# Liveability of Blacktown

## **Introduction**

The liveability of an area is greatly influenced by the availability of the index categories of factors influencing survival and the socioeconomic status of the people living in the area. Some of the most common index categories include affordability or the financial capacity of the people such as cost of home and house hold income, community characteristics such as workforce participation, language diversity, and dynamic community (Yates & Milligan, 2007). On the other hand, employability factors of the area such as employment level and education qualification as well as environmental amenity including creational centers and education attendance influence liveability. Liveability is also influenced by accessibility features as such population density and means of access to facilities.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and study the factors that affect the liveability of Blacktown City. Blacktown City is a suburb city in New South Wales. According to the official 2016 statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the demographic information of Blacktown shows that the area has an estimated resident population of 340000 people (Blacktown City Council, 2016). In New South Wales, Blacktown City is considered the second largest Local Government Area due to its vast population covering the 247 square kilometers of the area’s total land area. Blacktown is also postulated to have an annual population growth of 1.9% (Blacktown City Council, 2016). On the other hand, the City boasts of more than 3000 hectares of land under industrial employment. These are some of the factors that influence the liveability of Blacktown City.

## Summary

The socio-economic index of Blacktown City in 2011indicated that the area was disadvantaged compared to the Greater Western Sydney. Educational attainment and income levels of Blacktown City remained low which indicated the area had a relatively low socio-economic index (Wilkins, 2004). This indicates a relatively disadvantage of Blacktown City due to low educational and occupational index of the City thus leading to low levels of employment in menial occupation, low attainment of post-school qualification, and high unemployment rates.

The housing sector is a major influence to the socio-economic status of a community because it facilitates the fundamental right for shelter as a basic human need (Robinson & Adams, 2008). In 2011, private housing in Blacktown City showed a decline from 31.5% in 2001 to 23.2%. On the other hand, house purchases increased from 31.9% in 2001to 43.6% in 2011 while most of the private housing property is being purchased (Brown, 2015). This indicates that the area is under new development. The housing sector is affordable and thus helps to improve the quality of life of the people of Blacktown City (Blacktown City Council, 2016). However, there is an increase in unaffordable housing both purchasing and rental which increases the disadvantage of the area and increasing the probability of homelessness.

## **Housing** (Blacktown City Council, 2016)

| **Trend** | **Blacktown** | **New South Wales** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Median Household income (weekly) | $1,386 up 24% since 2006 | $1,233, up 19% since 2006 |
| Mortgage payments (weekly) | $485 up 23% since 2006 | $460 up 31% since 2006 |
| Rental payments | $300 up 50% since 2006 | $300 up 43% since 2006 |

Poverty is a socio-economic issue which restricts the mobility of persons as well as inhibiting their ability to afford necessary amenities. According to the Blacktown City Council, the city had an estimated 40422 people living in poverty (Blacktown City Council, 2016). This indicates a disadvantage of the area in comparison to the Greater Western Sydney and New South Wales. Poverty lines of a society are greatly influenced by labor force status and the family type (Blacktown City Council, 2016). The large section of the population in Blacktown lives in poverty with income levels being below the poverty lines. The level of social exclusion is high with some are faced with welfare dependency causing intergenerational disadvantages which is aggravated by the increased number of cultural diversity caused by asylum seekers and humanitarian migrants.

## Analysis

Blacktown City seems to be a disadvantaged area in terms of the socio-economic status. The levels of education are relatively low as compared to the New South Wales and Greater Western Sydney. The low socio-economic status of the City is greatly affected by low levels of personal income which is also facilitated by low levels of occupation and education. This by extension affects the social mobility (Blacktown City Council, 2016). Professions and skilled occupations contribute to greater social mobility and higher income levels. The lack of skills due to poor education levels increase the risk of unemployment and poverty and thus result in greater economic and financial hardships.

The level of unemployment in Blacktown City has remained relatively high. These unemployment rates are relatively higher in small areas of the city which are also affected by housing and economic and social hardships. There is a relationship between the lack of affordable housing and high levels of unemployment in Blacktown City (Blacktown City Council, 2016). The low levels of academic qualifications cause socio-economic disadvantage of Blacktown City which increases unemployment thus causing homelessness to most of the people. This means that the Blacktown City is socially disadvantaged and lacks most of the necessary facilities for human development, but seems to be a liveable area due to its accommodativeness.

## References

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5. Yates, J and Milligan, V (2007), *Housing affordability: A 21st century problem.* *National research venture 3*: Housing affordability for lower income Australians (AHURI Final Report No. 105).