



BACKGROUND PAPER 9: Population growth and demographic change

What was said during Time to Talk Canberra 2030

Most people felt the best opportunity to assure the future quality of Canberra was to make key decisions about Canberra's planning now. While some people challenged the inevitability of growth, most Canberrans recognised the city will grow and must provide for the needs of all sections of a larger society. Given this, the imperative is to ensure Canberra has the capacity to meet and manage the needs of a more diverse society. People recognised that the needs and lifestyles of younger people and older Canberrans must be balanced. They also understood that young people are Canberra's future.

Definition of issue

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Demographic statistics provide measures of the Australian population, its size, growth, composition and geographic distribution, as well as the components that shape population change: births, deaths and migration'.¹ Statistical data relating to the population and groups within it are provided by demographics. Demographics provide, for example, data on age groups, births, deaths, migration, household structure, cultural background, education and income of a population.

Role of strategic land use planning

Understanding the ACT's population growth and its demographic trends is fundamental to strategic planning and the provision of adequate housing, transport services, community infrastructure and recreation opportunities. The way these services and amenities are located and designed is critical to meeting the diverse needs of our population.

What issues does the ACT Planning Strategy need to consider?

Given the importance of the population's size, age structure and distribution to the planning of infrastructure and services, an understanding of demographic trends is crucial.

Population size

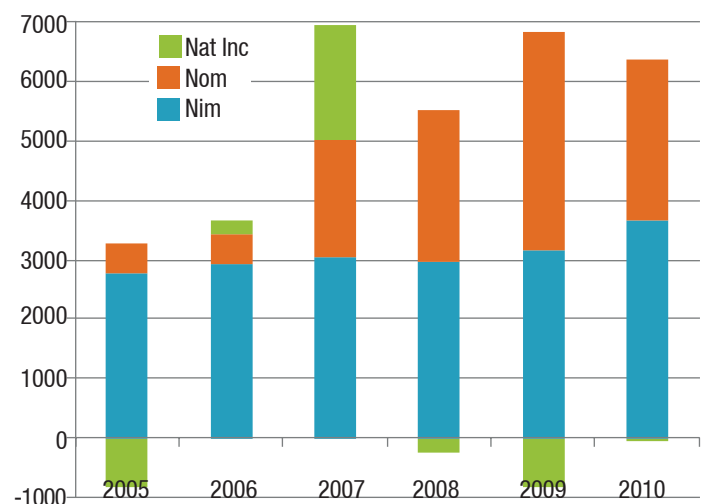
At June 2010, the ACT's population was estimated to be 358,600 and Queanbeyan's 41,400. In 2001 the ACT's population was 319,300 and Queanbeyan's 33,800.

Between 2001-2 and 2009-10 population growth averaged 4,400 per year, but since 2006-7, the annual population growth has averaged 6,200. In the first six months of 2010-11 it was 3000.

The higher population growth in recent years has mostly been from increased net overseas migration (NOM). NOM averaged 3120 a year between 2005 and 2010, increasing from 670 in 2005 to over 3400 in 2008 and 2009. In 2010 NOM was 1960. Population growth from natural increase (births minus deaths) grew from 2,800 in 2005 to almost 3,500 in 2010. Net interstate migration (NIM) in 2010 was almost 1,500. Between 2005 and 2010, NIM averaged 370, with a net outflow of 1600 in 2009 (see Figure 1).

By 2030 the ACT's population is projected to grow to 453,300 and Queanbeyan's to 60,000. Between 2010 and 2059, natural increase is anticipated to contribute to 61% of the population growth, with net migration from overseas contributing 39%. Net interstate migration is assumed to be 0.

