

Australia's future demographic identity

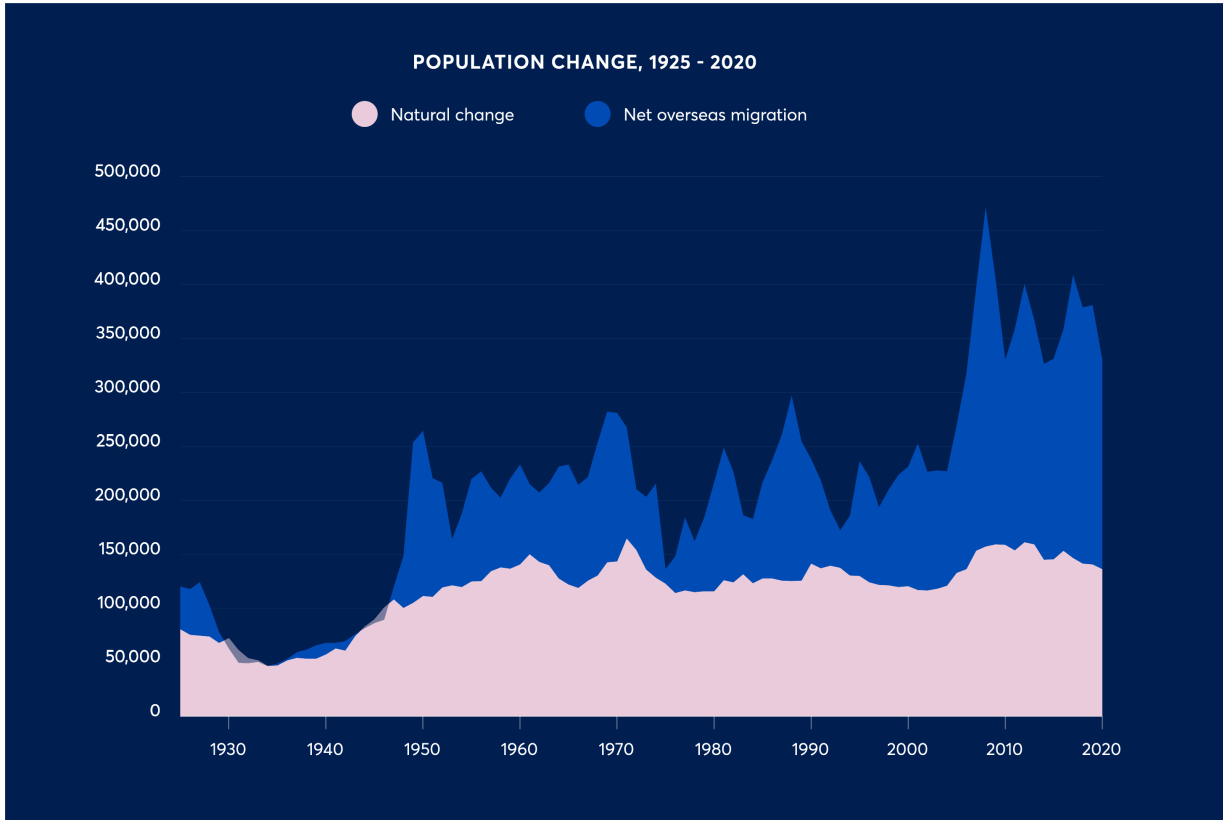


Australia's [most recent census](#) was a timely reminder that every stat tells a story. Data has the power to show us where we have come from and gives us a glimpse into the future of what could be.

From some of the earliest days of record-keeping, we can see that Australia has a long history of population growth. Since 1820 until today there are only two years in Australia's history that have seen a net annual decline. These are 1915 and 1916 during the First World War. The 200 years of growth brings Australia to its current population of 25 million people.

Migration is a key driver of Australia's population growth. Since the turn of the millennium, net overseas migration has accounted for 57% of Australia's population growth. The [demographic impact of COVID-19](#) has largely been a slowdown in population growth due to delayed migration and a slight drop in the fertility rate due to economic uncertainty. By the year 2031, however, Australia is expected to be between 1.1 and 1.4 million smaller than

the pre-COVID-19 estimate of 30 million.



Growing cultural and linguistic diversity

Australia is one of the most multicultural developed nations in the world, with twice as many residents born overseas (30%) as the United Kingdom (14%) or the United States of America (14%). This diversity of culture is likely to continue growing with a large proportion of Australia's projected growth coming from net overseas migration. Even though COVID-19 has seen closed international borders which will impair Australia's net overseas migration until the middle of this decade, our modelling shows that by 2030, annual migration to Australia will be close to the pre-COVID-19 numbers.

With a large proportion of Australia's growth coming from net overseas migration, an increasing number of Australians are using a non-English language in their home. Across Australia, just over one in five (22%) households speak a language other than English in

their home. What is of note, however, is the growing linguistic diversity of the capital cities. In New South Wales, for example, more than one in four households speak a language other than English in their homes (27%). This rises to 38% for Sydney and 56% for the Sydney city-state suburb. As organisations prepare for the future it is important to consider the ease with which an individual who speaks a language other than English can engage with your organisation.

Growing linguistic diversity



% of households where a non-English language is spoken

22% Australia

27% NSW

38% Sydney

56% Sydney city (suburb)

Australia's ageing population

Since 1971 Australia's median age has increased by 10 years. Just before the turn of the millennium the median age was 35 and since 2010 it has been steady at 37.i

Over time, however, Australia's population has been aging as the number of Australians aged over 60 overtakes those under 18. As a result, Australia's median age was projected to rise and reach 39 by 2031. Considering lower net overseas migration, however, it is likely that Australia will reach a median age of 39 ahead of this forecast, most likely by 2026.

Growing lifespan

A contributor to Australia's ageing population is the growing lifespan of Australians. In 1909, when Australia's age pension was introduced, life expectancy at birth was 57. Today this exceeds 80 when averaged across males and females. Life expectancy is projected to

continue rising, albeit at a slower rate. By the end of the decade, female life expectancy at birth is projected to reach 86.5, while life expectancy for males is projected to reach 83.1.

With Australians living longer, working later and more culturally diverse than ever before there is an opportunity for organisations to engage in a new way. Consider what opportunities there might be to engage an older worker where impacts not finances are a stronger motivator for where they spend their time. Similarly, consider how your organisation can engage in a way that embraces cultural and linguistic diversity.

Australia towards 2031
The demographic, consumer and behavioural trends shaping the nation

[Download the FREE report here](#) 



The report cover features the title 'Australia towards 2031' and the subtitle 'The demographic, consumer and behavioural trends shaping the nation'. The preview shows several key statistics: '60%' for 'Size of the regions', '42%' for 'Returning to local', '62%' for 'The future of work is hybrid', '83%' for 'The wellbeing era', and '76%' for 'The wellbeing era'. It also includes a quote: 'Only secondarily in history do massive demographic change combine with long social shifts, sweeping technological transitions and unprecedented technological innovation in that order of a decade, society altogether alters. Australia is currently in the midst of one such transformation.'

Contact

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