government sector's Independent and Catholic schools becoming demographically more similar in the type of communities they serve.

With the continued growth in Independent sector enrolments, particularly amongst medium-income families, schools will need to plan for the challenges of raising sufficient capital funding for new schools and the expansion of existing schools.

On the other hand, if family size continues to contract schools will also need to allow for this in forward planning.

And schools may need to think about the implications of the slow but steady rise of secularism, and the ways this may affect their approach to religious education and how they market their schools.

The 2016 Census of Population and Housing confirms the adage that the only constant is change. But by utilising tools such as the Census data, schools can stay on top of trends and changes and make prudent planning decisions for the future.

