

Queensland's future population

2006 edition

Ahead:
Queensland
Population 4 million +



Queensland Government
Department of Local Government, Planning,
Sport and Recreation

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Minister's Message

Welcome to the 2006 edition of *Queensland's Future Population*. This report confirms that Queensland's strong population growth is projected to continue over the next two decades. Queensland's economic strength and employment opportunities will continue to attract new settlers in substantial numbers from interstate and overseas.

This publication provides the latest population projections for Local Government Areas throughout Queensland, including some of the implications of this projected growth.

Queensland's population is set to grow by 1.54 million over the next 20 years. More than 5.5 million people are expected to call the State home by 2026. This growth will be fuelled by the continuing flow of interstate and overseas migration, as more and more people become attracted to our warm climate, outdoor lifestyle and strong economy.

We will also need to manage our ageing population as the median age of Queenslanders is expected to rise from 36.3 years to 40.8 years over the next two decades. This will increase demand on health, public transport, housing and care services. These issues will need to be managed correctly to ensure the ongoing sustainability of our communities.

The majority of this growth is expected in the south east region, with Brisbane's population expected to pass one million by the end of 2007. However, it won't just be limited to Brisbane. The population in the Western Corridor of Ipswich City and Beaudesert Shire is expected to more than double over the next 20 years.

Whilst there are definite advantages to this growth, we need to manage it in a sustainable manner through effective regional planning, water supply, infrastructure delivery and housing strategies.

More than \$400 million has been allocated over the next five years for councils to undertake water recycling, water saving and water supply projects. We are also rolling out the South East Queensland Regional Plan model in the north and expanding regional programs into western Queensland as part of the Blueprint for the Bush initiative.

I trust you will find this information useful.



Hon Andrew Fraser MP
Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport

Executive Summary

Queensland's Future Population – 2006 Edition presents the results of the latest population projections for Local Government Areas in Queensland. The projections are produced in three series – low, medium and high – and are available by five year age groups and sex for the period to 2026. The report also contains analysis of some of the implications of the projected future population growth, such as local variations in future population size and age structure.

Population in the South East Queensland Region is booming

The South East Queensland Region, combining Brisbane and Moreton Statistical Divisions and Toowoomba City, has the largest concentration of urban development and contains the majority of the State's population. The Region had 2.78 million residents in 2006, more than two-thirds (68.8%) of Queensland's total population. The South East Queensland Region's population is projected to increase to 3.96 million people by 2026, an increase of 1.18 million people or average growth around 60,000 people each year (or 1,150 people each week).

Gold Coast City captures the largest share of Queensland's population growth

Among all Local Government Areas in Queensland, Gold Coast City is expected to have the largest population growth over the next 20 years (nearly 267,000 people). This equates to average population growth of more than 13,300 people per year or more than 250 people per week.

Ipswich and Beaudesert expected to double in just 20 years

In line with the South East Queensland Regional Plan, population growth is expected to shift towards the western growth corridor. In both Ipswich City and Beaudesert Shire, the population is forecast to more than double in the 20 years to 2026. Projections show that the population of Ipswich City will grow from less than 147,000 people in 2006 to more than 347,000 people in 2026, an increase of more than 200,000 people. During this 20-year period, Beaudesert Shire is forecast to increase by more than 70,000 to a population of more than 133,000 people.

Six of the top ten fastest growing areas are on the coast

The top ten fastest growing Local Government Areas in Queensland between 2006 and 2026 include six located on the coast (Miriam Vale, Livingstone, Caloundra, Calliope, Gladstone and Whitsunday). The other four fastest growing areas are in South East Queensland's western growth corridor (Ipswich, Beaudesert and Laidley) or further west and adjacent to Toowoomba (Crow's Nest). Several areas located near the Bowen Basin made the listing due to the higher projections recommended for regions affected by the current mining boom.

Ageing of the population is a reality for the future

In 2006, the median age of Queenslanders was 36.3 years. By 2026 the median age is projected to reach 40.8 years, increasing to 45.0 years by 2051. In many regional areas, ageing of the population will be even more pronounced. An increase in the median age of more than 12 years by 2026 is projected for Burke Shire, Herberton Shire, Hinchinbrook Shire, Monto Shire, Charters Towers City, Eacham Shire and Etheridge Shire. As a comparison, the median age in Brisbane City is projected to increase from 35.1 years in 2006 to 36.4 years in 2026, an increase of 1.3 years over the 20-year period.

Largest growth in the age group 65 years and over

Across Queensland, the number of people aged 65 years or more is expected to increase by more than 605,000 or 121.0% between 2006 and 2026. The *South East Queensland Region* is projected to have the largest absolute increase with an additional 429,000 people aged 65 years or more expected to reside in the area by 2026. Of these, about 80,300 people are expected to live in Gold Coast City, followed by Ipswich City (58,900 people), and Brisbane City (40,900 people).

Queensland's population projected to be five million in 2018

Queensland's population is projected to grow from 4.04 million people in 2006 to 5.58 million in 2026, an increase of 1.54 million people over the 20-year period. The State's population passed four million in 2005, is projected to reach five million by 2018, and six million by 2032.

Brisbane City set to pass one million people next year

The population of Brisbane, Queensland's capital city, is projected to pass one million by the end of 2007. Brisbane took 19 years to grow from 750,000 people in 1988, to one million in 2007, but is projected to add only 164,000 people over the next 19 years to 2026.

Technical notes

In tables and figures Shire is abbreviated as (S) and City as (C) in accordance with Australian Bureau of Statistics Standards (ABS, Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), Cat No 1216.0)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has not been able to estimate population change for former Aboriginal Councils (ACs) and Island Councils (ICs) in Queensland from 30 June 2002 to 30 June 2005. The published populations for these areas have been held constant. As a result, projections are not available for these areas.

All other projections contained in this report are on the 2005 ASGC boundaries. For detail on other boundaries, please contact the Planning Information and Forecasting Unit.

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Introduction

Population projections for Queensland and Statistical Divisions (SDs) were released in July 2006. The underlying assumptions for these projections were determined by a committee with representation from several Queensland Government departments and the University of Queensland. Details of these projections can be found at:

http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au/publications/regular_publications/demography/population_projections.shtml

Projections at the Local Government Area (LGA) level were constrained by the SD projections. These LGA projections were produced by the Planning Information and Forecasting Unit (PIFU) of the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation, and are the subject of this report. Population projections for other areas such as Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) or aggregations of Collection Districts (CDs) will subsequently be available from PIFU.

Consultation was conducted with all local governments in Queensland seeking local input in relation to issues or projects that were likely to have a resident population impact. Where appropriate this local knowledge assisted in determining the projections for each LGA. Subsequently, each local government was again contacted for comments on the preliminary projections for their area.

All of these projections are produced using computer models. These models are based on analysis of trends for a large number of factors, while the influences of short-term activities or unusual events are not modelled. For example, the models do not incorporate the effects of change in policy directions, war, natural disasters or change in economic conditions. In addition, the output from these models is always totally dependent on the quality of the input data and the assumptions used.

For these reasons, and to highlight the uncertainty associated with projecting future outcomes, three series (low, medium and high) have been produced. These series of projections provide some indication of current thinking on the future size and distribution of the population in Queensland. However, users should of course exert caution in interpreting these results and be aware that these projections will be regularly updated to take into account new information, changing trends and improved methodologies.

A number of appendices accompany this report. They contain the medium series projections (Appendix A), the low series projections (Appendix B) and the high series projections (Appendix C) for LGAs, SDs, Planning Regions and Queensland. In addition, Appendix D contains projections by broad age group, and Appendix F defines the current Planning Regions in Queensland.

State population projections

Projected total population for Queensland

Queensland's population is projected to grow from 4.04 million people in 2006 to 5.58 million in 2026, an increase of 1.54 million people over the 20 year period. Under these medium series projections, an average increase of 77,000 people each year is anticipated, continuing a very strong period of population growth. In comparison, Queensland's population in 1986 was 2.62 million, growing by 1.42 million people in the 20 years to 2006, equivalent to average growth of 71,000 people each year.

The low and high series projections suggest a possible variability around the medium series future population levels (Table 1). By 2026, Queensland's population could be between 5.12 million and 6.10 million people, equivalent to average growth between 55,000 and 102,000 people each year. These low and high series projections are based on either less optimistic or more optimistic assumptions concerning future levels of fertility, mortality, interstate and overseas migration. Full details concerning the assumptions behind these projections can be found in a paper at:
http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au/queensland_by_theme/demography/population/research_papers/assumptions.shtml.

