

A contribution to
An analysis of medium to long-term impacts on the Australian Oceans

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Australian population growth

Australian population projections are available from a number of sources, but the original source of all projection data is the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS 2018). The latest ABS population projections (released in November 2018) were provided annually from 2017 to 2066 (Figure 1). The residential population projections are based on three series (A, B and C) that include assumptions about future fertility, mortality and migration (both overseas and internal). The three series of projections were selected from a possible 72 combinations of various assumptions and were formulated based on historical demographic trends. Series A assumes higher parameter values with a total fertility rate of 1.95 babies per woman, the life expectancy (at birth) for males and females is 87.7 and 89.2 respectively and net overseas migration is assumed to be 275 000 persons per year. Series B assumes current trends with a total fertility rate of 1.80, the life expectancy for males and females is 83.0 and 86 respectively and net overseas migration is assumed to be 225 000 persons per year. Series C assumes lower parameter values with a total fertility rate of 1.65 babies per woman, the life expectancy for males and females is 83 and 86 respectively and net overseas migration is assumed to be 175 000 persons per year. In all projections total fertility rates and net overseas migration are assumed from 2027 onwards and the life expectancy at birth is assumed from 2066. Projections for series A, B and C show average annual growth of 1.4%, 1.1% and 0.9% respectively (Figure 1).

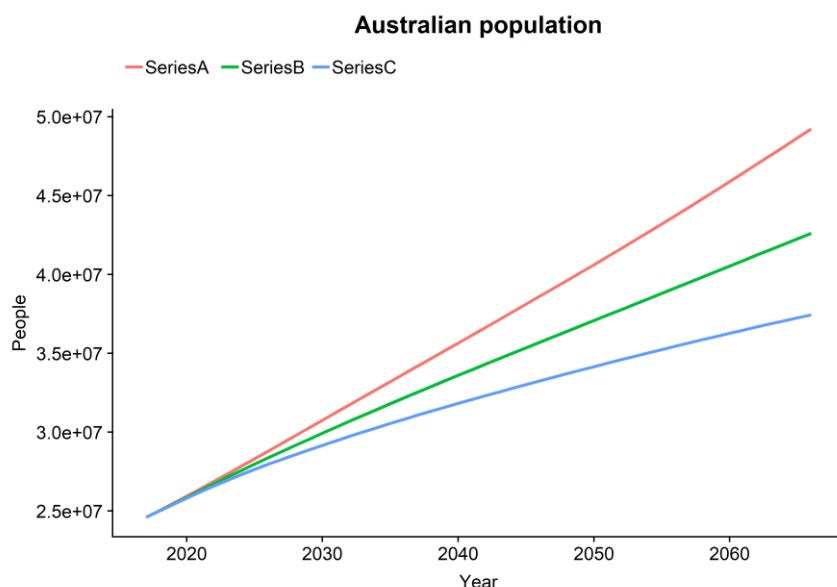


Figure 1 Historical and projected Australian population from 1996 to 2066

In the projections of all three series between 2017-2027, 60% of growth results from overseas migration while only 40% is from natural increase (i.e. births minus deaths). This is based on trends observed from ABS Census data in the decade prior to 2017. From 2027-2042 the

proportion of growth attributed to natural increase in series A is projected to increase to 44%, but declines in series B and C to 36% and 27% respectively in 2042.

There is no acknowledgement of interactions or influence from other sectors in the ABS document that provides the most recent projections. There is however acknowledgement in a Commonwealth Department of Treasury report that long term population growth is beneficial for the Australian economy, but puts pressure on other sectors, including infrastructure, services and the environment (Treasury 2010).

References

ABS. 2018. Population Projections, Australia, 2017 to 2066. Australian Bureau of Statistics

Treasury. 2010. Australia to 2050: future challenges , Intergenerational Report (IGR).
Canberra, Australia: Treasury, The Australian Government