

POPULATION STUDIES RESEARCH BRIEF

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NT Mobility Project:

Movers out of the Northern Territory

KEY FINDINGS

- The majority of people were satisfied with their time in the NT even though they had moved away.
- Nearly 40 per cent of respondents said they didn't know if they would return to the NT. Two thirds of those 44 years of age or younger said they didn't know.
- Of those who said they didn't know if they would come back to the NT, improved health services, financial incentives, career opportunities and housing subsidies were the most important factors in determining if they would return.
- For younger age groups and couples with no children improved financial incentives and health services were most important. Improved career opportunities were most important for single people and older age groups.
- These findings identify the characteristics of a group of people who could be targeted for further policy development which focuses on improved service delivery and incentives attracting them back to the Territory.

RESEARCH AIM

This research brief draws on data from the Australian Post Relocation Survey and examines the characteristics of respondents who moved out of the NT and factors which may encourage them to return. The survey was funded by NT Treasury and the brief was written by Dr Teresa Cunningham and Mary Beneforti.



Background

This paper provides findings from the Australian Post Relocation Survey (APRS) and the Northern Territory Population Mobility Survey (TMS) which were conducted as part of the NT Mobility project. This Research Brief examines the characteristics of respondents who were satisfied with their time in the Territory and who had moved out of the NT, including improvements which could be made which would encourage them to return. This is the second paper in a series of Research Briefs which examines the APRS and related surveys (see 2008006).

Method

The Northern Territory Treasury, in association with Charles Darwin University and Australia Post, conducted the Australia Post Relocation Survey to gather information about the reasons behind interstate migration into the Northern Territory (NT), migration out of the Northern Territory and migration within the Northern Territory. A control group was used to compare certain characteristics with the NT mover groups.

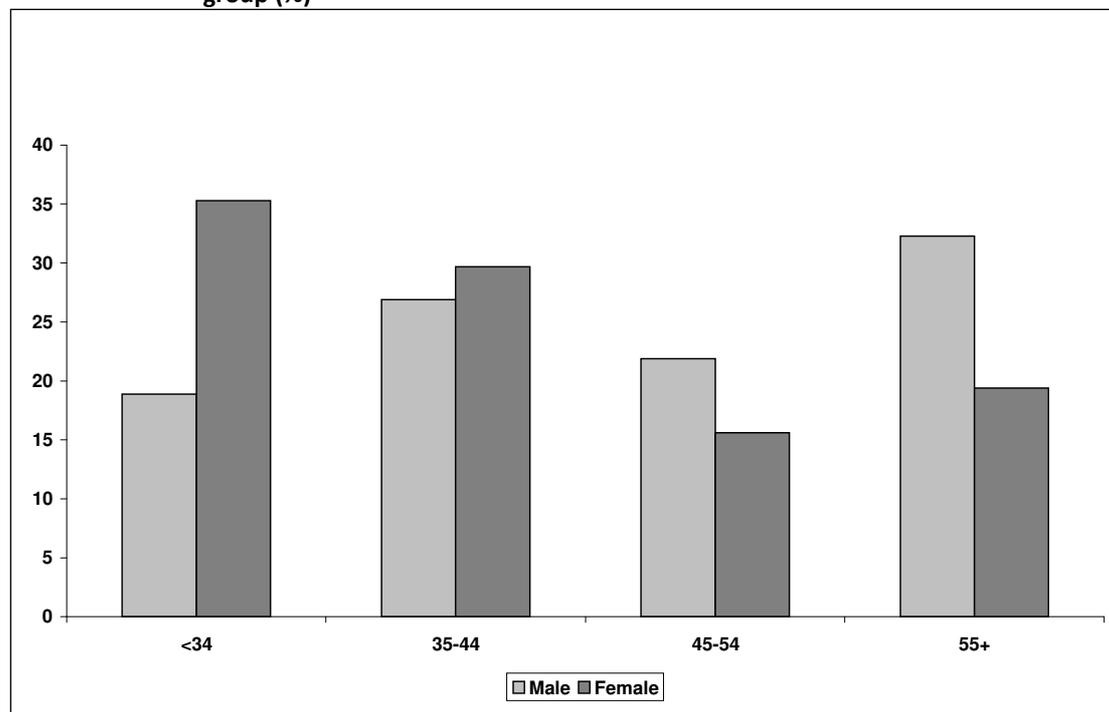
The survey was conducted in November to December 2006. Questionnaires were mailed to 11,000 applicants registered on Australia Post's mail redirection database who had either moved to, from or within the Northern Territory in the 12 months prior to the survey, or who had moved across any other state border within the same period. 2145 completed questionnaires were received, a response rate of just under 20 per cent. A total of 521 respondents had moved out of the Territory in the 12 month survey period.

