



# Queensland population update No.14

## Recent population change and trends in Queensland

January 2009





### Prepared by:

Department of **Infrastructure and Planning**  
Planning Information and Forecasting Unit  
PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002 Australia  
**tel** +61 7 3237 1115  
**fax** +61 7 3235 4071  
pifu@dip.qld.gov.au

[www.dip.qld.gov.au](http://www.dip.qld.gov.au)

### Disclaimer:

While every effort has been taken in preparing this report, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, express or implied, contained in this report. The Australian Bureau of Statistics gives no warranty that the data are free from error, are complete, have particular quality and are suitable for any purpose or otherwise.

© The State of Queensland, Department of Infrastructure and Planning, 2009.

Please note that intellectual property in the data contained in this document provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics vests in the Commonwealth of Australia. The State of Queensland acting through the Department of Infrastructure and Planning supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of information. However, copyright protects this material. The State of Queensland acting through the Department of Infrastructure and Planning asserts the right to be recognised (except where otherwise noted on the material) as author of this material and the right to have its material unaltered. The Australian Bureau of Statistics gives no warranty that the data are free from error, are complete, have particular quality, and are suitable for any purpose or otherwise.



# Contents

Executive summary .....	3
Queensland's population growth in the Australian context .....	4
Queensland compared to Australia.....	7
Natural increase .....	8
Net interstate migration.....	9
Net overseas migration.....	9
Changing age structure.....	10
Estimated resident population of Australia's capital cities and Queensland's major regional centres.....	11



## Executive summary

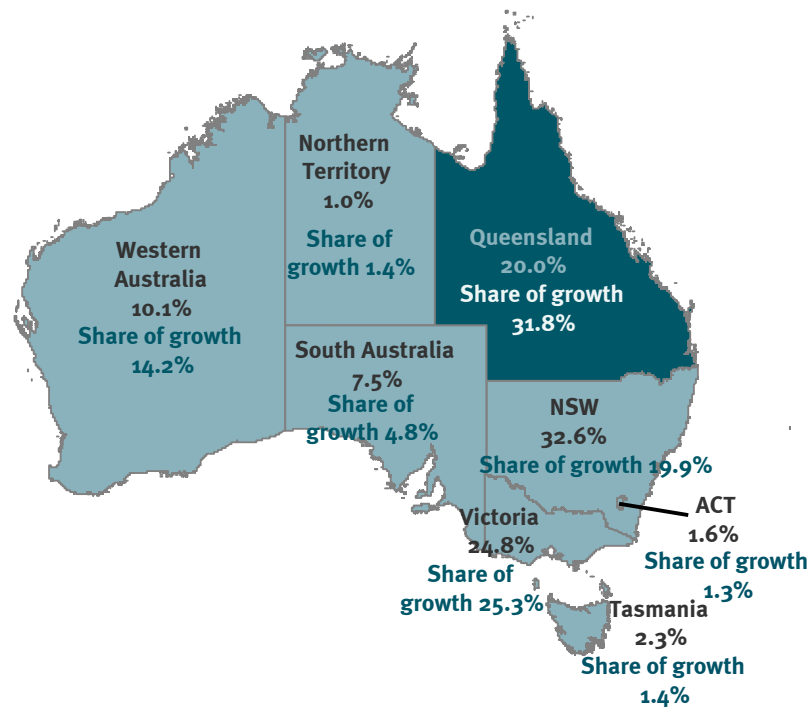
- Queensland's population reached 4.3 million by the end of June 2008.
- Queensland had the largest population increase in the country in the year to June 2008, with an increase of 98,000 people, followed by Victoria, with an increase of 92,700.
- Western Australia was the fastest growing state or territory in the year to June 2008 with an increase of 2.7 per cent, slightly ahead of Queensland's growth rate (2.3 per cent) and well ahead of the national average (1.7 per cent).
- In 2007–2008, Queensland experienced the largest net interstate migration of all states and territories (23,100 people), however this was the lowest annual net interstate migration in Queensland in the five years to June 2008.
- Net interstate migration accounted for 23.6 per cent of Queensland's total population growth during the year to June 2008; net overseas migration accounted for 42.1 per cent and natural increase 34.3 per cent.
- Net overseas migration was 41,300 people in 2007–2008—23.1 per cent higher than the previous year's figure of 33,500.
- At 30 June 2008, 20 per cent of Australians were Queenslanders, compared with 19.9 per cent the previous year.
- Natural increase (births minus deaths) added 33,600 people to Queensland's population in the year ending June 2008 (compared to 30,000 people the previous year).



## Queensland's population growth in the Australian context

Australia's population was 21.4 million by the end of June 2008, an increase of 359,000 people from June 2007 (21 million). Queensland's estimated resident population was 4.3 million at the end of June 2008. The state accounted for 31.8 per cent of the nation's population growth—more than its share of the national population and much larger than the contributions made by Victoria (25.8 per cent) and New South Wales (19.9 per cent) (Figure 1). Queensland's share of Australia's population was 20 per cent compared with 24.8 per cent for Victoria and 32.6 per cent for New South Wales.

