

MANAGING POPULATION AND CHANGE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE



AUSTRALIAN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION

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Executive Summary

Australia's population at the national, state and territory and local level is determined by natural increase and migration. Our ability to manage that population and the changes in population requires a strategic partnership between all three levels of Government which involves closer collaboration and alignment not only between levels of Governments but also with industry and the community. We need an overarching population strategy to plan and set a coordinated vision at the national level, which can then inform strategies and actions at the state and local levels. National policies and actions should reflect input from the state level which itself should draw on local input.

There are 537 councils in Australia and no two councils are identical. Their communities are also the product of a combination of natural increase and migration within states, between states and from international sources. The ability of local government areas to retain and attract population depends to a great degree on quality of life and liveability. Liveability in turn depends on economic, social, cultural, geographic and environmental issues.

Australia's local governments are created and maintained under state and territory legislation and many of the factors that contribute to the liveability in a council area depend on state and territory government policies and actions as well as those of the Federal Government.

Liveability at the council level also reflects the capacity of individual councils to make the investments necessary in community infrastructure and services, often in partnership with the other levels of government, with community groups and with business. The capacity of individual councils varies as does the need for investment but our current approaches are not delivering the best for our communities and we can and must do better.

There is already growing community backlash in response to crowding, congestion and overdevelopment in many of our capital cities. Infrastructure delivery is struggling to keep pace with rapid population growth and change. Metropolitan councils are consequently dealing with the frontline impact of Australia's increasing population and the demand for new infrastructure and services. For the inner-city councils, the challenge is around managing density and offsetting this density with a high-quality public realm essential for quality of life and social cohesion. "Middle ring" councils are concerned about their capacity to provide high quality open space particularly in light of the cost of land and competition for space in parks. Community facilities and local roads are also ageing and require significant maintenance and upgrades to meet the needs of the community.

In the outer ring of the cities there is a lag in infrastructure provision which is reducing the liveability of communities. This can mean that public transport networks or local community services are not delivered until well after new residents move in and patterns of behaviour, such as car use, have become well entrenched. These infrastructure deficiencies are increasingly limiting the fast-growing outer suburbs' ability to sustain continued growth at their current high rate.

There is a prevailing view that the population of regional Australia is in decline, that regions struggle to attract and retain permanent residents, and that there is a need for prescriptive incentives to encourage international migrants to move to and stay in regional areas. However, the reality is that many regional

areas are experiencing population growth and overseas-born residents are a significant, and in some cases, the only contributor to that growth.

Infrastructure spending is strongly weighted to solving problems in capital cities (particularly access to the CBDs) rather than enhancing liveability of the outer suburbs and regional towns and cities.

Overall, the Australian population wants liveable communities. To achieve this, regardless of location, there is a suite of essential elements which foster liveability (including but not limited to):

- access to secure and affordable water, energy and communications services;
- access to a range of community services and infrastructure that supports health, education, recreation and social interaction and well-being;
- a range of housing options, which is affordable and in adequate supply;
- transport accessibility, both within the community (including effective and adequate public transport options), and connected to other centres via strategically linked routes;
- pleasant environments, including parks, gardens, footpaths and bikeways as well as built infrastructure that is appropriate for the climatic conditions; and
- a range of education and employment pathways to cater to different age groups and skill groups, that considers also culturally-diverse and non-English speaking populations.

At the finer grain, the critical things that need to occur to achieve a liveable community are:

Metropolitan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic land planning, including corridors and staged land releases linked with supporting major infrastructure • affordable housing, with adequate supply and tenure options • socially coherent, culturally-diverse communities • access to higher education and professional occupations outside the CBD, particularly in the fast-growing outer suburbs • access to healthcare and transport options to support work and study • appropriate emergency management
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing populations, linked to a mix of migration, birth rates, working aged residents to assemble a critical mass • overt and strategic investment in essential community and social infrastructure • access to higher education and diverse employment opportunities, especially careers for young people • natural environment accessibility and protection/capitalisation of local area heritage • range of lifestyle opportunities • affordable housing with adequate supply and tenure options • uncongested traffic routes • digital connectivity • quality health services • good transport access and accessibility (public transport and freight) • financial incentives (e.g. zoned tax benefits) • diverse economic base, with facilitation of entrepreneurship
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing populations via migration and birth rates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to higher education and diverse employment opportunities, particularly for young people • overt and strategically planned investment in essential community and social infrastructure, including digital infrastructure and telecommunications and secure water supplies • affordable housing with adequate supply and tenure options • public transport • lifestyle opportunities • access to major centres for services • affordable and renewable energy options • access to state and federal data • diversification of economies and leveraging of economic opportunities including eco-tourism and agritourism • natural environment accessibility and protection/capitalisation of local area heritage
Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing populations via migration and birth rates • employment opportunities and job retention • overt and strategically planned investment in essential community and social infrastructure, including digital infrastructure and telecommunications and secure water supplies • access to education • economic opportunities including eco-tourism and agritourism • lifestyle opportunities and community well-being programs, including sport and recreational activities • proximity to a regional centre • transport accessibility (road and air) • subsidised, affordable housing • induction programs for new residents

