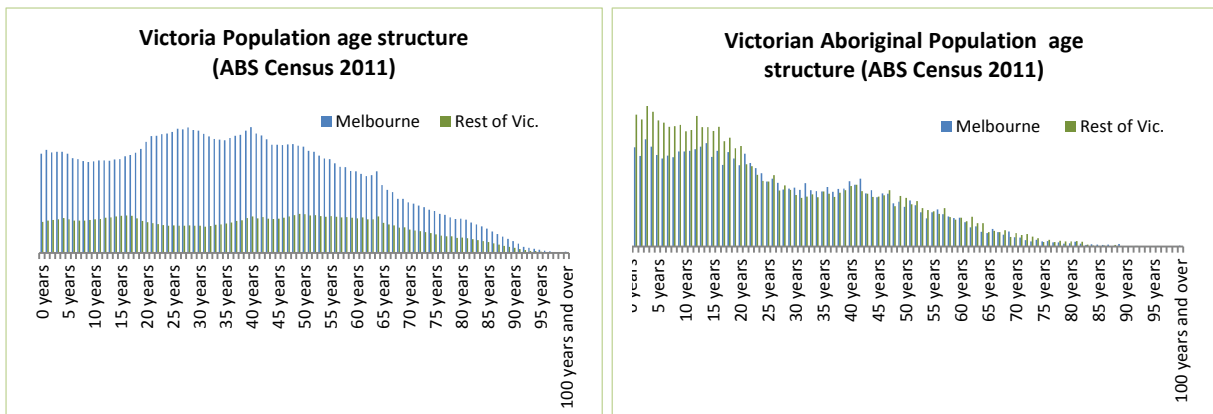


Regional economic development that can drive jobs and growth is vital to Aboriginal economic growth and development. Not only is regional Victoria home to the many Traditional Owner clans, language groups and families and their growing corporations, but is home to around 50% of the Aboriginal Victorian population.

Regional development is of particular interest and importance to Aboriginal people, and will have a relatively larger impact on the social and economic outcomes that can be achieved.

Aboriginal population and working age demographics

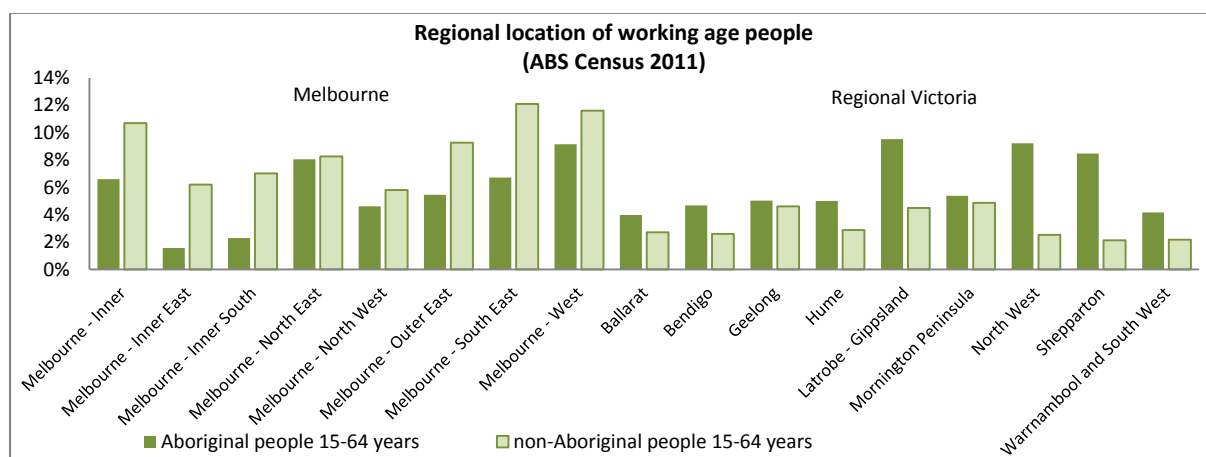
There is a significant difference in the demographic profile between Aboriginal Victorians and the total population across youth, working age, and older populations. As the graphs below indicate, the Aboriginal population is more equally divided between Melbourne and the Rest of Victoria than the total population, which is heavily represented in Melbourne. Furthermore, the age profile of the Aboriginal population is relatively youthful, and significantly so in regions outside Melbourne.



Jobs and growth are key issues for the Aboriginal community, and particularly the Traditional Owner Corporations located in Regional Victoria. The current situation indicates a significant level of focus is required given that labour force participation is relatively low, and unemployment is relatively high in regional Victoria, particularly for Aboriginal people.

Given the Aboriginal demographic profile, particularly the higher proportion of youth in regions (indicated by the steep curve and green lines), the next 10-15 years will be critical and will require significant investment in social and economic infrastructure, if there is to be a positive change.

