

INTERSTATE MIGRATION TO SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND: AN ANALYSIS

■ Ross Barker

There is increasing evidence that south east Queensland is emerging as the growth centre of Australia during the 1990s as a result of an accelerating redistribution of Australia's population. Current trends indicate that up to sixty per cent of the growth in the region is attributable to net interstate migration — the net result of migration exchanges between the states and territories in Australia.

This paper highlights the magnitude and characteristics of internal migration impacting on Queensland and south east Queensland based on an examination of migration data from the 1991 Census. In addition, some more recent data on the level and distribution of migration are presented. A thorough analysis of migration trends in Queensland will be released by the Queensland Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning in early 1994.

Various studies have shown that Queensland has been increasing its share of the nation's population through internal migration, with most of this growth occurring in south east Queensland.¹ In this paper, south east Queensland is defined as the Brisbane and Moreton Statistical Divisions which contain nineteen local government areas (LGAs) covering an area of 20,000 square kilometres from Noosa Shire in the north, Gatton Shire in the west and Gold Coast City in the south. Of these nineteen LGAs, thirteen could be regarded as predominantly urban (though often with considerable rural

production) covering an area of 10,500 square kilometres — mainland area only — and the remaining six are predominantly rural.

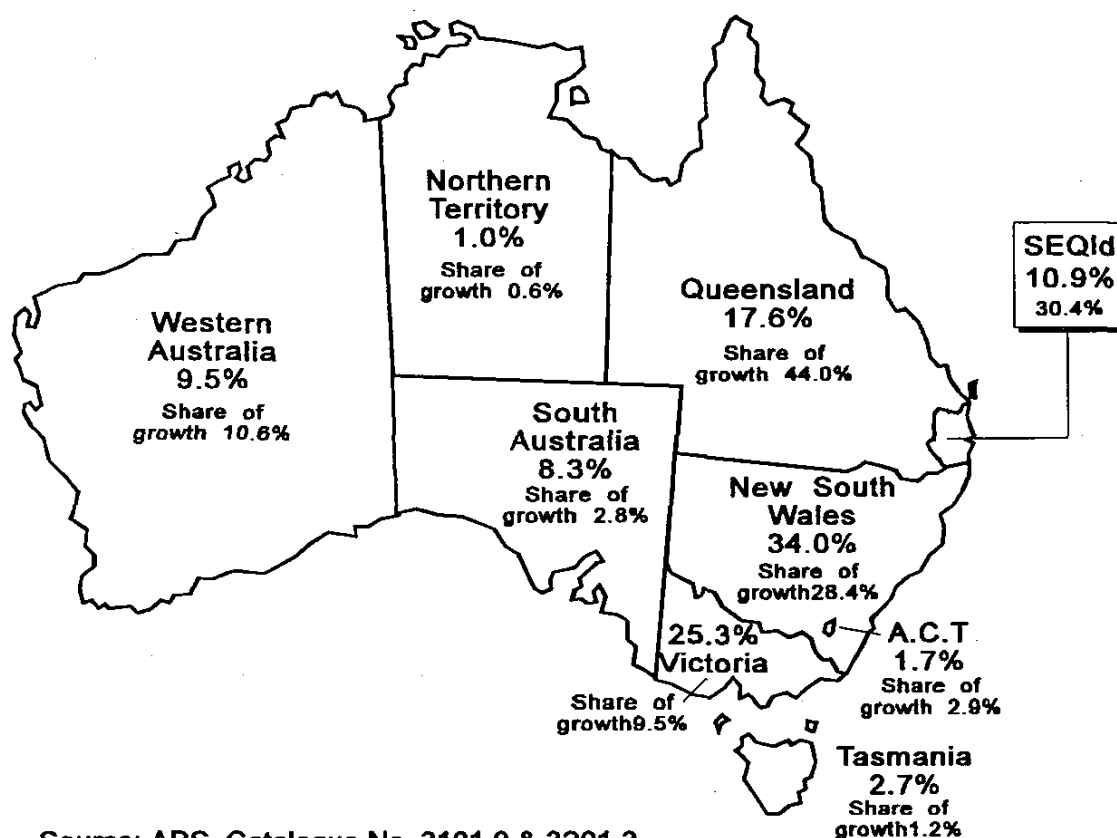
Queensland's share of Australia's population growth has increased dramatically in recent years with the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures showing that, for the year ending 31 March 1993, the state's share of the nation's growth was 44 per cent. This is remarkable given that the state's share of the nation's population was only 17.6 per cent at March 1993.