This submission has been prepared by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) . ALGA is the national voice of local government in Australia, representing 537 councils across the country. In structure, ALGA is a federation of state and territory local government associations. Each of the local government associations have provided input into this submission. In addition, the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors, the National Growth Areas Alliance and the Regional Australia Institute have also had input into this submission.

Given the timeframes available to prepare this submission it has not been possible to canvas the views of each of Australia’s local governments on what they consider their population carrying capacity to be, their skill needs, the contribution of the Commonwealth’s migration program to population growth or other aspects important to population planning and management. The submission consequently focusses broadly on types of regions. Appendix 1 includes the views of state and territory local government associations on the growth enablers and barriers from a local government perspective by jurisdiction. Appendix 2 summarises barriers to managing, attracting and retaining population by region type.

Recommendations

Overarching Population Strategy

- An overarching population strategy is needed to plan and set a coordinated vision at the national level. A more strategic approach needs to be taken to ensure that all levels of government, business, and the community are working towards a common goal. There needs to be a strategic partnership between all three levels of Government which sees closer collaboration and alignment not only between levels of Governments, but also with industry and the community.
- Local government needs to be part of ongoing discussions and planning. As the level of government closest to community, facing the daily task of delivering a range of social, economic and environmental services, local government input at early stages of population policy and strategic planning is critical to ensuring operational and place-based factors are adequately embedded.
- Regional and place-based governance arrangements involving the three tiers of government are essential to ensure coordination of both services and infrastructure. Governance requires a participatory approach, engaging with and respecting local and regional characteristics.
- Regional and local level implementation and adjustment to respond to both increasing and decreasing populations needs to be adequately resourced through repairing funding assistance to local government via Financial Assistance Grants.

Funding

- The level of Federal funding available to local governments to respond to population growth needs to increase through Financial Assistance Grants and specific partnership programs.
- At the state level, we need to remove suppression on local government revenue such as rate capping/pegging which limits the ability of councils to set their own property rates in response to community preferences and constrains their ability to provide the infrastructure needs to support development in our cities and regions.
- There needs to be a rebalancing of national and state infrastructure spending to enhance liveability in regional centres as well as dealing with congestion and housing problems in capital cities.
- There should be closer analysis of the net economic gains and losses from increasing urbanisation focused on capital cities alone.

Incentives to Relocate

- Providing financial incentives to encourage people living elsewhere in Australia to relocate to regional areas is identified as a more interventionist possible approach for increasing population and meeting skilled workforce needs.

- Coordination and incentives to move people away from high growth areas are required, recognising the opportunity for education-based incentives that also address skills gaps.
- Incentives are needed to address barriers that stop movements, with social, economic and environmental factors that influence a resident's decision on where to live including (but not limited to): social cohesion in a new community; links to family and friends including transport and telecommunications accessibility; work, education and career pathways; safety and feelings of security; liveability and comfort commensurate with local climatic conditions; appropriate and affordable housing options and other cost of living considerations; community, healthcare and government service accessibility, and water security.
- Remove barriers to secondary migration of international migrants wanting to relocate to regional areas, and provide funding to support community initiatives to contact and assist settlement of these people
- Incentives should be provided to encourage suitable new international arrivals to settle in places other than the capital cities
- Incentives should be provided for relocation which appropriately consider changing environmental characteristics including climate change and flow on costs of living

An overview of local government

It is essential that local governments have an active and ongoing role in population planning and management working alongside the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.

Local government is the government of communities and places. It plays an important role in the lives of citizens in the six Australian states and the Northern Territory and delivers and manages change at the local level. There are currently 537 local governments in Australia which make up the third tier of government in the Australian federal system. Constitutional responsibility for local government lies with the state and territory governments and local governments derive their functions and powers from state legislation. There are six separate state systems overseeing local governments, with a seventh system operating in the Northern Territory. In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), the ACT Government provides services delivered by local governments elsewhere.

