

January 2008

## Remote Area Population Studies Research

### Overview

The School for Social and Policy Research (SSPR) at Charles Darwin University in Australia's Northern Territory conducts Population Studies research into issues and opportunities facing remote areas. A key interest is in how population systems in remote areas impact on the capacity for economic and technological innovation. 'Remote areas' are those with relatively small local populations and at relatively long distances from large population centres, sources of immigrants, and markets for goods and services. The objective of the program is to develop models of small, remote, dispersed and dynamic populations which work in terms of informing population, economic and related policy through research in four fields –

1. formal demography – particularly population estimates and projections
2. mobility studies – particularly spatial analysis and understanding motivations
3. population 'transitions' – particularly issues around aging and urbanisation
4. population policy – particularly evaluation and modelling impacts.

The objective will be met through building demographic research capacity at Charles Darwin University and through critical international partnerships leading to general models of remote area development and peer review of the methods and results produced.

### Research Projects

Existing research includes a large Australian Research Council project looking at the implications of population mobility for the knowledge economy in the Northern Territory. This includes research into the movement intentions and population turnover issues facing professional groups such as nurses, engineers, accountants, dentists and hospitality workers. A survey of over 1 500 Northern Territory residents has addressed issues of family migration, key worker migration, and causes and consequences of population turnover. The quantitative survey is accompanied by 80 in-depth interviews with Northern Territory residents and a shorter survey of past residents. Additional projects include population projections, a study of urbanisation, evaluation of the economic potential of regional centres, understanding the consequences of an aging Indigenous population, evaluating strategies for workforce recruitment, mapping tourist and short-term resident flows, and understanding how immigrants from overseas resettle and adjust to the labour market.

### Partnerships and Contacts

The SSPR is looking to develop Northern Territory, Australian, and International research partnerships with academia, industry and government to further the theoretical and applied field of remote area population studies. Partnerships include collaborative multi-jurisdictional research, researcher exchange, seminars and scholarly activities, industry and government consultancies, post-graduate scholarship and internship opportunities.

Associate Professor Dean Carson  
Head of Population Studies  
School for Social and Policy Research  
Charles Darwin University  
Darwin. NT 0909  
08 8946 6772  
[dean.carson@cdu.edu.au](mailto:dean.carson@cdu.edu.au)