

Population growth highlights and trends, rebased estimates for Queensland and its regions, 2022 edition

Sources: ABS *National, state and territory population* (28 June 2022); ABS *Regional population* (26 July 2022); ABS *Regional population by age and sex* (30 August 2022)

Highlights from 2020–21

- Queensland had the largest population increase (42,650 persons) of any Australian state or territory ahead of Western Australia (31,460) and South Australia (9,650).
- Queensland's annual population growth rate (0.8%) was higher than the national average of 0.1%, which was also the slowest rate of growth for the Australian population since 1916–17. Prior to 2020–21, Queensland's slowest growth rate was in 1941–42 (during the World War II period), when growth was 0.1%.
- Net interstate migration (NIM) was the main contributor to population growth for Queensland, closely followed by natural increase, while net overseas migration (NOM) recorded a loss in 2020–21 for Queensland.

Key data

Estimated resident population

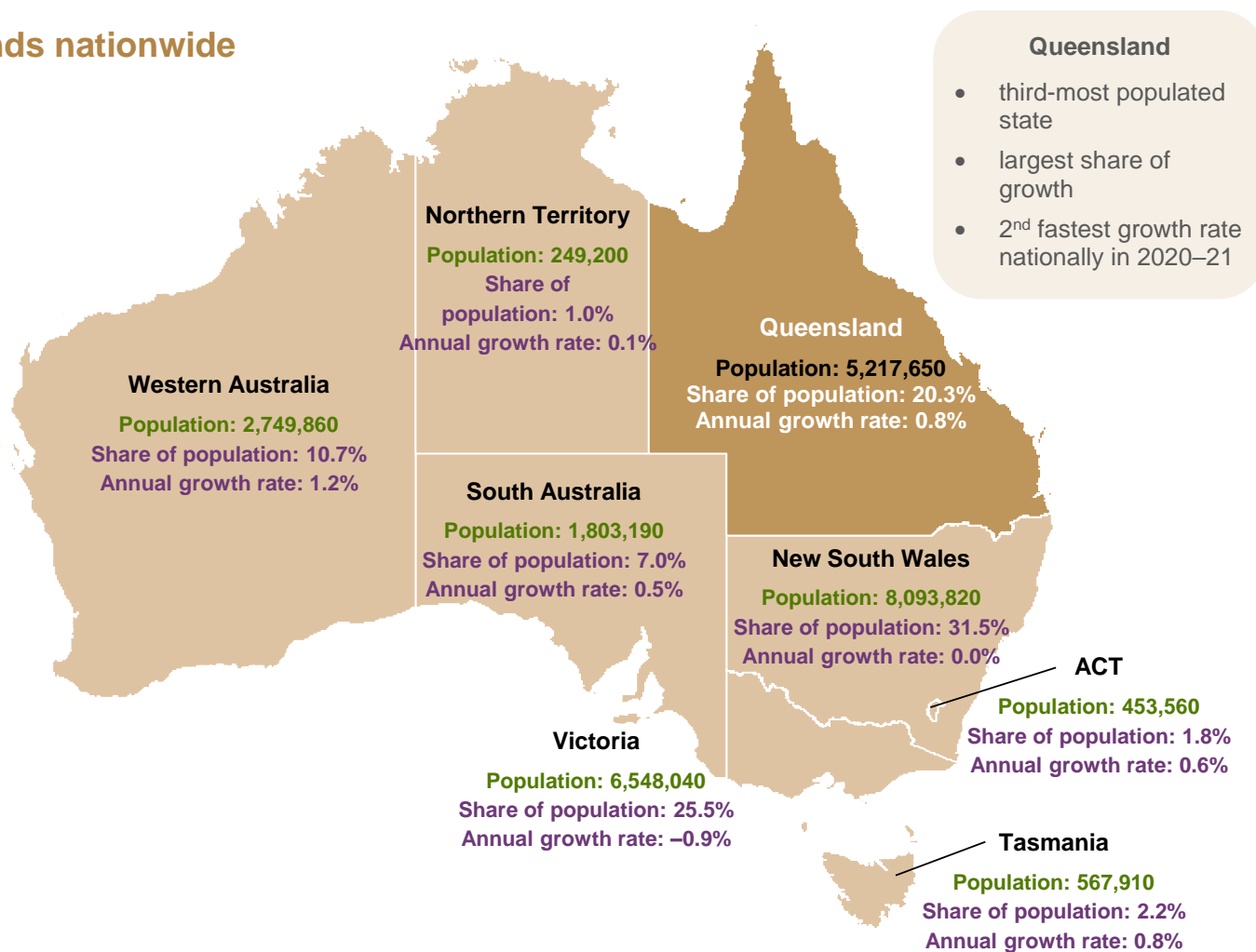
June 2020	June 2021		Change	
5,175,003	5,217,653	↑	42,650	0.8%

Components of change¹:

		Share of growth
Births	61,381	
Deaths	-32,029	
Natural increase	29,352	63.8%
Overseas arrivals	22,250	
Overseas departures	-36,347	
Net overseas migration	-14,097	-31.6%
Interstate arrivals	109,823	
Interstate departures	-78,644	
Net interstate migration	31,179	67.8%

¹ Differences between total population growth and the sum of the components of population change are due to intercensal difference. See Appendix A for more information.

