

# Population growth highlights and trends, Queensland, 2025 edition


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *National, state and territory population*, released 12 December 2024

Some statistics in this release have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The various closures of the international and state borders from late March 2020 to February 2022 had an impact on both net overseas migration and net interstate migration.

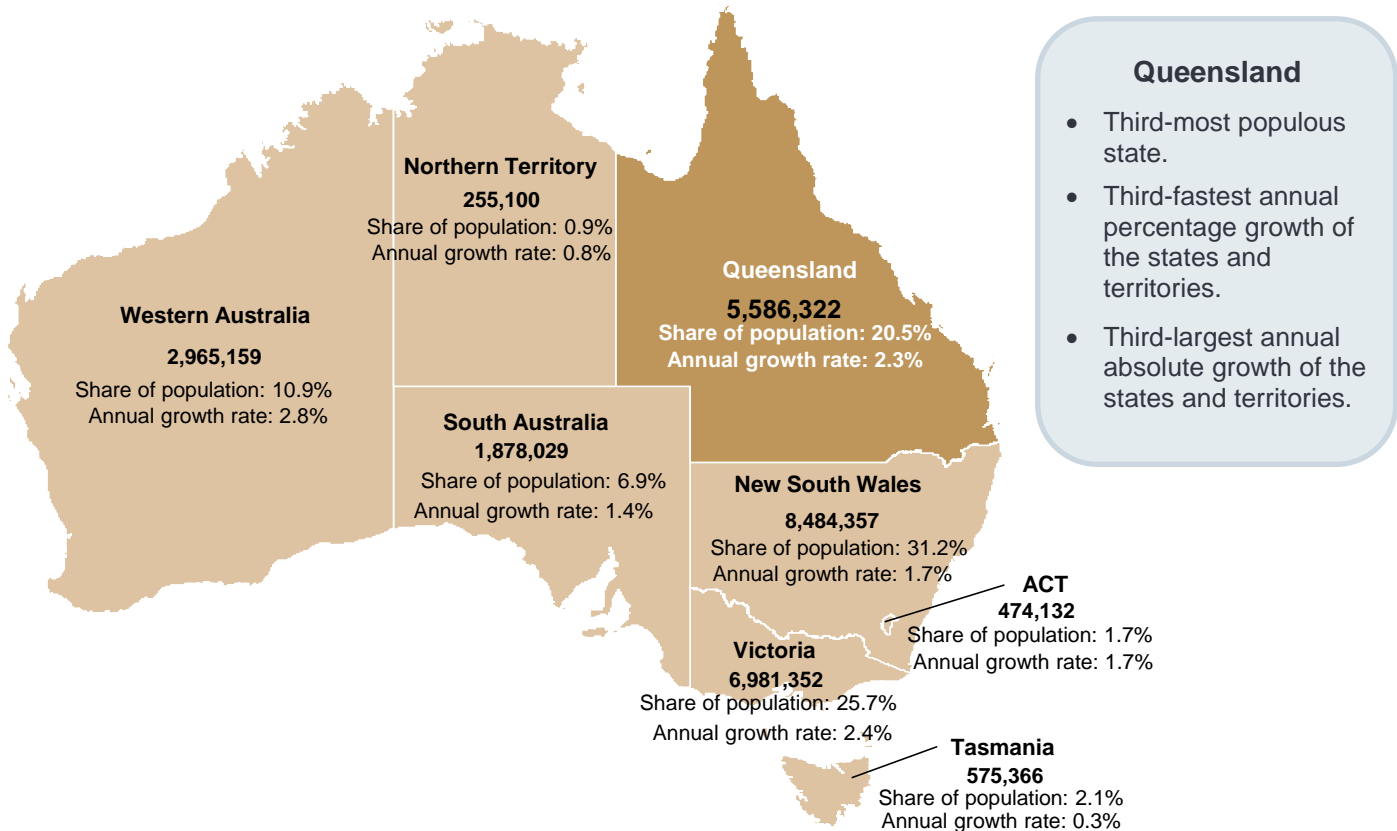
## Highlights from 2023–24

- Queensland had the third-largest population increase (125,845 persons) of the states and territories, behind Victoria (165,111) and New South Wales (143,158).
- Queensland’s annual population growth rate (2.3%) was the third-fastest of the states and territories, lower than both Western Australia (2.8%) and Victoria (2.4%), however, higher than the 2023–24 national average (2.1%).
- Continued high net overseas migration (NOM) of 74,932 persons was the largest driver of population growth for Queensland, followed by net interstate migration (NIM) of 29,910 persons.
