

# On the move



People relocate for many reasons. They may move for work and study, to be closer to family or move in with a partner, to find more suitable housing or a preferred environment. Family breakdown, changes in financial circumstances or lack of affordable housing can also lead to a move. Between 2001 and 2006, 43% of people aged 5 and over had changed their location. Of these, 4.5 million moved locally and 2.8 million were new residents, comprising 2 million new residents who moved from a different geographic area in Australia (see box below), and 0.8 million new residents who were overseas in 2001.

As well as creating great change in the lives of individuals and households, movements change the population size and composition in both the area people leave and the area they move to. People at different stages of the life cycle have different reasons for moving and different patterns of migration. For example younger people tend to move to urban areas<sup>1</sup>, while many older people move away from these areas. This article looks at migration patterns across 5 broad geographic areas in Australia, comparing people who moved to a new area from 2001 to 2006 (new residents) with those who lived in the same area in 2001 and 2006 (longer-term residents).

## Migration flows

This article examines migration flows between and within 5 broad geographic areas from 2001 to 2006. The census collects information about prior places of residence at two points in time—5 years and 1 year prior to the 2006 Census (for more information, see *internal migration* in Glossary). Moves made between these dates are not captured in the census. Data in this article are based on place of usual residence census counts, rather than the estimated resident population (see Glossary).

**Capital cities** are capital city Statistical Divisions (SDs) from each of the Australian states and territories.

**Coastal centres** and **inland centres** are Statistical Districts.<sup>2</sup> These areas are mainly urban and contain population centres of 25,000 persons or more (for example, Warrnambool and Toowoomba).

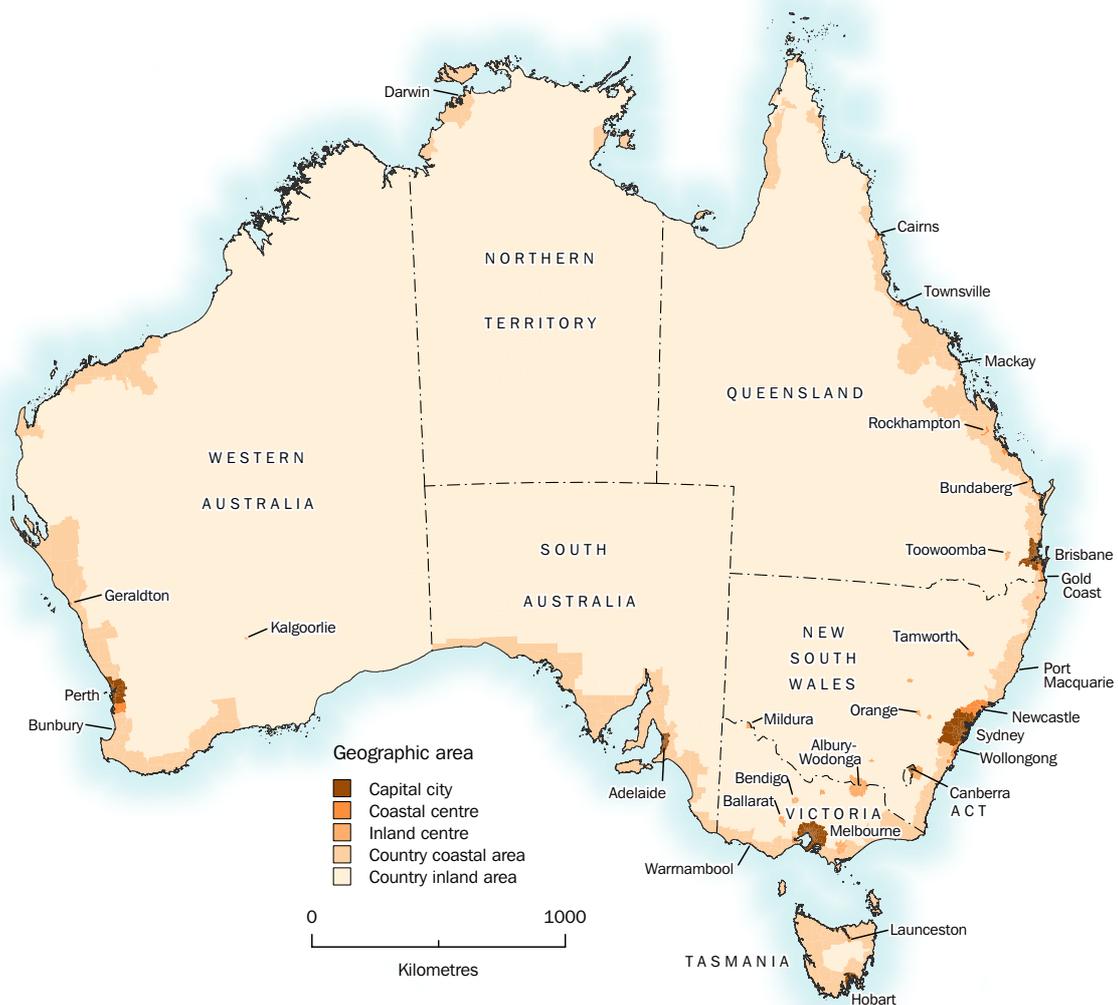
**Country coastal areas** and **country inland areas** are the remaining Statistical Local Areas (SLAs), on the coast or inland respectively.