Local governments undertake regulatory tasks that would be difficult for a state government to administer because of their localised and varying nature. These tasks can include building inspection, planning and development approval, dog and cat management, parking, food and health inspection. Local Government is also responsible for the delivery of many local services including roads and road maintenance, water supply and sewerage, community facilities like swimming pools, public halls and libraries, aged and child care facilities, stormwater drainage, waste management, natural resource management, green and public space provision and maintenance and emergency and disaster response and recovery.

Apart from the diversity that results from the separate state based legislative systems, local governments also vary in population size, area and geophysical characteristics, the degree of remoteness from major urban and regional centres and level of financial sustainability. In aggregate, local governments raise more than 80 percent of their own revenue. Individual councils have differing abilities to raise revenue, based on location, population size, rate base and the ability to levy user charges. This diversity has important implications for local governments' ability to provide social services and local infrastructure to respond to changing demographics and population growth or decline.

Local government is the means of ensuring that local communities' function effectively on a daily basis and are provided with the basic services and facilities that Australian communities expect to find in suburbs, towns and rural areas. Councils play a critical role in building local identity, community wellbeing and social cohesion and contributing to national productivity. Local governments are fundamental to achieving liveability in our cities, towns and rural areas.

Quality of life and liveability

The perception of quality of life and liveability feature strongly in the decisions of individuals and families about whether to stay in a community or their willingness to move to another area. There are often tangible and intangible factors that make a place attractive to live and work in.

Drivers of liveability can include having sufficient income (by implication, education and employment), accessibility (transport – including public transport and lack of congestion, walkability), personal relationships and connections (social capital – networks, trust), individuals feeling good about themselves (self-esteem, confidence), and having control over personal environments (such as capabilities to make choices and problem-solve).

Local governments, through their provision of community infrastructure and services, including land use planning, play a significant role in ensuring the liveability, sustainability and wellbeing of our communities. Liveability, particularly in cities and our larger regional centres, is influenced by a range of different factors including:

- Feeling of safety, opportunities for participation and social cohesion;
- Access and availability of community services such as arts and culture, entertainment, sport and recreation;
- Access and availability of community gathering places particularly focussed around a vibrant restaurant and café scene and a high quality public realm;
- Public open space including parks, playgrounds and reserves within walking distance;
- Good accessibility including walkability and public transport, lack of congestion;
- Sufficient income (by implication, education and employment) and cost of living commensurate with income;
- Proximity to quality higher order services such as health care and education; and
- Affordable and appropriate housing.

Local Government provides many of these services and has an important role in the development and support of communities as well as fostering social cohesion. Councils provide the conduit by which local and regional communities express their identity, enhance their well-being and relate to other levels of Government. It is the level of government that most people come in contact with for information and support and it is the level of government that is consistently sought out for commentary and leadership on local social issues.

Metropolitan and regional centres can provide both a high standard and range of physical infrastructure to support economic and lifestyle benefits, such as libraries, pools, sporting facilities, retail hubs, parks, aged care and child care services and are able to attract and retain populations. However, population pressures in some locations have meant that these services can be over capacity or not available. For

the high growth capital cities there are significant challenges in keeping pace with improved infrastructure, increased services and equitable access to housing.

Some regional centres and rural and remote areas can leverage their existing advantages in terms of liveability for example clean environments, lack of congestion and affordable housing, to actively promote their regions as great places to live and work. These strategies can also target skilled and experienced workers from overseas, interstate and intrastate, and often emphasise tree change and sea change lifestyle-based migration opportunities.

Many regional populations are growing on the basis of their existing services, accessibility and infrastructure, but future growth and the continued attraction of new residents will rely on more equitable investment in infrastructure and services to further build appealing, adaptable and viable communities that people want to live in and contribute to in the long term.

Infrastructure

Provision of quality physical infrastructure is a key enabler that not only contributes to the liveability of a region, but also promotes economic growth by unlocking private sector investment opportunities, enhances market connectedness, and improves productivity. Combined with other economic development strategies and initiatives, physical infrastructure facilitates the creation of jobs, which is a necessary condition for growing populations.

The provision and standard of physical infrastructure plays a role in the attraction and deterrent perception of a place to live. Transport routes, including roads under local government control as well as key state and nationally-important roads and rail, can foster the ability of a local community and population to grow and support local and regional economic growth.

The challenge for economic growth and diversity has been the lack of investment in strategic planning, infrastructure and service provision by governments. Associated with this challenge is the capacity of councils to fund local services (particularly in a rate-capped environment) and where small economies of scale mean that communities do not have capacity to pay higher rates.