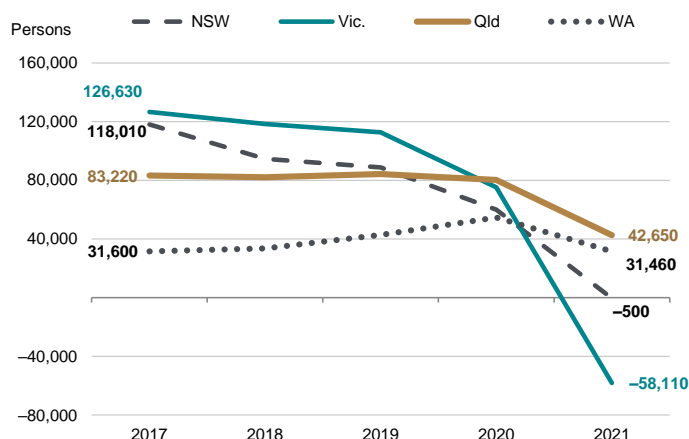
Trends nationwide



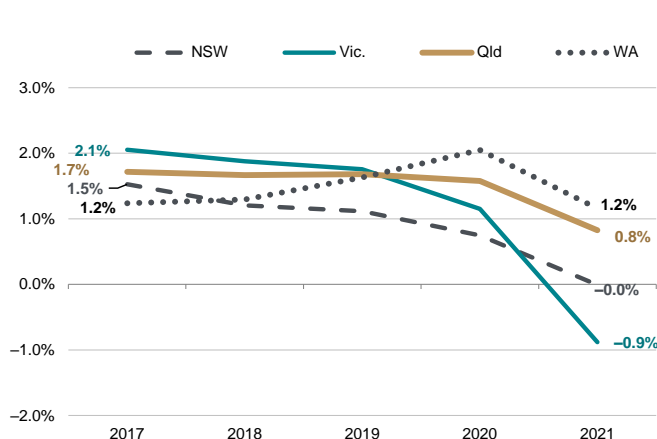
Five years to June 2021

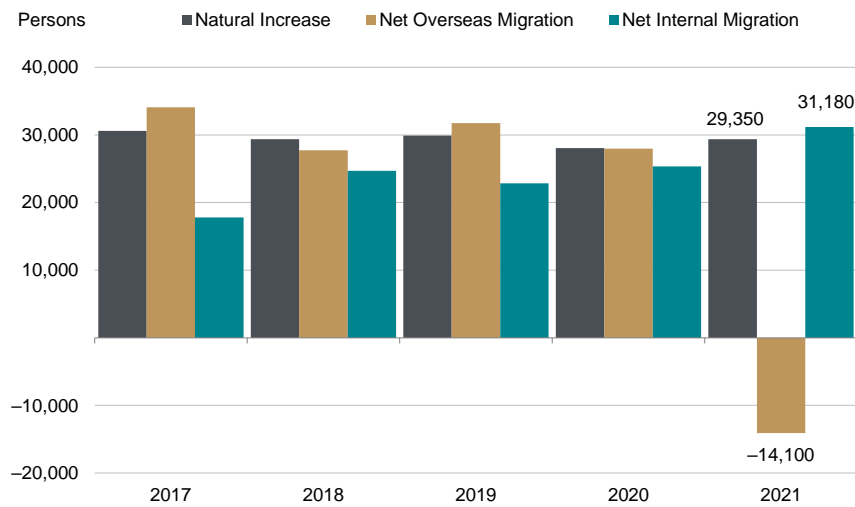
- New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland accounted for 74.0% of national growth in the five years to 2021.
- New South Wales and Victoria started the 5-year period with the strongest growth in absolute terms, however the population impact of COVID-19 on those two states was notable, particularly in 2020–21, with both states recording population decreases.
- Queensland recorded the largest absolute population growth in 2020–21, and the second-highest annual percentage growth rate (0.8%) for the states and territories, behind Western Australia.

Annual absolute growth, year to 30 June



Annual percentage growth, year to 30 June



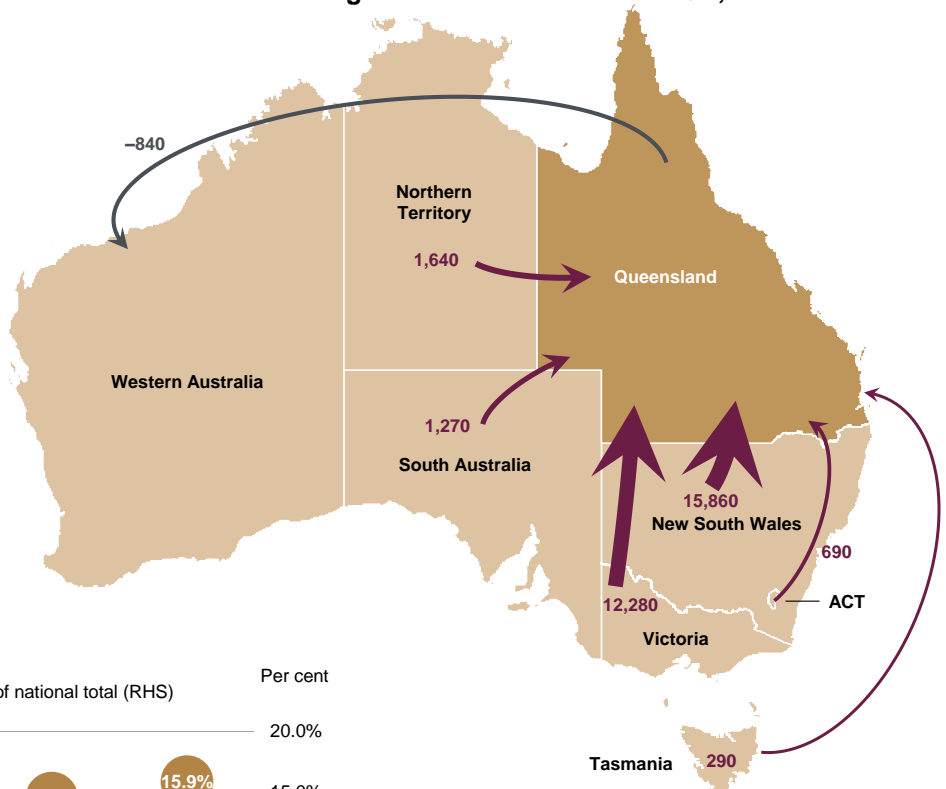


Queensland's gains from net overseas and interstate migration have been more variable than natural increase over the five years to 2020–21.