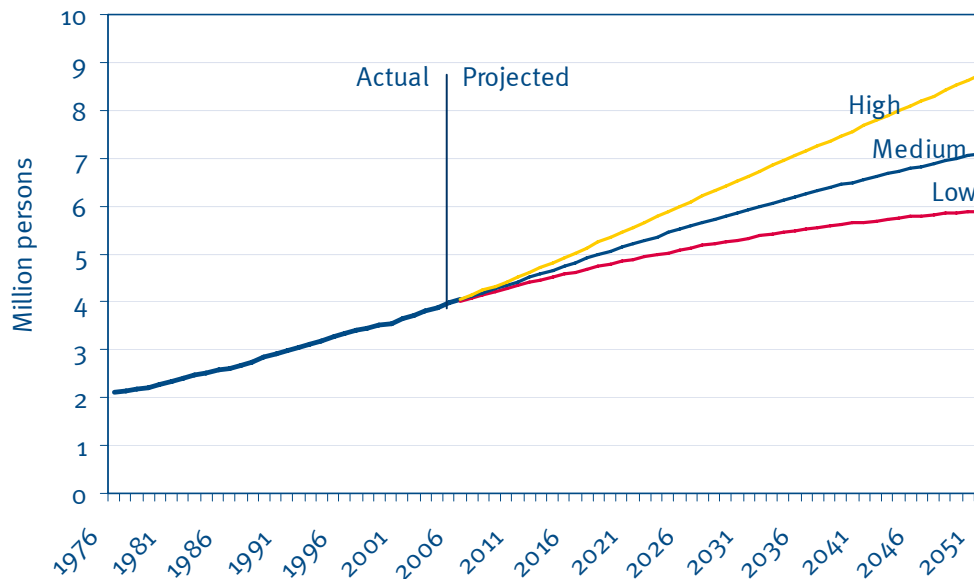
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
Low	4.03	4.34	4.63	4.89	5.12	5.33	5.51	5.67	5.79	5.90
Medium	4.04	4.43	4.82	5.21	5.58	5.93	6.26	6.56	6.84	7.10
High	4.05	4.52	5.03	5.56	6.10	6.63	7.16	7.68	8.20	8.73

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, low, medium and high series

Queensland's population is projected to have continued strong growth over the 25 years from 2026, to reach between 5.90 million and 8.73 million people in 2051. The medium series projection of 7.10 million people by 2051 indicates average growth of 61,000 people each year over the 25-year period between 2026 and 2051 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Actual and projected population for Queensland, 1976-2051

Source: Queensland Government 2006 edition population projections, ABS Cat No 3101.0



If comparing current and projected growth with that occurring over past decades, it is apparent that Queensland is presently experiencing peak levels of growth. The current projections suggest that this growth will increase during the next decade and peak in the decade ending 2021. Population growth is projected to ease thereafter, and by the decade ending 2051 return to the level of growth last experienced in Queensland during the 1980s and 1990s, (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Past and projected 10 year population growth, Queensland, decades ending 1911 to 2051

Source: ABS Cat No 3105.0.65.001, Cat No 3101.0 and Queensland Government 2006 edition population projections (medium series)

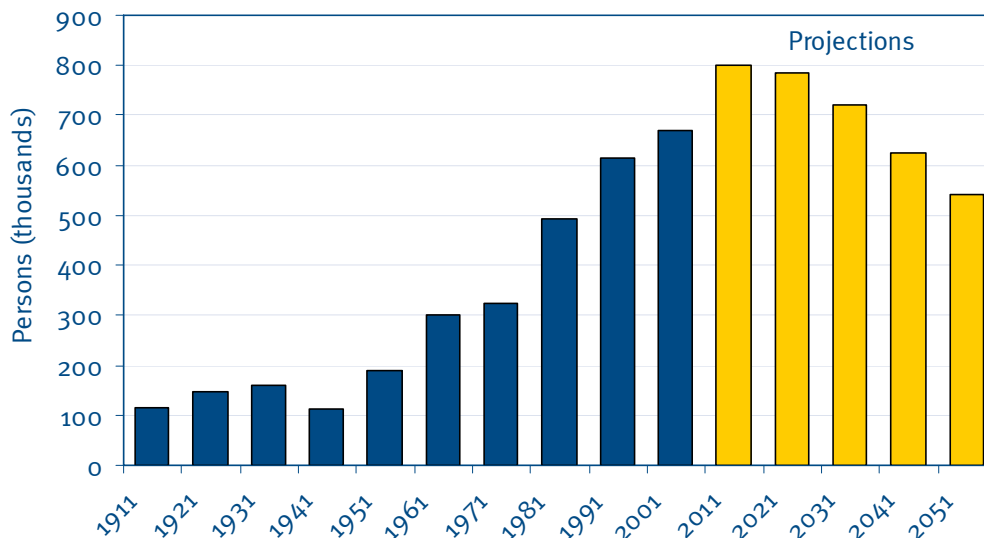
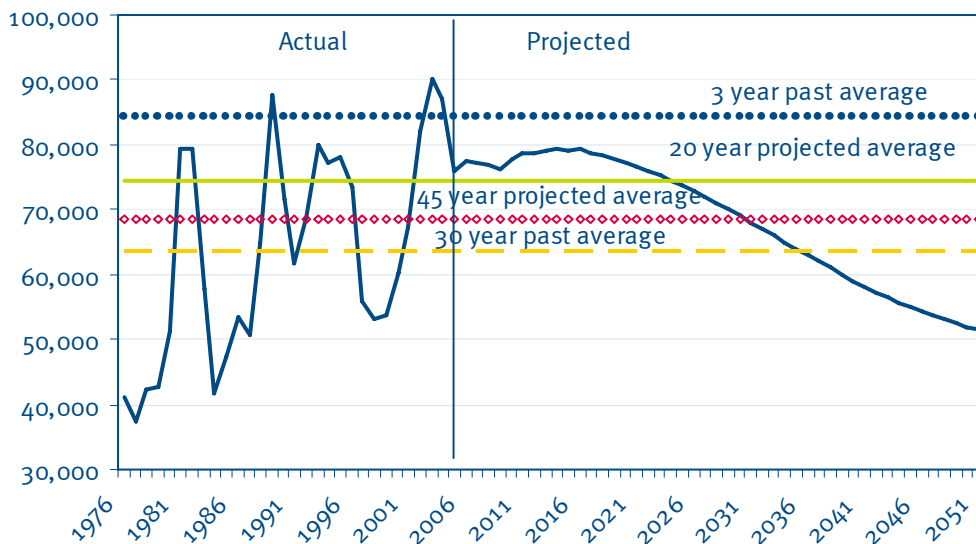


Figure 3 shows past and projected levels of annual growth for Queensland. It demonstrates the volatility of population growth when viewed on an annual basis; a level of volatility that is impossible to project. Instead, projected change should be compared to average levels of growth to more realistically illustrate a comparison of projected growth with past growth.

For example, a comparison of historical trends do not support that recent high levels of growth will continue into the future. The blue dotted line in Figure 3, illustrating average growth between June 2002 and June 2005, shows that, other than 2003 and 2004, only during one other year (1989) was this level of growth (an annual increase of 84,300 people) recorded in Queensland. In contrast, a longer-term average over the past 30 years, reflected with a yellow dashed line in Figure 3, has been exceeded in 15 of those years. In terms of the projections, the medium series illustrated in Figure 3 is below the 30-year past average for the projection period from 2036 to 2051 (although the high series remains well above this average level of growth). In contrast, the longer-term 30-year past average is exceeded by the medium series projections between 2006 and 2036.

Figure 3: Past and projected annual population growth, Queensland, 1976 to 2051

Source: ABS Cat No 3101.0 and Queensland Government 2006 edition population projections (medium series)



Comparing the projected average growth to past levels of growth is also revealing. The annual level of growth projected over the next 20 years is shown in Figure 3 with a green full line. This level of growth was exceeded in only nine of the past 30 years. The average level of growth projected for the next 45 years and shown with a red diamond line in Figure 3 was exceeded in less than half (13) of the past 30 years indicating that it is also an optimistic level of growth relative to past trends.

In summary, the average annual projected growth for the next 20 years is considerably higher compared to growth in the past. Projected growth over the next 45 years is somewhat more moderate reflecting changes to the age structure. The ageing of the population will potentially result in a smaller number of births, fewer interstate migrants, and a larger number of deaths relative to the size of the population.

Projected age structure for Queensland

Ageing is one of the most significant demographic trends currently shaping our world. The age structure of the Queensland population will proceed through major changes in the projection periods to 2026 and 2051. In 2006, the median age of Queenslanders (the age at which half the population is older and half younger) is 36.3 years. By 2026 the median age is projected to reach 40.8 years, increasing to 45.0 years by 2051¹. The highest population increases are projected to be among older people, especially those aged 65 years or more.

Queensland's population will continue to grow with considerable changes to the population composition and distribution. These changes can be directly translated into increased demand for infrastructure, goods and services. The increased demand will not necessarily be for roads and cars, or day care centres that cater for the needs of families with adults in the workforce. The ageing population may demand greater access to public transport, aged friendly housing design and more health and aged care services.

¹ Source: Queensland Government Population Projections, 2006, Office of Economic and Statistical Research

Statistical Division projections

Projected total population in Queensland's SDs

The 2006 edition population projections have been prepared using the 2005 Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). Users of the projections should note that the 2006 ASGC, in force from 1 July 2006, contains several boundary changes impacting on Brisbane and Moreton Statistical Divisions (SDs). These include the outward move of the Brisbane SD boundary to encompass whole surrounding LGAs, apart from Beaudesert Shire where only a part is included in Brisbane SD, the division of Moreton SD into Gold Coast SD (including part of Beaudesert Shire), West Moreton SD (including the remaining part of Beaudesert Shire) and Sunshine Coast SD (comprising Noosa and Maroochy Shires and Caloundra City). New resident population estimates for 30 June 2006, on these boundaries, will be available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in February/March 2007.