Physical infrastructure priorities vary by region, but typically include:

- transport infrastructure – road, rail, air and intermodal – and public transport services;
- communications infrastructure, including mobile coverage and improved connectivity, and high-speed broadband;
- sustainable supply of quality water; and
- reliable energy generation, storage and supply.

Metropolitan councils are dealing with the frontline impact of Australia's increasing population and the demand for new infrastructure and services. For the inner-city councils, the challenge is around managing density and offsetting this density with a high-quality public realm (streets, pathways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and public buildings and facilities) essential for quality of life and social cohesion. "Middle ring" councils are concerned about their capacity to provide high quality open space particularly due to the cost of land and competition for space in parks and their ability to address congestion on local roads. Community facilities are also ageing and require significant maintenance and upgrades to meet the needs of the community.

In greenfield areas, typically the outer ring of the cities, there is a lag in infrastructure provision which is reducing the liveability of the communities. This can mean that public transport networks or local community services are not delivered until well after new residents move in and patterns of behaviour, such as car use, have become well entrenched. Fast growing outer suburbs generated 35% of population growth and 25% of jobs growth between 2011-2016 but only received 13% of infrastructure investment. On a per capita basis, asset provision in the fast-growing outer suburbs is 20% below the metropolitan average. Unlike inner/middle areas, the fast-growing outer suburbs can no longer rely on the assets available in the metro CBD local government areas due to the long and increasing commute times. These outer areas are under-serviced and under-resourced in infrastructure and service

provision. In 2016, a \$50 billion backlog in health and transport infrastructure in these fast-growing outer suburbs was identified, as compared to neighbouring middle-ring suburban LGAs.¹

With the desirability of a capital city lifestyle clearly being challenged, improvements in regional city and town infrastructure that further enhance their liveability will increase the flow of people out of congested cities without the need for individual relocation incentives. While population growth in major metropolitan local government areas (10.5% for 2012-2016) was higher than regional areas, population growth in regional cities was not far behind. Regional areas in close proximity to the major metropolitans (connected lifestyle regions) grew by 9.3% across the same period and other regional cities grew at a rate of 7.8%. Mid-sized towns that act as industry and service hubs grew by 3.3%, and even across the more isolated heartland regions populations did not decline but in fact grew by 1.6%.

In order for regions to continue to grow and attract new residents, there needs to be a more equitable investment in their infrastructure and services to further build appealing, adaptable and viable communities that people want to live in and contribute to in the long term.

¹ Meeting Growth Area Infrastructure Investment Needs, SGS Economics and Planning, 2016 via NGAA)

Social Cohesion

Underpinning how successfully a community manages population change has a lot to do with the strength and cohesion of the community as well as local leadership (typically led by the council). Whilst communities are undergoing change, Local Governments understand the importance of the strength of the social fabric of their communities as much as the necessity for physical infrastructure, especially to foster liveable and inclusive communities.

Local governments' role in fostering social cohesion with their communities is varied but can include:

- Consulting and engaging with community leaders;
- Mapping and understanding community profile and needs;
- Planning and delivering relevant local infrastructure and services;
- Advocacy on behalf of communities for support services;
- Providing opportunities for celebration and promotion of cultural diversity; and
- Hosting citizenship ceremonies to welcome new citizens.

Migration

Australians 'vote with their feet' in choosing where to live. While capital city growth has been high in recent years, between 2011 and 2016 over 650,000 capital city residents moved out, and of these over 400,000 (63%) chose to move to a regional area. Over the past 4 years, Greater Sydney has shown a net regional internal migration loss, and each of those years the majority of people that left Greater Sydney moved to other parts of New South Wales (ABS 3412.0 - Migration, Australia, 2016-17).

Movement of people within Australia is the major component of population change in regional Australia and a major contributor to population growth and the offset of population decline within the regions. While the highest number of people moved to coastal regional cities within close proximity to the major capitals between 2012 and 2016, people also moved to a diverse range of regional areas including inland regional cities; mid-sized towns that act as industry and service hubs; and regional heartlands more geographically isolated from the major capitals.

Nationally, young people 20-29 years old are the most mobile, yet movement from major capital cities to regional areas of Australia peaks in the 30-39 and 60-69 age groups. This is positive for regional Australia because these age groups represent a workforce that can bring a range of skills and experience to regional communities. Some of these people will move to regional Australia with their families which helps bolster school enrolments and participation in community activities, along with meeting labour force demands.