- Net interstate migration was generally increasing over the five year period, continuing the increasing trend since the low recorded in 2014 (5,760).
- There was a loss due to net overseas migration in 2020–21, following four years of solid gains (>25,000 annually), which can be attributed to the impact of the COVID travel restrictions to/from Australia.

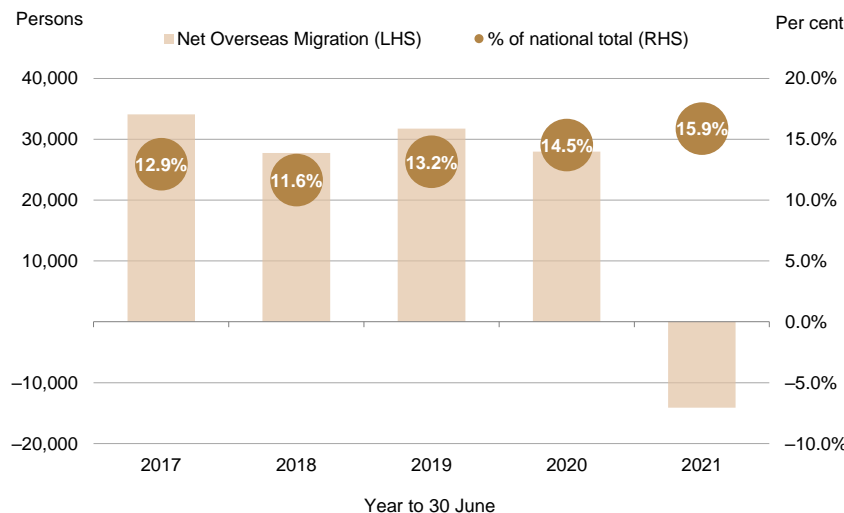
Components of population change, Queensland

Net interstate migration flows to and from Qld, 2020–21



- Queensland was the only jurisdiction to experience annual gains from interstate migration each year over the five years to 2020–21.
- There was a return to positive net migration from Victoria to Queensland in 2020–21, mainly due to more arrivals from Victoria.
- There was a small net loss to Western Australia.

Net overseas migration, Queensland, year to 30 June



- Queensland's gain from overseas migration was consistently over 24,000 in the years from 2016–17 to 2019–20, before the loss in 2020–21.
- Queensland's share of national net overseas migration ranged between 11% and 15% in the years of gain and accounted for 15.9% of the national net overseas migration loss in 2020–21.

Population trends by age and sex, Queensland

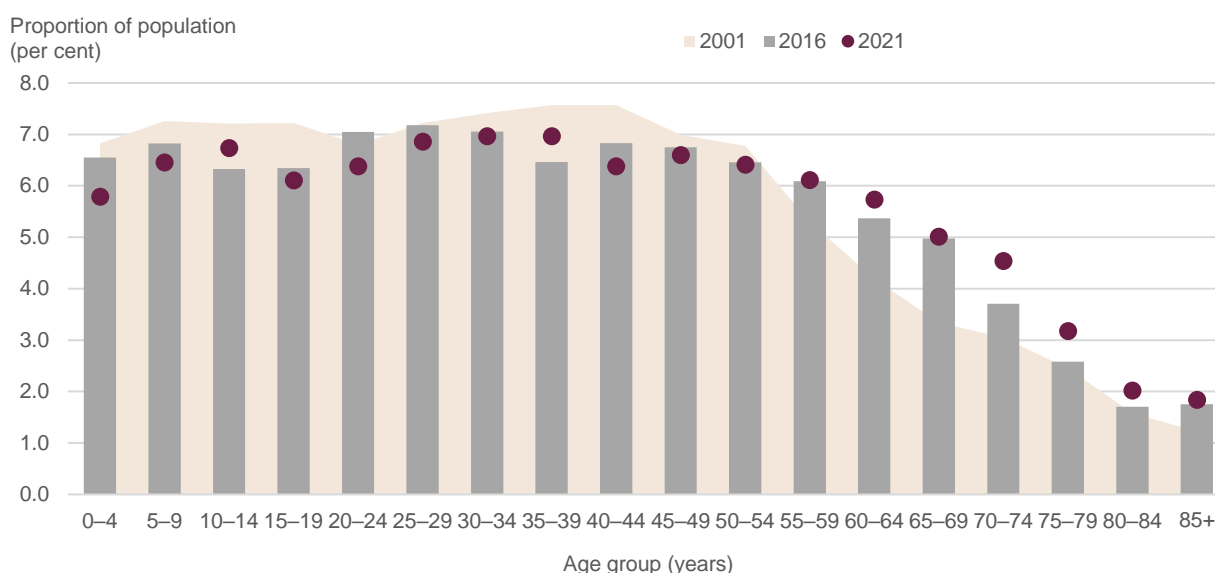
- Queensland's population is ageing, as a result of:
 - sustained low levels of fertility
 - increased life expectancies
 - movement of the large baby boomer cohort (those born in 1946 to 1965) into the older age groups.
- At 30 June 2021, there were proportionally fewer persons in each five-year age group up to 50–54 years of age, and proportionally more in older age groups compared with 20 years ago. The largest proportional shifts have occurred in the five-year age groups from 60–64 to 70–74.
- While the overall share of the population aged 15–64 years (traditionally considered the working-age population) decreased slightly between 2001 and 2021 (from 67.1% to 64.5%), the proportion of the population aged 65 years and older increased from 11.6% to 16.6% over this period.
- Children aged 0–4 years accounted for only 5.8% of the Queensland population in 2021, a notable decrease since 2016, and only slightly larger proportionally than the 60–64 year old age group (5.7%).

Living longer...

65 year olds in Queensland in 2020 could expect to live to:

- 85 years of age if male
- 88 years of age if female.

