



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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# Trends in Key Economic Parameters

**An Economic Context for Independent  
Schools in Australia**

**ISCA Research Report**

**May 2019**

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## Purpose

This Guide provides easy reference to trends in key indicators and relevant school-based data to provide a picture of the economic environment in Australia. The information is provided to assist Independent schools and their Boards to consider the context and outlook for their school communities as part of their decision making and planning processes.

Indicators utilised in this Guide are:

### **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**

The Consumer Price Index is the most comprehensive measure of goods and services price inflation faced by all consumer households. Information provided on CPI includes a breakdown of the CPI Education index.

### **Wage Price Index (WPI)**

The Wage Price Index measures changes in the price of labour in the Australian labour market. Information provided includes a breakdown of the Education component of WPI.

### **Producer Price Index (PPI)**

The Producer Price Index measures inflation of products either as they leave the place of production or as they enter the production process. The PPI Non-Residential Building Construction (which measures changes in prices of selected materials used in construction and wage costs over a 12-month period) is the metric used by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training to determine capital funding for non-government schools.

### **ACARA National Report on Schooling data portal**

The National Report on Schooling in Australia data portal, created by ACARA, provides public access to several national data sets for schooling relevant to the annual National Report on Schooling in Australia.

Information provided includes teaching and non-teaching staff salaries, parent fees/charges and trends in per student debt levels. All information is displayed as either 'per staff' or 'per student'.

### **Enrolment Growth Trends in Independent Schools**

The ABS Schools Australia data provides enrolment growth by state and territory including by primary and secondary and FTE staff growth.

Further information on these indices is provided in the Appendix.

# Consumer Price Index

CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES (CPI) PUBLISHED BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS						Average annual growth 2013-2018
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
<b>CPI (All Groups) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
Sydney	1.7%	2.0%	1.8%	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%
Melbourne	1.4%	1.9%	1.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.8%
Brisbane	2.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.9%	1.5%	1.7%
Adelaide	1.7%	1.0%	1.3%	2.3%	1.6%	1.6%
Perth	2.0%	1.5%	0.4%	0.8%	1.3%	1.2%
Hobart	1.1%	1.8%	1.3%	2.1%	3.0%	1.9%
Darwin	1.9%	0.5%	-0.4%	1.0%	1.2%	0.8%
Canberra	1.2%	0.7%	1.8%	2.2%	2.5%	1.7%
<b>CPI (Education) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
Sydney	4.7%	9.0%	3.1%	2.9%	4.0%	4.7%
Melbourne	5.0%	4.2%	4.0%	3.4%	2.0%	3.7%
Brisbane	5.8%	3.4%	3.2%	3.7%	2.1%	3.7%
Adelaide	4.8%	4.2%	2.8%	3.0%	2.1%	3.4%
Perth	7.1%	4.5%	3.2%	2.6%	1.8%	3.8%
Hobart	4.8%	2.7%	2.6%	3.2%	2.1%	3.1%
Darwin	4.7%	4.5%	3.4%	2.8%	4.5%	4.0%
Canberra	4.7%	3.1%	3.5%	3.1%	3.2%	3.5%
<b>CPI (Preschool &amp; Primary Education only) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
Sydney	4.4%	8.4%	5.2%	1.3%	2.8%	4.4%
Melbourne	5.7%	6.5%	5.2%	3.6%	1.5%	4.5%
Brisbane	6.8%	5.4%	3.6%	2.5%	2.1%	4.1%
Adelaide	6.7%	4.5%	3.5%	3.0%	2.4%	4.0%
Perth	5.9%	4.5%	4.2%	3.6%	1.3%	3.9%
Hobart	7.6%	3.2%	2.8%	2.9%	1.1%	3.5%
Darwin	6.3%	5.9%	2.1%	2.3%	2.9%	3.9%
Canberra	5.5%	5.5%	5.3%	2.7%	1.6%	4.1%
<b>CPI (Secondary Education only) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>
Sydney	6.3%	4.7%	4.4%	4.5%	3.7%	4.7%
Melbourne	6.3%	5.6%	5.5%	4.6%	3.4%	5.1%
Brisbane	6.3%	3.7%	4.3%	4.0%	3.4%	4.3%
Adelaide	5.0%	3.9%	4.3%	2.9%	3.3%	3.9%
Perth	5.7%	5.3%	3.8%	3.0%	2.3%	4.0%
Hobart	5.9%	2.9%	3.5%	3.7%	1.4%	3.5%
Darwin	4.9%	4.0%	3.8%	2.5%	6.9%	4.4%
Canberra	6.4%	2.5%	4.2%	3.7%	4.6%	4.3%