The major capital cities act as gateways for new temporary and permanent international migrants on their arrival. And with net overseas migration being the biggest component of population growth in Australia (60.6% of growth according to ABS 3101.0 - Australian Demographic Statistics, Jun 2018), the preference of new overseas migrants for capital cities is skewing population growth patterns. Despite regional Australia being home to nearly one third of the population, only 10% of all new arrivals between 2012 and 2016 settled in a regional area. If settlement of international migrants had been proportional to overall population distribution in Australia, an additional 213,081 migrants would have settled in regional Australia between 2012 and 2016.

Despite the predominance of international migrants settling in the capital cities they have also been moving to and contributing to regional communities, bringing their skills and experiences, and creating new opportunities for themselves and other residents. International migrants provide stability to communities in regional Australia by offsetting population decline and the departure of young adults, as well as being essential to meeting work force shortages. Regional migration of international migrants can be a win-win scenario for new arrivals and host communities in the regions. In many regional and remote places, population stability or growth has been based on international migration. An analysis of 2016 Census data shows that:

- 151 LGAs increased their overseas-born while decreasing their Australian-born population;

- 128 increased both their Australian-born and overseas-born population;
- 116 decreased both Australian-born and overseas-born population; and
- 20 increased Australian-born and decreased their overseas-born population.

There is an opportunity to build on the efforts of a growing number of regional communities that have already been successful in attracting international migrants through the development of place-based strategies. Regional cities such as Bendigo in Victoria; Mount Gambier in South Australia, Orange in New South Wales; and Toowoomba in Queensland have increased their populations by attracting overseas-born and Australia-born residents.

Australia’s current immigration, employment and settlement services are relatively siloed, imposing barriers to rural settlement. There is no systematic way for migrant workers to link up with rural employers, nor is there a systematic policy or integrated support mechanism to facilitate secondary migration away from metropolitan cities. With greater facilitation of relocation to rural areas and active community welcoming, more international migrants will come to call a rural community their home. Underpinned by a locally-led settlement strategy, rural and regional communities can welcome and host new migrants, play a key role in securing employment and housing, take into account culture, customs and the environment, and foster community cohesion. In areas of high migrant population, settlement services, literacy and education support, and employment pathways are essential – not only for the economic development of the community, but for creating a welcoming and caring environment. This is paramount to integration, resilience and economic success.

Local Governments play a significant role in ensuring that all refugees and new migrants feel welcomed and included, understand their rights and responsibilities, participate in the local community and are supported with appropriate services.

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRACTICE IN SUPPORTING COHESION AND INTEGRATION INCLUDE:

- VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MULTICULTURAL ISSUES NETWORK AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT MULTICULTURAL NETWORK NSW - NETWORKS FOR COUNCIL STAFF INTERESTED IN MULTICULTURAL SERVICES AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT;
- REFUGEE WELCOME ZONES - LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WHICH HAVE MADE A COMMITMENT TO WELCOMING REFUGEES INTO THE COMMUNITY, UPHOLDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF REFUGEES, DEMONSTRATING COMPASSION FOR REFUGEES AND ENHANCING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY;
- WELCOMING CITIES – A NETWORK WHICH SUPPORTS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ADVANCE COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE CAN BELONG AND PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND CIVIC LIFE.

Appendix 1 – State and Territory Local Government Associations

Growth Enablers and Barriers from a Local Government Perspective for each State and the Northern Territory

Jurisdiction	Specific Issues
<p>Local Government Association of Qld</p>	<p>The LGAQ has long been an advocate for a State Population Policy in Queensland. In 2010, the LGAQ as the peak body representing Queensland councils, established an Expert Panel to undertake a Public Inquiry on the need for a Queensland Population Policy. The Inquiry was aimed at stimulating debate on the need for a Queensland population policy within a national context, and potential benefits from development of such a policy.</p> <p>The Public Inquiry final report considers a range of issues relating to population growth and change, carrying capacity, infrastructure needs housing affordability, employment and skill development etc. and contains 12 recommendations that continue to be relevant in the context of the COAG population and migration agenda. Recommendations relate to: 1) the need for a State Population Policy, 2) Labour Market Stress, 3) Housing affordability, 4) Growth management, 5) Regional development, 6) Infrastructure investment and 7) Sustainable development.</p> <p>A copy of the Public Inquiry final report is attached below.</p> <div data-bbox="526 1129 581 1188" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">2010 LGAQ Population Report F</p> <p>In May 2018, the LGAQ made a submission to the Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into indicators of, and impact on regional inequality in Australia – see below attachment. The submission presents a concise summary of some key issues faced by regional Queensland communities and their local governments and makes reference to a number of other relevant LGAQ submissions and documents.</p> <div data-bbox="526 1478 581 1537" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">2018 LGAQ submission 115 to S</p>
<p>Local Government NSW</p>	<p>The real issue for State and local government in Sydney is that the very high level of population growth is outpacing capacity to deliver the infrastructure and services required to support that growth. There were already major infrastructure and service backlogs before the acceleration in population growth in recent years and the growth pressures are having a negative impact on liveability. There is a growing community backlash in response to crowding, congestion and overdevelopment.</p>

