

ABS Estimated Residential Population brief:

POPULATION GROWTH, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY, 2016-2017

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Recently the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] released updated Estimated Residential Population [ERP] statistics for Local Government Areas [LGAs] and other regions across Australia. This covered change in ERP from mid-2016 to mid-2017

Full data is contained in Regional Population Growth, Australia [Cat. No. 3218.0], available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3218.0>

WESTIR Ltd has extracted the population change estimates for recently altered / amalgamated LGAs in the Greater Western Sydney [GWS] region, including Canterbury-Bankstown and the adjunct LGAs of Lithgow and Wingecarribee. These last two are included as they now are considered part of the Department of Family & Community Services [FACS] districts of Western Sydney and South Western Sydney.

ERP is calculated as a total population figure, plus identifying the components of population change between 2016 & 2017. These components are:

- Natural increase [births – deaths];
- Net internal migration [arrivals - departures in area from & to sources in Australia]; and
- Net overseas migration [arrivals – departures in area from & to sources outside Australia].

The sum of these three elements gives the growth in population for each area – in this case, each LGA. ERP data is presented in Table 1, below. An explanation of how these elements are calculated and what they mean is provided by ABS at the address above.

CHANGE IN OVERALL ERP:

Between 2016 & 2017, NSW population grew by 1.6% [or 121,794 persons]. This was slightly less than the increase in Victoria, which state grew by 2.3% [or 144,357 persons]. NSW is still the more populous state, but much was made in the media of the possibility of NSW being overtaken by Victoria in the future.

Regionally, Greater Western Sydney grew at a rate faster than that of NSW, as a whole, increasing by 51,944 persons [ie. a rate of 2.3%]. This was 42.6% of the total NSW population increase. GWS remains a primary driver, as a region, of NSW growth.

Several LGAs of GWS also contributed significantly to the state's population increase. Population in all LGAs in GWS increased, and most grew at a faster rate than the state, as a whole. In percentage terms, Camden's population grew fastest, increasing by 8.4% over the year. Parramatta [3.6% increase]; The Hills [2.9%]; Blacktown [2.7%]; Cumberland [2.5%]; and Wollondilly [2.3%] were next in percentage change. This seems to be reflective of a mix of greenfield housing development and higher density infill housing.

Only Blue Mountains [0.1% increase]; Lithgow [0.3%]; Hawkesbury [0.4%]; Fairfield and Wingecarribee [both 1.3%], grew more slowly than total NSW. These LGAs are mostly more peripheral areas, or where opportunities for housing growth may be more limited.

Table 1. Estimated Resident Population, LGAs, Greater Western Sydney, 2016-17							
LGA	ERP at 30 June		Components of population change 2016-17			ERP change	
	2016pr	2017p	Natural increase	Net internal migration	Net overseas migration	2016pr-2017p	
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	%	no.
Blacktown (C)	347,591	356,859	3,701	648	4,919	2.7	9,268
Blue Mountains (C)	78,705	78,800	68	- 334	361	0.1	95
Cumberland (A)	226,051	231,604	2,730	- 3,281	6,104	2.5	5,553
Hawkesbury (C)	66,136	66,402	329	- 247	184	0.4	266
Parramatta (C)	234,968	243,464	2,439	- 1,625	7,682	3.6	8,496
Penrith (C)	201,400	204,785	1,755	461	1,169	1.7	3,385
The Hills Shire (A)	162,539	167,296	925	2,044	1,788	2.9	4,757
Lithgow (C)	21,524	21,596	-	24	48	0.3	72
TOTAL W.SYDNEY	1,338,914	1,370,806	11,947	- 2,310	22,255	2.4%	31,892
Camden (A)	80,476	87,250	895	5,531	348	8.4	6,774
Campbelltown (C)	161,409	164,273	1,313	26	1,525	1.8	2,864
Canterbury-Bankstown (A)	361,551	367,519	3,177	- 3,404	6,195	1.7	5,968
Fairfield (C)	206,436	209,107	1,266	- 1,814	3,219	1.3	2,671
Wollondilly (A)	49,742	50,877	318	695	122	2.3	1,135
Wingecarribee (A)	49,070	49,710	- 95	438	297	1.3	640
TOTAL SW.SYDNEY	908,684	928,736	6,874	1,472	11,706	2.2%	20,052
TOTAL GWS	2,247,598	2,299,542	18,821	- 838	33,961	2.3%	51,944
NSW	7,739,274	7,861,068	38,083	- 14,859	98,570	1.6%	121,794
Victoria	6,179,249	6,323,606	40,274	17,182	86,901	2.3%	144,357
REGIONS as a % of NSW							
W.Sydney	17.3%	17.4%	31.4%	15.5%	22.6%		26.2%
SW.Sydney	11.7%	11.8%	18.1%	-9.9%	11.9%		16.5%
Greater Western Sydney	29.0%	29.3%	49.4%	5.6%	34.5%		42.6%