**Figure 1: Proportion of national resident population at 30 June 2008 and share of national population growth, five years to 30 June 2008**

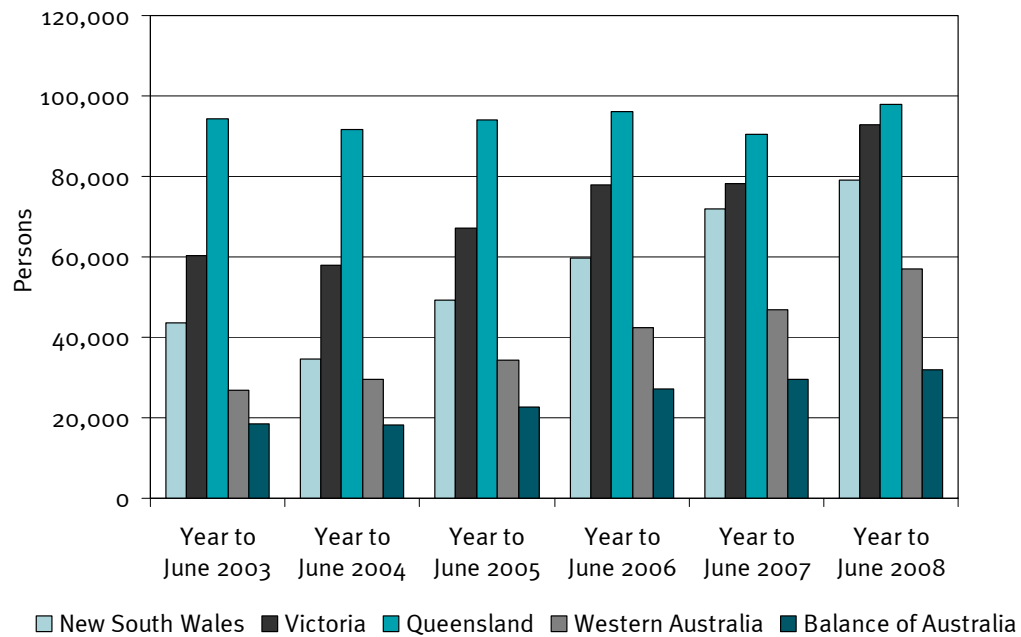


Source: ABS, *Australian demographic statistics*, Cat No 3101.0



Queensland had the largest population increase of all Australian states and territories, with 98,000 new Queenslanders in the year to June 2008. In 2007–2008, the population of Victoria also experienced significant growth over the previous year, increasing by 92,700 people and 78,300 people respectively. Queensland and Victoria were the only states to increase by more than 80,000 people in 2007–2008. As Figure 2 shows, Queensland had the largest annual population increase of all states in each of the past six years, followed by Victoria and New South Wales.

**Figure 2: Annual population growth, states and territories, 2002–2003 to 2007–2008**



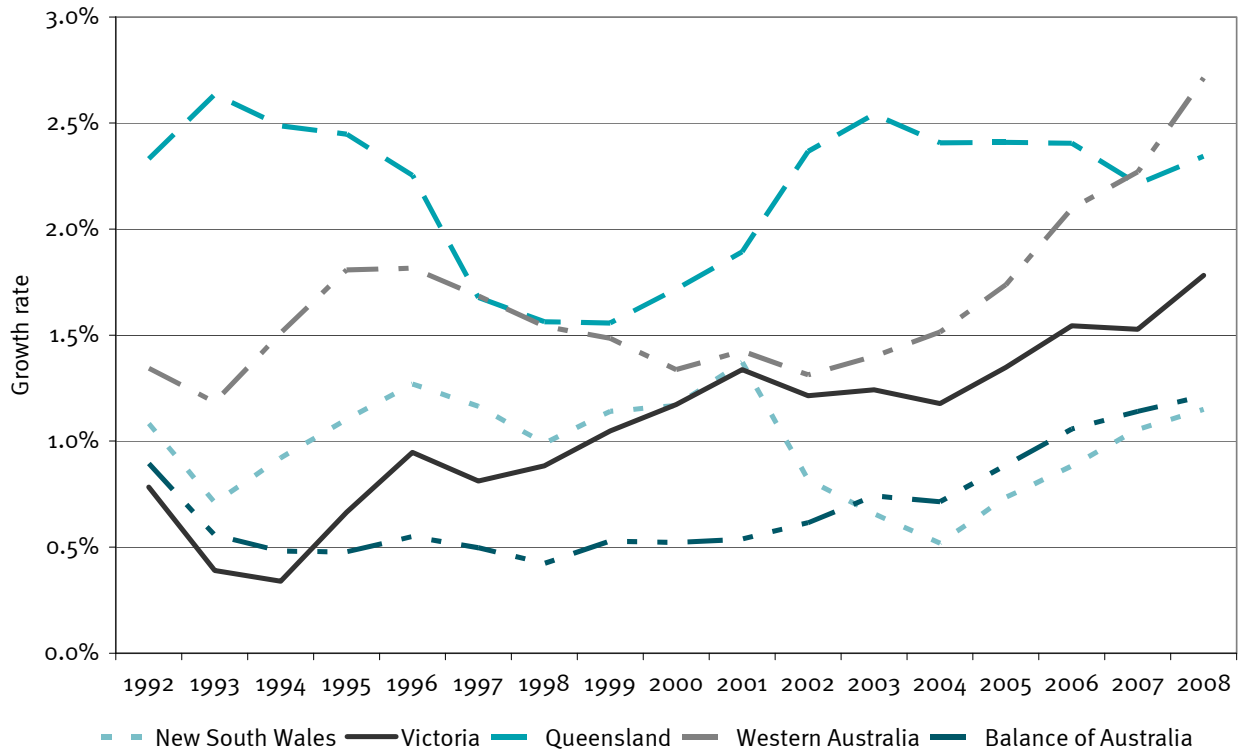
Source: ABS, *Australian demographic statistics*, June 2008, Cat No 3101.0