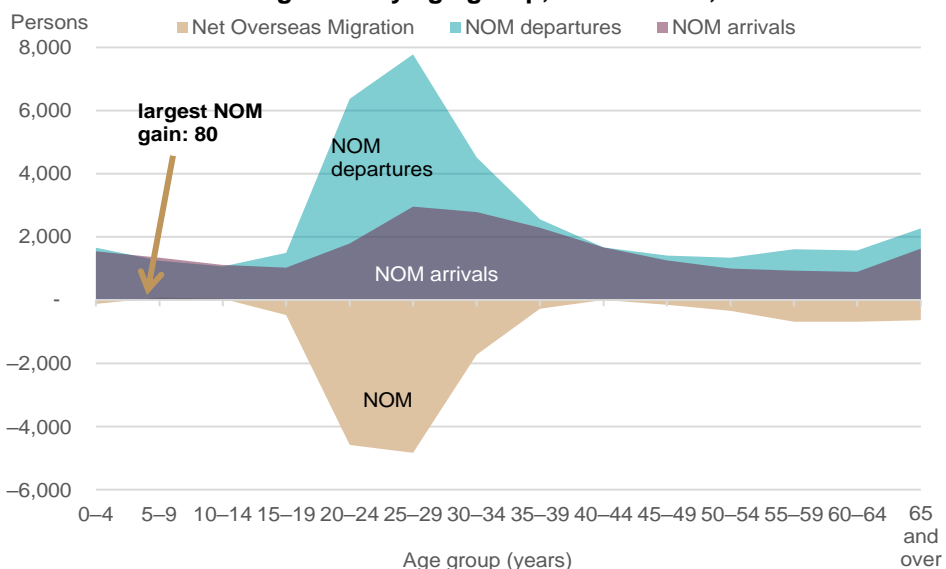
Proportion of population by age group, Queensland, as at 30 June



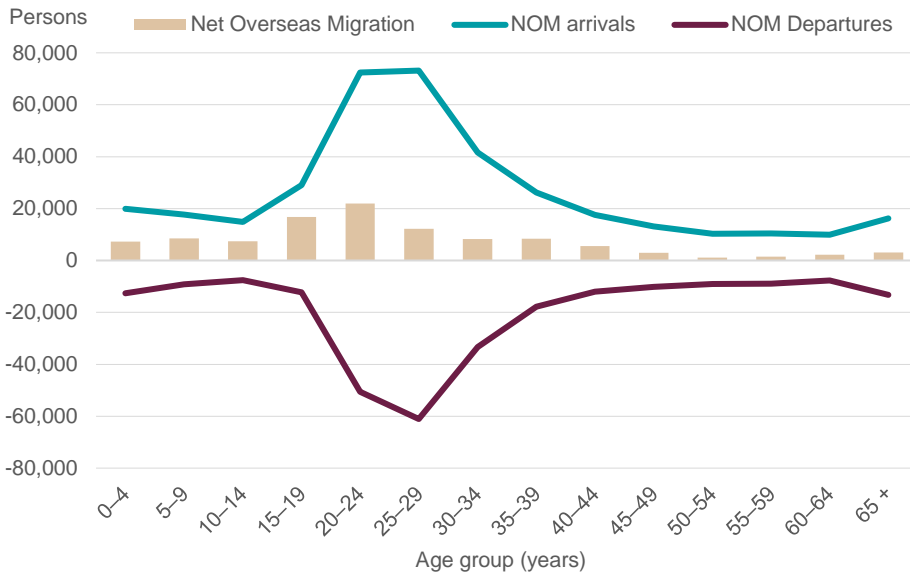
There was a net loss across nearly all age groups due to overseas migration in 2020–21, influenced by the impact of the international border closure implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The largest loss was for young adults aged 25–29 years, followed by 20–24 year olds.
- Traditionally these young adult age groups record some of the largest NOM gains.

Overseas migration by age group, Queensland, 2020–21



Overseas migration by age group, Queensland, five years to 30 June 2021

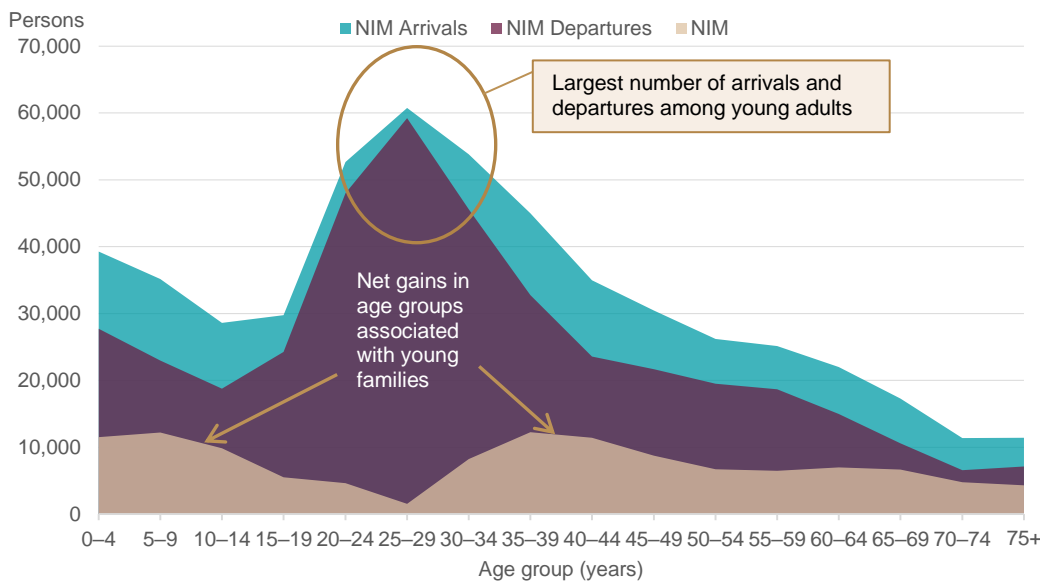


Historically NOM has been a strong component of population growth in Queensland.