	<p>While many regional areas of NSW would welcome population growth, we have seen that it won't be driven or sourced from high or higher levels of migration or birth rates, at least not without inducements. Even then, it seems that it would only make a marginal difference. Further, policies for encouraging population growth in regional areas are not largely driven by migration numbers and national population growth rates, they are more about attracting people out of the cities and away from the coast to settle in rural/regional areas. This is largely independent of migration levels.</p>
<p>Local Government Association Tasmania</p>	<p>The population in Tasmania is around 517,000. Two key issues dominate any discourse about the population in Tasmania, they are the slow rate of growth and the rapidly ageing population. The slow rate of population growth is contributed to by a persistent trend of people of reproductive age leaving the State for employment opportunities elsewhere. These losses are also the primary cause of the accelerating rate of ageing of the Tasmanian population.</p> <p>A critical issue is how the various levels of Government work together to address the movement of younger Tasmanians to other places and also a current shift of older people to retire in Tasmania. In other words, how they work to balance the population profile more effectively. Without this balance there will continue to be significant impost on capacity for service and infrastructure provision as the population continues to age.</p> <p>While the population in the State is growing slowly, the household formation rate is increasing and household composition is changing, this results in a requirement for a wider variety of housing options (particularly in the metropolitan areas) which in turn places increasing demand on the housing market.</p> <p>Although the population overall is not increasing significantly in the State, many rural areas are in decline and there are some areas of significant local population increase, particularly in towns within commuter distance of the Capital City - Hobart e.g. Sorell and Kingston. In these locations large new housing developments are underway and this is placing increasing pressure on existing transport links and other associated services.</p> <p>The ageing population and workforce is creating employment demand in the State and there is a challenge to ensure available skills match current and future requirements.</p> <p>In general, across the State, there is an increasing demand for healthcare and social services and accommodation and food services (particularly in tourism hot spots) aquaculture, viticulture and fruit growing and a decline in mining, manufacturing and forestry.</p> <p>The State Government has indicated that growth in the total population to 650,000 by 2050 would be favourable. There are limited strategies associated</p>

	with this intent, but such strategies include advertising home ownership opportunities in Tasmania to people in major cities like Sydney.
WA Local Government Association	<p>It is a fundamental reality that service options become less diverse and less accessible relative to distance from the metropolitan area. In WA the lack of substantial urban settlement outside of metropolitan Perth coupled with a lack of restriction to the growth of Perth acts as a disincentive to the necessary investment to create a second alternate metropolis.</p> <p>It's also worth contemplating the degree to which growth is compatible with sustainability. It may be that the continued growth of Perth is unsustainable due to environmental impacts (water supply, water quality, congestion, etc.), and at the same time, growth of regions unachievable due to the significant infrastructure investment required to grow our regional cities – current population circa 30K – to a level capable of sustaining 300K-500K+.</p> <p>However, a key issue that has been raised by WALGA members is the lack of an overarching plan or vision for the state to bring these together. A more strategic approach needs to be taken to the future of our state, to ensure that all levels of government, business, and the community are working towards a common goal. There needs to be a strategic partnership between all three levels of Government which sees closer collaboration and alignment not only between levels of Governments, but also with industry and the community.</p> <p>The recent signing of the State-Local Government Partnership Agreement provides an important opportunity for a closer, more collaborative relationship between the two levels of Government to ensure our state is prepared for the future.</p>
Local Government Association NT	<p>Barriers to attracting and retaining people in rural and remote communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family members are based interstate • High cost of air transport • Lack of employer-supported cross-cultural training • High cost of living • High cost of training • Lack of housing and high costs for existing housing • Lack of suitable quantities of developed land for housing • Native Title claims slowing developments • Insufficient outlets for art and culture and sport and recreation • Harsh weather conditions
Local Government Association SA	<p>Research commissioned by the LGA SA has confirmed the links between South Australia's economic performance and demographic profile, and explored how strategic population policy might be used to improve the state's productivity, stem regional decline, and at the same time address national migration challenges.</p>

The study involved work by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies to understand the economic and demographic challenges and opportunities across the state's regions, and LGA engagement with the local government sector to explore individual councils' current capacity to accommodate population change, and the types of investments required to increase that capacity.