Results

The analysis focuses on those respondents who said they were satisfied with their time in the NT even though they had moved out in order to determine what may encourage them to return, given that they liked the Territory. Additionally it was not possible to do any detailed analysis of those respondents who were dissatisfied due to their small number.

As shown in Figure 1 females moved out at a younger age than males. Nearly two thirds of females who moved out were less than 44 years of age (35.3 per cent less than 34 years, 29.7 per cent 35-44 years) compared with less than half of the males 44 years of age or younger (18.9 per cent less than 34 years, 26.9 per cent 35-44 years).

Figure1 Respondents who were satisfied with time spent in the NT by gender and age group (%)

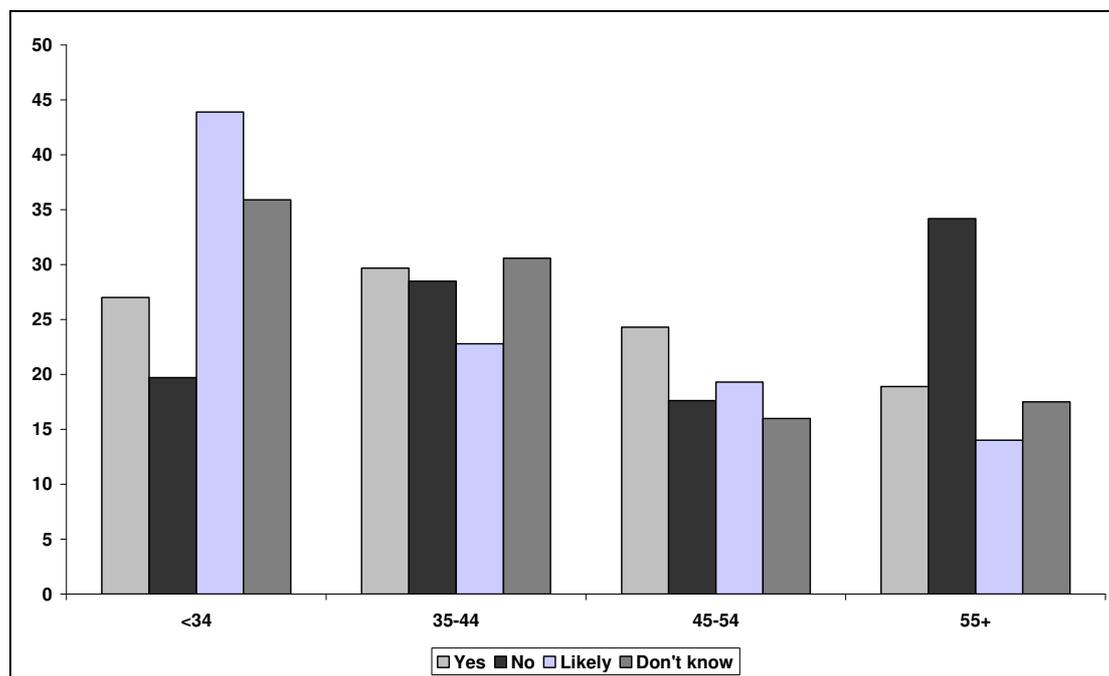


Of those who moved out and who had been satisfied with their time in the NT:

- 14.0 per cent said they would move back;
- 36.2 per cent said they would not move back;
- 10.6 per cent said it was likely they would move back; and
- 39.2 per cent said they didn't know what their future intentions were.