Looking at the five-year period to 30 June 2021, there was a net NOM gain in every age group, with the largest gain for the 20–24 years age group (21,960 persons), accounting for 1 in 5 of the total gain through NOM over the five years.

Females accounted for more than half (57.9%) of the total five-year NOM gain to Queensland, with 62,090 females gained, compared with 45,090 males.

Interstate migration by age group, Queensland, five years to 30 June 2021



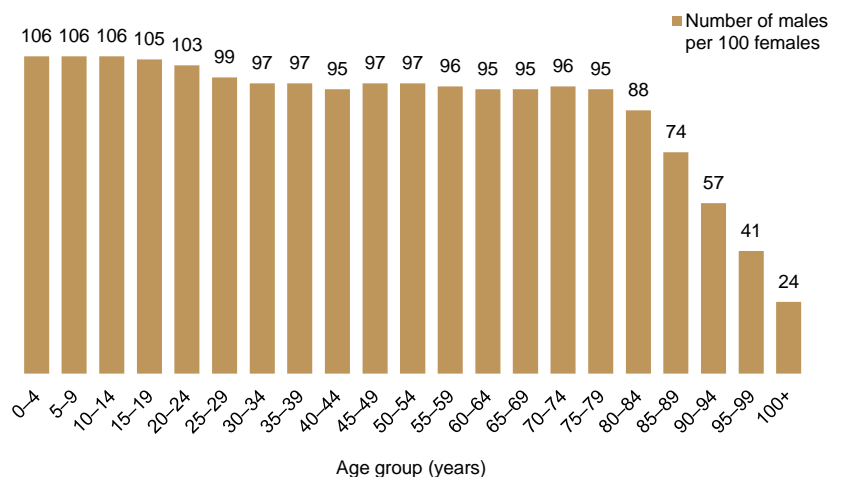
There were more than 926,100 interstate moves to and from Queensland in the five years to 30 June 2021:

- 34.6% of all moves were among young adults aged 20–34 years with the smallest net gain for 25–29 year olds.
- More than half of net interstate gains were in age groups associated with young families.

Men per 100 women, broad age groups, Queensland, 30 June 2021

Women outnumber men in older age groups:

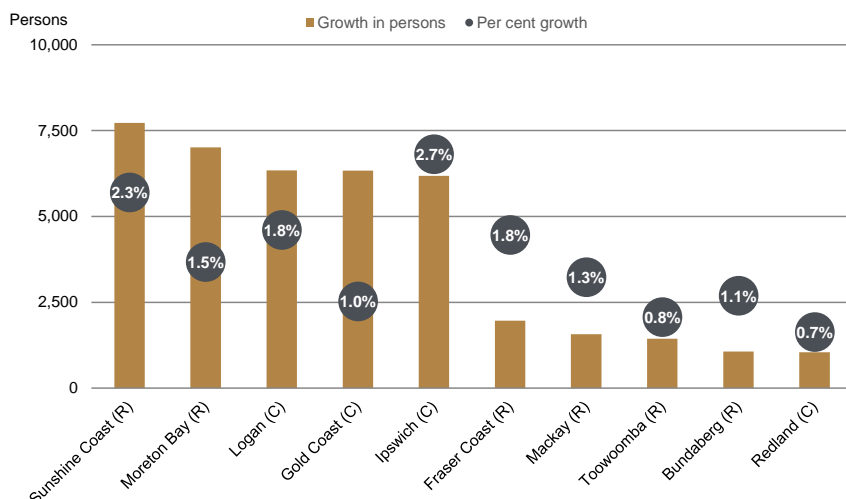
- From age 90 to 94 years onwards, there are fewer than 60 men for every 100 women.
- For centenarians, there are only 24 men for every 100 women.



Key population trends, Queensland regions

- Population growth continues to be largely concentrated in South East Queensland, with notable levels of growth also occurring in the regional local government areas (LGAs) of Fraser Coast (1,970 persons), Mackay (1,570) and Toowoomba (1,440) in the year to 30 June 2021². The fastest growing LGAs of Ipswich and Sunshine Coast were also the only LGAs (>10,000 population) to experience population growth of more than 2% in the year.

Top 10 largest growth LGAs³, year to 30 June 2021



Sunshine Coast grew by the largest number of people in 2020–21 and had the second fastest annual growth rate behind Ipswich (2.7%).

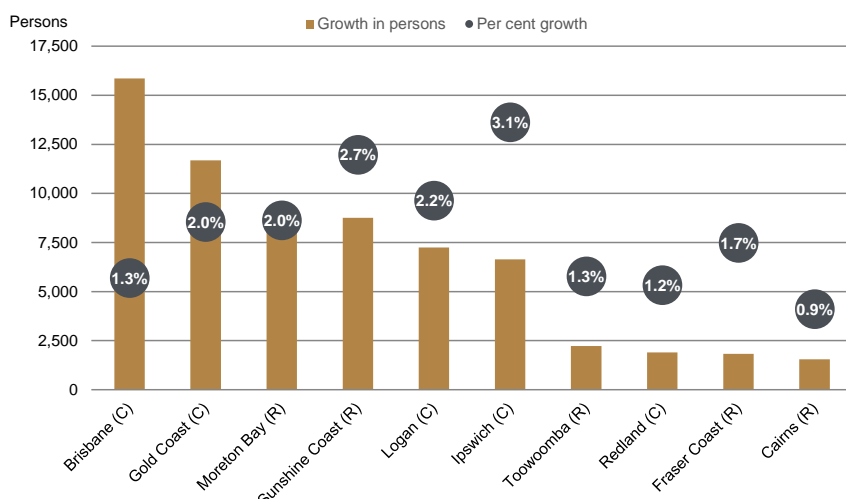
With the exception of Brisbane, the South East Queensland LGAs all grew.

Among the 39 large LGAs with more than 10,000 residents in 2020–21, nine experienced population losses, including Brisbane (–2,250 persons).