- Natural increase (births minus deaths) remained subdued, adding 21,003 persons to the state population. The number of births in Queensland in 2023–24 was 8.2% lower than 10 years earlier (58,258 registered births in 2023–24, compared with 63,490 in 2013–14), and 7.2% lower than the recent peak in 2021–22 (62,762).
- Queensland was home to 20.5% of Australia’s population at 30 June 2024, an increase in share from 20 years earlier (19.2%). Queensland’s share of the national population has increased by 2.1 percentage points since the turn of the century (18.4% at 30 June 2000).

### Estimated resident population (persons)

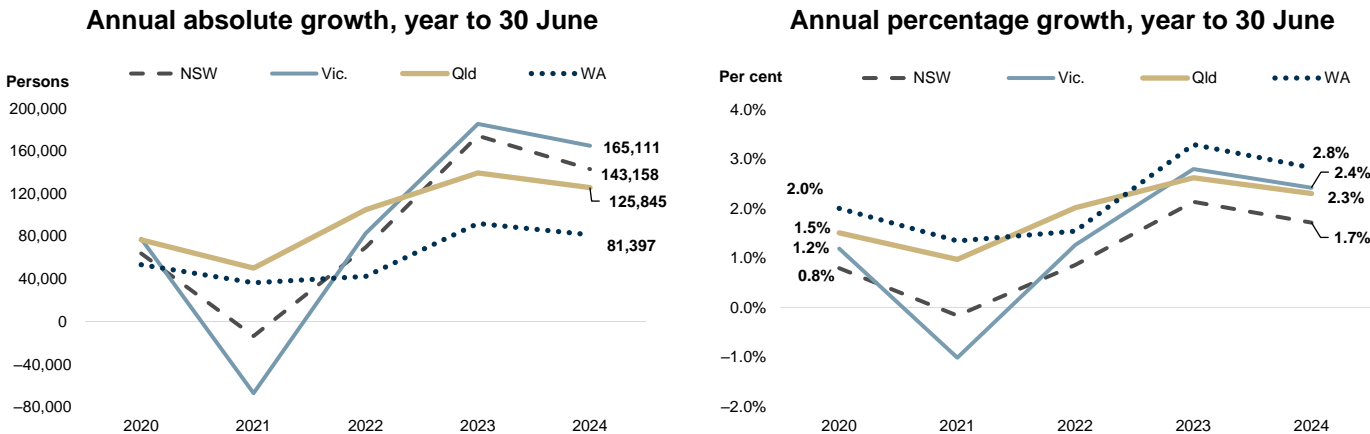
	June 2023	June 2024	Change	% Change
	5,460,477	5,586,322	 125,845	2.3%
Components of change			Share of change	
Births			58,260	
Deaths			37,260	
Natural increase			21,000	16.7%
Overseas arrivals			117,070	
Overseas departures			42,130	
Net overseas migration			74,930	59.5%
Interstate arrivals			106,510	
Interstate departures			76,600	
Net interstate migration			29,910	23.8%