Source: Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2016-17 (cat. no. 3218.0)

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

Drilling down into the components of population growth indicates some interesting changes occurring in the GWS region, and in the LGAs that comprise it.

Natural Increase

Over the 2016-17 period, GWS grew substantially through natural increase – ie the net of births over deaths in the area. Natural increase for the region in that year was 18,821 persons. This represented almost half [49.4%] of the total natural increase occurring across all of NSW.

Blacktown [with a natural increase of 3,701 persons; Canterbury / Bankstown [3,177]; Cumberland [2,730]; Parramatta [2,439]; Penrith [1,755]; Campbelltown [1,313] and Fairfield [1,266] were all significant contributors to the growth in GWS via natural increase. This reflects relatively high birth rates and a younger population in these areas. Only Wingecarribee [-95 persons] lost population through this component.

Net Overseas Migration

Overseas migration remained the prime component of population growth for NSW. Net overseas migration generated 98,570 extra persons during the year toward the state's population.

The GWS region was a substantial contributor to this growth as a reception area for overseas migration. The region received net 33,961 persons [or 34.5% of the NSW total] from this growth component.

The majority of these arrivals landed in the traditional migrant reception LGAs of Parramatta [7,682 net arrivals]; Canterbury-Bankstown [6,195]; Cumberland [6,104]; Blacktown [4,919]; Fairfield [3,219]. Indeed, net arrivals from overseas appear to be spread right across the region, with The Hills Shire, Campbelltown and Penrith also receiving more than net 1,000 international arrivals. Only peripheral LGAs in GWS received relatively few arrivals from this source.

Net Internal Migration

This was the most varied component of population change for the region, with some LGAs losing and some gaining population through this element of population change. Overall, NSW as a state lost population [by some 14,859 persons] via net internal migration. This was not sufficient for total population to decline, with the size of other components [natural increase and overseas migration] being large enough to ensure population increase continued.

The total loss for GWS was much more moderate, with a net loss of 838 persons across the whole region to internal migration. This was insufficient to dent the rapid regional population growth being experienced by GWS.

But in specific areas there were notable differences. Some peripheral growth areas, like Camden [+5,531 persons] and The Hills [+2,044], experienced strong increases from internal migration. This may well be due to the increasing availability of suitable and available housing for households from other areas, at a different stage of their lifecycle or just looking to purchase.

In other LGAs, there were notable losses through net internal out-migration. Canterbury-Bankstown [-3,404 persons]; Cumberland [-3,281]; Fairfield [-1,814]; and Parramatta [-1,625] all lost population. NSW state opposition leader, Luke Foley, got into considerable hot water recently suggesting that

this might represent “white flight” from those areas. [eg. SMH, 24 May 2018] This seems an unwarranted inference from these available data. Most of these ‘source’ areas for internal out-migration, have housed significant migrant communities struggling with disadvantage for many years. It would seem to follow that these are many of the people moving out, seeking home purchase or residences more suited to the life circumstances, for example.

Overall, the ERP Regional Population Growth data released recently by ABS support the continuing value of Greater Western Sydney as a region of dynamic population growth for NSW and Australia.