The largest growth over the five years to 2021 was experienced in Queensland's most populous LGA – Brisbane, increasing by 79,270 persons over the period, followed by the Gold Coast with 58,460 persons. Outside of South East Queensland, Toowoomba recorded the largest growth over the five-year period (11,150 persons).

Ipswich (3.1% average annual growth) was the fastest-growing LGA over the five years to 30 June 2021, followed by Sunshine Coast (2.7%) and Logan (2.2%). Gold Coast and Moreton Bay also grew by 2.0% each year on average over the five-year period.

Top 10 largest growth LGAs³, average annual growth, five years to 30 June 2021



Among the 39 large LGAs with more than 10,000 residents in 2020–21:

- growth** occurred in 33 LGAs over the five-year period, from 20 persons in Hinchinbrook, up to 79,270 in Brisbane
- losses** occurred in six LGAs, all regional, over the five years, ranging from a loss of 160 persons in Charters Towers, to the largest loss of 500 persons for North Burnett.

(C) = City (R) = Regional Council (S) = Shire

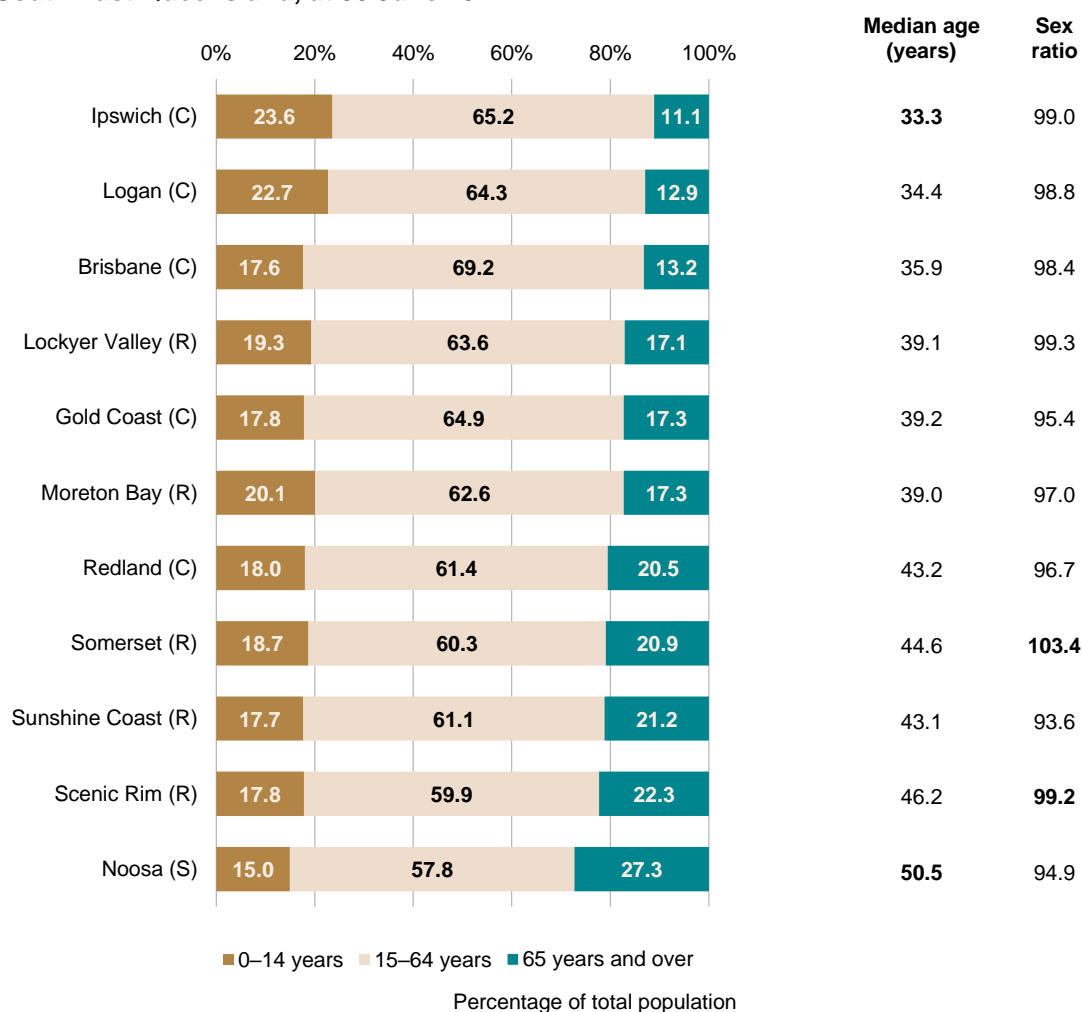
² Regional estimated resident population figures are preliminary rebased and subject to further revision, with the final 2021 Census-based estimates for 2017 to 2021 scheduled for release in 2023.

³ Only local government areas with a population of greater than 10,000 persons at 30 June 2021 were considered for these analyses.

Demographic characteristics of South East Queensland⁴

- Noosa (C) LGA had the largest proportion of people aged 65 years and older (27.3%), while Ipswich (C) had the largest proportion of children (0–14 years) (23.6%).
- The LGAs of Brisbane (C), Ipswich (C) and Gold Coast (C) had the largest proportions of the working-age population (15–64 years), with 69.2%, 65.2% and 64.9% respectively.
- Sex ratios (the number of men per 100 women) were highest in the predominantly rural LGAs of Somerset (R) and Lockyer Valley (R), and lowest in Sunshine Coast (R) and Noosa (S).