Trends nationwide, 2023–24

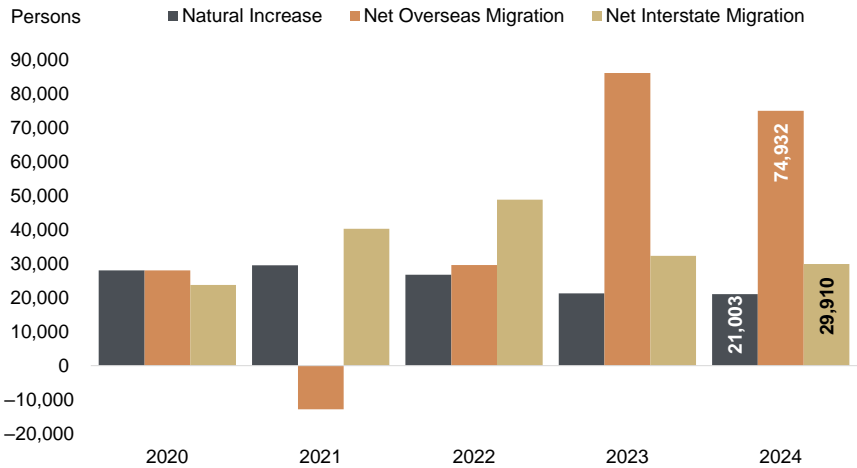


Five years to June 2024

- New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland together accounted for 73.8% of national population growth in the five years to June 2024.
- With the exception of Tasmania, all states and territories saw a moderation in their annual population growth rates in the year to 30 June 2021, with growth rates subsequently rebounding to peak in 2022–23, before easing slightly in 2023–24.
- Queensland’s annual growth rate increased to 2.6% in 2022–23 — more than twice that experienced in 2020–21 (1.0%), before moderating to 2.3% in 2023–24, which was still the second highest annual growth rate since 2008–09 (2.6%).
- Over the five years to June 2024, Queensland’s population grew by 9.8% or 497,490 persons, which was the largest increase over this period of any state or territory. This was primarily due to the disproportionate effect of the pandemic related impacts on the populations of both New South Wales and Victoria in the first three years of the period.



