Territory Population Update

New Population Statistics for September 2017

Summary

Population figures just published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that the total Estimated Resident Population of the Northern Territory stood at 246,065 at the end of September 2017, an increase of just 73 people over one year earlier. This represents a growth rate over the year of 0.03%. The population of 246,065 gives the Territory just under a 1.0% share of the national population of 24,702,851.

The graph below illustrates how the Territory’s population has changed over recent years. Following strong increases to the middle of 2013, population growth has been modest since then, fluctuating between growth and decline. Over the most recent quarter population growth was close to zero (with official figures indicating a decline of 40 people).

![The Territory's population graph](image)

Note: Population statistics are for the end of each month shown
Source: ABS
The bar chart below shows how the Territory’s population growth rate during the 12 months to 30th September 2017 compares with that of the other States and Territories and Australia as a whole. The Territory’s population growth rate of 0.03% is the lowest of all jurisdictions.

What factors are driving population change in the Territory?

Population change in the Territory is the result of several demographic processes. These are:

- births
- deaths
- in-migration from interstate
- out-migration to interstate
- immigration from overseas
- emigration to overseas.

These six factors are often summarised as:

- natural change (births minus deaths)
- net interstate migration (in-migration minus out-migration)
- net overseas migration (immigration minus emigration).
The diagram below shows how these factors of population change affected population growth during the 12 months to 30th September 2017. Processes which remove people from the Territory are shown in red; those which add people to the population are shown in green.

- During the year there were 3,948 births and 1,105 deaths to Territory residents, giving natural change of 2,843.
- There were an estimated 13,510 in-migration moves to the Territory from interstate, while there were 17,220 out-migrations to other parts of Australia. Net interstate migration was therefore - 3,710.
- The Territory’s population experienced immigration of 5,828 from overseas, while emigration was 4,888. Net overseas migration was therefore 940.
- Total population change over the year was estimated to be 73.
- Although overall population change was modest, the churn of population (numbers of people being added and removed from the population) was substantial. This is a long-established characteristic of the Territory’s demography.

Factors affecting population change in the Territory during the year ending 30th September 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Interstate in-migration</th>
<th>Interstate out-migration</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>13,510</td>
<td>17,220</td>
<td>5,828</td>
<td>4,888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Natural change} &= \text{Births} - \text{Deaths} \\
&= 2,843
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Net interstate migration} &= \text{In-migration} - \text{Out-migration} \\
&= -3,710
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Net overseas migration} &= \text{Immigration} - \text{Emigration} \\
&= 940
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Population change} &= \text{Natural change} + \text{Net interstate migration} + \text{Net overseas migration} \\
&= 73
\end{align*}
\]

Source: calculated from ABS data
Note: Components of population change may not sum to total population change due to measurement errors.
Factors affecting population change in recent years

Much of the volatility in the Territory’s population growth over the years is due to fluctuations in migration, which in part reflects fluctuations in the Territory’s economy. The graph below shows how natural change, net interstate migration, and net overseas migration have varied on a quarterly basis in recent years. The slow growth of the Territory’s population over the last few years is due to net interstate migration losses and lower levels of net overseas migration.

![Graph showing factors affecting population change in the Territory in recent years](image)

Note: Periods are quarters of the year; e.g. “Qtr 1 2016” refers to the first quarter of 2016
Source: ABS
Note: Components of population change may not sum to total population change due to measurement errors

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Data sources
All data are derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics bulletin Australian Demographic Statistics (released quarterly and containing data up to a date six months prior to publication) and the online data service ABS.Stat. Be aware that these statistics are estimates, not precise values.

Interested in finding out more about the Territory’s population?
See the webpage of the Demography & Growth Planning team at the Northern Institute, and our blog, demographyNorth.