In turn, south east Queensland has dominated growth within Queensland with the most recent ABS estimate at 30 June 1992 indicating a population of 1,896,000, or 62.6 per cent of the state's population. This represents an increase of 300,000 over the last six years, for a growth rate of 2.9 per cent per annum over this period.

Assuming south east Queensland maintains its 69.1 per cent share of the state's growth during 1991/92, for the year ending March 1993 the region will be responsible for 30.4 per cent of the nation's growth. Yet, as shown in Figure 1, south eastern Queensland's population is only 10.9 per cent of the nation's total population. Figure 1 also indicates that, for the year ending 31 March 1993, south east Queensland will experience a higher population increase than will the whole of New South Wales.

Analysis of 1991 Census data has been undertaken to examine the characteristics of the net result of migration exchanges over the 1986 to 1991

**Figure 1: Proportion of national population at March 1993
and share of national population growth,
twelve months to March 1993**



period, from interstate, intra-state and overseas movement. In situations where the migration component of population growth or decline is being sought, a simple calculation of the excess or deficit of in-migrants compared with out-migrants is adequate.

Although net flows are adequate for examining the impact of population movement, it is necessary to analyse gross flows in order to understand most compositional changes of the source and destination of movers. Information on gross flows enables us to compare the components of the opposing migration movements.

Population characteristics analysed include: age, destination and origin of

flows, labour force status, and major occupational groupings.

In relation to destination and origin data, New South Wales and Victoria were identified separately while the other states and territories were grouped into 'a rest of Australia' category. On the destination side within south east Queensland, data were prescribed at an LGA level with a further disaggregation possible for some LGAs; for example Brisbane City and Gold Coast City.

OVERALL OUTCOME OF INTERSTATE MOVEMENTS

One question that is frequently raised in the media is 'Where are the

interstate migrants coming from?' The answer is clear. For the intercensal period 1986 to 1991, most of the net movement is the result of exchanges between Queensland and New South Wales (62.2 per cent) and Queensland and Victoria (25.5 per cent) (Table 1).

Table 1: Net interstate migration to south east Queensland 1986-1991

Locality	NSW	Vic	Rest	Total
Bris City	9058	2551	2351	13960
Bal. BSD	21226	7689	2840	31755
Gold C.	17595	8771	3547	29913
Suns. C.	8355	4053	2355	14763
Total	56234	23064	11093	90391
Per cent	62.2	25.5	12.3	100.0

More recent ABS data since the 1991 Census indicate that Victoria's contribution to Queensland has increased significantly. The latest figures for the year ending March 1993 show that the proportion from New South Wales has declined to 40.5 per cent from 62.2 per cent in the 1986 to 1991 period while Victoria's contribution increased from 25.5 per cent to 35.9 per cent over the same period. This reflects the increased propensity of Victorians to migrate interstate in response to current economic

difficulties being experienced in that state. The net gain from other states and territories, while still relatively small as a proportion of total net gain, had nevertheless grown appreciably in comparison with the intercensal period.

Table 2 shows the two components of population change — natural increase and assumed net migration — for selected areas of Queensland. Assumed net migration in this context covers interstate, intrastate and overseas migration.² Assumed net migration accounted for 76 per cent of the population growth between 1986 and 1991 and 71 per cent for the latest year that data are available, 1991/92. (Note that 1991/92 figures are preliminary.)

On a subregional basis the dominance of assumed net migration in the growth of the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast is evident, accounting for 96 per cent and 85 per cent respectively in 1991/92. In contrast, assumed net migration contributed only 20 per cent of the growth of Brisbane City in 1991/92.