Components of population change, Queensland

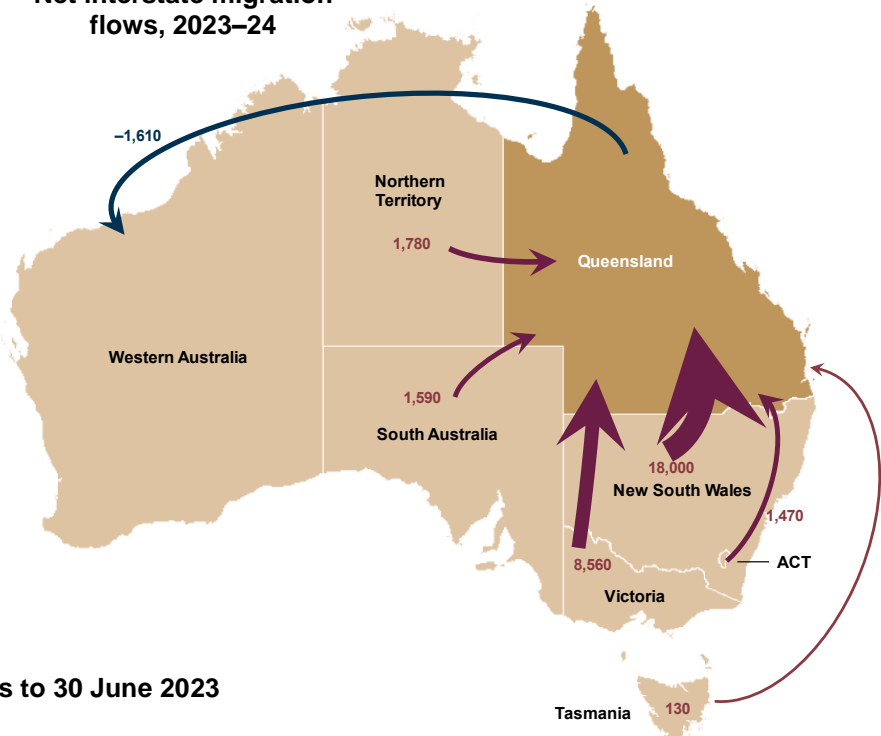


**Queensland’s gains from net overseas and interstate migration moderated after record levels in recent years.**

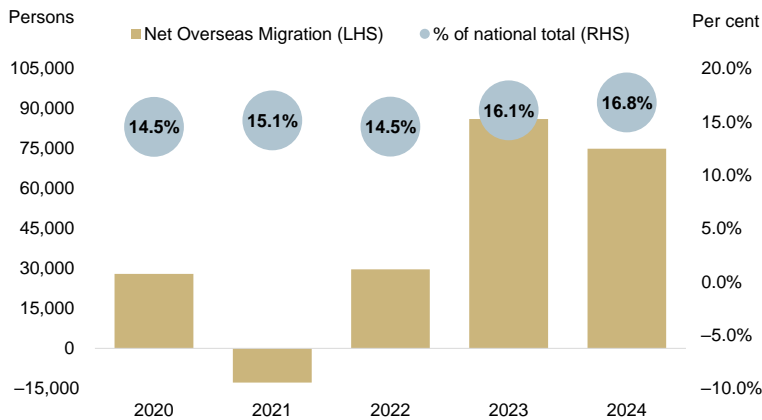
- NIM in 2023–24, contributed 29,910 persons to the population, 38.7% lower than the record peak in 2021–22.
- NIM accounted for 23.8% of growth in 2023–24, similar to the contribution in 2022–23 (23.1%).
- NOM for Queensland declined 12.9% from the record net gain in 2022–23, contributing 74,932 persons to the population. However, this was still more than double the levels recorded in the five years prior to the pandemic. NOM accounted for 59.5% of Queensland’s growth in 2023–24.

- Queensland is the only jurisdiction to have gained population through NIM in every quarter since June 1981.
- New South Wales continues to be the largest source of interstate migrants to Queensland, accounting for 60.2% of the net gain in 2023–24.
- Since 2016–17 there have been net gains to Queensland from Victoria, with a gain of 8,560 persons in 2023–24. However, this was 47.2% lower than the recent peak in 2021–22, during the pandemic affected period.
- Queensland’s population gain from NIM exceeded the gain from natural increase for the fourth consecutive year.

Net interstate migration flows, 2023–24



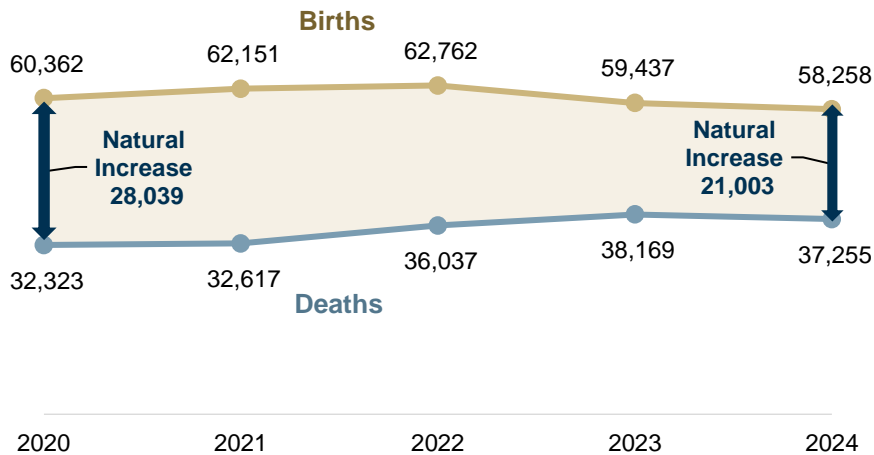
Net overseas migration, Queensland, five years to 30 June 2023



- Preliminary estimates show that the NOM contributed 74,930 persons to Queensland in 2023–24. The highest NOM gain for Queensland in recent decades was recorded a year earlier, in 2023–24 (86,010 persons).
- In absolute terms, Queensland’s share of the national NOM was 16.8% in the year to June 2024, the highest share since 2012–13 (18.2%).
- Queensland’s share of the national NOM has ranged between 11.1% and 16.8% in the years since 2013–14. In 2020–21, the only year of NOM loss for the period, Queensland accounted for 15.1% of the national loss.