A further breakdown of these respondents is shown in Figure 2 which indicates that younger age groups were more likely to have said "yes" or "likely" that they would return to the NT and two thirds of those under 44 years of age said they "didn't know" if they would return.

Figure 2 Respondents intentions of returning to the NT by age group (%)



A target group for future policy development is those people who stated that they didn't know whether or not they would remain in the NT and who may therefore want to return if certain improvements to services are made. In order to determine whether this was the case respondents were asked about a number of areas where improvements could be made.

Table 1 What improvements would encourage those respondents to return to the NT who didn't know if they would return (in order of importance)

	Percent	Number
Financial incentives	32.3	64
Health services	31.8	63
Career opportunities	30.8	61
Housing subsidies	27.8	55
Law and order	19.2	38
School education	17.2	34
Culture/recreation	11.1	22
Tertiary education	10.6	21
Aged care	6.6	13
Childcare	5.1	10
Nothing	4.5	9
Public Housing	3.5	7

As shown in Table 1 around one third of respondents said they would be encouraged to move back if there were improved financial incentives (32.2 per cent), improved health services (31.8 per cent) or improved career opportunities (30.8 per cent). This was followed by around one quarter (27.2 per

cent) of respondents who cited improved housing subsidies as a motivation. Of less concern were school education and law and order issues (17.2 and 19.2 per cent of respondents respectively) and of least importance were tertiary education (10.6 per cent), aged care (6.6 per cent) child care (5.1 per cent) and public housing (3.5 per cent).

Household composition and age may influence the ability to move and the likelihood of moving and Table 2 shows these two variables by the four most important factors—as shown in Table 1—which would encourage respondents to return to the NT.

Table 2 What improvements would encourage respondents to return to the NT by household status⁽¹⁾ and age group (%)

	Financial incentives	Health services	Career opportunities	Housing subsidies
Couple no children	36.7	36.7	31.7	28.3
Couple with children	28.6	31.2	29.9	26.0
One person	28.6	28.6	39.3	35.7
<34	32.9	38.6	31.4	34.3
35-44	35.1	35.1	35.1	28.1
45-54	28.6	25.7	42.9	22.9
55+	30.6	19.4	11.1	19.4

⁽¹⁾ Single parent and group share households not included due to small numbers

Financial incentives and health services were equally important for couples with no children (36.7 per cent for both) and housing subsidies least important for this group but most important for one person households (35.7 per cent) who had career opportunities as their most important factor (39.3 per cent). Health services were of slightly more importance for couples with children (31.2 per cent) than were other factors and for respondents 34 years and younger (38.6 per cent). A large percentage (42.9 per cent) of 45-54 year olds said that improved career opportunities would encourage them to return. Over one quarter to one third of respondents in each age group stated that improved financial incentives would motivate them to return (28.6 per cent to 35.1 per cent).

Comments

- Most people were satisfied with their time in the NT even though they had moved away;
- Women moved out at a younger age than men;
- Nearly 40 per cent of respondents said they didn't know if they would return to the NT a possible "target group" for policy development which attracts them back to the Territory;
- Two thirds of those under 44 years of age said they didn't know if they would return, indicating that younger age groups, who are usually more mobile, were probably more

inclined to move back, again indicating a group of people who should be the focus of initiatives to encourage them to return;

- Of those who said they didn't know improved health services, financial incentives, career opportunities and housing subsidies were the most important improvements; and
- Improved financial incentives and health services were most important for younger age groups and couples with no children; improved career opportunities were most important for single people and older age groups. These findings indicate areas on which policy development should focus in order to attract people back to the Territory.

References

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