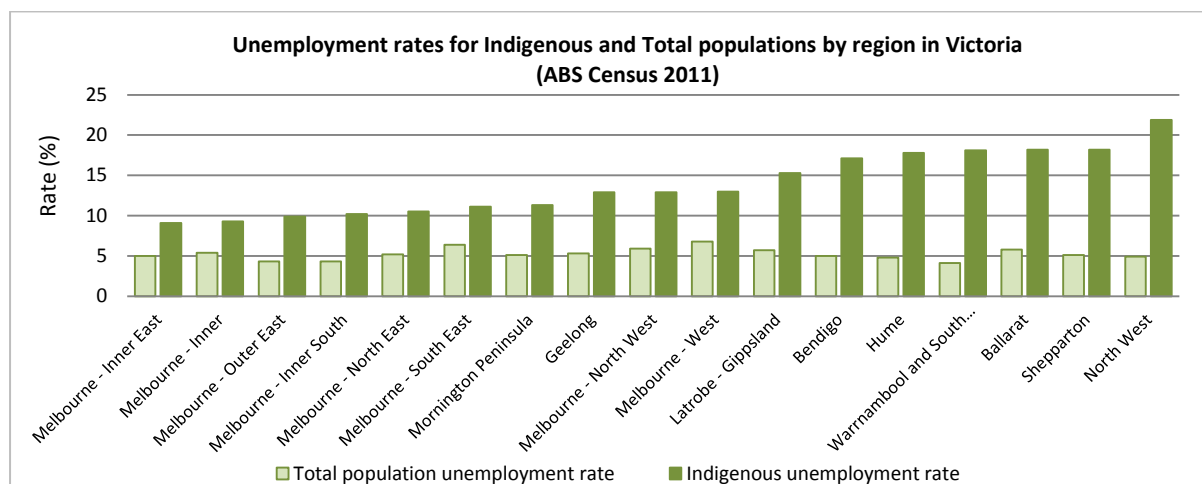
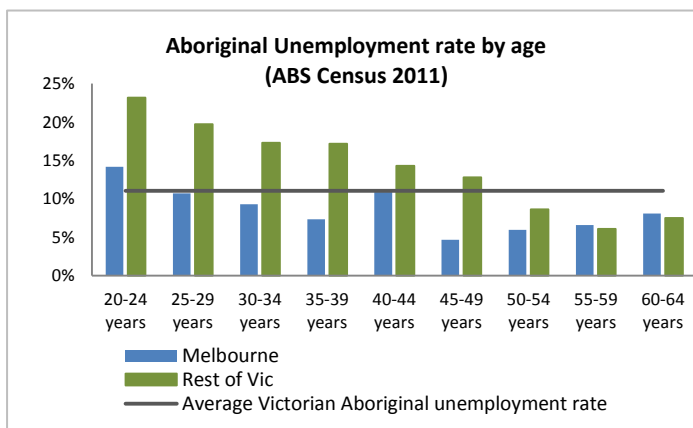
The regional proportion of the Aboriginal working age population is proportionally higher than the Non-Aboriginal working age population.



The economic potential of regions is contained not only in the physical assets and infrastructure, but in the people across the regions.

However, this potential is currently underutilised.

The unemployment rates in regional Victoria, particularly for younger age groups is higher than in Melbourne, and higher than for the total population.



Traditional Owners are increasingly active in the management of the resources of the Country

Traditional Owners are primary stakeholders in the management and governance of land in Victoria.

Around 75% of Victoria is currently covered by Traditional Owner groups either under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)*, or as Registered Aboriginal Parties under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*.

Traditional Owners are inextricably linked to this regional asset. They have a growing role to play and are increasingly becoming partners in the planning and management of the public land estate, through the growing number of Joint management and co-management arrangements over national parks. There are currently 40 Joint Management and Co-operative Management arrangements over parks and reserves across Victoria.¹

The role of Traditional Owners on Country, not only in managing the natural resources and ecological diversity, but also in strengthening the tourism and other uses of these resources is a growing area of interest, and in some areas is providing a leading edge to the growth potential.²

¹ The land base in Victoria is 227,416 square kilometres. About 39% is classified as Public land, and the remaining 61% is Private land. Around 75% of the Victorian land base is used for agricultural or forestry production. However, a significant proportion of the land is categorised as being used for conservation and natural environment (22%). Parks Victoria is responsible for managing a diverse estate covering more than 4 million hectares, or about 17 per cent, of Victoria. There are also around 3.4 million hectares of State forest.

² The Budj Bim Landscape Master Plan in the South West is an example of the integrated strategy in this regard.