Natural increase, Queensland, five years to 30 June 2024

- Natural increase declined by 270 persons (1.3%) in the year to June 2024, reflecting a larger decrease in births than deaths.
- The number of births registered in Queensland in 2023–24 (58,260) was 2.0% lower than in 2022–23, and 7.2% lower than the recent peak in 2021–22 (62,760).
- There were more than 37,000 deaths in Queensland for the second consecutive year.



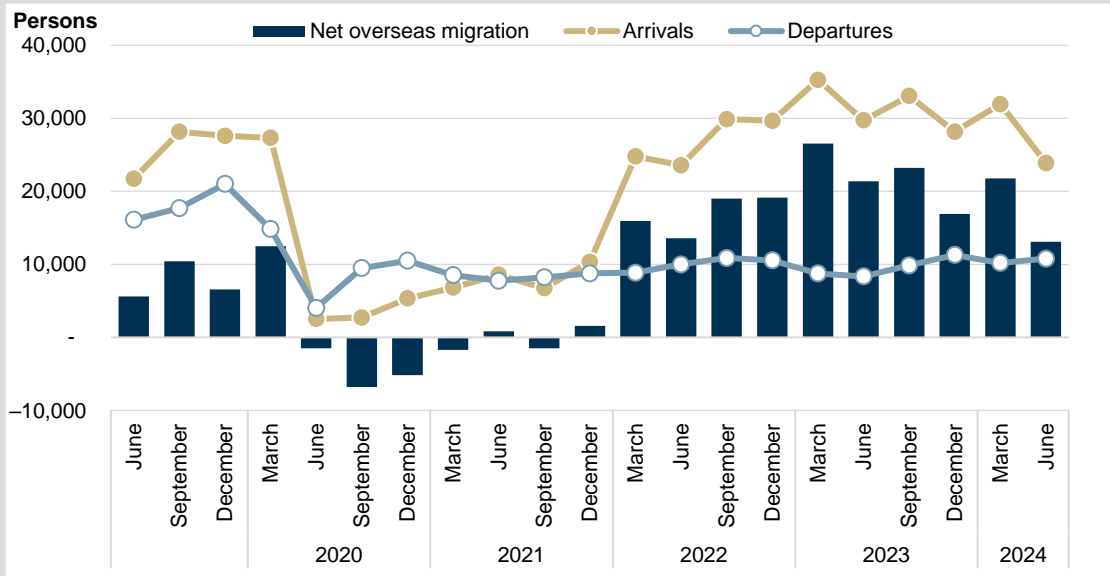
## Ongoing impact of international travel restrictions on NOM

In late March 2020, the Australian Government implemented restrictions on international travel to curb the spread of COVID-19. As a large portion of Queensland’s population growth in recent decades has come from NOM, these restrictions had a direct impact on both Queensland’s NOM, and associated population growth for the affected period during 2019–20, 2020–21, and to a lesser extent in 2021–22. However, easing of these restrictions from late 2021 saw a resumption in overseas arrivals and departures, resulting in a return to population gains through NOM. Preliminary migrant arrivals in June quarter 2024 were more than eight times higher than the low point in June quarter 2020 (23,890 migrant arrivals compared with 2,530), and 10.0% higher than the levels recorded in June quarter 2019 (pre-pandemic) of 21,710 migrant arrivals.

Preliminary migrant data show that departure levels have not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels, having remained relatively stable following the low in June quarter 2020. While in June quarter 2024, migrant departures were higher than in June quarter in 2023 (10,790 migrant departures compared with 8,350), they were still around a third lower (33.1%) than the level recorded in June quarter 2019 (pre-pandemic).

The final NOM figures for Queensland show net losses in the four consecutive quarters from June 2020 to March 2021, and again in September quarter 2021. Prior to these losses, the previous quarterly NOM loss was in December quarter 1994 (–160 persons).

While migrant departures remain below pre-pandemic levels, migrant arrivals returned to levels similar to those experienced pre-pandemic for the most recent quarter, resulting in the preliminary NOM gain for the June quarter 2024 (13,110 persons) being more than double the gain recorded in the comparable pre-pandemic quarter (June quarter 2019 had a gain of 5,600 persons).