For the entire south east Queensland region, Ward has noted

Table 2: Components of population change, selected areas of Queensland, 1986-1991

Area	Population 1986*	1986-91 Average Annual Change		Population 1991	1991-1992 Annual Change		Population 1992
		N.I.	A.N.M.		N.I.	A.N.M.	
B.S.D. ¹	1218146	9802	18166	1357986	10893	16620	1385499
Brisbane City	731347	3050	3288	763038	3417	869	767324
Balance of B.S.D.	486799	6752	14878	594948	7476	15751	618175
Gold Coast ²	190180	998	10719	248768	1339	8186	258293
Sunshine Coast ³	116533	939	8014	161300	1221	6870	169391
Balance of SE Qld	67838	716	1627	79554	662	2255	82471
SE Qld	1592697	12455	38527	1847608	14115	33931	1895654
Queensland	2624395	22641	44670	2960951	25458	44047	3030456

N.I. = Natural Increase, A.N.M. = Assumed Net Migration; * 1986 figures calculated on 1991 boundaries where appropriate. ¹ Brisbane Statistical Division ² Gold Coast City and Albert Shire Part B

³ Caboolture Shire, Maroochy Shire and Noosa Shire

Source: ABS Catalogues No. 3224.3, 1306.3, 3201.3, unpublished data

that, over the last three intercensal periods since 1976 "it is clear therefore that while net interstate migration gains have contributed significantly to population growth in south east Queensland, the region has also grown as a result of increased movements from other parts of the state, as well as from natural increase and immigration".³

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERSTATE MOVERS

The cross-classified tables from the 1991 Census show in and out-migration for south east Queensland by state of origin of inward movement. The four subregions identified — Brisbane City, balance of Brisbane Statistical Division (BSD minus Brisbane City), Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast account for 91 per cent of the net interstate migration gain to south east Queensland. In terms of total net movement to subregions, 'balance of BSD'⁴ and Gold Coast are responsible for 32 per cent and 30 per cent respectively.

The growing attraction of the Sunshine Coast as a destination for interstate movers is evidenced by the fact that the gain to this area exceeded the gain to Brisbane for the period 1986 to 1991, even though the population to Brisbane City is more than four times greater than that of the Sunshine Coast.

The dominance of net transfers between New South Wales and the four areas in south east Queensland identified above is also evident. New South Wales accounted for between 57 to 65 per cent of the net movement to all four areas. Victoria, although a distant second, nevertheless contributed more in population exchange between the same areas than the remainder of Australia, (excluding New

South Wales) ranging from 18 per cent in Brisbane City to 29 per cent on the Gold Coast.

As mentioned previously, the latest figures from the ABS indicate that the flow from Victoria to Queensland has increased substantially since 1991 with a corresponding decline for New South Wales.

AGE PROFILE OF INTERSTATE MOVERS

For Brisbane City the major gain has been in the established family ages of 30 to 44 years together with their primarily dependent children aged 5 to 19 years (see Figure 2). There is a dramatic decline in *net* interstate migration for those aged in their twenties with the age group 25 to 29 actually recording a net outflow, particularly to Sydney. Nevertheless, mobility rates for these groups remain high. This suggests that, over the 1986 to 1991 period, residents of Brisbane aged in their twenties moved interstate for predominantly employment-related reasons.

The age profiles of net interstate migration for the Gold and Sunshine Coasts have similar patterns, particularly for those in the age groups beyond 35 to 39 years. The relatively low gain in the 20 to 29 year age group again reflects the lack of employment opportunities on the Sunshine Coast during this period. Current high unemployment levels indicate that little has changed since 1991.

The figures also destroy a commonly held perception that interstate movements to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts are dominated by the older age groups. While there is a slight rise in the 60 to 64 age group, the 60 years and over category represents 15.2 per cent and 18 per cent of the net

migration gain to Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast respectively. By comparison, the proportion of the total resident population in this same age group in 1991 was 19.8 per cent and 22.1 per cent for the two areas.

OCCUPATIONS OF INTERSTATE MOVERS

In analysing data on this topic it is important to remember that the labour force status of the movers is captured at the time of the 1991 Census and not at the time the person actually moved. It is quite probable that the labour force status of those in the working age groups at the time of the Census was different from when they moved during the previous five years.