Coastal centres and country coastal areas border the coastline or have their centre point (centroid) within 50 kms of the coast. Very large SLAs (25,000 square kms or more) are excluded from coastal areas, as large parts of these SLAs are outside the 50 km coastal zone.

**New residents** are people who moved between 2001 and 2006, into a different capital city SD, or for non-metropolitan areas, into a different Statistical Subdivision (SSD). New residents may have moved into a different broad geographic area (as described above), or they may have moved within a geographic area. This category excludes people who did not fully state their place of usual residence 5 years ago, and children under 5 years of age.

**Longer-term residents** are people who lived in the same area, either a capital city SD or a non-metropolitan SSD, in both 2001 and 2006. This category excludes people who did not fully state their place of usual residence 5 years ago, and children under 5 years of age.

## Geographic areas: migration flows



### Across Australia, new and longer-term residents differ

New residents generally have different characteristics to longer-term residents. In 2006, new residents were younger on average than longer-term residents with a median age of 31 years compared with 41 years, as young people are more likely to move than older people (see the 'Population overview', p. 2–8). Associated with their young age profile, 21% of new residents were studying, compared with 12% of longer-term residents. A higher proportion of new residents lived in rented housing than longer-term residents (49% compared with 20%). In contrast, longer-term residents were more likely to live in housing that was owned outright or with a mortgage (78% compared with 49%). Renting could be more affordable for new residents, or provide flexibility while they try living in an area before deciding to settle more permanently and perhaps buy a home. Further, renting may be preferable for people who make temporary moves, for education or contract work.

New residents were less likely overall to be in the labour force (see Glossary) than longer-term residents. However in the 15–34 year age group, new residents who moved from within Australia had slightly higher labour force participation (78%) than longer-term residents (75%), suggesting that employment opportunities are a factor for younger people who move. Conversely, for those in the older working ages (45–64 years), labour force participation of all new residents was lower than longer-term residents (65% compared with 73%), related to retirement decisions. The unemployment rate of new residents was 7.8%, almost twice the rate of longer-term residents (4.6%). Some unemployed new residents may not have had time to find work, or to have established social networks that are useful in job searching.<sup>3</sup>

Even so, new residents in each age group were more highly qualified: 47% had a degree or higher qualification compared with 37% of longer-term residents. Consequently, they were less likely to work in a low skilled

New and longer-term residents

		Capital cities	Coastal centres	Inland centres	Country coastal areas	Country inland areas
New residents	'000	1 351.5	563.5	150.4	351.5	355.3
Longer-term residents	'000	9 561.5	1 781.8	550.1	1 134.6	1 286.4
New residents	%	12.3	23.7	21.2	23.4	21.3
<b>Total population(a)</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>11 850.5</b>	<b>2 555.3</b>	<b>756.0</b>	<b>1 609.4</b>	<b>1 783.2</b>
<b>Total population(a)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>63.7</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>9.6</b>

(a) Includes people who did not have a usual address, did not fully state their address, or were in migratory, shipping or offshore areas 5 years ago.

occupation than longer-term residents (42% compared with 45%), and more likely to live in a higher income household<sup>4</sup> (23% compared with 21%). For more information about the relationship between employment, qualifications and income see the 'Work overview', p. 138–150.