Projections at the SD level indicate continuing strong growth, particularly in Queensland's coastal regions and in the south-eastern corner of the State (Table 2). South East Queensland (SEQ), defined here as Brisbane and Moreton SDs, is projected to record an increase in growth, from 2.68 million in 2006 to 3.84 million people in 2026. This increase of 1.16 million people in the next two decades is equivalent to an average increase of 58,000 people each year. In comparison, growth in SEQ over the past two decades amounted to 1.09 million people or an average of 54,550 people each year.

Table 2

Actual and projected population, Queensland's Statistical Divisions,
years ending 30 June 1986, 2006 and 2026

Statistical Division	1986 No.	2006 No.	2026 No.
Brisbane	1,217,348	1,844,606	2,533,359
Moreton	375,549	839,316	1,310,539
<i>South East Queensland</i>	<i>1,592,897</i>	<i>2,683,922</i>	<i>3,843,898</i>
Wide Bay-Burnett	170,835	263,211	352,565
Darling Downs	183,112	225,994	274,629
South West	28,791	26,950	27,705
Fitzroy	160,120	191,959	248,403
Central West	13,619	12,135	12,233
Mackay	117,511	150,978	207,418
Northern	157,732	209,763	264,834
Far North	161,042	242,099	317,234
North West	38,332	34,356	35,036
Queensland	2,623,991	4,041,368	5,583,956

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Estimated Resident Population, Queensland, 1987, Cat No 3210.3 and 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, medium series

Outside SEQ, the largest projected increase is in Wide Bay-Burnett SD where growth is anticipated to be 89,354 people by 2026, an increase of one-third (33.9%) on the 2006 population. Under the medium series projections, Far North SD is projected to experience the next largest amount of growth – 75,135 people or an increase of 31.0%. These are followed by Fitzroy (56,440 or 29.4%), Mackay (56,440 or 37.4%) and Northern (55,070 or 26.3%) SDs each projected to grow by around 55,000 people over the 20 years to 2026. Darling Downs SD is projected to grow by around 48,600 people or 21.5% by 2026. The combined growth in the three western regions is expected to be much smaller and amount to around 1,500 people over the 20 years to 2026.

During the past two decades, three-quarters of Queensland's growth occurred in SEQ. This situation is projected to continue with 75.2% of the State's projected growth between 2006 and 2026 anticipated to be in SEQ. With only a very small amount of growth projected for the three western regions and 3.2% of Queensland's growth anticipated in the Darling Downs SD, the remaining coastal SDs are expected to be the location for just over two out of every ten new Queenslanders in the next two decades (21.6% of the growth to 2026).

Twenty years ago, SEQ was home to six out of every ten Queenslanders. By 2026, this share is projected to increase to nearly seven out of every ten (68.8%) with 45.4% of all Queenslanders likely to reside in the capital city SD.

Projected age structure in Queensland's Statistical Divisions

Not only are various SDs growing at faster or slower rates than the State as a whole, but different age groups are also projected to change at varying rates. For example, while children in Queensland aged less than 15 years are projected to increase by 18.2% over the 20 years to 2026, three SDs are expected to have faster rates of growth. In Moreton SD, the number of children is projected to grow by more than 51,000 or an increase of nearly one-third on current numbers. In both Mackay and Brisbane SDs, an increase of around 20.0% is projected in the number aged less than 15 years. In contrast, remaining SDs are projected to have slower increases while, in each of the three Western SDs, this age group is projected to decline (Table 3).

Table 3

Population growth by broad age groups in Queensland Statistical Divisions
years ending 30 June 2006 to 2026

Statistical Division	0-14 years		15-39 years		40-64 years		65 and over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Brisbane SD	72,014	19.7	175,375	25.4	198,251	34.1	243,112	116.9	688,753	37.3
Moreton SD	51,415	32.7	98,622	36.6	144,444	50.3	176,741	140.6	471,222	56.1
Wide Bay – Burnett SD	2,314	4.4	7,658	10.4	25,995	28.1	53,387	119.4	89,354	33.9
Darling Downs SD	2,208	4.5	7,489	9.9	11,538	16.4	27,401	88.0	48,635	21.5
South West SD	-511	-8.2	671	7.0	-254	-3.1	849	28.4	755	2.8
Fitzroy SD	5,811	13.5	13,154	19.8	15,424	25.2	22,055	103.4	56,444	29.4
Central West SD	-138	-5.2	83	2.0	-54	-1.4	207	14.6	98	0.8
Mackay SD	6,818	20.8	12,320	23.5	13,918	27.8	23,386	148.9	56,441	37.4
Northern SD	4,388	9.8	14,458	17.8	12,472	20.1	23,753	109.0	55,071	26.3
Far North SD	4,843	9.3	17,268	20.1	20,490	26.0	32,534	128.8	75,135	31.0
North West SD	-1,228	-14.3	-709	-5.1	469	4.9	2,148	89.7	680	2.0
Queensland	147,934	18.2	346,388	24.3	442,693	33.9	605,573	121.0	1,542,588	38.2

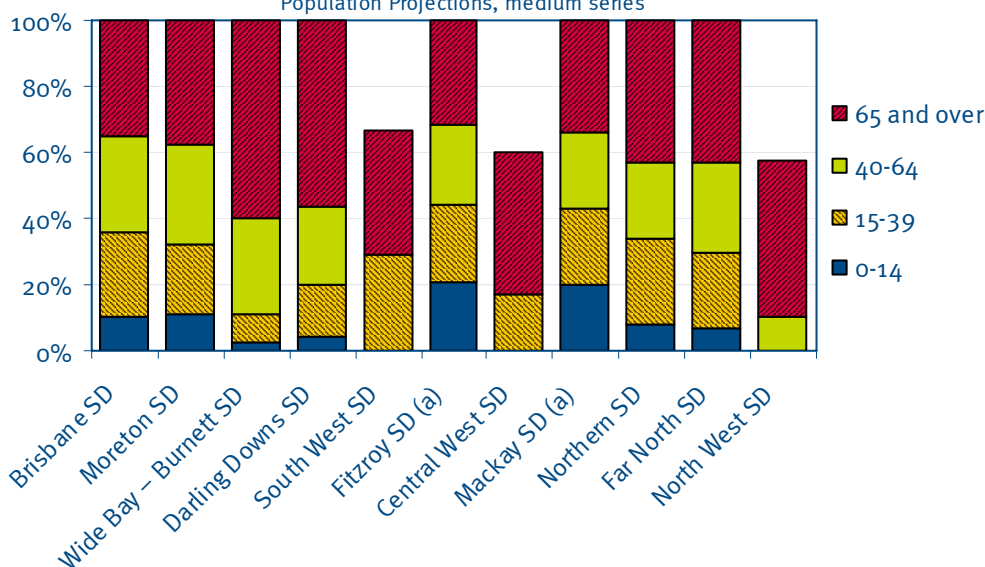
Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, medium series

Across Queensland, the number of people aged 65 years or more is expected to increase by more than 605,000 or 121.0% between 2006 and 2026. Despite large increases being projected for several SDs, only in Mackay SD (148.9%), Moreton SD (140.6%) and Far North SD (128.8%) will the age group 65 years and over grow faster than in the State as a whole (121.0%). The large increases in this age group reflect the age structure of the existing population and the two regions attraction to retirement migrants.

However, Brisbane SD is projected to have the largest absolute increase in numbers of people aged 65 years or more with an additional 243,000 people expected to reside in the area by 2026. Moreton SD is projected to have an increase of almost 177,000 people of this age. As a result, in 2026 two-thirds of Queensland's retirees will live in South East Queensland.

Figure 4: Share of population growth 2006 to 2026 by broad age groups in Queensland Statistical Divisions

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government
Population Projections, medium series



Note: Age groups with declining population are not displayed.

Reflecting the ageing of the population, in some SDs more than half of total population growth is projected to be in the age group 65 years and over. This is the case in Wide Bay–Burnett SD (59.7%) and Darling Downs SD (56.3%). Also Far North SD (43.3%) and Northern SD (43.1%) are expected to have a large share of population growth in the age group 65 years and over (Figure 4). In Western Regional Queensland population growth is projected to be small in all age groups.

These changes in the composition of the population will alter patterns of demand. Services will need to cater for a larger population of older people, including greater numbers of older frail people likely to require higher levels of care and support, and expecting to be looked after at home. A greater number of older people may also choose to work on a part time basis for a number of years, rather than total retirement from the work force.

Projections by broad region in Queensland

This analysis is based on dividing Queensland into three broad regions: South East Queensland, Eastern Regional Queensland and Western Regional Queensland. The following three sections discuss population projection trends in these three regions while subsequent sections discuss trends in individual LGAs within each region.

South East Queensland

South East Queensland (SEQ), comprising of Brisbane and Moreton SDs, has the largest concentration of urban development in Queensland, and contains the majority of the State's population. From 2.37 million in 2001, by 2006 SEQ had 2.68 million residents, which is nearly two-thirds (66.4%) of the State's total population (Table 4). More than three-quarters (77.7%) of Queensland's population growth over the decade to 2006 occurred in SEQ (545,700 people). This trend of population concentration in the south east corner of the State is projected to continue (Table 5).