## Wage Price Index

WAGE PRICE INDEXES (WPI) PUBLISHED BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average annual growth 2013-2018
<b>WPI (All Groups, Private sector) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
New South Wales	2.3%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	2.3%	2.2%
Victoria	2.7%	2.3%	1.8%	2.2%	2.5%	2.3%
Queensland	2.6%	1.8%	1.7%	1.9%	2.3%	2.1%
South Australia	2.7%	2.1%	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.5%
Western Australia	2.0%	1.5%	1.2%	1.5%	1.7%	1.8%
Tasmania	2.7%	2.4%	2.4%	2.2%	2.9%	2.4%
Northern Territory	2.5%	1.8%	1.6%	1.4%	1.6%	2.0%
Australian Capital Territory	2.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	2.2%	2.1%
<b>WPI (Education, Private sector) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
<b>WPI (Education, Public sector) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>WPI (Education, Public and Private sector) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>

## Producer Price Index

PRODUCER PRICE INDEXES (PPI) PUBLISHED BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average annual growth 2013-2018
<b>PPI (Non-residential building construction) growth</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
New South Wales	2.4%	3.1%	3.9%	3.7%	3.5%	3.3%
Victoria	2.1%	0.2%	-1.3%	0.0%	3.9%	1.0%
Queensland	4.4%	4.1%	5.5%	1.7%	0.2%	3.2%
South Australia	0.6%	0.1%	1.6%	1.2%	2.4%	1.2%
Western Australia	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.5%	-0.6%	-0.2%	-0.3%
Tasmania	0.7%	3.2%	2.7%	5.8%	2.6%	3.0%
Northern Territory	1.6%	0.5%	-3.2%	1.7%	-0.7%	0.0%
Australian Capital Territory	1.8%	1.7%	2.3%	2.9%	2.8%	2.3%

