

Population

Northern Territory 216 503 ↑ 2.2% annual
 Australia 21 097 148 ↑ 1.5% annual

In annual terms, the Northern Territory resident population is estimated to have increased by 2.2% to 216 503. (see Chart 1).

The Territory recorded the third highest annual growth of the jurisdictions, behind Western Australia (2.4%) and Queensland (2.2%), and above national growth of 1.5% (see Chart 2).

In the September quarter 2007, estimated resident population (ERP) increased by 1528 persons in the Territory, compared to an increase of 1213 in the September quarter 2006.

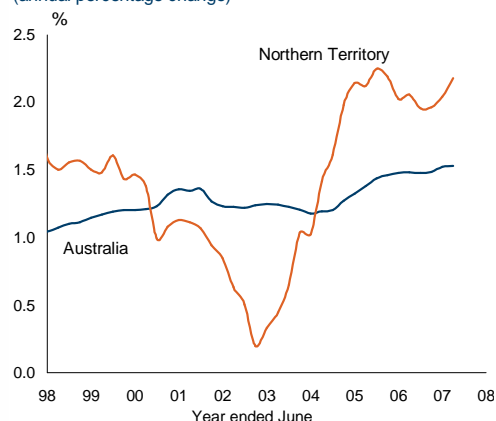
- Natural increase (births less deaths) contributed 756 persons, an increase on the reported 624 persons in the September quarter 2006. The ABS reports that birth registrations are higher across Australia due to the new federal legal requirement to register a birth prior to receiving the baby bonus.
- Net overseas migration contributed 384 persons, compared to 354 in the September quarter 2006.
- Net interstate migration was 388, higher than 235 in the September quarter 2006. This was the second quarter of positive net interstate migration in the year to September 2007.
- In the year to September 2007, net interstate migration in the Territory was 381 compared to a net loss of 421 persons in the year to September 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.

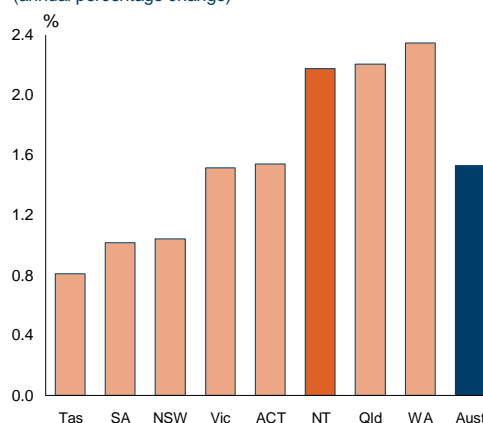
The ERP figures released today still have a preliminary status. Revised estimates for June quarter 2006 based on the 2006 Census are due for release in June 2008. Revisions to the Territory's resident population from June 2006 onwards may occur as a result of this release.

Chart 1: Population Growth
(annual percentage change)



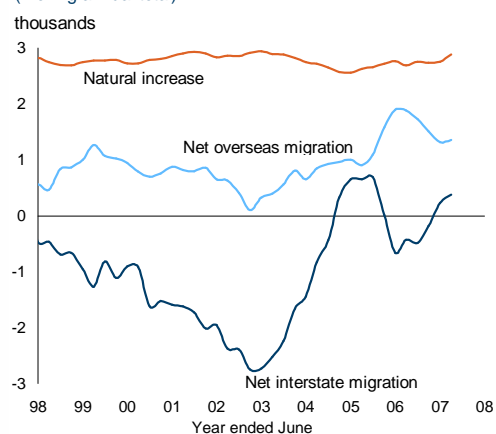
Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0

Chart 2: Population Growth
(annual percentage change)



Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0

Chart 3: Territory Population Components¹
(moving annual total)



Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0

¹ New methods are introduced into the calculation of net overseas migration from September quarter 2006

Estimated Resident Population and Components of Change

	September Quarter		change		
	quarter	year to date	quarterly ¹	annual ²	year on year ³
Northern Territory					
population growth	1 528	4 616			
natural increase	756	2 884			
<i>births</i>	1 053	3 924			
<i>deaths</i>	297	1 040			
net migration					
<i>overseas</i>	384	1 351			
<i>interstate</i>	388	381			
total population	216 503		0.7%	2.2%	2.0%
Australia					
population growth	79 926	318 490			
total population	21 097 148		0.4%	1.5%	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.