Age and sex indicators ranked by smallest to largest proportion of people 65 years and older, LGAs in South East Queensland, at 30 June 2021



Median age

Highest

- Noosa (S) at 50.5 years

Lowest

- Ipswich (C) at 33.3 years

Men per 100 women

Highest

- Somerset (R) with 103 men per 100 women

Lowest

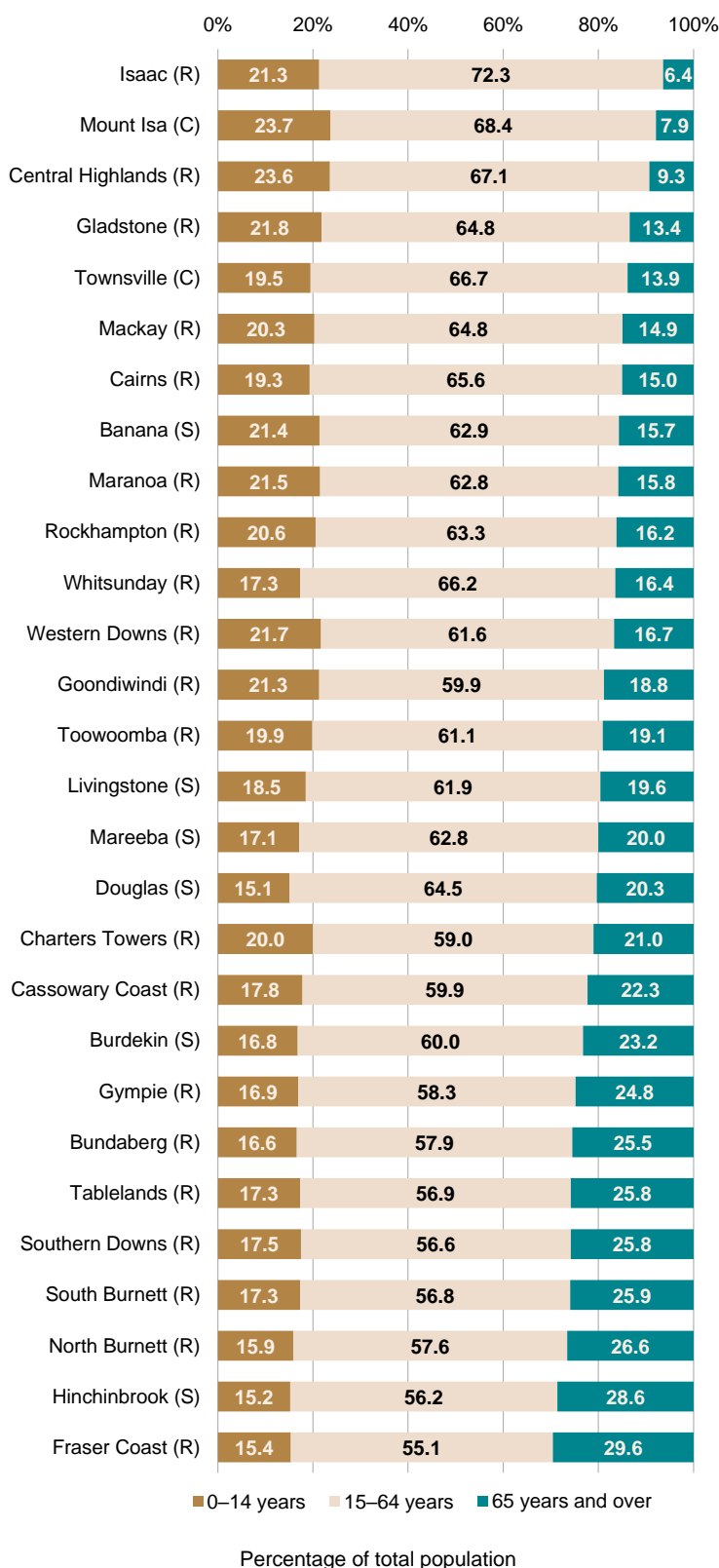
- Sunshine Coast (R) with 94 men per 100 women

⁴ For the purposes of this publication, Toowoomba (R) has not been included in South East Queensland.

Demographic characteristics of regional Queensland

Regional Queensland LGAs with a population of 10,000 or more persons

Selected regional Queensland LGAs by broad age groups, at 30 June 2021



Isaac (R), with 22,430 persons, had a relatively young population comparatively, with:

- more than 1 in 5 in the LGA's population children aged 0–14 years (21.3%)
- the highest proportion of working-age persons (72.3%)
- the smallest proportion of the population aged 65 years and older (6.4%).

Fraser Coast (R), with 112,080 persons, had a relatively older population, with:

- the smallest proportion of its population in the working age group (55.1%)
- the largest proportion of the population aged 65 years and older (29.6%).

Hinchinbrook (S), with 10,990 persons, also had one of the oldest populations, with:

- the highest median age at 51.4 years
- the second-smallest proportion of children and the second-largest proportion of people aged 65 years and older.

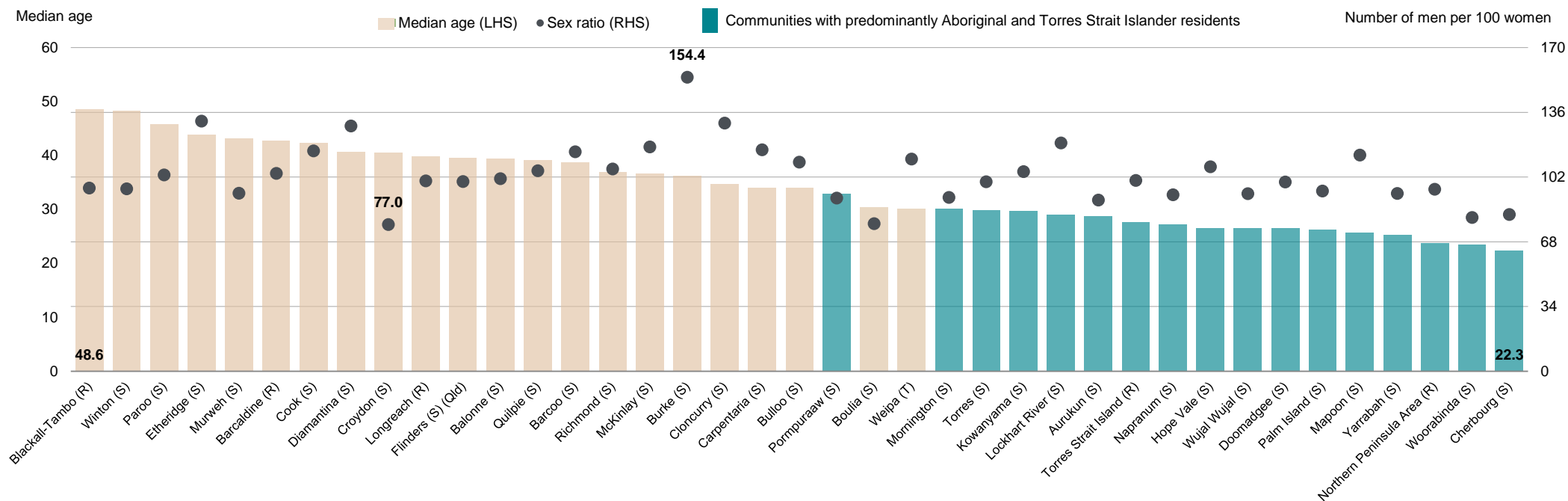
LGAs ordered by proportion aged 65 years and over