Figure 1: ACT population growth by component 2005 to 2010



Source: ABS Catalogue 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics





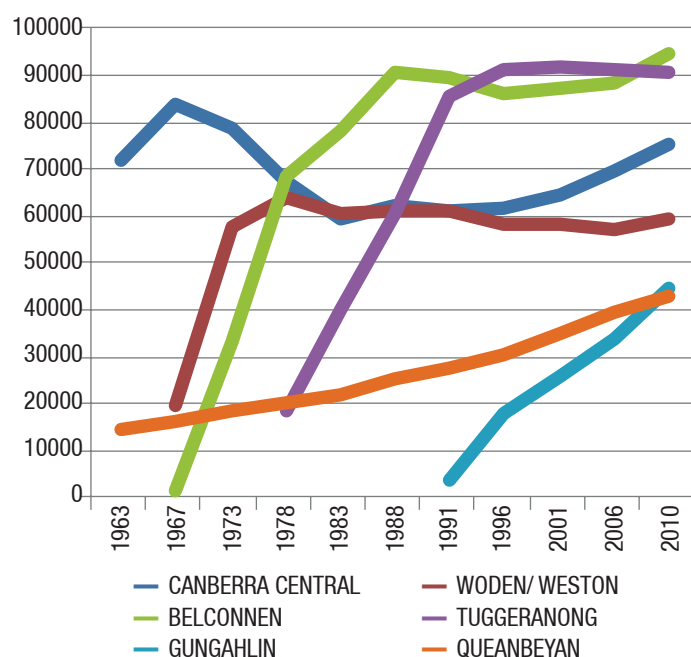
Population distribution

High population growth in Canberra between the early 1960s and the mid 1970s was based on the expansion in the Commonwealth Public Service, and was accommodated by the development of new towns. Figure 2 indicates the population distribution by town since 1963, when settlement started in the first new town of Woden-Weston Creek.

The population fell in central Canberra (North and South Canberra) from over 82,000 in the mid 1960s to below 60,000 in the mid 1980s. However, the district's population began to increase from the mid 1990s to its estimated 2009 level of 73,000. The decline was in response to an ageing population, lower fertility and increased separation and divorce. It led to lower school enrolments, reduced levels of support for local shops and lower utilisation of physical and social infrastructure. The increase in population in the district has primarily been a result of redevelopment activity.

Each new town was rapidly settled by households that were starting to have families. This led to successive peaking of demand for age related social infrastructure, notably schools. Woden-Weston Creek's population peaked at 63,000 in 1976 before falling to below 60,000. Belconnen's population has been reasonably stable at 85,000-90,000 since the mid 1990s with new settlement in west Belconnen counteracting population decline in the older suburbs. Tuggeranong's population has begun to fall; population decline in the north Tuggeranong suburbs, settled in the mid 1970s to the early 1980s, is counteracting population growth in the more recently settled areas. The changed demography is also reflected in the decline in average dwelling occupancy from 3.9 people per dwelling in 1966 to 2.5 in 2006. Further decline is expected.

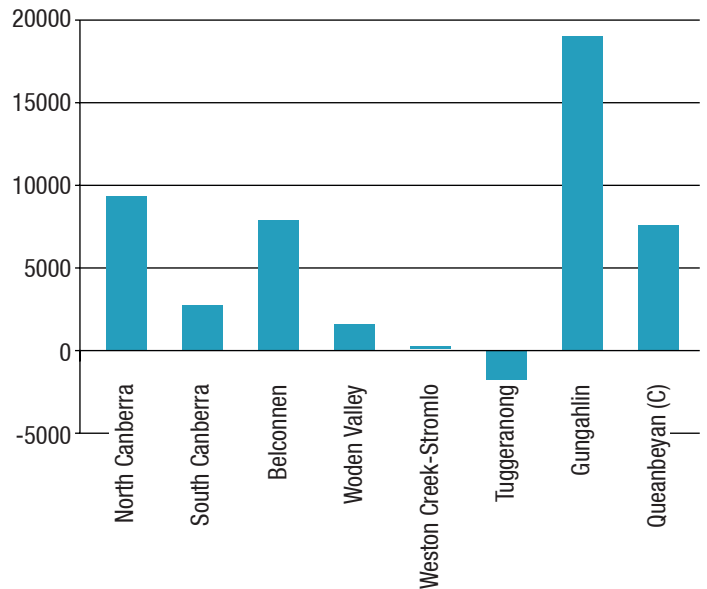
Figure 2: Population growth by town 1963-2010



Source: NCDC Annual Reports (Various) and ABS Catalogue 3218.0 Regional Population Growth

Figure 3 indicates the population growth by district between 2001 and 2010. Gungahlin, Belconnen and North Canberra experienced the greatest growth, while numbers fell in Tuggeranong and Woden-Weston Creek experienced minimal growth.

Figure 3: Population change by district 2001-2010



Source: ABS Catalogue 3218.0 Regional Population Growth

Table 1 indicates the projected population growth by district between 2009 and 2021. Gungahlin, Molonglo and North Canberra are projected to have the highest growth. Gungahlin's population is projected to increase from 40,900 in 2009 to 72,900 in 2021, while Molonglo's population is projected to be 20,600 by 2021. Populations are projected to increase North and South Canberra, largely as a result of redevelopment, and Belconnen, primarily as a result of development in west Belconnen, Lawson, Bruce and the town centre. Tuggeranong's population is projected to fall as a result of ageing in the north Tuggeranong suburbs.