Queensland’s annual population growth was relatively constant at approximately 90,000 people from 2002–2003 to 2007–2008. In comparison, Victoria’s annual population increased by 60,400 in 2002–2003, rising to 92,700 in 2007–2008. Increases in New South Wales were lower than Victoria in all years between 2003 and 2008, however the amount of growth has almost doubled from 43,600 in 2002–2003 to 79,200 people in 2007–2008.



Queensland's annual population growth has been above 2 per cent since 2002 and was 2.3 per cent in the year to June 2008. Figure 3 shows that growth in Western Australia increased significantly during the financial year 2007–2008, to a rate of 2.7 per cent. Rapid growth was also seen in Victoria, where the growth rate increased to 1.8 per cent by the end of the financial year in 2008 from 1.5 per cent in the previous year. New South Wales had a growth rate of 1.2 per cent, which was only a slight increase on the growth rate for years leading up to June 2008. Growth in other states and territories over 2007–2008 also increased slightly.

**Figure 3: Annual population growth rates, states and territories, 2002–2003 to 2007–2008**



Source: ABS, *Australian demographic statistics*, June 2008, Cat No 3101.0



## Queensland compared to Australia

Population change results from two factors:

- natural increase (the difference between the number of births and deaths) and
- migration (net overseas and net interstate movement).

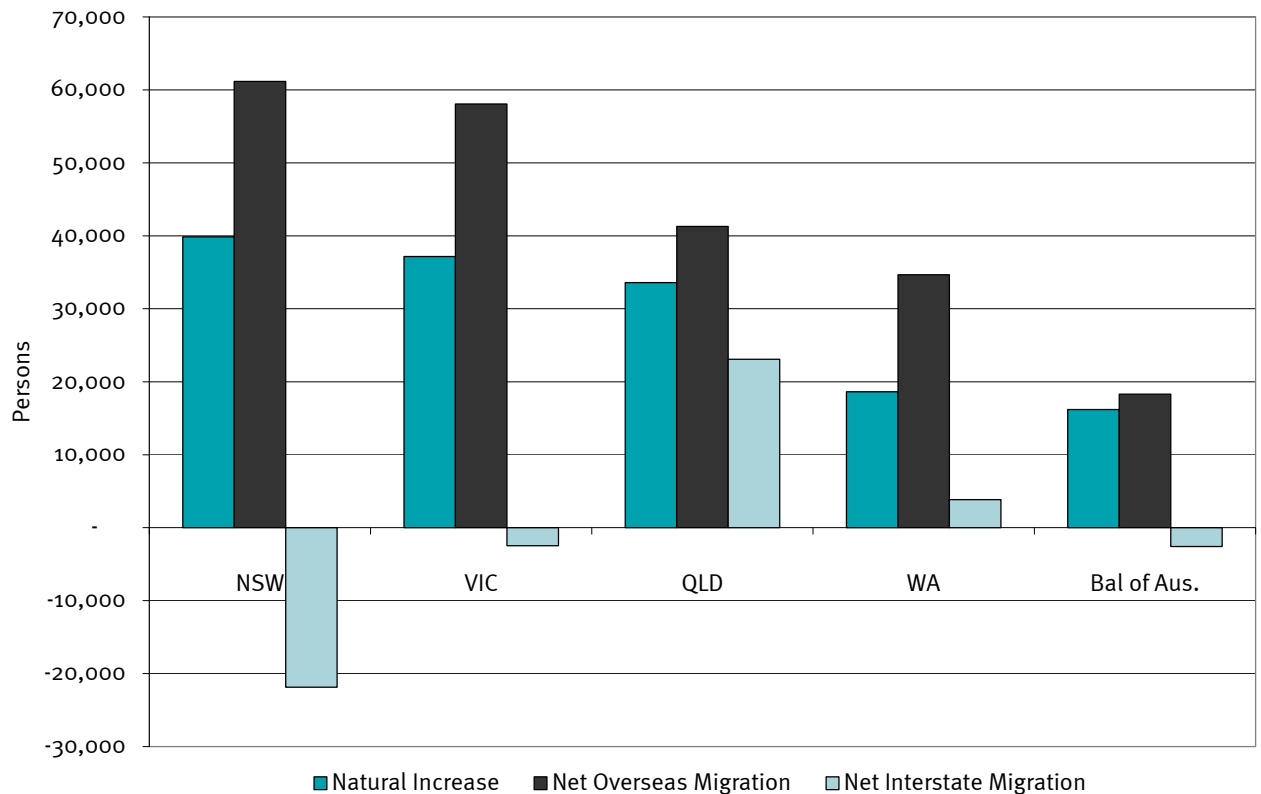
Natural increase (births minus deaths) added 33,600 people to Queensland's population in the year ending June 2008, compared with 39,900 people in New South Wales and 37,200 people in Victoria. This represents 34.3 per cent of Queensland's total population increase in 2007–2008 and 23.1 per cent of Australia's natural increase. Natural increase was higher than the previous year's figure of 30,000. Queensland's average annual increase (33,600) was about 4,000 lower than in Victoria (37,200) and 6,000 lower than New South Wales (39,900).

