

CHAPTER 14: SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AREAS

- **The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2001 is a tool for measuring the social and economic conditions of Australian communities.**
- SEIFA has been developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics using data derived from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. SEIFA 2001 provides a range of measures to rank areas based on their relative social and economic wellbeing.
- The 2001 Census provides extensive information on a number of social and economic concepts, such as those discussed in previous chapters ie. income, education and occupation. However, these subjects in isolation may not give a full indication of the social and economic conditions in a particular area. SEIFA 2001 combines all these items into a series of comprehensive indexes that allow you to profile Australia's communities.
- SEIFA 2001 contains four indexes, each summarising a different aspect of the level of socio-economic wellbeing in an area.
- The four indexes are:

1 Index of Advantage/Disadvantage

This index is a continuum of advantage to disadvantage. Low values indicate areas of disadvantage, and high values indicate areas of advantage. It takes into account variables relating to income, education, occupation, wealth and living conditions.

2 Index of Disadvantage

This index is derived from attributes such as income, educational attainment, unemployment, and dwellings without motor vehicles. In particular it focuses on low income earners, relatively lower educational attainment and high unemployment.

3 Index of Economic Resources

Variables for this index include those relating to the income, expenditure and assets of families, such as family income, rent paid, mortgage repayments, and dwelling size.

4 Index of Education and Occupation.

This index includes variables relating to the educational and occupational characteristics of communities, such as the proportion of people with a higher qualification or those employed in a skilled occupation.

- Attributes of the population of an area such as educational attainment, income, employment and occupation contribute to the index value. A higher index value indicates that an area has attributes such as a relatively high proportion of people with high incomes and or a skilled workforce. It also means that an area has a low proportion of people with low incomes and relatively few unskilled people in the workforce. Conversely, a low index value indicates that an area has a higher proportion of individuals with low incomes, more employees in unskilled occupations and a low proportion of people with high incomes or skilled occupations.
- The scores for each of these indexes for Wyong LGA and Gosford LGA are shown in Table 14.1. To place these measures in perspective scores for NSW and Australia are also included.
- The average index value for socio-economic advantage/disadvantage for statistical local areas across Australia is 1,005. Hence, an index value exceeding 1,005 indicates that an area is more advantaged than the Australian average, while a value of less than 1005 indicates that an area is more disadvantaged than the Australian average. Wyong LGA with an index score of 938, for example, is more disadvantaged than Gosford LGA with a score of 1,009.

Table 14.1: Socio-Economic Indexes

Index	Wyong LGA	Gosford LGA	NSW	Australia
Advantage/Disadvantage	938	1,009	1,015	1,005
Disadvantage	959	1,011	1,000	1,002
Economic Resources	958	1,019	1,030	1,009
Education and Occupation	932	1,002	1,010	1,001

Source: ABS Census 2001.

Information provided by the Hunter Valley Research Foundation.

- Table 14.2 ranks local government areas in NSW from highest to lowest index values. Gosford LGA is ranked 39 and Wyong LGA is ranked 99 out of 171 LGA's in NSW.

- Whilst the index is used to rank areas other arithmetic relationships between index values are not meaningful. For example, an area with an index value of 1,200 is not necessarily twice as advantaged as an area with an index value of 600 (ABS, 2004).
- Similarly, the socio-economic difference between two areas with index values of 800 and 900 is not necessarily the same as the difference between two areas with index values of 1,050 and 1,150. Therefore, the index should only be used for ordering and ranking areas.

Table 14.2: Index of Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage -NSW Statistical Local Areas, 2001