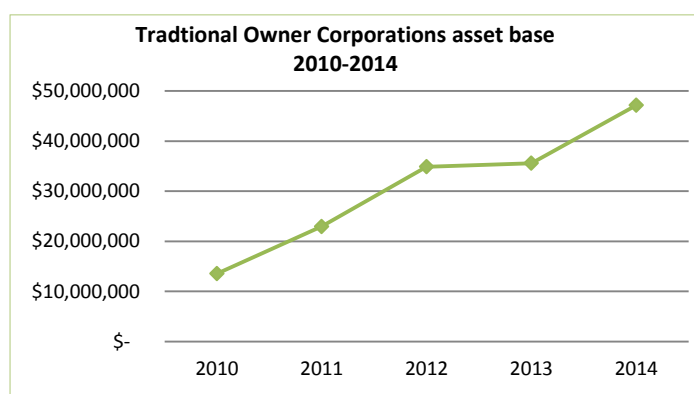
Traditional Owner Corporations participation in regional and local strategies

Traditional Owner Corporations represent a ‘for ever’ institution, with a role that transcends the business or social issues of the day. Thus, they are a strategic partner with State and local governments and agencies across the regions, with a key stake in the long term direction and strategies.

There is a growing recognition that Traditional Owners are not simply ‘another stakeholder’, but have statutory and cultural rights and obligations that mean they are integral partners with the governance and management of the social and economic infrastructure across their regions.

Traditional Owner Corporations are increasingly working with local government Councils and organisations, to develop strong relationships and to contribute to the opportunities and pathways for growth.

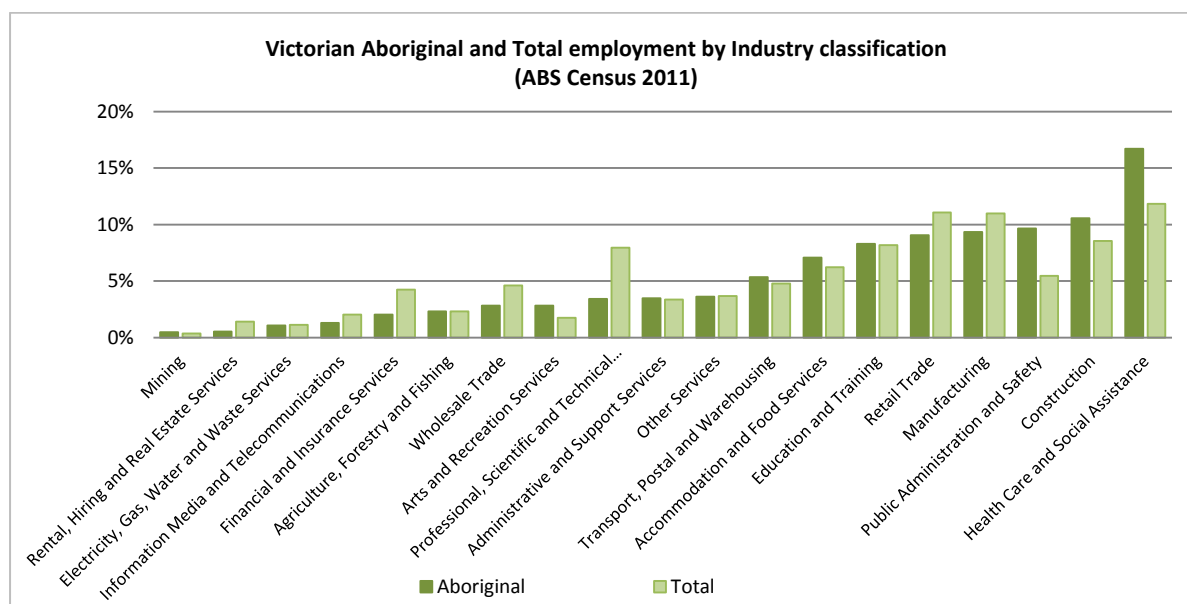
The growth and development of the corporations is significant. The asset base in financial terms has been growing quickly and is around \$50m.



The Traditional Owner Corporations, while having a focus on sustainable economic development that is intergenerational and therefore is intrinsically conservative, are looking to invest and have a strong interest in investing in the long term interests of their communities.

Business and industry

The graph below highlights Aboriginal and Total employment by industry classification.



Victorian Aboriginal self-employment is relatively strong, with over 10% of all self-employed Australian Aboriginal people located in Victoria³. This is around 8% (850 people) of the total number of the Aboriginal workforce in Victoria.

