



After Dinner Political Economy

Reflections on Australian political economy theory and issues

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BRIEFING NOTE

Geographic Distribution of Social Housing in South Australia

Social housing (that is, public and community housing) is not evenly spread across South Australia. Its geographic distribution reflects both the early role of public housing in economic development strategies under the Playford government and so was focused on manufacturing industrial areas, and more recently, the neoliberal shift to public housing as a targeted welfare measure which sees a concentration on lower socio-economic areas. In practice, the two approaches often overlapped and deliver(ed) similar geographic patterns.

Data from the 2021 ABS Census of Population and Housing shows that the South Australian social housing estate is spread between Greater Adelaide and the rest of the state in broad proportion to the population share, with a slight bias towards Adelaide.

Greater Adelaide accounted for 77.9% of the South Australian population and 78.2% of all social housing. Social housing in Adelaide constituted 5.6% of all occupied housing in Adelaide, and 5.4% of all occupied housing in the rest of the state.

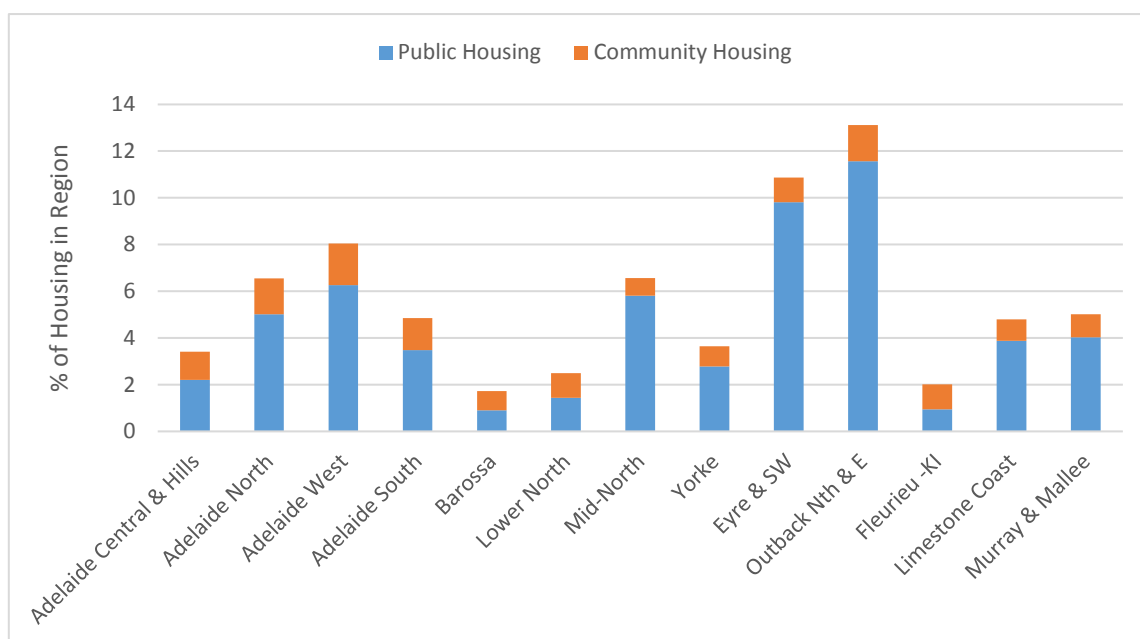
Social Housing in South Australia, 2021

	Public Housing	Community Housing	Total Social Housing
Greater Adelaide	22,401	7,835	30,236
Rest of State	6,861	1,535	8,396
All of South Australia	29,263	9,378	38,641

However, the distribution is not evenly spread within those two broad zones. As the following graph and table show, social housing is concentrated in Adelaide's north and western suburbs, and in the Eyre Peninsula and far north of the state.

Regional areas closest to Greater Adelaide have the lowest density of social housing, while the Limestone Coast and Murray-Mallee have rates of social housing just below the state average, largely due to relative fewer community housing dwellings.

Density of Social Housing, 2021, by Region



Base Data from ABS Census Community Profiles

	Total Number Occupied Dwellings	Number of Public Housing Dwellings	Public Housing % of All Housing	Number of Community Housing Dwellings	Community Housing % of All Housing	Total Social Housing	Social Housing % of All Housing
Summary							
Greater Adelaide	536,048	22,401	4.2	7,835	1.5	30,236	5.6
Rest of SA	155,264	6,861	4.4	1,535	1.0	8,396	5.4
All SA	691,313	29,263	4.2	9,378	1.4	38,641	5.6
By Region							
<i>Greater Adelaide</i>							
Adelaide Central & Hills	122,507	2,702	2.2	1,479	1.2	4,181	3.4
Adelaide North	167,280	8,385	5.0	2,569	1.5	10,954	6.5
Adelaide West	98,750	6,184	6.3	1,764	1.8	7,948	8.0
Adelaide South	147,512	5,126	3.5	2,030	1.4	7,156	4.9
<i>Barossa-Yorke</i>							
Barossa	14,362	130	0.9	117	0.8	247	1.7
Lower North	9,180	132	1.4	97	1.1	229	2.5
Mid-North	11,249	653	5.8	85	0.8	738	6.6
Yorke	11,231	313	2.8	97	0.9	410	3.7
<i>Outback</i>							
Eyre & SW	22,710	2,230	9.8	239	1.1	2,469	10.9
Outback Nth & E	8,952	1,035	11.6	139	1.6	1,174	13.1
<i>South East</i>							
Fleurieu -KI	23,282	220	0.9	250	1.1	470	2.0
Limestone Coast	25,897	1,005	3.9	236	0.9	1,241	4.8
Murray & Mallee	28,403	1,144	4.0	282	1.0	1,426	5.0

Source: ABS, 2021 Census of Population and Housing.