Capital cities

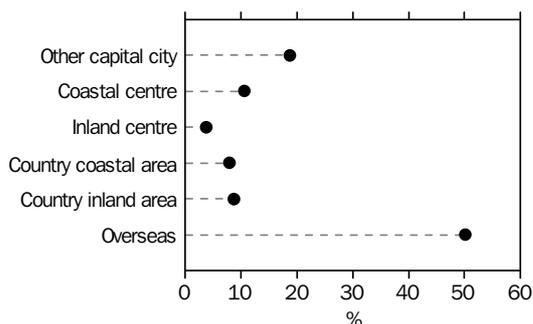
According to the 2006 Census, the flow of new residents into Australia's capital cities was larger than the flows into other areas (1.4 million new residents compared with between 150,000 and 564,000 in the other areas). However, new residents had a smaller impact on the composition of capital cities: they represented 12% of the usual resident population of the capital cities in 2006, compared with 21% or more in the other geographic areas.

Capital cities are the main entry points for migrants to Australia, and reflecting this, new residents who were overseas in 2001 made up half of all new residents in capital cities. Almost three quarters of new residents from overseas were recent arrivals (see Glossary) and one quarter were Australian residents who were overseas in 2001 and had since returned to Australia.

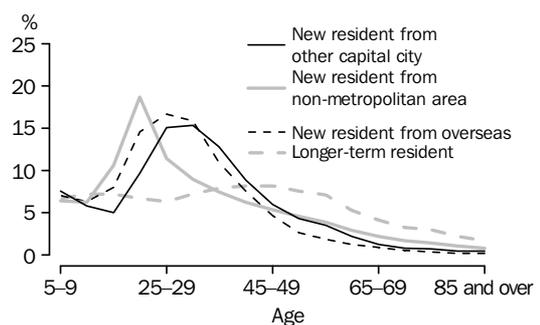
New residents in capital cities were younger on average than people who moved to the other geographic areas, except inland centres. New residents in capital cities and inland centres had a median age of 29 years, while new residents in the other geographic regions had median ages of 33 years or more. There was also a large difference between the median ages of new residents (29 years) and people who had left a capital city and moved to a non-metropolitan area or different capital city (34 years).

Reflecting the range of educational opportunities available in capital cities, new residents aged 15 years and over had higher participation in education than longer-term residents (27% compared with 14%). Education thus emerges as one factor associated with migration to capital cities. Supporting this, a higher proportion of new residents in capital cities were students (27%) than in the other geographic areas (10% to 22%). The high proportion of students among new residents from overseas (34%) contributed to this pattern, although new residents from non-metropolitan areas were also more likely to be studying than new residents in the other geographic areas.

New residents to capital cities: location in 2001



Age profile of residents of capital cities



The high participation of new residents in education in capital cities meant that their labour force participation was slightly lower than longer-term residents (73% compared with 77% in the 15–64 year age group). Lower labour force participation among new residents from overseas (67%) influenced the lower overall participation of new residents.

However, new residents from other capital cities had higher labour force participation than longer-term residents (81% compared with 77%). They were a slightly older group than new residents from non-metropolitan areas, with a lower proportion of students (17%). They appeared to be doing well in the labour market: half of employed new residents from other capital cities were Managers or Professionals. Associated with this, a high proportion of new residents from other capital

cities lived in *higher income households* (40%). In contrast, high proportions of new residents from non-metropolitan areas (45%), overseas (40%) and longer-term residents (43%) worked in low skilled occupations and they were less likely to live in *higher income households*.

New residents in capital cities were more likely to live in rental accommodation than new residents in the other geographic regions (59% compared with 49% or less). This is likely to reflect both the high proportion of students among new residents and their younger age profile, and the higher cost of buying a house in capital cities than in other areas. In addition, people who make temporary moves to cities for education or work may prefer rental accommodation. For more information see 'Housing across Brisbane and Melbourne city rings', p. 224-232.