Over the five years to June 2008, Queensland gained an average of 28,500 people from interstate migration. During this period, only Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia experienced an average annual net gain from interstate migration. In the year to June 2008, Western Australia had the second highest net interstate migration (3,800), followed by the Northern Territory (1,200) and Tasmania (790). The remaining states and territories had negative net interstate migration for the latest financial year.

Net overseas migration contributed 42.1 per cent to Queensland's population growth in the year to June 2008—ranking third of all states and territories in 2007–2008. New South Wales had the largest net gain from overseas migration (61,200) followed by Victoria (58,000). Queensland was followed by Western Australia, which had a net gain of 34,700 people from overseas migration. Figure 4 shows that the components of Queensland's population change (natural increase, net interstate and overseas migration) vary considerably from those for other states and territories, with all three components being strongly positive.



Figure 4: Components of population change, states and territories, 2007–2008



Source: ABS, *Australian demographic statistics*, June 2008, Cat No 3101.0

## Natural increase

Based on preliminary estimates, the number of births in Queensland reached a new high of 60,300 for the year to 30 June 2008 and was 10.4 per cent higher than the previous year’s figure of 54,600.

In 2007–2008, Queensland’s total fertility rate (2.041 births per woman) was much higher than in the previous year (1.882). This result was due partly to recent changes in the processing of births registration in Queensland. With the exception of New South Wales, fertility rates were slightly higher for each state in 2007–2008. Australia’s total fertility rate increased slightly to 1.935 in 2007–2008 from 1.855 in 2006–2007 but remained below the replacement rate of 2.1 births per woman. In all states and territories except Tasmania, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, total fertility rates in 2007–2008 were below the replacement rate.

Standardised death rates (deaths per 1,000 people) increased in Australia in 2007–2008 from the previous year. In Queensland, the rate was 6.03, slightly higher than 5.93 the previous year. In Queensland and Australia the relative number of births and deaths remained stable with more than twice as many births as deaths. Over the last five years, the number of births in Queensland averaged 62,700 annually compared with 29,100 deaths. In the longer-term, natural increase—the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths—is expected to slow as more people enter into older age and the number of deaths rise accordingly.



## Net interstate migration

Queensland's net gain from interstate migration in the year to June 2008 (23,100) was significantly higher than that of any other state or territory; however the gain was lower than in the previous year's figure (27,000).