Table 4

Population and share of population, Queensland Regions, ten years ending 30 June 2006, 2016 and 2026

Region	2006		2016		2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Eastern Regional Queensland ^(a)	1,284,898	31.8	1,496,526	31.0	1,707,699	30.6
Western Regional Queensland	73,440	1.8	73,781	1.5	74,975	1.3
South East Queensland ^(b)	2,683,921	66.4	3,269,620	67.8	3,843,894	68.8
Queensland ^(c)	4,041,368	100.0	4,823,408	100.0	5,583,956	100.0
Toowoomba (C)	97,531	2.4	107,209	2.2	115,587	2.1
<i>South East Qld Region ^(d)</i>	<i>2,781,452</i>	<i>68.8</i>	<i>3,376,829</i>	<i>70.0</i>	<i>3,959,481</i>	<i>70.9</i>

^(a) Includes high series projections for Local Government Areas in Mackay and Fitzroy Statistical Divisions

^(b) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane and Moreton SDs

^(c) Medium series projections

^(d) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane SD, Moreton SD and Toowoomba (C)

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, high and medium series

Table 5

Average annual population change and rate of change,
Queensland Regions, ten years ending 30 June 2006, 2016 and 2026

Region	Average Annual Population Change					
	10 years to 2006		10 years to 2016		10 years to 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Eastern Regional Queensland ^(a)	15,781	1.3	21,163	1.5	21,117	1.3
Western Regional Queensland	5	0.0	34	0.0	119	0.2
South East Queensland ^(b)	54,571	2.3	58,570	2.0	57,427	1.6
Queensland ^(c)	70,268	1.9	78,204	1.8	76,055	1.5
Toowoomba (C)	1,096	1.2	968	1.0	838	0.8
<i>South East Qld Region ^(d)</i>	<i>55,667</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>59,538</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>58,265</i>	<i>1.6</i>

^(a) Includes high series projections for Local Government Areas in Mackay and Fitzroy Statistical Divisions

^(b) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane and Moreton SDs

^(c) Medium series projections

^(d) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane SD, Moreton SD and Toowoomba (C)

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, high and medium series

The planning area covered by the *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005-2026* comprises Brisbane and Moreton SDs but also includes the LGA of Toowoomba City. In the following analysis *South East Queensland (SEQ)* is used to refer to the area comprising Brisbane and Moreton SDs while *South East Queensland Region (SEQR)* is used for the area covered by the SEQ Regional Plan, that is, Brisbane and Moreton SDs plus Toowoomba City. Most tables include both areas.

Under the medium series projections, the population of SEQ is projected to increase to 3.84 million people by 2026 (3.96 million people including Toowoomba City). This growth of 1.16 million people over the 20-year period from 2006 to 2026 represents an average increase of nearly 58,000 people each year. Growth is expected to be slightly higher in the first decade of this period.

In the ten years to 2016, the population of South East Queensland is projected to increase by nearly 586,000 people, or an average increase of nearly 58,600 people each year, to reach 3.27 million people. In comparison, this growth is somewhat higher (up 7.3%) than during the previous ten-year period when there was an increase of nearly 546,000 people or an average of 54,600 people each year.

This high level of growth is projected to continue in the following decade. Between 2016 and 2026, SEQ is projected to grow by around 57,400 people each year. While this level of growth is down 2.0% on that projected for the ten years to 2016, it remains 5.2% higher than growth over the past ten years.

Eastern Regional Queensland

Eastern Regional Queensland is comprised of the eastern coastal SDs and Darling Downs SD. Compared to SEQ, these areas do not have a major city with a population of more than 200,000 people as in the more densely populated SEQ, but Eastern Regional Queensland is much more densely populated than the vast area of Western Regional Queensland.



The population of Eastern Regional Queensland is expected to be more than 1.28 million in 2006 and is projected to increase to almost 1.71 million in 2026 (Table 3). This growth of more than 0.42 million people over the 20-year period from 2006 to 2026 represents an average increase of more than 21,000 people each year, which is based on the high series projections for Mackay and Fitzroy SDs (Table 5).

Western Regional Queensland

The population size in Western Regional Queensland is projected to be stable in the 20 years to 2026. A moderate population growth in the North West SD is projected to occur mostly among people aged 40 years and above. In 2026, the total population in Western Regional Queensland is expected to reach almost 75,000 people (Table 5).



Future population growth may be larger in areas of the North West SD where mining expansion is underway and likely to continue. Increase in the resident population is difficult to project as it depends on the extent of fly-in/fly-out arrangements. If many mining workers choose to live locally, the high series may better reflect resident population growth than the medium series in the North West SD. The results from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, expected in mid 2007, will provide numerical information on the overall level of fly-in/fly-out movements in the North West SD and other regions of Queensland.

Projections of Local Government Areas

This section presents an analysis of the projected ten largest and fastest growing areas followed by a description of future population growth in Local Government Areas (LGAs) within South East Queensland, Eastern Regional Queensland and Western Regional Queensland. The intention of the analysis is to provide a better understanding of regional variations in population growth to 2026. For most LGAs, medium series projections have been used.

The population projections for LGAs in Queensland (2006 edition) have been produced in three series - low, medium and high. Users should remember that the low and high series projections form upper and lower limits of likely population futures. It is possible that unforeseen events may occur, or factors not captured by the projection methodology will affect a local area's future population growth, resulting in the population of individual areas tracking more closely to the low or high series than the medium series. Due to strong population growth in mining LGAs in and around the Bowen Basin, the high series is currently recommended for LGAs in Mackay SD and Fitzroy SD.

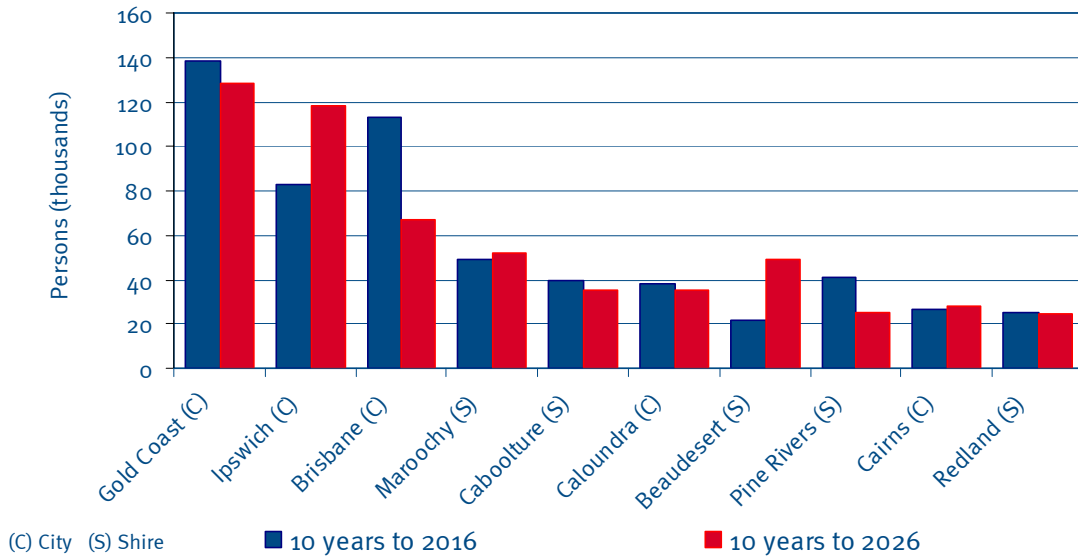
Appendix A contains medium series projections for Queensland LGAs while Appendix B contains low series projections and Appendix C high series projections. Appendix D contains medium series projection results by broad age group for LGAs in all SDs, except for LGAs in Mackay SD and Fitzroy SD where the high series is used. For more detailed projection results, for example five-year age groups by sex, please contact the Planning Information and Forecasting Unit.

Top ten largest growth local government areas

Figure 5 shows the top ten LGAs ranked by the projected total amount of population growth over the 20 years to 2026. Gold Coast City is expected to have the largest population growth in Queensland over the next 20 years (nearly 267,000 people). In the ten years to 2016 Brisbane City is expected to have the second largest population growth (112,880 in Brisbane compared with 138,470 people in Gold Coast). However, in the ten years to 2026, population growth in Ipswich City is projected to exceed that in Brisbane City (118,280 and 67,040 respectively – see Figure 5). This is largely due to Ipswich having greater quantities of available residential land for greenfield development.

Figure 5: Top ten LGAs by largest population growth 2006-2026

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, medium series



(C) City (S) Shire ■ 10 years to 2016 ■ 10 years to 2026

While population growth in Ipswich City in the ten years to 2016 is projected to be more than 80,000 people, in the ten years to 2026, growth is expected to surge to almost 120,000 people. This is just 10,000 people less than the projected population growth in Gold Coast City for the same period. New master planned developments, such as in Springfield and the Ripley Valley are driving the anticipated growth in Ipswich City. In contrast, much of Brisbane City’s growth will occur through redevelopment of existing residential or other landuses, or through infill.

Two other LGAs are projected to have substantially different levels of growth in the first ten years of the projection period compared with the second. Beaudesert Shire is projected to increase in population by around 21,570 people in the ten years to 2016. A further surge in the ten years to 2026 is then projected (49,340 people). An additional 70,000 people are projected for Beaudesert Shire over the 20 years to 2026. This population growth is expected to be mostly accommodated by greenfield development in the Yarrabilba and Jimboomba areas in the northern part of the Shire. Projected strong growth of more than 40,000 people in Pine Rivers Shire in the ten years to 2016 is expected to ease to growth of around 25,000 people in the following ten-year period. By 2016 major development in the North Lakes and Mango Hill areas will be largely completed.