The problem: economic and population decline

South Australia's comparatively poor economic performance results from a combination of economic conditions, and demographic trends - specifically slow population growth and an ageing population. These factors tend to reinforce each other as a sluggish economy drives working age South Australians to seek opportunities elsewhere, and does little to attract others in.

A smaller working age population affects all South Australians, as it leads to reduced economic output, lower productivity, less consumer spending, and less government revenues to invest in services and infrastructure.

Keeping our regions alive

While the state as a whole and the Greater Adelaide metropolitan region have ageing population and ageing workforce, with a few exceptions the greatest population decline in South Australia is in our rural and regional areas. In these areas, many young people don't stay past secondary schooling, and less overseas migrants settle. The result is a shortfall in the skills, services and infrastructure these communities need to survive and thrive economically and socially.

The role of overseas migration

For almost 20 years, overseas migration has been the greatest contributor the state's overall population, countering the outflow of South Australians interstate and beyond. While there are opportunities to increase the positive impact of overseas migration on South Australia even further, policy change at the national level is needed for them to be realised.

Planning for migration

Should national policy change lead to increased migration to South Australia, and particularly regional areas, there is a need to ensure these areas have the physical, social and economic capacity to meet the inflow. This requires a strategic, partnership approach amongst all levels of government addressing important physical infrastructure, liveability factors, and programs and services to meet the needs of new arrivals and existing communities.

In September 2018 the LGASA provided the attached to submission to the South Australia Parliaments, Economic and Finance Committee Inquiry into the *Economic Contribution of Migrants*.



ECM_665878_v6_LG
A Submission into the

	<p>The LGASA is currently engaging with the local government sector to understand the current carrying capacity of individual councils, and the level of investment that would be required to accommodate significant population growth in the future</p>
<p>Municipal Association of Vic</p>	<p>Fast-growing population numbers alongside rapid urbanisation present major challenges and opportunities for Victoria. For example, the latest ABS population projections (30 November 2018) estimate that most of Victoria’s future population growth will mostly be in Greater Melbourne, with a projected increase of 6.2 million by 2027, only some 8 years away, and that Melbourne will be accommodating 85% of the 14.5 million Victorian population by 2066. Consequently, planning well for population growth and accommodate where people are choosing to live is an ongoing and significant issue for all levels of government. Solutions will by necessity have to involve all sorts of councils, both rural, regional and metropolitan, if population growth is to be managed in a sustainable way. Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils’ need for more direct Commonwealth Government funding to manage population and urbanisation growth - Need for targeted projects where ALGA and the state associations are resourced through federal funding to employ officers in state associations to work collaboratively with federal government departments on some hot-topic areas – one of our high priority nominations would be the question of housing affordability and need for better integration between federal/state/local planning policies - The emergence of technology as a new area of critical infrastructure requiring federal investment to assist councils deliver efficiencies and also evolve to new ways of councils engaging and empowering their citizens - Considering urban growth strategically to minimise unintended consequences such as loss of productive rural land for food production and economic growth - Maintaining the liveability of urban environments which will be relying even more on amenity provided by public places, such as parks and water sources for recreation and community connection - Need for all projects to be considered in the frame of how they enable community wellbeing and resilience, particularly for those communities facing population decline. The needs of an ageing population also need to be factored in to ensure there are appropriate services to enable in-home-care to mitigate impending pressures on the public health system from the ageing of the ‘baby boomer’ generation, and resilience of communities in the face of changing climatic conditions such as longer dryer periods punctuated by more intense storm events - Local community innovations and councils’ ability to pick up trends early mean they are an ideal partner for the Commonwealth Government to work closely with when initiatives are being planned. <p>In Victoria there are various types of infrastructure and services which require funding investment from Commonwealth Government. These include</p>