Table 1: Population growth by district 2009-2021

District	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	Change
North Canberra	46850	49800	51650	53250	55150	8300
South Canberra	26000	28000	29000	29650	30600	4600
Belconnen	91250	92650	92350	92600	94150	2900
Woden	33800	34300	33850	33500	33650	-150
Weston Creek	23300	23550	22850	22050	21850	-1450
Tuggeranong	89800	89300	87200	85600	85150	-4650
Gungahlin	40900	50950	60450	67750	72900	32000
Molonglo		250	7450	15350	20600	20600

Source: ACT Population Projections for Suburbs and Districts 2001-2021 (CMD, 2011)



Age structure

Figure 4 indicates the change in the ACT age structure between 2001 and 2059.

In 2001 65,900 people were aged 14 years and under, 230,500 were aged between 15 and 64 years and 25,200 people were aged 65 years and over. Between 2001 and 2010 the number of 0-14 year olds fell by 1000, the number aged between 15 and 64 years increased by 20000, and the number of people aged 65 years and over increased by 10,600.

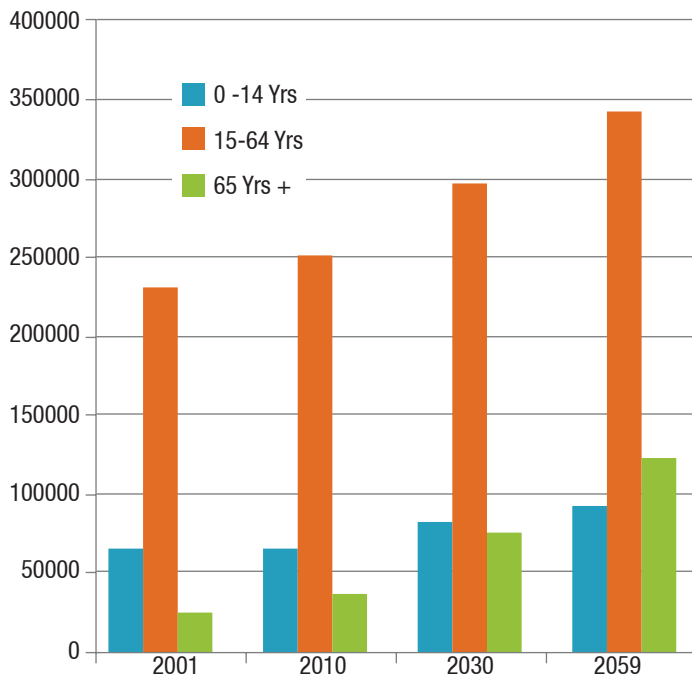
The number of people projected to be aged 65 years and over doubles from 37,000 in 2010 to 75,000 in 2030. The population aged 14 years and under increases by 16,000 by 2030, with its share of the population falling from 18.3% to 18%.

The population aged 65 years and over is projected to increase from 10.4% of the population in 2010 to 16.5% in 2030 and 21.9% by 2059.

The population aged 14 years and under will increase from 18.3% in 2010 to 18.9% by 2020 before falling to 18% by 2030. Numbers in this age group will increase by 17,000 between 2010 and 2030, indicating an ongoing need to provide age related facilities such as child care and schools.

The population of the ACT is projected to age, with the median age projected to increase from 33.7 years in 2009, to 37.5 years in 2030 and 39.9 years by 2059.

Figure 4: ACT age structure 2001-2059



Source: ACT Population Projections for Suburbs and Districts (CMD, 2011)