Other LGAs in the top-ten list of largest projected population growth will have strong population growth with less variation over the 20 year period. Of these, Maroochy Shire is expected to have the largest total population growth of 100,000 people in the 20 years to 2026. Cairns City is the only LGA to be included in the top ten that is situated outside SEQ. Cairns City is projected to grow by more than 54,000 people over the coming two decades.

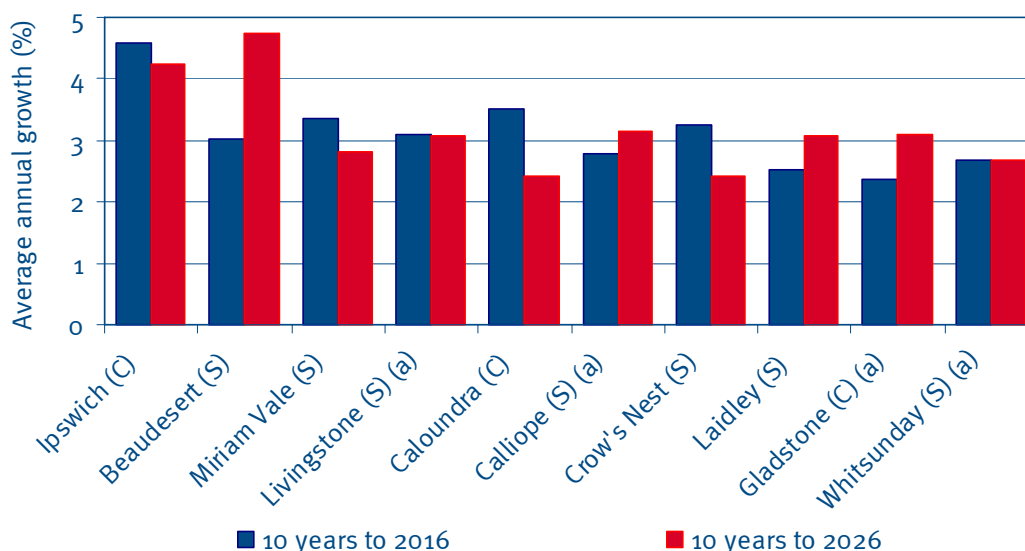
Top ten fastest growing local government areas

Figure 6 shows the top ten LGAs ranked by their projected growth rate over the 20 years to 2026. The increased population growth in Ipswich City and Beaudesert Shire will propel these two LGAs to first and second place in the listing of the fastest growing LGAs in Queensland (Figure 6). With its smaller base population, Miriam Vale Shire is currently the fastest growing LGA in Queensland: however, in the ten years to 2016, both Ipswich City and Caloundra City are expected to have faster population growth. In the next ten years, the population growth rate in Miriam Vale Shire is projected to ease to less than 3.4% per year, while exceeding 3.5% per year in Ipswich City and Caloundra City in the ten years to 2016.

In the ten years to 2026, the annual population growth rate of Beaudesert Shire is projected to be faster than any other LGA in Queensland. The growth rate of Beaudesert Shire is expected to surge towards an annual average of almost 5% in the ten years to 2026, while population growth in Ipswich City, Miriam Vale Shire, Caloundra City and Crow's Nest is forecast to slow. In South East Queensland, like Beaudesert Shire, Laidley Shire is projected to have a higher average annual growth in the ten years to 2026 compared to the ten years to 2016.

Figure 6: Top ten fastest growing LGAs 2006-2026

Source: 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, high and medium series



(C) City (S) Shire
(a) Based on high series projections

Local Government Areas in South East Queensland

Population distribution

In 2001, Logan City was the LGA with the third largest population after Brisbane City and Gold Coast City. It was followed by Maroochy Shire in fourth place. By 2006, Pine Rivers Shire is expected to have overtaken Maroochy Shire. By 2016, Ipswich City is projected to have a larger population than any of these three LGAs. This will push Ipswich City into third ranking after Brisbane City and Gold Coast City in terms of population size of LGAs in South East Queensland.



The population in SEQ is projected to continue to be concentrated along the coast; however, Ipswich City and Beaudesert Shire are expected to take up an increasing share of the population. Some rural shires, such as Boonah Shire and Kilcoy Shire will remain sparsely populated.

Population growth

In SEQ there are three main growth corridors: from Brisbane to Gold Coast (south), to Ipswich (west) and to Sunshine Coast (north). Much of the population growth in SEQ will occur in these three growth corridors. The three largest cities in the SEQ Region are projected to capture more than half of the region's population growth over the next decade. Gold Coast City is projected to experience the largest increase, with average annual growth of more than 13,800 people to 2016 (Table 6).

Brisbane City is expected to have the second largest average growth (11,300 people each year), and Ipswich City the third largest (8,300 people). In the case of Gold Coast City, the expected growth is approximately equal to the previous ten-year period. However, in Brisbane City the annual growth in the ten years to 2016 represents a smaller amount of growth than over the previous ten-year period, while for Ipswich City it is significantly more than in the previous ten years. These changes largely reflect broadacre residential land availability with a decreasing supply in Brisbane City compared with an increasing supply in Ipswich City. The three LGAs of Gold Coast, Brisbane and Ipswich are expected to capture 56% of the region's population growth in the decade to 2016. The population of Brisbane City is expected to pass one million people near the end of 2007.

Four LGAs in the northern growth corridor (Pine Rivers Shire, Caboolture Shire, Caloundra City and Maroochy Shire) are expected to capture 28% of the region's population growth. This leaves 16% of the population growth to 2016 to occur in the remaining 11 LGAs in the SEQ region. In particular, both Redland Shire and Beaudesert Shire have projected average annual population growth exceeding 2,000 people, while each of the other nine LGAs are expected to grow by less than 2,000 people per year.

Table 6

Average annual population change and share of change, LGAs
South East Queensland Region, ten years ending 30 June 2006, 2016 and 2026

Local Government Area	Average Annual Population Change					
	10 years to 2006		10 years to 2016		10 years to 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Beaudesert (S)	1,469	2.7	2,157	3.0	4,934	4.7
Boonah (S)	50	0.6	63	0.7	83	0.9
Brisbane (C)	15,969	1.8	11,288	1.1	6,704	0.6
Caboolture (S)	3,431	3.0	3,979	2.6	3,538	1.9
Caloundra (C)	2,642	3.4	3,827	3.5	3,519	2.4
Esk (S)	183	1.2	187	1.1	210	1.1
Gatton (S)	162	1.0	225	1.3	302	1.5
Gold Coast (C)	13,913	3.4	13,847	2.5	12,849	1.9
Ipswich (C)	2,263	1.7	8,265	4.6	11,828	4.2
Kilcoy (S)	41	1.2	52	1.4	49	1.1
Laidley (S)	198	1.5	411	2.5	653	3.1
Logan (C)	1,259	0.7	1,571	0.9	1,906	1.0
Maroochy (S)	4,098	3.3	4,880	2.9	5,156	2.3
Noosa (S)	1,216	2.9	624	1.2	364	0.6
Pine Rivers (S)	4,298	3.5	4,118	2.5	2,526	1.3
Redcliffe (C)	391	0.8	522	0.9	393	0.6
Redland (S)	2,989	2.6	2,554	1.8	2,416	1.4
<i>South East Queensland</i> ^(a)	<i>54,571</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>58,570</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>57,427</i>	<i>1.6</i>
Toowoomba (C)	1,096	1.2	968	1.0	838	0.8
South East Qld Region ^(b)	55,667	2.3	59,538	2.0	58,265	1.6

(C) City (S) Shire

^(a) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane and Moreton SDs

^(b) Comprises LGAs in Brisbane SD, Moreton SD and Toowoomba (C)

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, Cat No 3218.0 and 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, medium series

None of the LGAs in the region is expected to exhibit a trend of declining population. However, if a gain of 1,000 people or a loss of 1,000 people over the ten years to 2016 is considered stable, that is plus or minus an average of 100 people each year, then two LGAs in the region (Boonah Shire and Kilcoy Shire) fall into this category.

Population growth rates

In the ten years to 2006 Pine Rivers Shire, Gold Coast City, Caloundra City and Maroochy Shire had the fastest population growth, with all four LGAs growing faster than 3.0% per year. In the ten years to 2016, Ipswich City, Caloundra City and Beaudesert Shire are expected to have the fastest population growth, exceeding an annual average growth rate of 3.0%. Both Ipswich City and Beaudesert Shire are expected to continue experiencing population growth of more than 3.5% per annum in the ten years to 2026.

In the ten years to 2016, Ipswich City is expected to have the fastest average annual population growth (4.3%), Caloundra City is expected to have the second fastest growth (3.5%), followed by Beaudesert Shire (3.1%) and Maroochy Shire (2.9%). Other fast growing LGAs, which are all projected to grow at a similar pace, include Caboolture Shire (2.6%), Gold Coast City (2.5%), Laidley Shire (2.5%) and Pine Rivers Shire (2.5%). However, in some LGAs with similar growth rates, the projected absolute growth is much different. For example, in the ten years to 2016 Gold Coast City is projected to grow by 138,000 people, easily outnumbering projected growth in Laidley Shire (4,000 people).

Projected age structure

Just like Queensland and the rest of Australia, the population of South East Queensland is ageing. The median age of people in South East Queensland – that is the age at which half the population is older and half younger – is expected to have increased from 35.2 years in 2001 to 36.5 years in 2006. By 2026, the median age is projected to increase to 40.9 years (Appendix D).