	<p>investment in critical infrastructure and services to be in place ahead of population arrivals. Inner and middle councils in Melbourne have ageing infrastructure designed over a hundred years ago for much smaller population levels and different approaches to managing greening and draining of the city. Retrofitting is costly and difficult in increasingly dense and crowded public places where developer contributions are more difficult to implement than in greenfield areas. Accessible jobs are critical for new growth areas.</p> <p>Opportunities for technological innovation and efficiency capture by councils are going to require upfront investment by the Commonwealth Government because the scale is currently beyond the capacity of individual councils. For example, the Roads to Recovery Program has been an excellent infrastructure program where federal funding has enabled council provision of the main connectivity conduits for rural, regional and metropolitan areas for many years. The future “highways” are also going to include technological connectivity and innovation. These will also attract opportunities for more jobs – which are critical attractors for population movement to areas needing population growth.</p> <p>The relatively close geographic proximity of large regional cities in Victoria provides many opportunities to achieve cost-effective scales of infrastructure provision necessary to manage population growth in proximity to employment sources.</p>
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Appendix 2 – Identified Barriers to Managing, Attracting and Retaining People by Scale

	Barriers to managing population growth	Barriers to attracting and retaining people
Capital Cities	<p>Undersupply of appropriate housing Inadequate essential infrastructure Lack of capacity & investment in transport systems Lack of focus on future requirements such as job skills, services etc Lack of population mobility Lack of State-wide economic strategy Lack of strategy, planning & funding for infrastructure Poor urban and regional planning Planning not supported by infrastructure No control on migrant numbers or location Demographic balance and workforce capabilities Inadequate healthcare High proportion of people not working age (SA) Low population growth – migrants, international students, birth rates (SA) Migrant preference for large cities</p>	<p>High population growth outstripping capacity (NSW) Limited affordable housing for service industries Low wages and limited career (Tas) Lack of job opportunities Pressure on health system & poor health system Traffic congestion Competition with East Coast (WA) Restrictive visa system Separation from families (NT) Competition with other cities and regions SA State Government charging skilled migrants school fees Poor or no settlement services High cost of living, air transport</p>
Regional Centres	<p>Lack of diverse lifestyle opportunities Population centralisation – Perth dominance Lack of State-wide economic strategy Cannot influence where migrants settle Public service jobs not encouraged (Tas). Lack of employment opportunities Lack of tertiary and career opportunities Lack of planning and funding for infrastructure and transport Lack of adequate essential infrastructure Lack of housing choice Poor urban and regional planning and not supported by infrastructure Adverse weather (SA)</p>	<p>Limited opportunities – employment & career, services, cultural diversity, isolation, education Migrant preferences for large cities related to perceived opportunities Lower status of universities Relative lack of opportunity for young people Limited information for migrants Access to specialist health care Dominance of Capital and interstate Lower wages Climate (too hot or cold – SA) and adverse/harsh weather (SA, NT, Tas) Lack of services & infrastructure SA State Government charging skilled migrants school fees. Distance from a major centre & cost of travel</p>

	<p>Low population growth Lack of demographic balance & workforce capabilities Inadequate health care and workforce capabilities</p>	<p>Low liveability, quality of life Lack of family proximity and support (NT) Transport accessibility High costs – housing, living, transport Native title slowing down development (NT) Lack of employer supported cross cultural training (NT)</p>
Rural	<p>Managing population decline Inadequate essential services Lack of diverse lifestyle opportunities Lifestyle expectations not met Lack of employment or dominance of one industry Cannot influence where migrants live Loss of young people Lack of State wide economic strategy Shift in economy from labour to capital Lack of education and career opportunities Lack of telecom connectivity Inadequate healthcare & education Dominance of Capital & coastal communities (East Coast) High % of pop not of working age Low population growth Adverse weather Lifestyle Lack of planning & funding for a range of infrastructure & transport</p>	<p>Access to health services Dominance of Capital Access to government services Limited commercial choice/diversity Attraction of regional centre Lack of job opportunities Lack of education opportunities Low standard and high cost of health Climate (adverse) Poor or no settlement services Poor access – transport and high costs of travel Restrictive visa system Retirees drift to coast & regional centres Seasonal nature of employment Water supply Loss of young people Poor telecommunications</p>
Remote	<p>Dominance of Capital Lack of education opportunities Lack of planning and funding for range of infrastructure & transport Low population growth Adverse weather Lifestyle Tyranny of distance and preference for east coast Inadequate healthcare and education services Low accessibility</p>	<p>Access to health services Poor job opportunities Isolation (& from family) Limited choices/diversity Poor accessibility and high costs of travel Distance from a major centre Lack of education opportunities Low levels of literacy and numeracy, cultural competency (NT) Poor or no settlement services Adverse weather & harsh conditions High costs of housing, living, training, telecom. Insufficient oppor for sport and rec and arts and culture Climate</p>