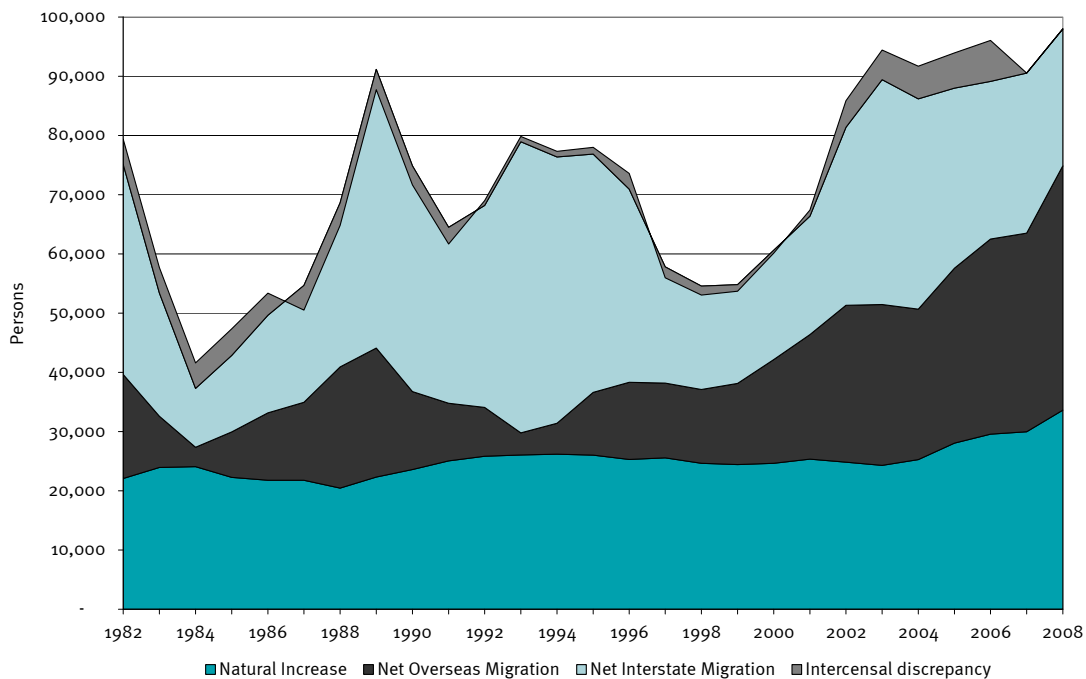
Net interstate migration contributed 23.6 per cent of Queensland's population growth in 2007–2008. In the year to June 2008, Queensland gains from net interstate migration (23,100) were the lowest recorded in the five years to June 2008. The net gain from the interstate migration in 2007–2008 equates to an average of 440 people moving to Queensland every week from other states or territories. This compares with a weekly average of 490 people in the previous financial year.

## Net overseas migration

In the year to June 2008, net overseas migration to Queensland was 41,300—23.1 per cent higher than the previous year (33,500) and the highest annual total over the past five years. In 2007–2008, the main sources of settler arrivals into Queensland were New Zealand (40 per cent), the United Kingdom (19.1 per cent) and South Africa (4.8 per cent) (Source: *Settler arrivals 2007–2008*, Department of Immigration and Citizenship).

The relative contribution of each of the three components to population growth in Queensland over time is shown in Figure 5. It is evident that while natural increase has remained relatively stable over the past 25 years, both interstate and overseas migration have fluctuated widely. The contribution of net overseas migration in particular is now much larger than in the past.

**Figure 5: Components of population change, Queensland, 1981–1982 to 2007–2008**



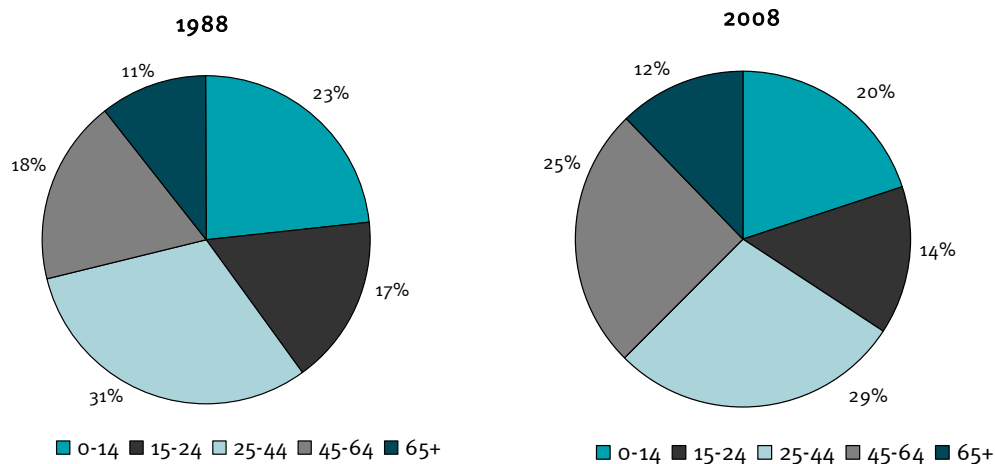
Source: ABS, *Australian demographic statistics*, June 2008, Cat No 3101.0



## Changing age structure

Australia's population, like that of many developed countries, is ageing as a result of sustained low fertility and increasing life expectancy. In 1988, Queensland children aged 0–14 years comprised 23.3 per cent of the population (Figure 6). By 2008, the proportion had fallen to about one fifth (20.1 per cent). In contrast, older age groups now account for much higher shares of the population. Queenslanders aged 45–64 years in 1988 represented 18.4 per cent of the total population but by 2008 accounted for one quarter (25.1 per cent). People who had reached the age of 65 years or more in 1988 comprised 10.6 per cent of the population, but by 2008 represented 12.3 per cent.