**Characteristics of new and longer-term residents: capital cities and coastal centres**

		New residents			Longer-term residents
		From capital cities	From non-metropolitan areas	Total(a)	
<b>Capital city</b>					
Population	'000	254.0	419.9	1 351.5	9 561.5
Proportion of people who...					
are students(b)	%	17.2	23.0	27.5	13.6
are in the labour force(c)	%	81.4	77.8	72.9	76.8
are in low skilled occupations(d)	%	31.6	44.6	39.7	43.2
live in lower income households(e)	%	10.7	17.4	14.5	17.9
live in higher income households(e)	%	40.1	23.8	28.0	24.2
<b>Coastal centre</b>					
Population	'000	198.9	284.9	563.5	1 781.8
Proportion of people who...					
are students(b)	%	12.4	15.9	15.9	11.3
are in the labour force(c)	%	74.0	75.7	74.3	74.6
are in low skilled occupations(d)	%	40.6	47.8	44.3	48.3
live in lower income households(e)	%	20.1	21.8	20.2	24.7
live in higher income households(e)	%	20.8	16.8	18.7	15.2

(a) Includes new residents who were overseas in 2001.

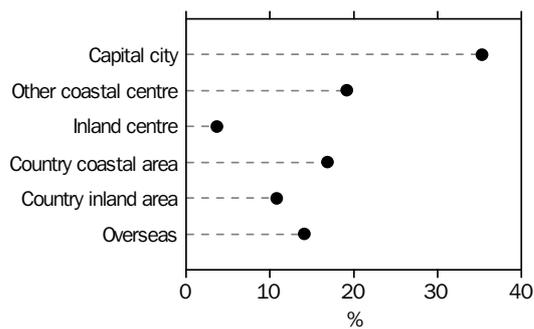
(b) People aged 15 years and over.

(c) People aged 15 to 64 years.

(d) Employed people. See Glossary for definition of low skilled occupation.

(e) People in private households. See Glossary for definition of lower income and higher income households.

**New residents to coastal centres: location in 2001**



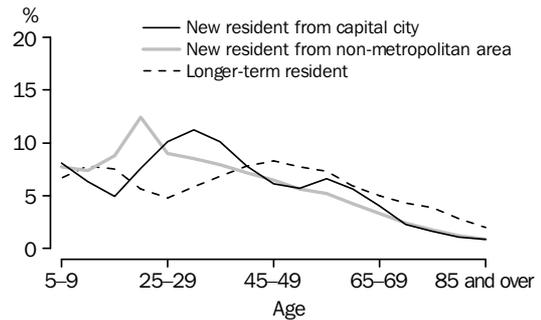
**Coastal centres**

Migration flows to coastal areas, particularly to the population centres, such as the Gold Coast (Qld) or Bunbury (WA), are an important feature of migration within Australia. According to the 2006 Census, 564,000 people moved to a coastal centre from 2001 to 2006. Of new residents in coastal centres, 35% lived in a capital city in 2001, 19% in other coastal centres and 17% in country coastal areas.

While capital cities attracted mostly young new residents, coastal centres attracted both young and older migrants. New residents had a median age of 33 years, similar to the median age of people who had left a coastal centre and moved to a different coastal centre or geographic area (32 years). The age structure of new residents was notably different to longer-term residents. This, in combination with the high proportion of the population who were new residents (24%), meant that new residents had an impact on the population composition of coastal centres.

Older people represented a larger share of all new residents in coastal centres than in capital cities—24% were 50 years and over compared with 12% of new residents in capital cities. A relatively large proportion of new residents in coastal centres who moved from capital cities were in the early retirement age group (55–64 years) compared with the age profile of new residents in capital cities. This reflects the many people who relocate to coastal centres on retirement.