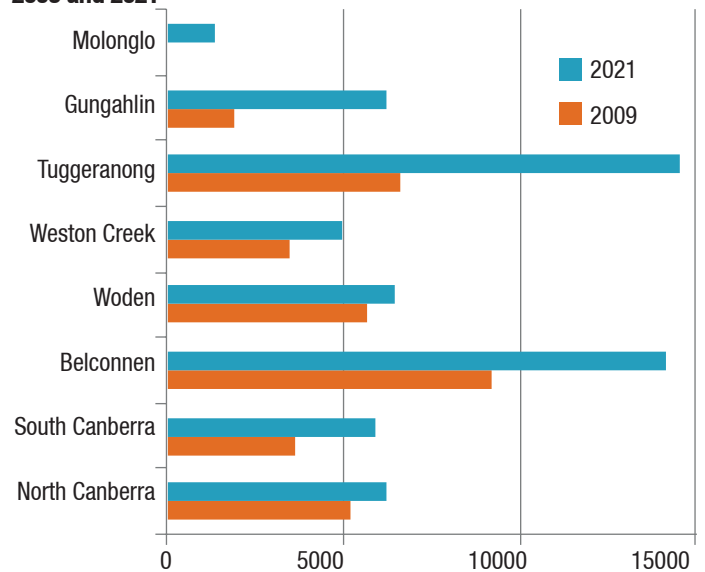
Figure 5 indicates that the population aged 65 years and older is projected to increase in all districts between 2009 and 2021. Tuggeranong and Belconnen are projected to have the greatest increase in this age group, with Tuggeranong's population increasing from 6650 to 14500 and Belconnen's increasing from

9200 to 14150. The share of the 65 years and over population living in these districts will increase from 44% to 48% over the period. There is also appreciable growth projected in this population in Gungahlin – from 1,950 to 6,200.

Figure 6 indicates the projected change in the population aged 0 to 14 years by district. Gungahlin and Molonglo are projected to experience the greatest increase, with Gungahlin expected to increase from 9900 to 18500 between 2009 and 2021 and Molonglo to 6450. Increases are also projected in North Canberra (2650), South Canberra (650) and Belconnen (1150). Declines in this population group are projected in Tuggeranong (-4800), Woden (-850) and Weston Creek (-450). Despite the decline, Tuggeranong is projected to have the highest number of 0-14 year olds in 2021.

While there is some evidence of regeneration of suburb populations as younger households purchase properties in older areas, it is unlikely that previous levels will be reached. This will be a result of lower fertility levels than when the suburbs were first settled and the slower rate of dwelling turnover because the suburb is not being settled within a short period. This is illustrated in North Canberra where, despite an increase in population, there were 5,600 0 to 14 year olds in 2006 compared to 16,400 in 1966.

Figure 5: Projected population aged 65 years and over by district 2009 and 2021



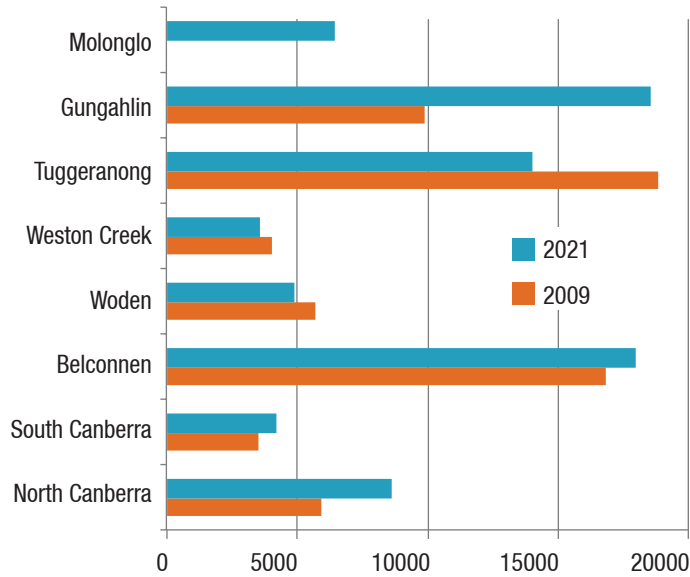
Source: ACT Population Projections for Suburbs and Districts (CMD, 2011)

Figure 7 indicates the projected change in age structure between 2011 and 2021 in Queanbeyan. The proportion of the population aged 65 years and over is projected to increase from 9.8% to 13.1%, while the population aged under 15 years is projected to fall from 20.4% to 19.8%.

The changing age structure is associated with changed household composition. Household and Family Projections from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (see Figure 8) indicate there will be substantial growth in couple and single person households in the ACT between 2006 and 2031 and limited growth in the number of couple households with children.