# ACARA National Report on Schooling in Australia

FIGURES FROM ACARA NATIONAL REPORT ON SCHOOLING	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average annual growth 2012-2017
<b>Teaching staff salaries per FTE teaching staff (Non-Government schools)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
New South Wales	2.9%	3.9%	1.7%	1.8%	2.1%	2.5%
Victoria	4.1%	3.6%	4.5%	2.7%	2.8%	3.5%
Queensland	1.7%	3.2%	1.4%	0.4%	5.3%	2.4%
South Australia	3.7%	4.2%	2.8%	3.2%	2.2%	3.2%
Western Australia	3.6%	4.6%	1.8%	2.2%	2.6%	3.0%
Tasmania	3.0%	3.9%	3.3%	2.4%	-0.1%	2.5%
Northern Territory	6.3%	-0.7%	10.0%	-1.1%	13.2%	5.4%
Australian Capital Territory	2.6%	1.4%	2.4%	4.1%	3.5%	2.8%
<b>Non-teaching staff salaries per FTE non-teaching staff (Non-Government schools)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
New South Wales	2.6%	0.1%	4.7%	4.2%	5.2%	3.4%
Victoria	4.3%	3.2%	3.7%	3.6%	3.8%	3.7%
Queensland	-1.5%	1.9%	2.3%	7.4%	-1.5%	1.7%
South Australia	4.9%	1.8%	1.6%	2.7%	3.4%	2.9%
Western Australia	5.0%	1.2%	0.8%	4.4%	0.9%	2.5%
Tasmania	8.9%	0.9%	3.0%	5.8%	6.1%	4.9%
Northern Territory	-4.2%	10.5%	-11.9%	7.6%	-10.0%	-2.0%
Australian Capital Territory	-0.2%	2.3%	12.5%	-1.6%	-4.6%	1.5%
<b>Fees and charges per student (Independent schools)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
New South Wales	3.5%	4.1%	4.1%	3.4%	3.7%	3.8%
Victoria	2.7%	4.7%	4.2%	4.2%	2.3%	3.6%
Queensland	4.2%	3.9%	3.2%	3.2%	2.4%	3.4%
South Australia	3.7%	5.0%	4.9%	5.3%	4.1%	4.6%
Western Australia	6.6%	5.1%	5.4%	2.7%	1.4%	4.2%
Tasmania	1.8%	4.8%	3.6%	3.3%	-8.5%	0.9%
Northern Territory	8.8%	2.5%	7.5%	2.8%	2.6%	4.8%
Australian Capital Territory	6.8%	5.2%	3.1%	4.8%	4.6%	4.9%
<b>Loans at the end of the year per student (Independent schools)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>
New South Wales	-5.9%	-6.4%	2.0%	-2.2%	-2.4%	-3.0%
Victoria	-7.1%	-11.0%	12.5%	1.0%	9.3%	0.5%
Queensland	-3.2%	-1.3%	-2.5%	-0.5%	-0.4%	-1.6%
South Australia	-1.4%	-2.2%	-1.4%	-0.9%	14.3%	1.5%
Western Australia	-3.0%	0.0%	11.3%	0.3%	4.2%	2.5%
Tasmania	0.1%	-4.9%	4.7%	0.5%	26.1%	4.8%
Northern Territory	-10.0%	30.7%	-0.8%	4.8%	-15.3%	0.7%
Australian Capital Territory	-2.1%	-11.0%	-10.7%	-3.9%	22.9%	-1.7%

## Independent Schools Enrolment Growth

FIGURES FROM ABS SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average annual growth 2013-2018
<b>FTE Student growth (Independent sector)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
New South Wales	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%	2.6%	2.4%
Victoria	2.2%	2.3%	2.1%	3.5%	2.9%	2.6%
Queensland	1.2%	1.4%	0.7%	1.3%	1.5%	1.2%
South Australia	0.7%	1.4%	0.5%	0.2%	3.2%	1.2%
Western Australia	1.0%	2.4%	-0.8%	-0.3%	1.0%	0.7%
Tasmania	1.1%	-0.3%	-0.3%	1.0%	1.2%	0.5%
Northern Territory	-0.5%	5.4%	-1.3%	-3.7%	-1.4%	-0.3%
Australian Capital Territory	1.0%	0.3%	2.6%	2.2%	2.2%	1.7%
<b>FTE Student growth (Independent sector, Pre-Year 0 to Year 6)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
New South Wales	2.2%	1.9%	2.1%	2.9%	2.9%	2.4%
Victoria	3.7%	3.1%	2.7%	3.3%	3.5%	3.3%
Queensland	5.4%	1.8%	0.6%	0.8%	1.9%	2.1%
South Australia	0.4%	2.2%	0.5%	0.3%	3.8%	1.4%
Western Australia	2.5%	0.1%	-1.1%	-1.0%	1.3%	0.4%
Tasmania	1.3%	0.8%	-1.2%	2.6%	0.3%	0.8%
Northern Territory	3.2%	7.1%	4.1%	-1.3%	1.2%	2.8%
Australian Capital Territory	0.6%	2.0%	3.3%	3.8%	2.8%	2.5%
<b>FTE Student growth (Independent sector, Year 7 to Year 12)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
New South Wales	2.2%	2.5%	2.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%
Victoria	1.1%	1.8%	1.7%	3.7%	2.4%	2.1%
Queensland	-1.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.7%	1.2%	0.5%
South Australia	0.9%	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	2.6%	0.9%
Western Australia	-0.1%	4.2%	-0.5%	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%
Tasmania	1.0%	-1.2%	0.5%	-0.5%	1.9%	0.3%
Northern Territory	-3.1%	4.1%	-5.5%	-5.7%	-3.7%	-2.8%
Australian Capital Territory	1.4%	-1.3%	1.9%	0.7%	1.6%	0.9%
<b>FTE Staff growth (Independent sector)</b>						
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
New South Wales	3.7%	3.6%	3.7%	3.1%	4.1%	3.6%
Victoria	2.8%	3.2%	3.8%	2.7%	4.0%	3.3%
Queensland	1.9%	4.5%	2.8%	2.2%	2.7%	2.8%
South Australia	1.6%	2.7%	2.2%	2.0%	2.0%	2.1%
Western Australia	2.3%	4.4%	0.8%	1.2%	2.5%	2.2%
Tasmania	3.1%	1.7%	1.9%	2.9%	1.1%	2.2%
Northern Territory	6.6%	7.1%	5.4%	-5.7%	-6.2%	1.2%
Australian Capital Territory	4.3%	3.8%	4.4%	3.3%	1.6%	3.5%