**Age profile of residents of coastal centres**



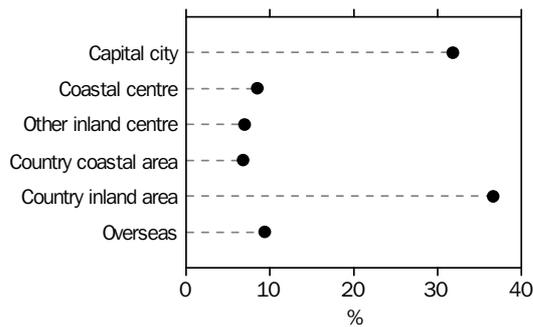
Around 21% of new residents who moved from non-metropolitan areas were aged 15–24 years, drawn to coastal centres for both work and study. A high proportion of this group worked in the Retail trade, Accommodation and food services or Construction industries (49%). Almost as many were students (45%). New residents from capital cities tended to be older, with 21% in the 25–34 year age group. Health care and social assistance and Public administration and safety were the main industries of employment of this group (12% and 11% respectively). Many coastal centres, particularly those in Queensland and Western Australia, have experienced relatively fast population growth.<sup>5</sup> Associated expansion in employment opportunities in key industries has attracted more people to these areas.

**Inland centres**

Between 2001 and 2006, the flow of people into inland centres, such as Bendigo or Tamworth, was smaller (150,000) than flows to other regions. This was consistent with the small total population of inland centres (756,000) compared with other areas described in this article.

New residents represented 21% of the population of inland centres. Reflecting a general trend in the movement of population from surrounding areas to urban areas, 37% of new residents in inland centres (55,000 people) lived in country inland areas in 2001. This was a comparatively large share of the new residents, considering the small proportion of Australians who lived in these areas (10% in 2006).

**New residents to inland centres: location in 2001**

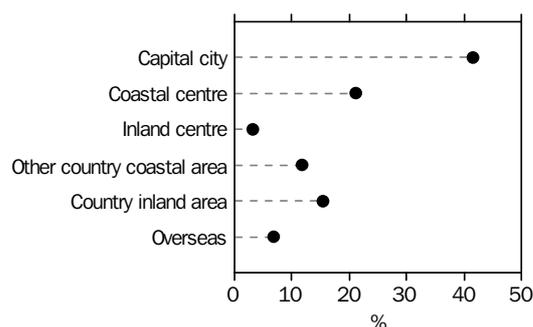


New residents in inland centres had a young age profile (median age of 29 years), similar to the age profile of new residents in capital cities. This can be attributed to both the large flow of young people from non-metropolitan areas, and the relatively small flow of older people moving to inland centres, compared with the flow of older people moving to coastal areas. New residents had a similar age profile to the people who had left an inland centre and moved elsewhere: both groups had a median age of 29 years.

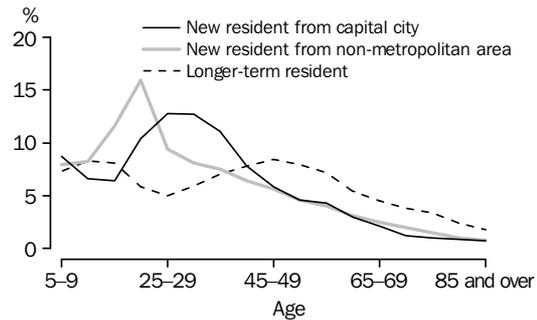
All of the inland centres have university campuses or vocational education facilities, and as in capital cities, these attracted a relatively large flow of students, especially from non-metropolitan areas. One fifth of new residents (15 and over) were students, and half of these students were young people (15–24) who had moved from a non-metropolitan area.

New and longer-term residents in inland centres had similar labour force participation (75% and 76% respectively). Employed new residents most commonly worked in Health care and social assistance or Public administration and safety (both 12%), while a large group of employed longer-term residents worked in Retail trade (14%). An exception was Kalgoorlie, where 25% of new residents and 20% of longer-term residents worked in the Mining industry.