Rank	LGA	Index Value	Rank	LGA	Index Value
1	Mosman	1,231.1	46	Wollongong	991.8
2	North Sydney	1,226.8	47	Wagga Wagga	986.9
3	Woollahra	1,223.4	48	Botany Bay	985.0
4	Ku-ring-gai	1,213.4	49	Newcastle	984.8
5	Lane Cove	1,197.0	50	Singleton	984.5
6	Hunter's Hill	1,176.2	51	Cooma-Monara	978.6
7	Willoughby	1,174.2	52	Liverpool	978.0
8	Manly	1,172.4	53	Blacktown	977.9
9	Leichhardt	1,159.0	54	Albury	977.7
10	Waverly	1,154.6	55	Tallaganda	975.8
11	Hornsby	1,143.3	56	Mulwaree	974.3
12	Baulkham Hills	1,142.5	57	Orange	974.2
13	Sydney	1,138.4	58	Dubbo	973.1
14	Pittwater	1,127.5	59	Bankstown	972.0
15	South Sydney	1,123.9	60	Lake Macquarie	970.5
16	Yarrowlumla	1,109.5	61	Campbelltown	969.5
17	Randwick	1,107.9	62	Jerilderie	969.4
18	Warringah	1,105.7	63	Byron	969.3
19	Ryde	1,103.1	64	Ballina	967.4
20	Sutherland	1,092.7	65	Canterbury	964.8
21	Ashfield	1,083.8	66	Cobar	961.5
22	Strathfield	1,082.5	67	Cabonne	960.6
23	Kogarah	1,079.9	68	Bourke	958.7
24	Blue Mountains	1,072.9	69	Maitland	957.6
25	Marrickville	1,067.9	70	Uralla	957.2
26	Burwood	1,060.9	71	Tamworth	956.1
27	Snowy River	1,053.4	72	Goulburn	956.0
28	Kiama	1,044.9	73	Scone	955.1
29	Hurstville	1,043.4	74	Murray	953.8
30	Camden	1,042.9	75	Port Stephens	952.3
31	Parramatta	1,030.7	76	Parry	952.1
32	Gunning	1,030.7	77	Griffith	951.9
33	Yass	1,020.8	78	Lismore	950.9
34	Queanbeyan	1,020.8	79	Muswellbrook	949.2
35	Armidale-Dumaresq	1,018.9	80	Leeton	948.7
36	Hawkesbury	1,017.2	81	Lockhart	948.4
37	Wingecarribee	1,014.4	82	Dungog	948.2
38	Rockdale	1,013.1	83	Auburn	948.1
39	Gosford	1,008.8	84	Holbrook	947.7
40	Wollondilly	1,003.1	85	Deniliquin	946.7
41	Evans	998.0	86	Berrigan	945.1
42	Penrith	996.5	87	Bega Valley	945.0
43	Holroyd	995.0	88	Narrabri	944.9
44	Bathurst	993.1	89	Hastings	944.9
45	Hume	991.9	90	Moree Plains	944.6

Rank	LGA	Index Value	Rank	LGA	Index Value
91	Crookwell	943.6	138	Yalloroi	918.5
92	Shell Harbour	942.9	139	Gilgandra	918.5
93	Boorowa	941.8	140	Nundle	918.2
94	Wakool	941.7	141	Great Lakes	918.0
95	Coffs Harbour	941.6	142	Culcairn	917.5
96	Walcha	940.8	143	Bogan	917.3
97	Oberon	940.8	144	Grafton	916.0
98	Corowa	939.2	145	Copmanhurst	915.4
99	Wyong	938.2	146	Fairfield	915.4
100	Shoalhaven	937.4	147	Harden	914.8
101	Murrurundi	937.1	148	Greater Taree	912.7
102	Blayney	936.1	149	Wellington	912.2
103	Warren	935.8	150	Glen Innes	910.7
104	Weddin	935.8	151	Coonamble	910.2
105	Carrathool	935.8	152	Broken Hill	909.6
106	Mudgee	935.4	153	Inverell	909.4
107	Bland	935.4	154	Macleay	907.7
108	Coolamon	934.8	155	Brewarrina	907.2
109	Quirindi	934.5	156	Merriwa	905.4
110	Forbes	933.6	157	Cessnock	903.9
111	Parkes	932.5	158	Guyra	902.9
112	Wentworth	932.1	159	Murrurundi	902.5
113	Narrandera	931.2	160	Rylestone	902.5
114	Lachlan	930.7	161	Tenterfield	896.8
115	Bombala	929.0	162	Kyogle	896.6
116	Hay	929.0	163	Walgett	895.6
117	Bellingen	928.5	164	Central Darling	890.6
118	Eurobadalla	928.1	165	Barraba	889.5
119	Young	928.1	166	Manilla	888.9
120	Severn	926.7	167	Pristine Waters	888.1
121	Lithgow	926.6	168	Kempsey	886.9
122	Cootamundra	926.4	169	Manilla	885.4
123	Narromine	925.8	170	Richmond Valley	884.8
124	Tumburumba	925.1	171	Bingarra	878.9
125	Tweed	925.0	172	Conargo	n.a
126	Tumut	925.0	173	Canada Bay	n.a
127	Junee	924.5			
128	Coolah	924.0			
129	Cowra	923.1		NSW	1,015.3
130	Balranald	922.9		Australia	1,004.9
132	Gunnedah	922.6			
133	Urana	922.3			
134	Gundagai	922.1			
135	Temora	920.7			
136	Gloucester	920.6			
137	Coonabarrabran	918.8			

Source: ABS 2004, Data Compiled from National Regional Profiles.

- It is also interesting to note that the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage is not uniform with the LGA boundaries. Table 14.3 shows the disparity between and within the different postcodes areas on the Central Coast (derived from aggregating the indices for Census collection districts (CCD's)).

Table 14.3: Central Coast Postcodes Above and Below a Score of 1,000

LGA	Postcode	Number of CCD's Score <999	Number of CCD's Score >1,000
Gosford	2083	0	2
	2250	43	58
	2251	15	36
	2256	23	8
	2257	40	18
	2260	0	37
	2775	1	0
Wyong	2258	1	7
	2259	53	16
	2261	77	9
	2262	30	0
	2263	42	4

Source: ABS Census 2001, Table produced by Central Coast Health.