LGAs projected to have the highest median ages by 2026 include the rural areas of Boonah, Kilcoy, Laidley and Esk Shires: areas which young people have tended to leave to seek employment, training and lifestyle opportunities. In addition, coastal LGAs such as Noosa Shire, Redcliffe City and Maroochy Shire are also projected to have higher median ages as they continue to prove attractive to older people seeking retirement destinations. The changes in median age reflect the variations in relative distribution of people in broad age groups (0-14, 15-39, 40-64 and 65 years and over).

Across South East Queensland, the proportion of young people aged less than 15 years is projected to decline from 19.7% in 2006 to 17.1% of the population by 2016. Not surprisingly, those areas with higher median ages will have the lowest proportions of young people in their populations. In contrast, LGAs with proportions of young people exceeding 17% in 2026 include Logan City, Pine Rivers Shire, Gold Coast City and Ipswich – areas that are attractive to young families seeking relatively cheaper housing and facilities important to raising children. In the South East Queensland Region in 2026, Toowoomba City is also projected to have a high proportion people aged less than 15 years (18.4%).

The proportion of the South East Queensland population comprising people aged between 15 and 39 years is also projected to decline by 2026 (from 36.3% in 2006 to 32.5% in 2026). Brisbane City is projected to continue to have a relatively large proportion people in this age group, as it is the destination of many young people who move from elsewhere in Queensland, interstate or overseas often seeking employment and education opportunities. Other areas that are projected to have higher proportions of this age group include Logan City, Gold Coast City, Toowoomba City and Pine Rivers Shire.

In contrast, the proportion of the South East Queensland population aged between 40 and 64 years is projected to remain relatively stable, declining slightly from 32.1% in 2006 to 31.6% in 2026. LGAs with slow population growth and high median ages are projected to have the highest shares of their populations comprising people aged between 40 and 64 years, including the Shires of Esk, Gatton, Noosa and Boonah.

The largest proportional increases in population are projected to occur in the population aged 65 years or more. In 2006, 11.8% of the South East Queensland population was in this age group. By 2026, the share of the population aged 65 years or more is projected to increase to 19.6%. That is, by 2026 one in every five people living in South East Queensland will be aged 65 years or more.

Across the region, the proportion of people aged 65 years or more in the population is projected to more than double in Logan City, Beaudesert Shire, Pine Rivers Shire, Laidley Shire, Ipswich City and Gatton Shire. For example, in Logan City the proportion of people aged 65 years or more is projected to rise from 7.8% in 2006 to 19.3% of the population in 2026 (from 13,600 people in 2006 to 40,500 people in 2026). Beaudesert Shire had less than 6,000 people aged 65 years or more in 2006, but this number is projected to swell to almost 30,000 people by 2026. In Pine Rivers Shire in 2006, the projected population was nearly 11,700 people aged 65 years or more, with projections indicating there will be almost 40,000 people in this age group by 2026.

Local Government Areas in Eastern Regional Queensland

Population distribution



In Eastern Regional Queensland, eight Local Government Areas (LGAs) represent the eight largest regional cities and account for 41.2% of the regions population in 2006 and growing to 44.2% by 2026. The population of all of these cities (shown below in descending order of projected population size) will exceed 50,000 people by 2026:

- Cairns City (185,873 people),
- Mackay City (129,033 people),
- Townsville City (126,908 people),
- Toowoomba City (115,587 people),
- Thuringowa City (93,228 people),
- Hervey Bay City (86,875 people),
- Rockhampton City (65,190 people), and
- Bundaberg City (57,596 people).

Cairns City (185,873 people) will remain the largest LGA in Eastern Regional Queensland, followed by Mackay City (129,033 people), Townsville City (126,908 people), Toowoomba City (115,587 people) and Thuringowa City (93,228 people). The twin cities of Townsville and Thuringowa will contain the largest urban concentration outside of South East Queensland with a combined population of 220,136 people.

Following the eight cities in a ranking by population size in 2026 are Livingstone Shire (53,728 people). Cooloola Shire (49,635 people) is projected to have the second largest shire population in 2026 after Livingstone Shire. Cooloola contains the regional centre of Gympie, while Livingstone includes Yeppoon and other rapidly growing coastal localities east of Rockhampton.

Population growth

The eight largest regional centres, listed above, along with adjacent shires contain almost three quarters of the population in Eastern Regional Queensland. These 20 areas are projected to account for almost 80% of the population growth in the region in the 20 years to 2026. Population concentration in these growth areas is, therefore, expected to continue. However, much of this growth will be in adjacent shires, such as Livingstone Shire adjacent to Rockhampton City, Burnett Shire adjacent to Bundaberg City and Calliope Shire adjacent to Gladstone City. If excluding population growth in adjacent shires, the eight cities with the largest populations will capture about 52% of population growth in Eastern Regional Queensland in the 20 years to 2026 (Table 7).

In the next decade, five cities in Eastern Regional Queensland are expected to receive almost half of the population growth in the region. In the ten years to 2016, Cairns City is projected to have average population growth of 2,645 people each year, followed by Mackay City with average growth of 2,167 people. Three other cities are also projected to have annual population growth exceeding 1,000 people. The twin Cities of Thuringowa (1,736) and Townsville (1,542) are expected to have similar annual population growth, while Hervey Bay City (1,438) is expected to continue on its strong growth path.

Population growth is strong in and around a few regional centres where retail outlets and other service functions are concentrated. University and vocational education and also a variety of job opportunities assure continued growth in and around these locations. However, recent high levels of activity in the resources sector have had some influence on these patterns of population distribution.

For example, the recent increase in international demand for coal shows how market forces can change the patterns of population growth. The shires in the coal-mining area of the Bowen Basin have reversed the trend of population decline, and are now attracting jobseekers from within Queensland, interstate and overseas. For example the Shires of Belyando, Broadsound, Emerald, Nebo and Peak Downs had a combined average annual population growth of approximately 180 people in the ten years to 2006. This is an average growth, which reflects a decline in the beginning of this ten-year period and a strong recovery at the end of the period. However, in the ten years to 2016 the same five Shires are projected to have a combined annual population growth of more than 1,300 people. This projected growth is based on the high series projections. It does not include workers who live in the area for the duration of their rostered-on period as they travel back to their usual place of residence at the end of their shift (known as Fly In/Fly Out or Drive In/Drive Out workers).

Table 7

Average annual population change and share of change, LGAs
Eastern Regional Queensland, ten years ending 30 June 2006, 2016 and 2026

Local Government Area	Average Annual Population Change					
	10 years to 2006		10 years to 2016		10 years to 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Atherton (S)	129	1.2	149	1.2	157	1.2
Aurukun (S)	34	3.5	16	1.3	8	0.6
Banana (S) ^(a)	54	0.4	13	0.1	17	0.1
Bauhinia (S) ^(a)	4	0.2	36	1.5	12	0.4
Belyando (S) ^(a)	54	0.5	582	4.2	33	0.2
Biggenden (S)	-5	-0.3	4	0.2	1	0.1
Bowen (S) ^(a)	-51	-0.4	149	1.1	115	0.8
Broadsound (S) ^(a)	-56	-0.8	125	1.7	18	0.2
Bundaberg (C)	376	0.8	522	1.1	506	0.9
Burdekin (S)	-13	-0.1	-15	-0.1	-57	-0.3
Burnett (S)	717	3.0	879	2.8	942	2.3
Cairns (C)	1,980	1.6	2,645	1.9	2,815	1.7
Calliope (S) ^(a)	313	2.1	526	2.8	802	3.2
Cambooya (S)	166	3.4	172	2.6	179	2.1
Cardwell (S)	221	2.2	182	1.5	201	1.4
Charters Towers (C)	-20	-0.2	-21	-0.2	-34	-0.4
Chinchilla (S)	39	0.6	20	0.3	12	0.2
Clifton (S)	17	0.7	15	0.6	12	0.4
Cook (S)	90	2.5	50	1.2	40	0.8
Cooloola (S)	541	1.6	609	1.5	606	1.3
Crow's Nest (S)	387	3.7	479	3.2	475	2.4
Croydon (S)	3	1.1	3	0.9	4	1.0
Dalby (T)	67	0.7	59	0.5	47	0.4
Dalrymple (S)	2	0.0	-10	-0.3	-9	-0.3
Douglas (S)	210	2.0	219	1.8	260	1.8
Duaringa (S) ^(a)	-116	-1.5	131	1.7	20	0.2
Eacham (S)	7	0.1	16	0.3	13	0.2
Eidsvold (S)	-5	-0.5	-4	-0.5	-3	-0.3
Emerald (S) ^(a)	161	1.2	487	3.0	240	1.2
Etheridge (S)	7	0.7	-3	-0.3	0	0.0
Fitzroy (S) ^(a)	73	0.7	174	1.5	285	2.1
Gayndah (S)	3	0.1	-2	-0.1	-3	-0.1
Gladstone (C) ^(a)	244	0.9	765	2.4	1,303	3.1
Goondiwindi (T)	68	1.4	44	0.8	33	0.6
Herberton (S)	15	0.3	25	0.4	33	0.6
Hervey Bay (C)	1,550	3.4	1,438	2.4	1,818	2.4
Hinchinbrook (S)	-110	-0.9	-19	-0.2	-19	-0.2
Inglewood (S)	-18	-0.7	2	0.1	2	0.1
Isis (S)	55	0.9	65	1.0	63	0.9
Jericho (S) ^(a)	7	0.7	3	0.3	4	0.3
Johnstone (S)	-26	-0.1	32	0.2	31	0.2
Jondaryan (S)	328	2.5	339	2.1	339	1.7
Kilkivan (S)	15	0.5	20	0.6	19	0.5
Kingaroy (S)	127	1.1	104	0.8	74	0.5
Kolan (S)	23	0.5	27	0.6	32	0.6
Livingstone (S) ^(a)	611	2.4	1,047	3.1	1,399	3.1