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# Appendix

## Summary of metrics used

### Consumer Price Index (CPI)

The Consumer Price Index is the most comprehensive measure of goods and services price inflation faced by all consumer households. The education (Preschool, Primary and Secondary) component of CPI is comprised of all expenditure on school services: school fees and other fees which are associated with attending the school such as book fees, payments from school excursions, fees for swimming lessons. More information on CPI and access to downloadable data is available at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/PrimaryMainFeatures/6461.0>

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6401.0>

The following CPI measures have been used:

- CPI (All Groups) by Australia, Major City
- CPI (Education) by Australia, Major City
- CPI (Preschool & Primary Education) by Australia, Major City
- CPI (Secondary Education) by Australia, Major City

Time periods used: December quarter of each year, vs same quarter prior year.

### Wage Price Index (WPI)

The Wage Price Index measures changes in the price of labour in the Australian labour market. More information on WPI and access to downloadable data is available at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Wage+Price+Indexes+FAQs>

<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6345.0Explanatory%20Notes1Dec%202018>

The following WPI measures have been used:

- WPI (All Groups, Private sector) by Australia, State
- WPI (Education, Private sector) by Australia
- WPI (Education, Public sector) by Australia
- WPI (Education, Public and Private sector) by Australia

Time periods used: December quarter of each year, vs same quarter prior year.

### Producer Price Index (PPI)

The Producer Price Index measures inflation of products either as they leave the place of production or as they enter the production process. More information on PPI and access to downloadable data is available at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6427.0>

The following PPI measures have been used:

- PPI (Non-residential building construction) by Australia, State



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Time periods used: December quarter of each year, vs same quarter prior year.

The PPI (Non-residential building construction) is the metric used by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, to determine Commonwealth capital funding for non-Government schools.

## **ACARA National Report on Schooling data portal**

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is the independent statutory authority responsible for the development of a national curriculum, a national assessment program, and national data collection and reporting program that supports learning for Australian students.

The National Report on Schooling in Australia data portal provides access to several national data sets for schooling relevant to the annual National Report on Schooling in Australia and is available at the following link

<https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia-data-portal>

The following measures have been used from the data portal:

- Teaching staff salaries (Non-Government sector)
- Non-teaching staff salaries (Non-Government sector)
- School parent fees and charges (Independent sector)
- Loans at the end of the year (Independent sector)

Data for these measures are publicly available at the following link

<https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia-data-portal/school-funding/non-government-schools-income-and-expenditure>

Note that the Schools Australia dataset assigns Independent Catholic schools to the Catholic sector.

## **Schools Australia – Australian Bureau of Statistics**

The Schools, Australia dataset is an annual release containing statistics on students and schools, and the staff involved in the provision or administration of school education. It includes the government and non-government school populations for all Australian states and territories.

Data used in the compilation of these statistics are sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (non-finance), which is a joint undertaking between state and territory government departments on education, the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

An explanation of ABS Schools Australia and data is available publicly at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4221.0>

The following information has been used from ABS Schools Australia:

- Full time equivalent Independent students by Total Students, Primary, Secondary (data table 43a)
- Full time equivalent Independent staff (data table 51a)

Note that the Schools Australia dataset assigns Independent Catholic schools to the Catholic sector.