**Figure 6: Population structure, broad age groups, Queensland, 1988 and 2008**

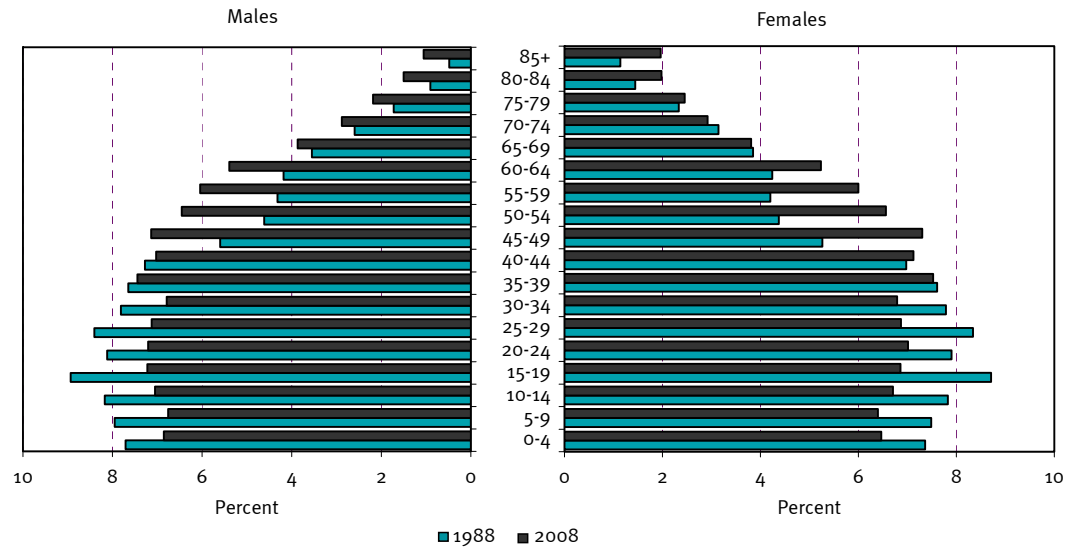


Source: ABS, *Population by age and sex, Australian states and territories*, June 2008, Cat No 3201.0

Figure 7 shows that in 2008 the numbers within each five-year age group is higher for the 35–39-year-old Queenslanders compared to those in younger age groups. In contrast, when these Queenslanders were children or young adults in 1988, the largest age group was aged between 15 and 19 years. Males comprised 8.9 per cent and females 8.7 per cent of the 1988 Queensland population within this age group. By 2008, the proportion of the population in this younger age group had declined to 7.2 per cent for males and 6.9 per cent for females. Those aged 35–39 years now represent the largest group of Queenslanders (M=7.4 per cent; F=7.5 per cent), reflecting the influence of population ageing and net interstate and overseas migration on Queensland's age structure between 1988 and 2008.



Figure 7: Population structure, age and sex, Queensland, 1988 and 2008



Source: ABS, *Population by age and sex, Australian states and territories*, June 2008, Cat No 3201.0

## Estimated resident population of Australia's capital cities and Queensland's major regional centres

The following analysis is based on final figures from the 2006 Census and preliminary 2007 figures. The estimated resident population (ERP) of Sydney, Australia's most heavily populated capital city Statistical Division (SD) was 4.3 million in June 2007 (Table 1). Brisbane's population was more than 1.8 million people, half the number in Melbourne SD (3.8 million people). Brisbane SD excludes the large urban areas of Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast, which are separate SDs. In the five years to 30 June 2007, Brisbane's population increased by an average of 38,000 people each year. Over the same period, Melbourne's average annual population increase was 56,400, the largest of all capital cities. The corresponding figure for Sydney was 34,200. Perth's population increased by an average annual amount of 28,000 people between 2002 and 2007, whereas the annual population increase in Adelaide and Hobart averaged 8,600 and 1,900 respectively.

Table 1: Population and population growth, capital city Statistical Divisions, 1997–2002, 2002–2007 and 2006–2007