**New residents to country coastal areas: location in 2001**



**Age profile of inland centres**



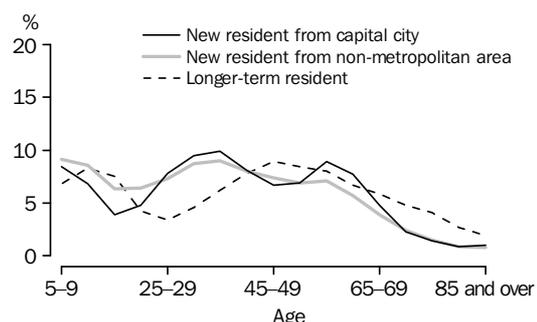
**Country coastal areas**

The characteristics of new residents who moved to country coastal areas were similar to those who moved to country inland areas, though they were quite different to new residents in capital cities and inland and coastal centres. Around 351,000 people were new residents in country coastal areas in 2006. New residents came mainly from capital cities (42%), and coastal centres (21%). Just over 23% of all people in country coastal areas were new residents.

Around 41% of new residents in country coastal areas lived in families with children under 15, similar to those in country inland areas (43%) but higher than those in capital cities (37%), making this a distinctive aspect of migration to country areas.

Movement of older people is another distinctive aspect of migration to country coastal areas. A higher proportion of new residents in country coastal areas than those in other areas were older 'sea changers', that is people of early retirement age (55–64 years) who previously lived in a capital city. As a result, the median age of new residents in country coastal areas was 37 years, the highest of new residents in any of the geographic areas. People who had left a country coastal area and moved to a different country coastal

**Age profile of country coastal areas**



Characteristics of new and longer-term residents: inland centres and country areas

		New residents			Longer-term residents
		From capital cities	From non-metropolitan areas	Total(a)	
<b>Inland centre</b>					
Population	'000	47.8	88.4	150.4	550.1
Proportion of people who...					
are students(b)	%	19.0	22.7	22.3	12.2
are in the labour force(c)	%	77.2	74.4	74.7	76.3
are in low skilled occupations(d)	%	36.4	47.0	42.7	48.5
live in lower income households(e)	%	17.2	22.0	19.8	23.3
live in higher income households(e)	%	24.8	15.4	19.2	14.6
<b>Country coastal area</b>					
Population	'000	146.3	181.5	351.5	1 134.6
Proportion of people who...					
are students(b)	%	9.0	10.6	10.2	10.1
are in the labour force(c)	%	68.7	69.9	69.6	72.3
are in low skilled occupations(d)	%	39.7	46.0	42.7	47.7
live in lower income households(e)	%	26.0	26.9	25.8	30.1
live in higher income households(e)	%	15.4	13.8	15.1	10.8
<b>Country inland area</b>					
Population	'000	130.1	202.4	355.3	1 286.4
Proportion of people who...					
are students(b)	%	10.4	11.8	11.6	9.7
are in the labour force(c)	%	72.3	72.9	72.8	74.8
are in low skilled occupations(d)	%	39.9	45.1	42.8	45.7
live in lower income households(e)	%	23.7	24.4	23.5	28.1
live in higher income households(e)	%	17.7	15.9	17.2	11.9
(a) Includes new residents who were overseas in 2001.					
(b) People aged 15 years and over.					
(c) People aged 15 to 64 years.					
(d) Employed people. See Glossary for definition of low skilled occupation.					
(e) People in private households. See Glossary for definition of lower income and higher income households.					

or geographic area were younger on average than new residents (median age of 32 years compared with 37 years). In contrast with other geographic areas, new residents from non-metropolitan areas and those from capital cities had a similar age profile.

Consistent with the presence of retired people, new residents in country coastal areas were more likely to live in a *lower income household* than new residents in other geographic areas (26% compared with 15% to 24%). Even so, they were more likely than new residents in the other areas to live in a house that was owned outright or with a mortgage (62% compared with 41% to 57%). This was influenced by the very high proportion of new residents aged 55–64 living in a home owned outright or with a mortgage, particularly those from capital cities (86%)—a larger proportion of new residents in country coastal areas than in other areas. Many new residents may have retired, sold their homes in other areas and bought property on the coast. Their assets may have allowed them to buy a home while having *lower household income*.

A large group of new residents aged 55–64 were retirees, with 57% not in the labour force compared with 45% of longer-term residents. This contributed to the overall lower labour force participation among new residents than longer-term residents.