Population trends by age and sex, Queensland

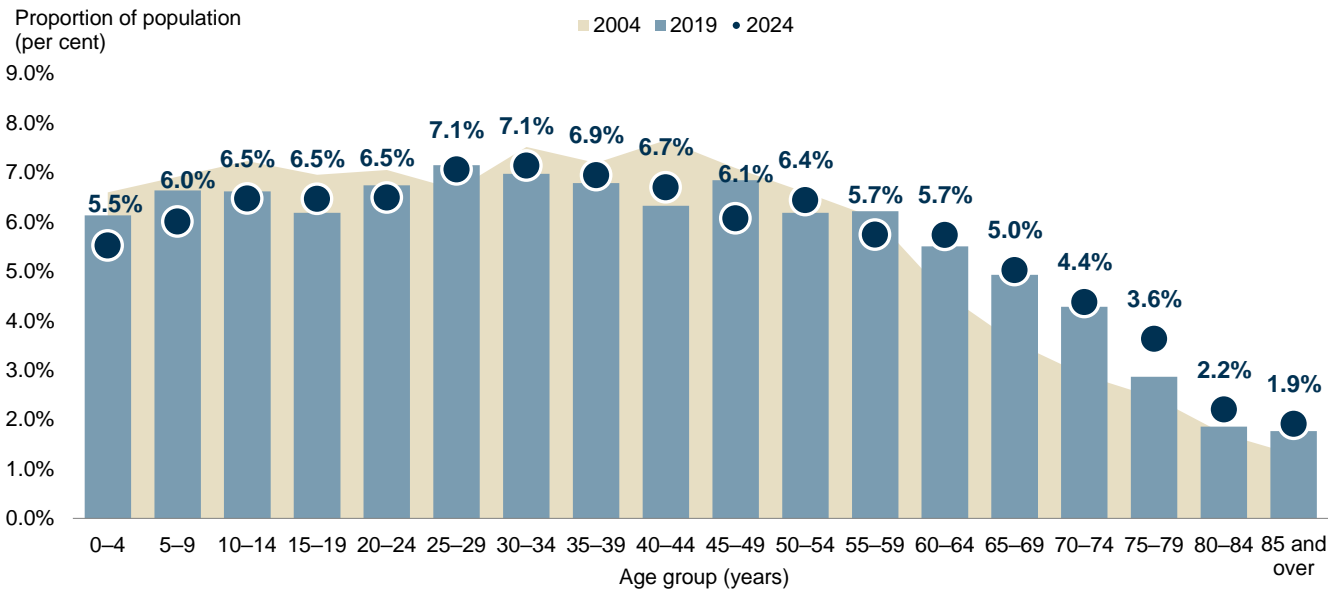
- Queensland's population is ageing due to:
  - sustained low levels of fertility
  - increased life expectancy
  - movement of the large 'baby boomer' cohort (those born between 1946 to 1965) into the older age groups.
- At 30 June 2024, with the exception of those aged 25–29 years, there were proportionally fewer persons in each five-year age group up to 55–59 years, and proportionally more in older age groups compared with 20 years earlier. The largest proportional shifts were in the 65–69 years and 70–74 years age groups (+1.5 percentage points). The largest proportional increase over the five years since 2019 was in the 75–79 years age group, increasing to 3.6% of the Queensland population, up 0.8 percentage points from five years earlier.
- While the overall share of the population aged 15–64 years (the working-age population) decreased between 2004 and 2024, from 67.3% to 64.8%, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and older increased (from 11.9% to 17.2%) over the same period. In 2024, around 1 in 6 Queenslanders were aged 65 years or older, up from just over 1 in 9 in 2004. The numbers of older (65 years and over) and very old (85 years and over) people in the population have both more than doubled since 2004. Since 2019, these cohorts have increased by 20.0% and 18.9% respectively.
- At 30 June 2024, persons aged 30–34 years were the largest group proportionally, accounting for 7.1% (399,090 persons) of the Queensland population, followed by those aged 25–29 years (also 7.1%, and 394,540 persons).

Living longer...