Local Government Area	Average Annual Population Change					
	10 years to 2006		10 years to 2016		10 years to 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mackay (C) ^(a)	1,290	1.7	2,167	2.3	2,301	2.0
Mareeba (S)	74	0.4	115	0.6	104	0.5
Maryborough (C)	96	0.4	96	0.4	74	0.3
Millmerran (S)	52	1.7	25	0.7	29	0.8
Mirani (S) ^(a)	53	1.0	163	2.6	144	1.9
Miriam Vale (S)	165	3.5	221	3.4	250	2.8
Monto (S)	-44	-1.6	-5	-0.2	-6	-0.3
Mount Morgan (S) ^(a)	2	0.1	2	0.1	5	0.2
Mundubbera (S)	-10	-0.4	6	0.3	6	0.2
Murgon (S)	28	0.8	14	0.4	11	0.3
Murilla (S)	-7	-0.2	4	0.2	2	0.1
Nanango (S)	68	0.8	42	0.5	45	0.5
Nebo (S) ^(a)	-10	-0.5	53	2.2	12	0.4
Peak Downs (S) ^(a)	33	1.0	88	2.3	62	1.3
Perry (S)	8	1.9	3	0.5	3	0.6
Pittsworth (S)	58	1.2	60	1.1	53	0.9
Rockhampton (C) ^(a)	64	0.1	207	0.3	262	0.4
Rosalie (S)	104	1.2	128	1.3	136	1.2
Sarina (S) ^(a)	101	1.0	211	1.9	226	1.7
Stanthorpe (S)	46	0.4	48	0.4	56	0.5
Tara (S)	30	0.8	8	0.2	4	0.1
Taroom (S)	-23	-0.8	-10	-0.4	-6	-0.2
Thuringowa (C)	1,566	3.0	1,736	2.5	1,480	1.7
Tiaro (S)	92	2.0	135	2.3	143	2.0
Toowoomba (C)	1,096	1.2	968	1.0	838	0.8
Torres (S)	68	2.0	52	1.3	94	2.0
Townsville (C)	1,622	1.7	1,542	1.4	855	0.7
Waggamba (S)	33	1.2	34	1.1	46	1.3
Wambo (S)	1	0.0	7	0.1	2	0.0
Warwick (S)	163	0.8	127	0.6	78	0.3
Weipa (T)	-11	-0.5	30	1.2	26	0.9
Whitsunday (S) ^(a)	415	2.6	547	2.7	715	2.7
Wondai (S)	38	0.9	23	0.5	14	0.3
Woocoo (S)	43	1.4	58	1.6	63	1.5
Eastern Regional Queensland ^(b)	15,581	1.3	21,001	1.5	20,971	1.3

(C) City (S) Shire (T) Town

^(a) Based on high series projections

^(b) Includes Aboriginal and Islander Communities for which specific population projections have not been undertaken due to the unavailability of historical data

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, Cat No 3218.0 and 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, high and medium series

Within Eastern Regional Queensland, many LGAs are projected to have only modest average annual population change, with 25 LGAs projected to have an increase or decrease of fewer than, 20 people per year. Little change in the population size is expected for some relatively populous LGAs in 2006 such as Burdekin Shire (population 18,820), Hinchinbrook Shire (population 12,260), Charters Towers City (population 8,830), Eacham Shire (population 6,370) and Chinchilla Shire (population 6,220).

Population growth rates

In the ten years to 2006, seven LGAs recorded population growth in excess of 3.0% per year – Crow's Nest Shire (3.7%), Miriam Vale Shire (3.5%), Aurukun Shire (3.5%), Hervey Bay City (3.4%), Cambooya Shire (3.4%), Thuringowa City (3.0%) and Burnett Shire (3.0%). In the following decade to 2016, Belyando Shire (4.2%), Miriam Vale Shire (3.4%), Crow's Nest Shire (3.2%), Livingstone Shire (3.1%) and Emerald Shire (3.0%) are expected to have the fastest population growth, exceeding an annual average growth of 3.0%.

Using the high series projections for Fitzroy SD, Calliope Shire (3.2%), Gladstone City (3.1%) and Livingstone Shire (3.1%) will have the fastest annual growth in the ten years to 2026. Miriam Vale Shire is expected to continue having fast population growth, with the average annual growth rate only declining to around 2.8% per annum in the ten years to 2026.

Projected age structure

LGAs projected to have high levels of population ageing are Herberton, Hinchinbrook and Monto Shires. The median age in these three Shires is expected to increase by more than 14 years between 2006 and 2026, taking the median age to over 57 years. Other LGAs with a projected median age of more than 55 years in 2026 are the Shires of Biggenden, Mount Morgan, Miriam Vale, Eacham, Nanango, Isis and Inglewood (Appendix D). Slow population growth and ageing of the population in these areas is often caused by young people moving to seek employment, training and lifestyle opportunities elsewhere. A net loss of people in younger age groups through migration augments the general trend towards an ageing population.

Areas with a high median age are also likely to contain a high proportion of their population aged 65 years and over. In 2026, this age group will constitute a high proportion of the population in Monto (40.6%), Herberton (37.7%), Hinchinbrook (36.5%), Biggenden (36.2%), Inglewood (35.2%) and Mount Morgan (34.7%) Shires. However, the largest increases in the number of people in the age group 65 years and over are projected for the Cities of Cairns (16,173), Hervey Bay (15,035), Mackay (13,589), Thuringowa (9,977), Toowoomba (9,457) and Townsville (8,549). Such a significant increase of elderly will bring many implications including a growing demand for health and aged care facilities and services.

At the same time as the proportion of people aged over 65 years is projected to increase, the proportion of young people aged less than 15 years is decreasing. LGAs in Eastern Regional Queensland that are projected to have under 11% of

their population aged below 15 years in 2026 are Etheridge Shire, Herberton Shire, Monto Shire, Croydon Shire and Eacham Shire. In terms of planning for schooling and other youth-specific services, the number of people aged below 15 years is projected to decrease by more than 500 between 2006 and 2026 in the following eight LGAs:

- Johnstone Shire (-1,161),
- Maryborough City (-977),
- Burdekin Shire (-878),
- Charters Towers City (-732),
- Hinchinbrook Shire (-679),
- Warwick Shire (-654),
- Banana Shire (-637) and
- Eacham Shire (-516).

During the same time some LGAs with larger population growth will experience substantial increases in the young population. For example, the groups aged below 15 years are projected to show an increase of more than 3,000 people during the 20 years to 2026 in Mackay City (9,448), Cairns City (6,841), Livingstone Shire (5,772), Gladstone City (5,410), Thuringowa City (4,087) and Calliope Shire (3,233). However, it should be noted that the population growth in Mackay, Livingstone, Gladstone and Calliope are based on the high series projections.

The broad age groups 15 to 39 years and 40 to 64 years are projected to experience less drastic change than the younger and older populations. However, an increased proportion of the population in ages from 15 years to 64 years is only expected in two sparsely populated Shires – Croydon (13%) and Perry (2%). All other LGAs in Eastern Regional Queensland are projected to have a decline in the proportion of people aged 15 to 64 years in their populations. However, because of the overall population increase, the number of people of working age will only decline in a few LGAs. About 50 LGAs in Eastern Regional Queensland are projected to have an increase in the number of people aged 15 to 64 years. In this broad age group, the largest declines are projected in the Hinchinbrook Shire (-1,580 people), Burdekin Shire (-1,411 people) and Charters Towers City (-1,036 people). The largest increase is projected for Cairns City with an additional 17,500 people in age group 15 to 39 years and 14,100 people in age group 40 to 64 years.

Local Government Areas in Western Regional Queensland



Population distribution

Up to the end of the 1990s, many LGAs in Western Queensland experienced declining population. Since then, the population has remained relatively stable and the projections indicate that this will continue. Because of overall projected stable population the ranking by population size among LGAs in Western Regional Queensland is not expected to change.

In 2006, Mount Isa City (21,341 people) has a projected population much larger than any other LGA in Western Regional Queensland. No other LGA has a population size exceeding 10,000 people. The second largest population is in Roma Town (6,836 people) followed by Balonne Shire (5,627 people), Murweh Shire (5,026 people), Longreach Shire (4,001 people) and Cloncurry Shire (3,834 people). This ranking is expected to remain the same in 2016 and 2026. However, all of these LGAs are projected to have population growth in the next 20 years, except Murweh Shire, which is expected to remain at a population size of around 5,000 people.

Population growth

The largest population growth is projected for Mount Isa City. Using the medium series, the City is projected to have population growth of 350 people in each of the next two decades (Table 8). Currently the medium series for Mount Isa City and other LGAs in the North West SD is used. However, if mining expansion results in stronger growth in the resident population the high series may be more appropriate. Other mining LGAs that are expected to have a moderate growth include Cloncurry Shire and Carpentaria Shire.

