

Population

Northern Territory 217 559 ↑ 2.4% annual
 Australia 21 180 632 ↑ 1.6% annual

In annual terms, the Northern Territory resident population is estimated to have increased by 2.4% to 217 559. (see Chart 1).

The Territory recorded the second highest annual growth of the jurisdictions, slightly behind Western Australia (2.4%) and above national growth of 1.6% (see Chart 2).

In the December quarter 2007, estimated resident population (ERP) increased by 1102 persons in the Territory, compared to an increase of 679 in the December quarter 2006.

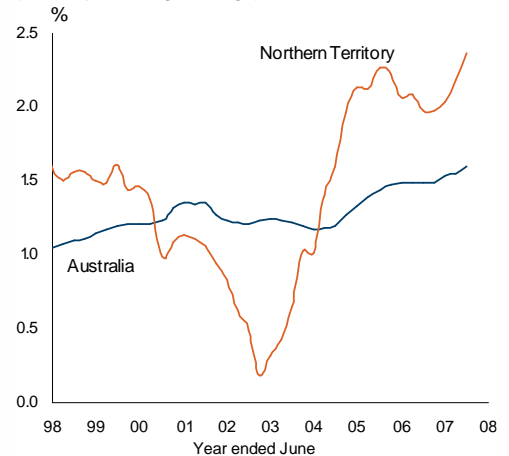
- Natural increase (births less deaths) contributed 639 persons, a decrease on the reported 682 persons in the December quarter 2006
- Net overseas migration contributed 95 persons, compared to 107 in the December quarter 2006.
- Net interstate migration was 368, higher than the negative 110 in the December quarter 2006. This was the third quarter of positive net interstate migration in the year to December 2007.
- In the year to December 2007, net interstate migration in the Territory was 859 compared to a net loss of 438 persons in the year to December 2006.

Northern Territory Treasury has ongoing concerns over the ability of the ABS interstate migration model, to accurately estimate interstate flows to the Territory and therefore population growth (see 'Interstate Migration Model' discussion on following page).

ABS has developed a new method for estimating net overseas migration (NOM) which is expected to better reflect movements of travellers and whether they should be included in the Australian resident population. Results of the new NOM method are incorporated into ERP from September quarter 2006 onwards. It is too early to assess the effect of the new methodology on Territory figures.

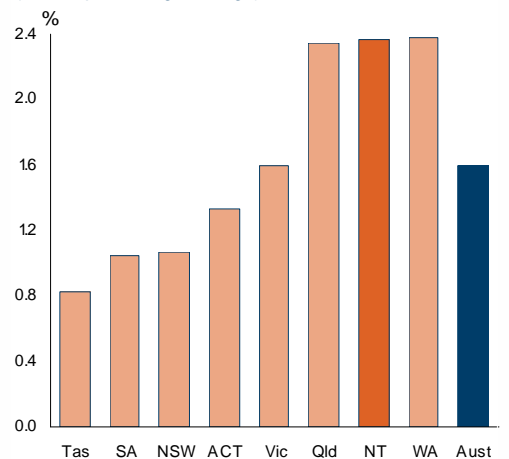
ABS advises that ERPs for 30 June 2006 and the 2001-06 intercensal period are now final. All estimates from September quarter 2006 onwards are still preliminary.

Chart 1: Population Growth
(annual percentage change)



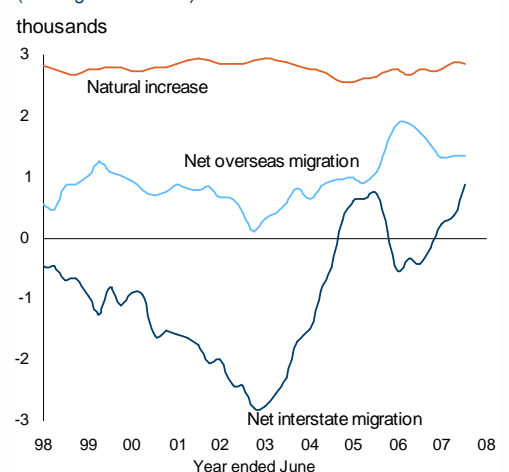
Source: ABS Cat. No. 31010

Chart 2: Population Growth
(annual percentage change)



Source: ABS Cat. No. 31010

Chart 3: Territory Population Components¹
(moving annual total)



Source: ABS Cat. No. 31010

New methods are introduced into the calculation of net overseas migration from September quarter 2006

Estimated Resident Population and Components of Change

	December Quarter		change		
	quarter	year to date	quarterly ¹	annual ²	year on year ³
Northern Territory					
population growth	1 102	5 040			
natural increase	639	2 842			
<i>births</i>	898	3 894			
<i>deaths</i>	259	1 052			
net migration					
<i>overseas</i>	95	1 339			
<i>interstate</i>	368	859			
total population	217 559		0.5%	2.4%	2.1%
Australia					
population growth	84 734	331 872			
total population	21 180 632		0.4%	1.6%	1.5%

¹ compares the latest quarter with the previous quarter

² compares the latest quarter with the same quarter last year

³ compares the 4 quarters up to and including the latest quarter with the previous 4 quarter period

Caution is advised when using monthly data for the Territory, which is often derived from small samples and highly volatile.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0

Interstate Migration Model

The ABS model for estimating interstate migration flows is based on Medicare 'change of address' information with adjustments for defence personnel not covered by Medicare. While this model balances at a national level and works well for most large jurisdictions, it performs poorly in the estimation of movements to and from the Territory. The Territory has a much higher level of population transience compared to other states. In a typical year, around 8% to 10% of the total population of the Territory will move. The youth and mobility of those migrating to the Territory and their low propensity to use medical services means their 'place of residence' record with Medicare is often incorrect. Hence, the Medicare model (using Medicare Australia data, formerly the Health Insurance Commission) probably under enumerates the residence of many short-term migrants to the Territory. Compounding this is the typically older and higher health care user profile of those migrating from the Territory. This type of person is more likely to update their Medicare 'place of residence' record once settled in another state. Under-estimation of the Territory's population has a significant impact on population-based funding the Territory receives from the Commonwealth.