Health care and social assistance and Retail trade were the most common industries of employment for new residents to country coastal areas (both 11% of employed new residents). In contrast, Agriculture, forestry and fishing and Retail trade were the most common industries of employment for longer-term residents (both 12%). Longer-term residents were twice as likely as new residents to work in Agriculture, forestry and fishing.

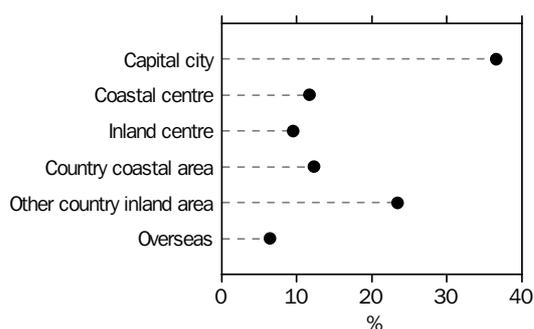
## Country inland areas

A large group of people moved to country inland areas between 2001 and 2006 (355,000). Even so, many country inland areas experienced population decline in this period.<sup>6</sup> Although the largest group of new residents in country inland areas lived in a capital city in 2001 (37%), almost one quarter moved from other country inland areas (23%). This was comparatively high, considering how few Australians lived in these areas (10% in 2006), and suggests substantial population churn within country inland areas. Such churn may be related to a number of factors. Long-term restructuring of the agricultural industry has led to movement of people with specialised skills needed for work available in country inland areas. Further, drought has had an impact on employment in certain areas. In addition, there has been substantial growth in employment opportunities in mining in some country inland areas.

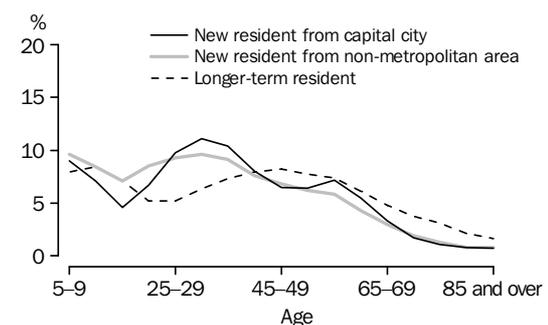
Families with children are an important part of the picture of migration into country inland areas. Almost 43% of new residents in these areas lived in a family with children under 15, the highest of any geographic area.

New residents to country inland areas had a median age of 34 years, while people who had left and moved to a different country inland or geographic area had a median age of 30 years. New residents from capital cities were slightly older on average than new residents from non-metropolitan areas (median ages of 35 years and 33 years respectively). This can be partly attributed to the higher proportion of new residents from capital cities in the early retirement age group (55–64 years), perhaps representing rural ‘tree changers’, similar to coastal ‘sea changers’. Compared with new residents, longer-term residents in country inland areas had a much older age profile, with a median age of 44 years.

### New residents to country inland areas: location in 2001



### Age profile: country inland areas



In country inland areas a similar proportion of new residents and longer-term residents were labour force participants (73% compared with 75%). However, a higher proportion of new residents aged 45–64 were not in the labour force (35% compared with 26% of longer-term residents). Of those who were employed, Agriculture, forestry and fishing was the most common industry of employment for both longer-term residents and new residents from non-metropolitan areas, although longer-term residents were more likely to work in this field (20% compared with 14%). The most common industry of employment for new residents from capital cities was Health care and social assistance (10%). In Western Australia, Mining was a major industry of employment for all new residents (15% compared with 6% of longer-term residents).

## Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2003, 'Youth migration in Australia' in *Australian Social Trends 2003*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 Of the Canberra/Queanbeyan statistical district, only the Queanbeyan Statistical Subdivision is included as an inland centre.

3 ABS 2002, 'Searching for work' in *Australian Social Trends 2002*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Household income is equalised gross household income. For details of the household income groups used see the Glossary.

5 ABS 2008, *Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2006–07*, cat. no. 3218.0, ABS, Canberra.

6 ABS 2007, *Regional Population Growth, Australia, 1996 to 2006*, cat. no. 3218.0, ABS, Canberra.