The regional centres of Longreach, Roma and St George in Balonne Shire are expected to show increased population growth in the ten years to 2026. In this period, the three LGAs have a projected population growth similar to Mount Isa City. The average annual population growth is expected to be 30 people or more in Balonne Shire (41 people), which contains the town of St George, Roma Town (31 people) and Longreach Shire (30 people). In the twenty years to 2026 a number of LGAs are expected to have population decline, albeit at modest levels.

Table 8

Average annual population change and share of change, LGAs
Western Regional Queensland, ten years ending 30 June 2006, 2016 and 2026

Local Government Area	Average Annual Population Change					
	10 years to 2006		10 years to 2016		10 years to 2026	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aramac (S)	-16	-2.1	-2	-0.3	-1	-0.2
Balonne (S)	80	1.5	14	0.2	41	0.7
Barcaldine (S)	-10	-0.6	1	0.1	3	0.2
Barcoo (S)	-2	-0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Bendemere (S)	-6	-0.6	-1	-0.1	0	0.0
Blackall (S)	-28	-1.6	-26	-1.8	-10	-0.8
Booringa (S)	-11	-0.6	-5	-0.3	-3	-0.2
Boulia (S)	2	0.3	-1	-0.3	0	0.0
Bulloo (S)	-6	-1.3	0	-0.1	0	-0.1
Bungil (S)	-4	-0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
Burke (S)	20	5.6	-2	-0.4	-2	-0.5
Carpentaria (S)	31	1.5	7	0.3	7	0.3
Cloncurry (S)	64	1.8	12	0.3	8	0.2
Diamantina (S)	-2	-0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0
Flinders (S)	-26	-1.2	-19	-1.0	-13	-0.7
Ilfracombe (S)	3	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.2
Isisford (S)	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.4
Longreach (S)	15	0.4	7	0.2	30	0.7
McKinlay (S)	-14	-1.3	-8	-0.8	-7	-0.7
Mornington (S)	-9	-0.8	1	0.1	-2	-0.2
Mount Isa (C)	-105	-0.5	35	0.2	35	0.2
Murweh (S)	4	0.1	-4	-0.1	-3	-0.1
Paroo (S)	-17	-0.7	-4	-0.2	-4	-0.2
Quilpie (S)	-24	-2.0	-4	-0.4	-2	-0.2
Richmond (S)	2	0.2	-1	-0.1	-2	-0.1
Roma (T)	27	0.4	18	0.3	31	0.4
Tambo (S)	5	0.9	4	0.6	7	0.9
Warroo (S)	6	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
Winton (S)	-11	-0.7	-4	-0.2	-2	-0.1
Western Regional Queensland ^(a)	-30	0.0	19	0.0	116	0.2

(C) City (S) Shire (T) Town

^(b) Includes Aboriginal and Islander Communities for which specific population projections have not been undertaken due to the unavailability of historical data

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, Cat No 3218.0 and 2006 edition Queensland Government Population Projections, medium series

Projected age structure

The population of Western Regional Queensland is ageing as it is in other parts of Queensland. As a consequence, the median age is projected to increase in the twenty years to 2026. The proportion of the population aged less than 15 years is projected to decline, and the proportion aged 65 years and more is projected to increase.

The median age is projected to be less than that of Queensland by 2026 by about 5 years. The lack of medical and other special services in remote areas result in many retirees moving east. LGAs projected to have the highest median ages by 2026 include Burke, Bendemere, Warroo and Quilpie Shires.

The LGAs with the lowest proportions of people aged less than 15 years in their populations by 2026 include Burke (11.6%), McKinlay (13.3%), Warroo (14.0%) and Quilpie (14.0%) Shires. LGAs projected to have comparatively high proportions of young people by 2026 include Carpentaria (30.7%) and Isisford (32.4%) Shires.

While the population aged 15 to 39 years and 40 to 64 years overall is projected to remain relatively stable in size, some LGAs are projected to have a large proportion of their population in these age groups in 2026. Bulloo Shire and Roma Town are expected to have more than 40% of their populations in the age group 15 to 39 years. The proportions aged 40 to 64 years in 2026 are projected to exceed 40% in Burke, Boulia and Aramac Shires.

Population ageing is more evident in the remote parts of Western Regional Queensland. In these areas, the population aged 40 years and more is projected to increase by more than ten percentage points in the 20 years to 2026. This includes areas like Mornington, Richmond, McKinlay, Cloncurry, Boulia and Burke Shires. Burke Shire also is projected to have the highest proportion of people aged 65 years and over with more than one quarter of the population at retirement age.

In the southern part of Western Regional Queensland, Quilpie Shire and Bendemere Shire are both projected to have more than 20% of their population aged 65 years and more in 2026. In addition, between 2006 and 2026 Bendemere Shire is projected to have an increase in the proportion of the population aged 40 years and over of more than ten percentage points.

Conclusion

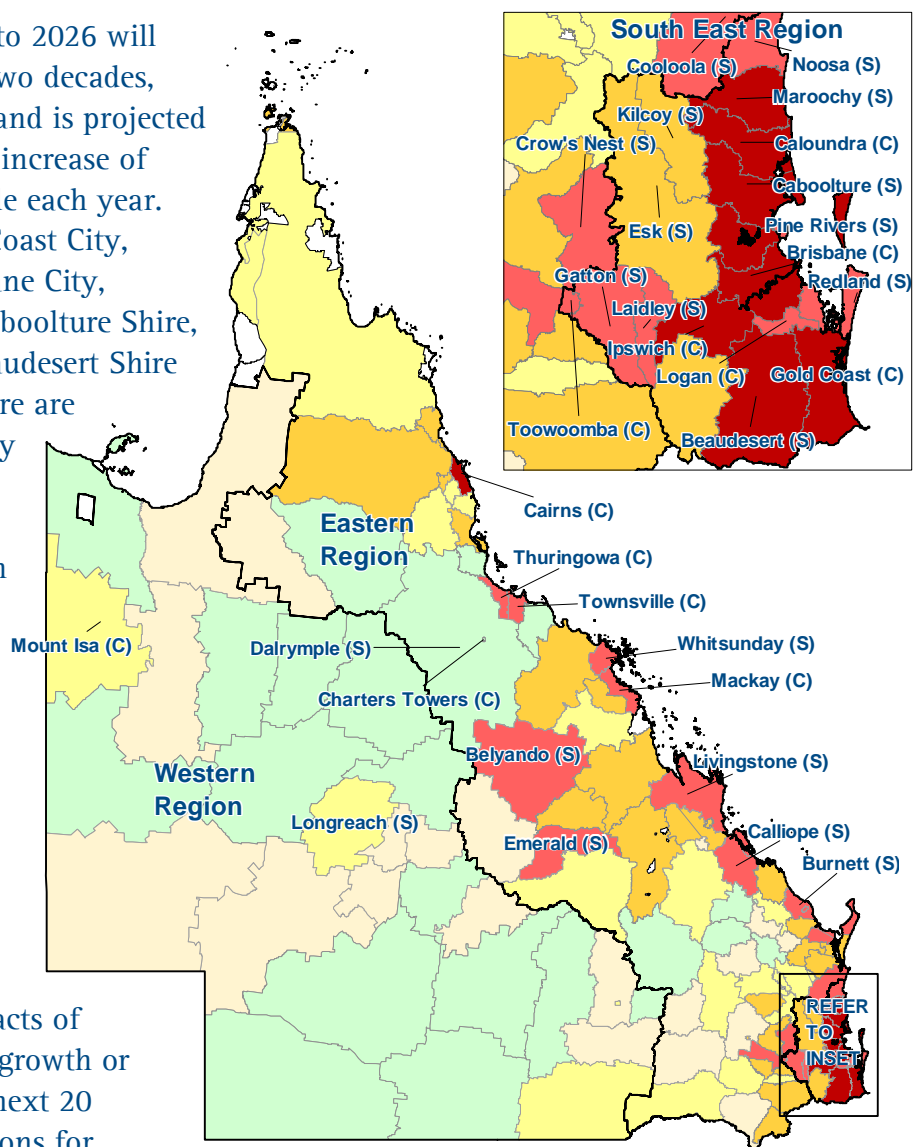
This report on the 2006 edition population projections shows that continued strong population growth is projected for Queensland. The annual population growth is projected to be larger in the next 15 years and then decline gradually. This report outlines the scale, distribution and composition of this population change.

South East Queensland is expected to be the location where most of the population growth to 2026 will occur. In the next two decades, South East Queensland is projected to have an average increase of nearly 58,000 people each year. The LGAs of Gold Coast City, Ipswich City, Brisbane City, Maroochy Shire, Caboolture Shire, Caloundra City, Beaudesert Shire and Pine Rivers Shire are projected to grow by more than 60,000 people each by 2026. Outside South East Queensland, only Cairns City is projected to have population growth exceeding 50,000 people by 2026 (Figure 7).

People in all areas of Queensland will experience the impacts of population ageing, growth or decline during the next 20 years. The implications for planning of services and infrastructure are significant.

Figure 7: Projected population growth by Local Government Area, 20 years to 2026

Sources: Queensland Government Population Projections, 2006 edition medium and high series



Projected Absolute Change for all LGAs in Queensland, 2006–2026
Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council Areas

-750 to 0 (24)	200 to 1,000 (22)	5,000 to 50,000 (22)
0 to 200 (20)	1,000 to 5,000 (28)	50,000 to 300,000 (9)