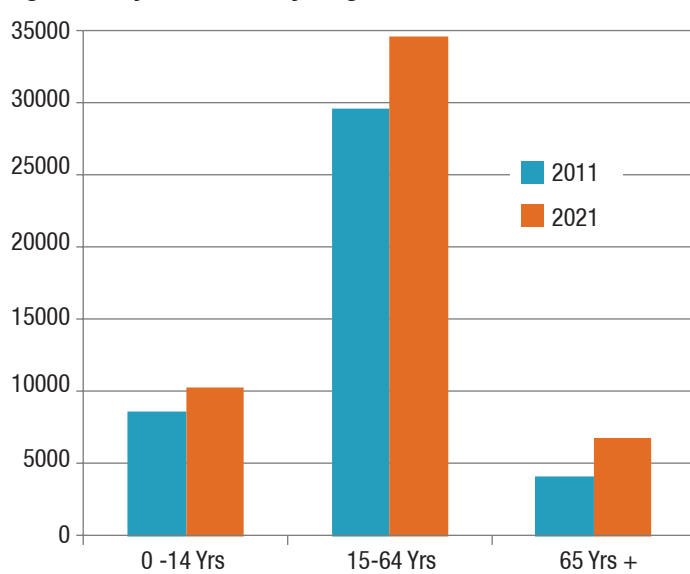


Figure 6: Projected population aged 0-14 years by district 2009 and 2021



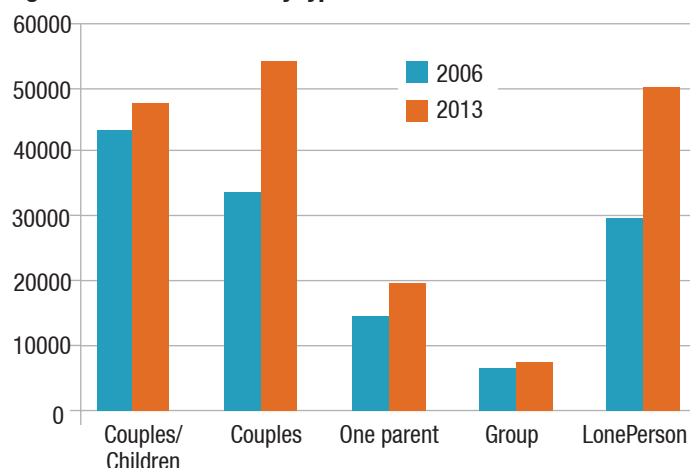
Source: ACT Population Projections for Suburbs and Districts (CMD, 2011)

Figure 7: Projected Queanbeyan age structure 2011 and 2021



Source: NSW Dept of Planning and Infrastructure New South Wales State and Regional Population Projections: 2008

Figure 8: ACT households by type of household 2006-2031



Source: ABS Cat 3236.0 - Household and Family Projections, Australia, 2006-31

Things to think about

The growing population will require approximately 65,000 additional dwellings between 2006 and 2030. A major issue is where these dwellings should be accommodated, and the mix between greenfield development (new residential estates on farmland) and development in established areas.

The location of residential development has implications for the overall level of travel in the city, the level of physical infrastructure (such as roads, cycleways, water, sewer, electricity and stormwater) and social infrastructure (such as schools, shops, places of worship, health facilities and services).

A challenge is to meet the housing, services and infrastructure needs for a growing population with greatly increased numbers of people aged over 65, while still responding to the needs for social infrastructure for a growing population under 15 years, particularly in Gungahlin, Molonglo and North Canberra.

The ageing of the population will generate demand for a wider variety of housing, improved connections to services and facilities to enable ageing in place.

Further reading

- ACT Government (2010) A Social Overview of the ACT 2009-2010. http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/137921/social-overview-act.pdf
- ACT Government (2010) ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population: A Demographic Analysis. http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/154487/ACT-Aboriginal-Torres-Strait-Islanders.pdf
- ACT Government (2010) Baby Boomer Retirements and Our Future Workforce. http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/172857/Baby-boomer-retirements.pdf
- ACT Government (2010) Population Ageing in the ACT: Issues and Analysis. http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/154475/population-ageing-ACT.pdf
- ACT Government (2011) ACT Population Projections 2009 – 2059. <http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/policystrategic/actstats/projections>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Population Statistics, Cat 3101 Australian Demographic Statistics. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3101.0>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Population aged 65 years and over by Statistical Local Areas in Canberra. 30 June 2009. Link?
- ABS Social Atlas, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2030.8/>
- Jackson, Natalie (2008) Population Change and Sustainable Futures: Imagining the ACT. http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/12431/Paper - Natalie Jackson.pdf

Endnotes

- <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/c311215.nsf/20564c23f3183fdaca25672100813ef1/c027c7af9d0e4ff1ca2567cf0009ac561!OpenDocument>