Demographic characteristics of regional Queensland

For regional Queensland LGAs with a population of fewer than 10,000 persons

- At 30 June 2021, 39 LGAs in Queensland had estimated resident populations fewer than 10,000 persons, ranging from 270 persons in Croydon (S) to 4,630 persons in Cook (S).
- Of this group, Blackall-Tambo (R) had the highest median age (48.6 years) while Cherbourg (S) had the lowest (22.3 years). In general, communities with predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents had the lowest median ages (teal bars in chart below).
- Burke (S) had 154 men per 100 women, the highest sex ratio of all LGAs in Queensland, while Croydon (S) had the lowest sex ratio of all LGAs across the state with 77 men per 100 women.

Regional Queensland LGAs with a population of fewer than 10,000 persons, median age and sex ratio, ordered by median age, at 30 June 2021





Technical notes

Population data used in this publication were the most recent available at the time of preparation and have been sourced from the ABS publications *National, state and territory population, December 2021*; *Regional Population, 2021*; *Regional population by age and sex, 2021*; with supporting data from *Overseas Migration, 2020–21*.

ERP data in this publication have been rebased according to the 2021 Census of Population and Housing and may not match estimates published elsewhere. The ABS does not release rebased components data.

The status of ERP data changes over time from preliminary to revised to final as new component data become available. Users should exercise caution when analysing and interpreting the most recent annual and quarterly estimates for all components of ERP, particularly when making time series comparisons. Complete accuracy of ERP figures is not claimed by the ABS and should not be assumed.

All ERP and component data up to and including June 2016 are final. ERPs for June 2017 to June 2021 are preliminary rebased, to be revised in future issues of *National, state and territory population*. The ABS has rebased ERPs up to June quarter 2021 — see *Quality Assurance of Rebased Population Estimates, 2016* for further information on calculation of the estimated resident population and the rebasing cycle.

Natural increase data for September quarter 2016 to June quarter 2020 are revised. Data for September quarter 2020 to June quarter 2021 are preliminary (based on date of registration).

Net overseas migration data for September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2020 are revised. Data for December quarter 2020 to June quarter 2021 are preliminary (based on modelled traveller behaviour). Estimates for the September quarter 2006 onwards use an improved methodology based on the '12/16 month rule' and are not directly comparable with estimates from earlier periods.

Net interstate migration data for September quarter 2016 to June quarter 2021 are preliminary (modelled expansion factors based on 2016 Census).

For years prior to 2020–21, the sum of the components of population change does not equal the change in ERP over the year due to intercensal difference. For further details on ERP and component data, refer to the explanatory notes, ABS *National, state and territory population, December 2021*.

A range of supporting data tables is available on the QGSO website (<http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au>).

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary

Average annual rate of population change

Also known as the average annual population growth rate. It is calculated as a percentage using the formula below, where P_0 is the population at the start of the period, P_n is the population at the end of the period and n is the length of the period between P_n and P_0 in years.

$$\left[\left(\frac{P_n}{P_0} \right)^{\frac{1}{n}} - 1 \right] \times 100$$

For example, to calculate the average annual rate of population change from 2011 to 2021, n is 10, P_0 is the population in 2011 and P_n is the population in 2021.

Estimated resident population (ERP)

The official measure of the population of Australia is based on the concept of residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality, citizenship or legal status, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents who are overseas for less than 12 out of the preceding 16 months. It excludes overseas visitors who are in Australia for less than 12 out of the preceding 16 months.

Intercensal difference

The difference between two estimates at 30 June of a census year population, the first based on the latest census and the second arrived at by updating the 30 June estimate of the previous census year with intercensal components of population change which take into account information available from the latest census. Intercensal difference is determined once rebasing is complete, and is the difference between final ERP and the final updated components of ERP.

Natural increase

The excess of births over deaths in a given area. Although usually positive, natural increase can be negative if the population has an older age structure such that more deaths than births are experienced over a period of time.

Net interstate migration (NIM)

The net result of population movement into the region from interstate minus population movement out of the region to other states. During intercensal years, the ABS prepares state and territory-level quarterly estimates of net interstate migration using indicators of population change.

Net migration

Net migration refers to the net result of population movement into and out of a given area. It is the resulting change in population from the combination of overseas migration, interstate migration and internal (intrastate) migration.

Net overseas migration (NOM)

The difference between the number of people settling in a given area from overseas and the number of people departing that area to live overseas. Estimates of overseas migration data are derived primarily from Department of Immigration and Border Protection international passenger and visa records, and revised for each period to include only those people, regardless of nationality, citizenship or legal status, who have been in (or out of) Australia for 12 of the previous 16 months. By this definition, some temporary residents in Australia are included in the net overseas migration figure.