Queensland population update No. 16

Queensland’s population, June 2010

Queensland in the Australian context

At 30 June 2010, Australia had an estimated resident population of 22.3 million, an increase of 377,100 people from June 2009 (22.0 million). Queensland remained the third largest state in population terms with an estimated resident population of 4.5 million, accounting for one fifth (20.2 per cent) of Australia’s population (Figure 1).

Over the year to June 2010, Queensland’s population grew by 89,100 people (Figure 2). This represented 23.6 per cent of national population growth, somewhat higher than Queensland’s share of the Australian population. Queensland’s absolute population growth over the year to June 2010 was almost 30,000 less than growth in the previous 12 month period.

Figure 2: Annual population growth, states and territories

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Just the facts...

- After Western Australia (2.2 per cent), Queensland recorded the second highest population growth rate (2.0 per cent) of all states and territories (Figure 3).
- In the year to 30 June 2010, population growth rates slowed across all states and territories.
Components of population change

Population change at the state level results from natural increase (or decline), net interstate migration and net overseas migration.

Natural increase

Natural increase (births minus deaths) contributed a net gain of 39,800 people or 44.7 per cent of the state’s total growth in the 12 months to June 2010 (Figure 4). This exceeded Victoria’s natural increase (36,300), although it is below that of New South Wales (49,900). Queensland accounted for around one quarter (24.6 per cent) of natural increase nationally, considerably higher than the state’s overall population share of 20.2 per cent. Natural increase in Queensland was up 1,400 or 3.6 per cent from around 38,400 during the year to June 2009.

Net interstate migration

Queensland experienced a net gain of 9,600 people as a result of interstate migration in the 12 months to June 2010, much higher than the gains of 2,600 people in Victoria, 2,000 people in Western Australia, and 300 people in Tasmania. The remaining states and territories all lost population as a result of interstate migration.

By using data for the 12 months to each quarter, Figure 5 shows that net overseas migration has been steadily declining since the year ending March 2009. In contrast, net interstate migration has been declining since June 2007 while natural increase has risen slowly.

Just the facts...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008–09</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total fertility rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standardised death rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>5.63</td>
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</table>

Australia’s population, like that of many developed countries, is ageing as a result of sustained low fertility and increasing life expectancy. However, there has been an increase in births in recent years. Queensland’s total fertility rate has been close to or at replacement level (2.1) for the past three years.

According to preliminary estimates\(^2\), the number of births registered in Queensland in the 12 months to June 2010 was around 66,300. This is an increase of 1,100 from the previous year (65,200).

Queensland recorded 26,500 deaths in the year to 30 June 2010, a slight decrease on the previous year’s figure (26,800). Standardised death rates fell for Australia and all states and territories over the same period.

Net interstate migration

Queensland experienced a net gain of 9,600 people as a result of interstate migration in the 12 months to June 2010, much higher than the gains of 2,600 people in Victoria, 2,000 people in Western Australia, and 300 people in Tasmania. The remaining states and territories all lost population as a result of interstate migration.

Net interstate migration in Queensland has slowed significantly, with the net gain in the 12 months to June 2010 just less than half the net gain of the previous year (18,400).

Net interstate migration for the year to June 2010 comprised just 10.7 per cent of the state’s total population growth, the lowest 12 monthly figure recorded since the inception of the current interstate series\(^3\) in 1986. The highest recorded figure was 49,162 in the year to June 1993 (61.6 per cent of the state’s total population growth).

By using data for the 12 months to each quarter, Figure 5 shows that net overseas migration has been steadily declining since the year ending March 2009. In contrast, net interstate migration has been declining since June 2007 while natural increase has risen slowly.

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\(^2\)Births and deaths data for September quarter 2009 onwards are preliminary on a quarter of registration basis. Also note that in December 2009, the Queensland registry conducted a project to follow up and finalise previously incomplete birth registrations. As a result, about 1,800 births registered in December quarter 2009 occurred in 2008 and earlier.

\(^3\)Net interstate migration data prior to 1986 cannot be directly compared with data since 1986 due to a methodological break in the series.
Net overseas migration
Net overseas migration contributed an additional 39,700 people to Queensland’s population in the year to 30 June 2010, accounting for a similar share of population growth as natural increase (44.6 per cent and 44.7 per cent respectively). Compared with the previous year’s net gain of 61,900 people, net overseas migration to Queensland fell 35.9 per cent. New Zealand continues to be the main source country for settler arrivals to Queensland.

Top five source countries of settler arrivals in 2009–10 to Queensland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source country</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China(a)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of arrivals: 24,946

(a) Excluding Special Administrative Regions and Taiwan
Source: Settler Arrivals 2009–10, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Australian Government

Despite exceptionally strong growth in recent years, net overseas migration to Queensland remains well below the levels experienced by New South Wales (66,000 or 30.6 per cent of net overseas migration to Australia) and Victoria (60,400 or 28.0 per cent of net overseas migration to Australia). Both of these states have recorded substantial increases in recent years. Western Australia also recorded a notable net overseas migration gain of 28,200 people in the year to 30 June 2010.

Figure 6: Quarterly population change, Queensland

Changing age structure
Over the last two decades, the proportion of Queensland’s population in the younger age groups has decreased, while the proportion in older age groups has increased (Figure 7).

At 30 June 1990, more than three quarters of Queenslanders (76.4 per cent) were younger than 50 years of age. By 2010, people aged less than 50 years comprised 69.6 per cent of the state’s total population. The proportion of the population aged 50 years and older increased correspondingly, from 23.6 per cent in 1990 to 30.4 per cent in 2010. Adults of mature working age (50–64 years) now comprise 17.8 per cent of Queensland’s total population and 29.4 per cent of the total working age population.

Figure 7: Population structure, broad age groups, Queensland

Dependency ratio
One way to measure the change in the age structure of a population is to analyse its dependency ratios over time, that is, the ratio of the number of people aged less than 20 years or aged 65 or more years, to the number of people aged 20 to 64 years. This ratio is seen as a proxy for the portion of a population that is composed of dependents (people who are generally too young or too old to work).

Queensland had the second highest dependency ratio of all states and territories in Australia in June 2010. The ratio of 65.3 per cent was higher than for Australia as a whole (64.3 per cent). The ratio of young dependents (aged less than 20 years) to working-age individuals was higher than for Australia (44.5 per cent compared with 42.1 per cent) although it was lower for dependents aged 65 years and over (20.8 per cent compared with 22.1 per cent).
Figure 8: Queensland dependency ratios

The total dependency ratio in Queensland has declined over the past 39 years from 90.3 per cent in the year to June 1971 to 65.3 per cent in the year to June 2010 (Figure 8). Low birth rates have been the greatest contributor to this decline, with the youth dependency ratio falling steadily from 73.6 per cent to 44.5 per cent over the same period. The elderly dependency ratio increased slightly from 16.7 per cent to 20.8 per cent.

Age pyramid
From June 1990 to June 2010, the proportion of the population in each five year age group younger than 45 years has become smaller (Figure 9). Conversely, the proportion of the population in each age group aged 45 years and older was larger in June 2010 than in June 1990, with the exception of females aged 70–79 years, where the proportions were similar.

In June 1990, young people aged 15–19 years were the largest five-year age group, comprising 8.8 per cent of males and 8.5 per cent of females. Twenty years later, females who were teenagers in June 1990 and are now aged 35–39 years continue to account for the largest proportion of the female population (7.3 per cent). However, the 25–29 years cohort is the largest group for males in June 2010 (7.5 per cent), followed by the 35–39 years cohort. This may be the result of migrants settling in Queensland during the past two decades.