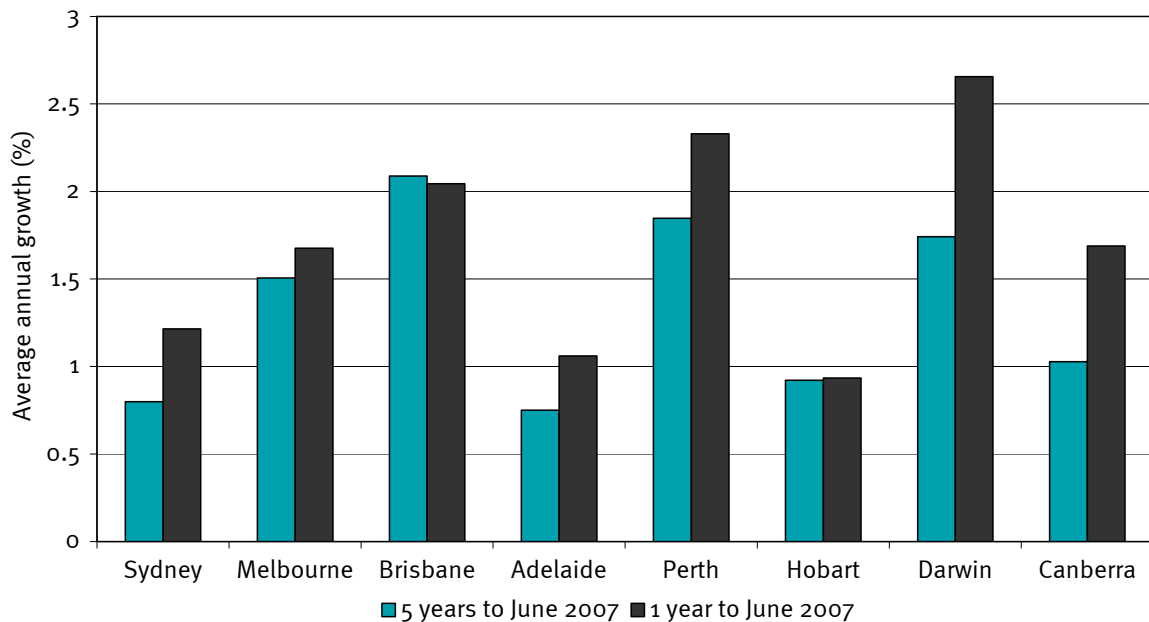
Capital city statistical division	Average annual population change						Estimated resident population at 30 June 2007
	5 yrs to June 2002		5 years to June 2007		1 year to June 2007		
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	
Sydney	46,868	1.2	34,204	0.8	52,032	1.2	4,334,020
Melbourne	42,869	1.3	56,362	1.6	62,740	1.7	3,805,755
Brisbane	24,622	1.5	38,008	2.2	37,204	2.0	1,856,966
Adelaide	6,217	0.6	8,594	0.8	12,149	1.1	1,157,961
Perth	19,519	1.4	28,052	1.9	35,377	2.3	1,554,125
Hobart	391	0.2	1,894	0.9	1,918	0.9	207,399
Darwin	1,710	1.7	1,991	1.8	3,037	2.7	117,399
Canberra	2,723	0.9	3,432	1.0	5,635	1.7	339,474

Source: ABS, *Regional population growth, 1996–2006 and 2006–2007*, Cat No 3201.0



Between 2002 and 2007, Brisbane's average annual growth rate (2.2 per cent) was the highest of all capital cities with Perth being the second fastest-growing capital city SD (1.9 per cent). With the exception of Sydney, all capital city SDs grew faster in the five years to June 2007 than in the previous five-year period. Faster growth was most apparent in Hobart and Brisbane, where the average annual growth rates increased from 0.2 per cent to 0.9 per cent and 1.5 per cent to 2.2 per cent respectively in the five years to June 2007. In contrast, average growth in Sydney declined from 1.2 per cent in the five years to June 2002 to 0.8 per cent between 2002 and 2007. During the 12 months to June 2007, Brisbane's growth rate of 2 per cent was less than its average during the previous five years. Darwin experienced the highest growth (2.7 per cent) over this period, followed by Perth (2.3 per cent) (Figure 8).

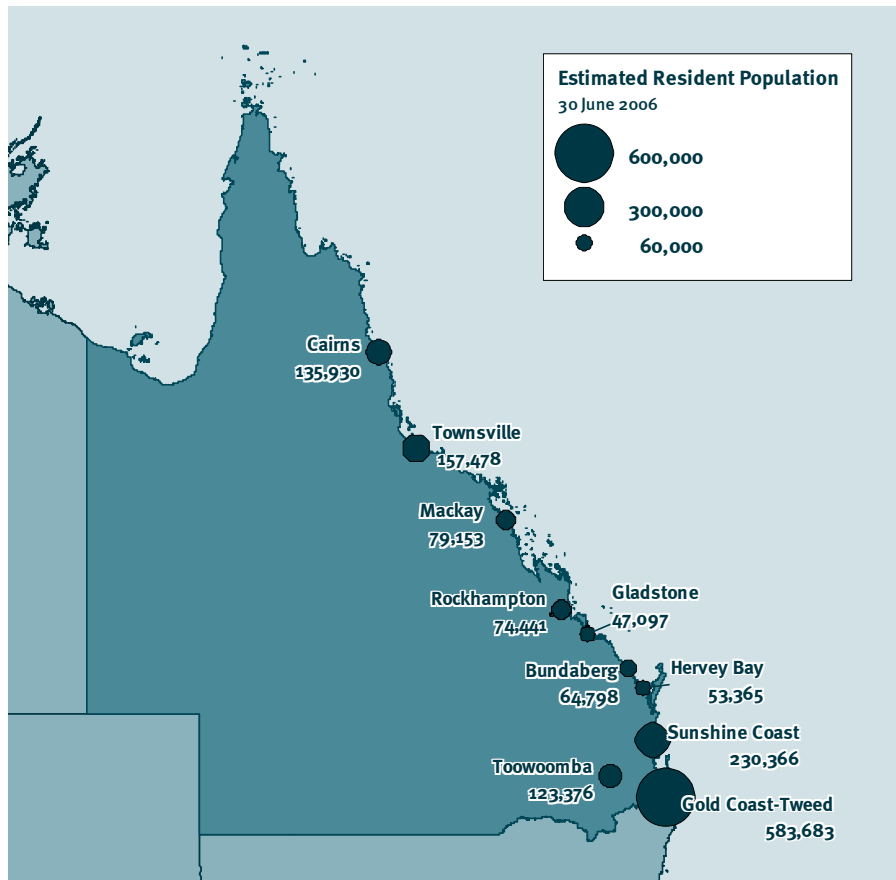
**Figure 8: Average annual population growth rates, capital city Statistical Divisions, 2002–2007 and 2006–2007**