Queenslanders aged 65 years in 2023 could expect to live to:

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

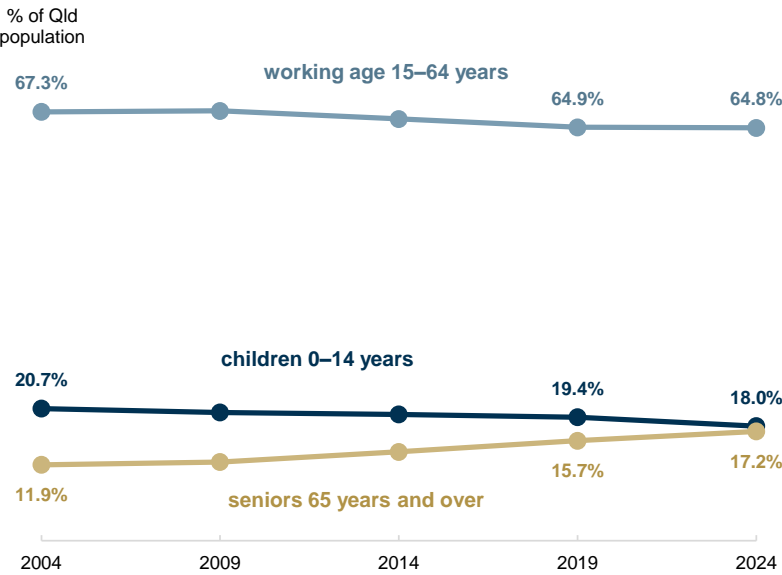
Proportion of population by age group, Queensland, as at 30 June 2024



- At 30 June 2024, children aged 0–14 years accounted for a smaller proportion of Queensland's population compared with five years earlier (18.0% compared with 19.4% in 2019). Both the 0–4 years and 5–9 years age groups have recorded proportional decreases since 2019, each decreasing by 0.6 percentage points in the five years to June 2024.
- There will be smaller cohorts moving into the labour force age groups in the future unless the impact of migration gains to the labour force cohorts (both NIM and NOM) can offset these differences.
- The dependency ratio (number of dependents per 100 working-age population<sup>1</sup>) increased slightly from 54.1 in 2019 to 54.3 in 2024, driven primarily by increases in the old-age dependency ratio (65 years and over), from 24.2 to 26.5 per 100 working-age population, over the five years. The child dependency ratio (0–14 years) declined slightly over the same period (from 29.9 in 2019 to 27.8 children per 100 working-age population in 2024), however was not sufficient to offset the increase in the old-age dependency ratio.

<sup>1</sup> Working-age population is traditionally considered to be those aged 15–64 years.

Working-age population seeing a decline in share

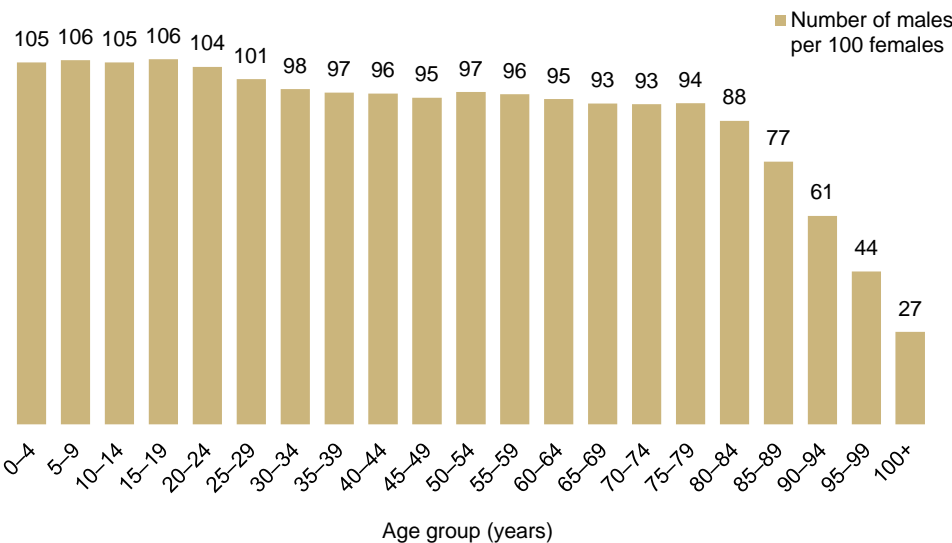


Seniors are the fastest growing group in the Queensland population:

- The population aged 65 years and over has more than doubled since 2004 to reach 959,110 persons in 2024.
- 1 in 6 Queenslanders were aged 65 years or older in 2024, up from just over 1 in 9 in 2004.
- The average annual growth rate since 2019 for seniors is 3.7%, compared with 1.5% for the rest of the population.
- The population aged 85 years and over had an average annual growth rate of 3.1% for the decade to June 2023, and growth of 4.5% in the last year.

- Just under 2 in 3 (64.8%) Queenslanders are in the traditional working-age group of 15–64 years. This is a continuation of the slow decline in the proportion of the population that is of working-age seen over the past two decades — 67.3% at 30 June 2004.
- At 30 June 2024, Queensland’s estimated resident population included 2,766,440 males and 2,819,880 females. The median age (age where half the population is younger/older) for Queensland’s males and females was 37.6 and 39.3 years respectively.
- The impact of relatively higher mortality rates for males across the various life stages is reflected in longer life expectancy for females, and results in the sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) decreasing with increasing age. The largest differences are experienced in the age groups beyond 85 years, with increasingly fewer men per 100 women in each consecutive five–year age group.

Sex ratio by selected age groups, year to 30 June 2024



There were:

- More males than females in age groups under 30 years.
- More females than males in all older age groups, including more than twice as many females aged 95 years or older.



## Technical notes

Population data used in this publication were the most recent available at the time of preparation and have been sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication [National, state and territory population, December 2024](#).

The status of estimated resident population (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 2021 are final. ERPs from September 2021 to June 2023 are revised and from September 2023 to June 2024 are preliminary. The ABS has rebased ERP up to June quarter 2021 — see [Methodology used in rebased population estimates, June 2021](#) for further information on calculation of the ERP and the rebasing cycle.

Natural increase data for September quarter 1991 to June quarter 2021 are final. Data for September quarter 2021 to June quarter 2023 are revised (based on date of occurrence). Data for September 2023 to June 2024 are preliminary (based on date of registration).

Net overseas migration data for September quarter 1991 to June quarter 2023 are final. Data for September quarter 2023 to March quarter 2024 are revised (based on actual traveller behaviour). Data for June quarter 2024 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.

The estimates for September 2017 onwards are based on a new methodology for NOM. The change in method is due to the removal of outgoing passenger cards by the Department of Home Affairs from July 2017. For further information, see the feature article on '[Improvements to estimates of net overseas migration](#)' in ABS, *Australian Demographic Statistics*, September 2017. Due to the disruption in travel patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic, from March 2022, preliminary estimates were modelled on traveller behaviour from the corresponding quarter of 2018. Estimates prior to March 2022 and from June 2023 are modelled based on the behaviour of similar travellers from one year earlier. The characteristics defining similar travellers are: age; country of citizenship; direction of first and last movement in the reference quarter; initial ERP status; time spent out of Australia; and visa group.

Net interstate migration — for June, September and December quarters 2021, Medicare change of address data showed an implausibly high number of moves for these quarters due to widespread updating of Medicare records as people got vaccinated for COVID-19. Not all the address changes recorded in this quarter happened within this quarter. To treat for this, undercount adjustments in the affected quarters have been revised. Net interstate migration data for September quarter 1991 to June quarter 2021 are final. Data for September quarter 2021 to June quarter 2024 are preliminary (based on modelled expansion factors from 2021 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 [Methodology section](#), ABS, *National, state and territory population*, June 2024.

In most cases, figures included in the text throughout this report are rounded to the nearest 10, although all calculations and percentages are based on unrounded data.

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

# 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 account of 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 from Department of Home Affairs actual arrival and departure information for individual passengers, 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 (the '12/16 month rule'). By this definition, some temporary residents in Australia are included in the net overseas migration figure.

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