

The Brain Drain: Interstate and Internal Migration into and out of Western Australia

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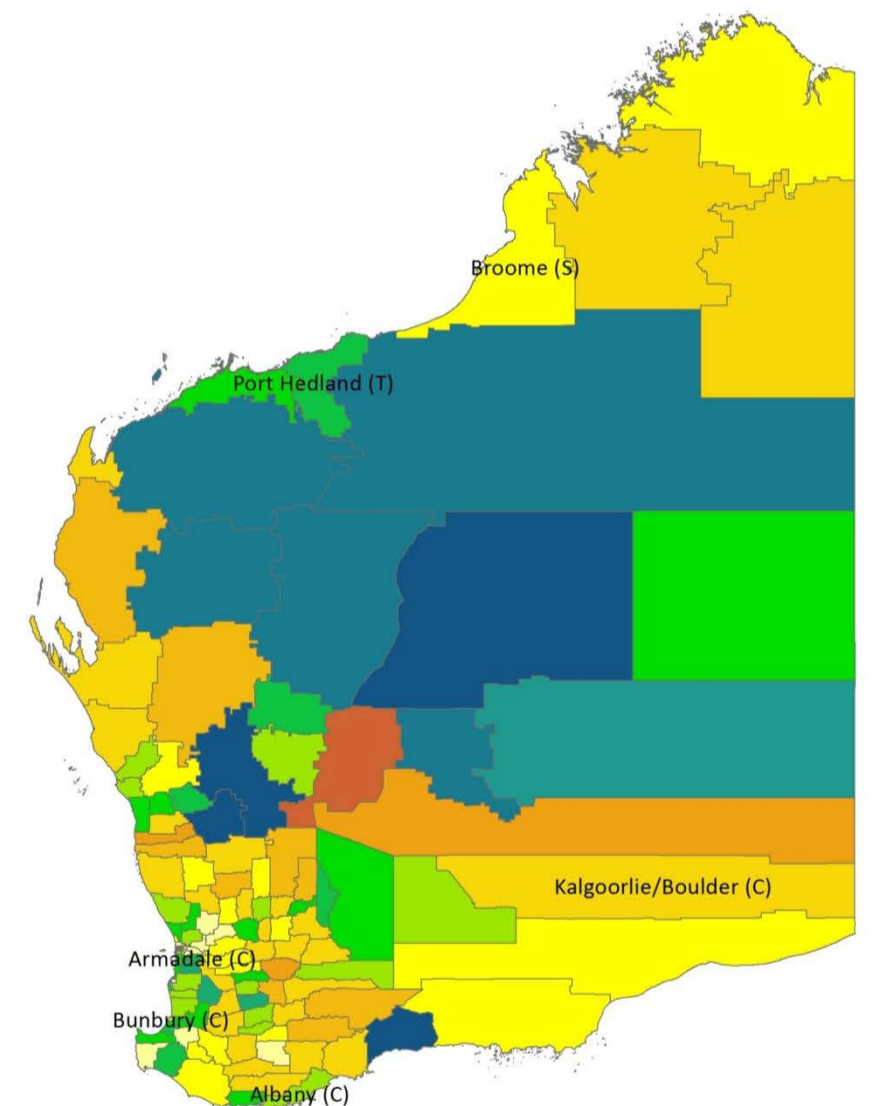
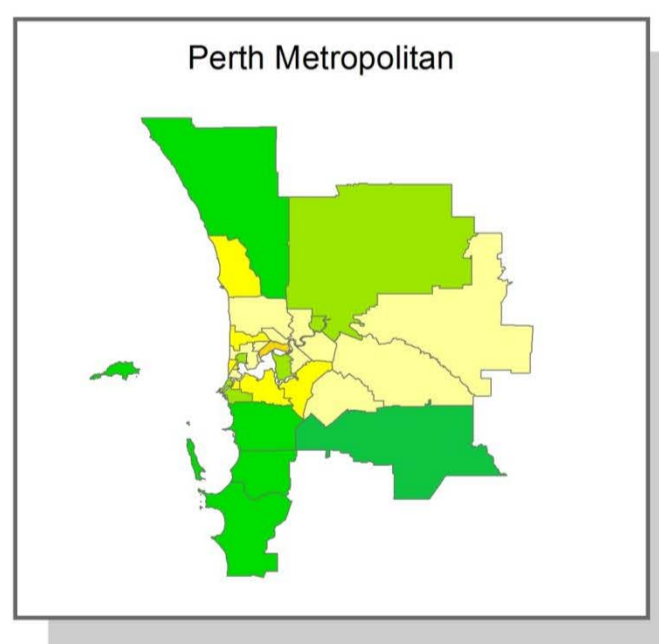
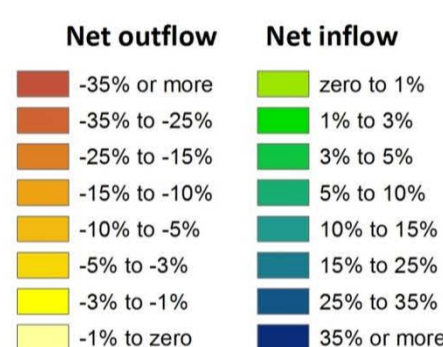
Project undertaken by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre

Project Overview

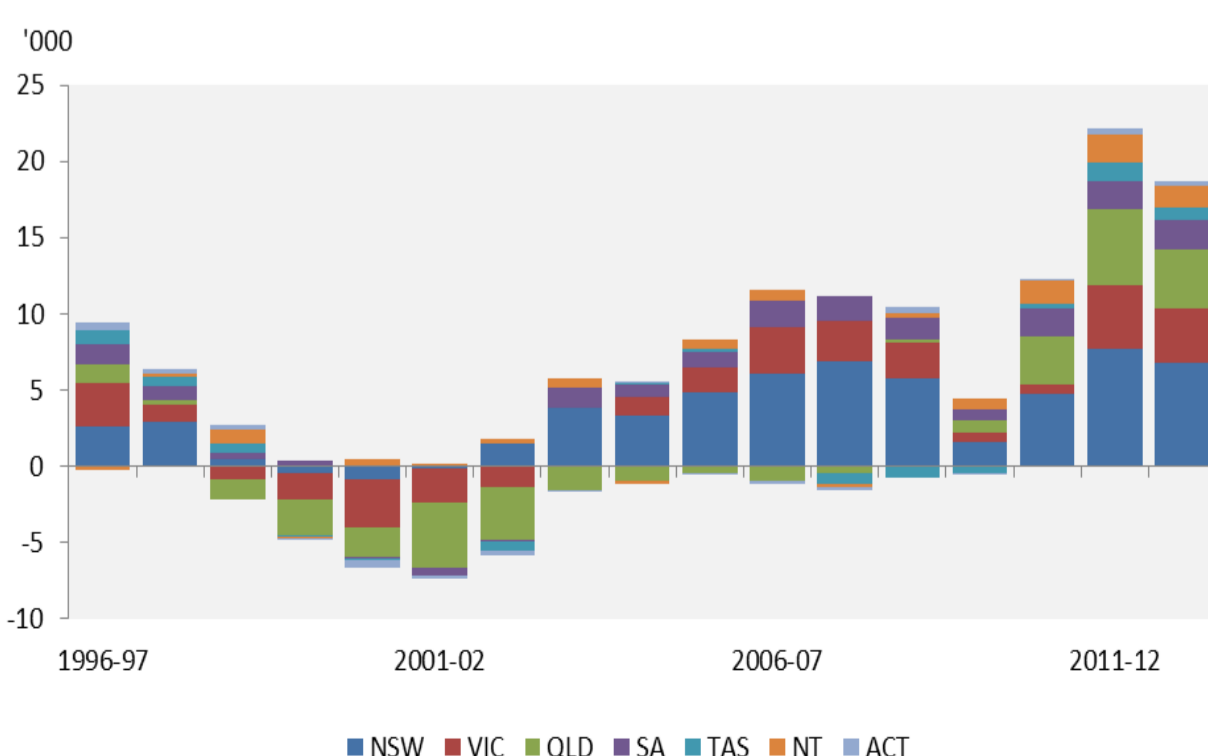
Internal migration flows provide important information about the gains and losses to populations in particular areas. Together with natural population changes and overseas migration, internal migration is a key component of population growth or decline in WA. It also serves as a key indicator of the economic sustainability of areas, providing a critical component of labour market flexibility and the main channel through which the population adjusts to regional labour and housing market conditions.

This project challenges the notion that flows of migrants to WA from the eastern states is insignificant compared with overseas migration. The research compares Census data from 2006 and 2011 to analyse migration flows and the characteristics of those who migrate.

Net outflows and inflows by LGA, 2010-2011 - Perth



Net Interstate migration in Western Australia by state of origin 1996-2012



Outcomes

Monitoring projected population shifts is critical to the effective design of planning systems and policy implementation in WA. The research has provided important evidence to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into geographical labour mobility. Findings include:

- Overseas migration remains the largest source of population inflows into WA, however flow is increasing consistently from the rest of Australia
- The majority of inflows are skilled male workers aged 24 - 29 from New South Wales and Queensland
- Reverse migration patterns are evident, with a net outflow of 500 university graduates moving to Victoria from Western Australia