Source: ABS, *Regional population growth, 1996–2006 and 2006–2007*, Cat No 3201.0



Figure 9: Queensland Statistical Districts, June 2006



Source: Australian Standard Geographical Classification, 2006

Outside capital city SDs, the ABS has defined Statistical Districts (SDists), which are predominately urban areas generally defined as containing an urban centre population of 25,000 people or more. At the end of June 2007, Gold Coast–Tweed was Australia’s most populated SDist with 583,700 people (Table 2). Over the five years between 2002 and 2007, it was also the largest-growing SDist with an annual average increase of 18,000 people.

This figure was well ahead of the increase in Newcastle SDist (5,200), which had a similar-sized population (523,700) to Gold Coast–Tweed SDist in 2007. Hervey Bay was the fastest-growing SDist in Australia between 2002 and 2007, with annual average growth of 5.5 per cent.

Within Queensland, seven of the 10 SDists had average annual growth rates over the five years to 2007 in excess of the state average (2.4 per cent). Almost all 10 Queensland SDists grew faster between 2002 and 2007 than they did in the previous five years with substantially higher growth rates in Hervey Bay, Mackay, Cairns and Gladstone.

In the year to June 2007, growth rates eased slightly in most of Queensland’s SDists. Exceptions were Townsville SDist where a growth rate of 2.8 per cent was maintained, while Gladstone SDist increased its growth rate from an average of 3.2 per cent over the five years to 2007 to 3.3 per cent in 2006–2007.




**Table 2: Population and population growth, Queensland Statistical Districts, 1997–2002, 2002–2007 and 2006–2007**

Queensland statistical districts	Average annual population change						Estimated resident population at 30 June 2007
	5 yrs to June 2002		5 years to June 2007		1 year to June 2007		
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	
Gold Coast-Tweed <sup>(a)</sup>	25,017	6.0	18,015	3.4	18,372	3.3	583,683
Sunshine Coast	6,281	3.6	7,318	3.5	6,307	2.8	230,366
Townsville	2,751	2.1	4,035	2.8	4,229	2.8	157,478
Cairns	1,324	1.2	4,155	3.4	4,294	3.3	135,930
Toowoomba	1,674	1.6	2,384	2.1	1,515	1.2	123,376
Hervey Bay	821	2.1	2,512	5.5	2,501	4.9	53,365
Mackay	989	1.6	2,494	3.5	1,630	2.1	79,153
Bundaberg	630	1.1	1,390	2.3	1,406	2.2	64,798
Gladstone	508	1.3	1,362	3.2	1,490	3.3	47,097
Rockhampton	762	1.2	1,259	1.8	1,195	1.6	74,441

<sup>(a)</sup> The area of the Gold Coast SDist. was increased in the 2006 Census and population estimates between 2001 and 2006 were then revised. Hence the estimate of average annual population growth between 1997 and 2002 was affected by this revision.

Source: ABS, *Regional population growth, 1996–2006 and 2006–2007*, Cat No 3218.0

Despite the easing of growth rates in the remaining SDists, absolute increases in 2006–2007 were up on the five year average in Cairns SDist (4,290 compared with 4,160 people) and Bundaberg (1,390 and 1,410 people respectively) and remained stable in Hervey Bay SDist (2,510 and 2,500 people respectively).



Department of **Infrastructure and Planning**  
Planning Information and Forecasting Unit  
PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002 Australia  
**tel** +61 7 3237 1115  
**fax** +61 7 3235 4071  
pifu@dip.qld.gov.au

[www.dip.qld.gov.au](http://www.dip.qld.gov.au)