³ Census data 2011: comprises owner managers of unincorporated enterprises with nil employees of persons aged 15 years and over

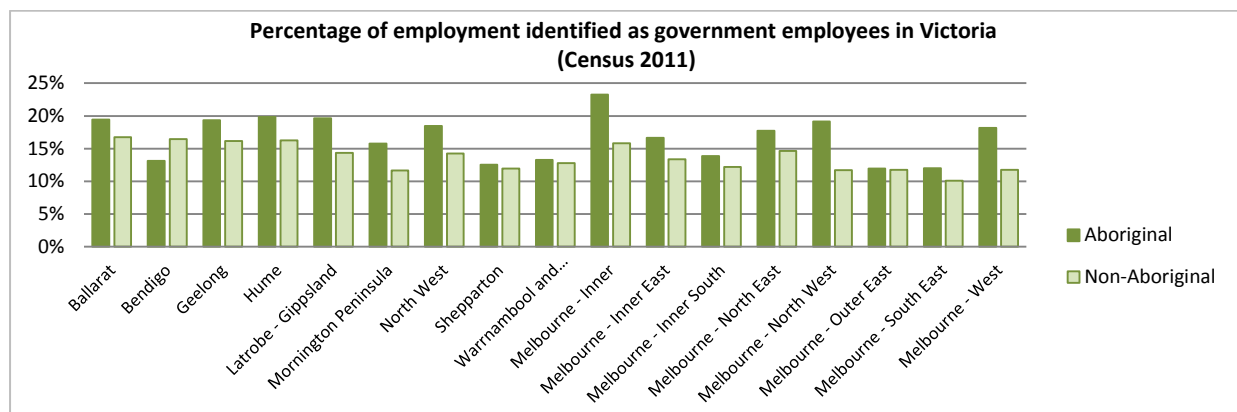
Furthermore, 39% of Aboriginal self-employed (Owner/Managers) are located in Regional Victoria, again indicating the strong potential for positive benefits from investment in regional Victoria.

Owner/managers

	Aboriginal Victorians	Non-Aboriginal Victorians
Melbourne	61%	73%
Regional Victoria	39%	27%

Government/private employment

The average number of people identified as employed by government is 17% for Aboriginal and 14% for Non-Aboriginal people. However, there is a wide variety across the regions, ranging from 12-23%, for Aboriginal employees and 10-17% for Non-Aboriginal employees.

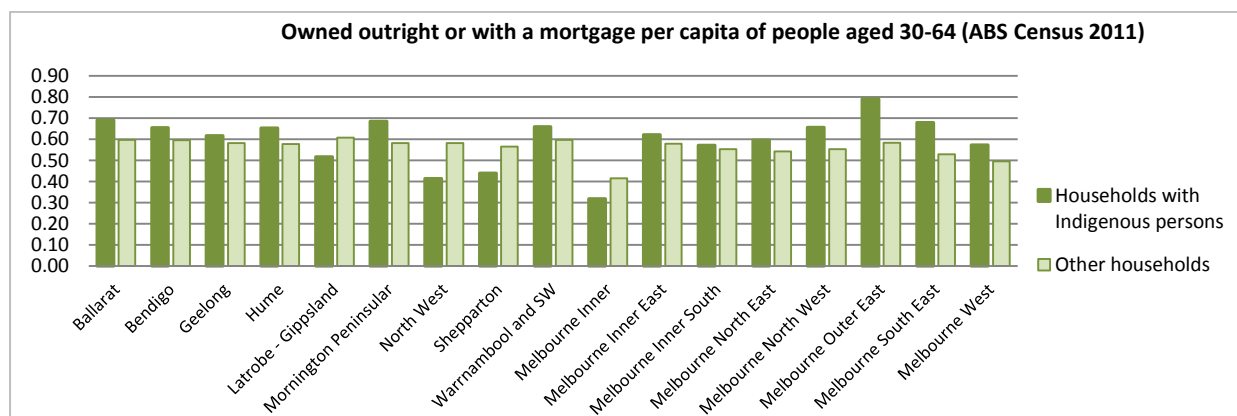


While these figures may seem like a sizeable difference, the private sector including self-employed, account for 83% and 86% of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal employees respectively, indicating a relatively minor difference overall.

Housing

Home ownership for households is shown in the following graph as a proportion of the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal populations respectively for ages 30-64, as the main period in which people buy houses. Across Victoria there is a slightly higher proportion of home ownership per capita of Aboriginal people in the 30-64 age group than Other households, although there is some variation by region.

The level of home ownership per capita tends to indicate a relatively strong commitment to savings and investment and can be seen as a positive sign for future economic growth for Aboriginal Victorians.



While the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information, no warrantee is made as to the accuracy of the information contained in this document and no liability is accepted for any statement or opinion, or for an error or omission or for any loss or damage suffered as a result of reliance on or use of any material in the document.