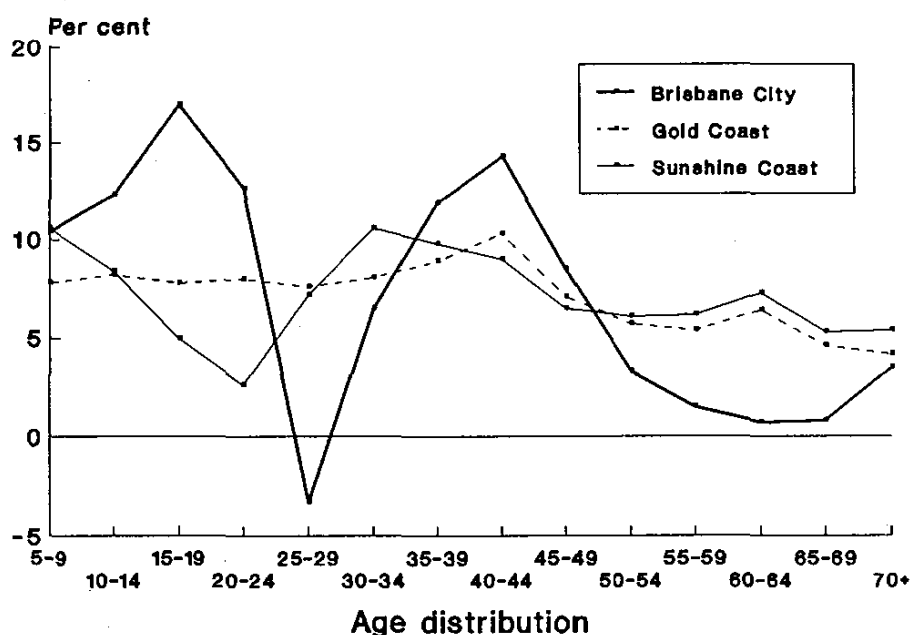
The labour force status of the total net interstate gain of 98,000 to south east Queensland over the 1986 to 1991 period as of 1991 was as follows:

- . 35,600 or 36 per cent were employed,
- . 10,500 or 10.6 per cent were unemployed,

- . 32,500 or 32.9 per cent were aged 15 and over and not in the labour force,
- . 20,100 or 20.4 per cent were children under 15.

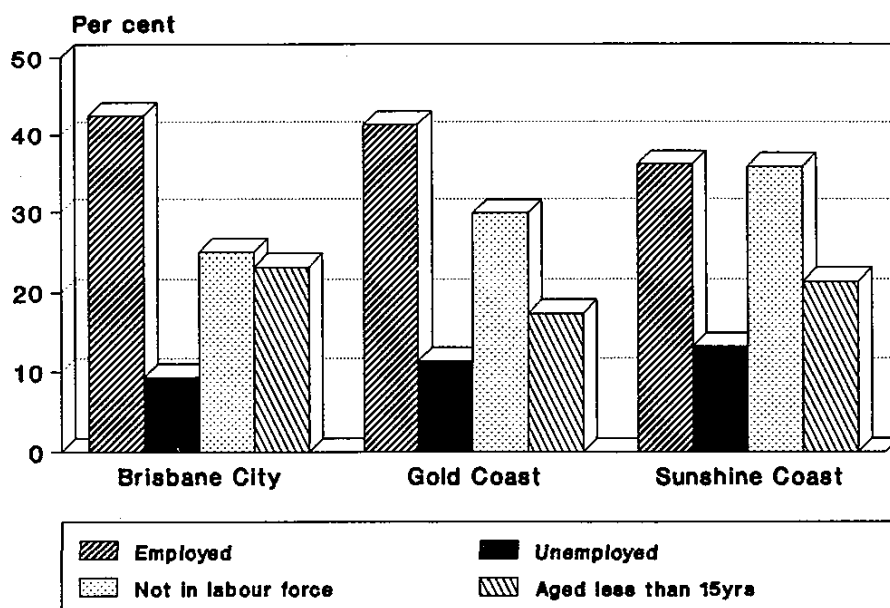
Figure 3 shows the four categories of labour force status for the sub-regions of Brisbane City, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. For Brisbane City the employed labour force component of the resultant net movement (42.5 per cent) was considerably higher than for Sunshine Coast (29.5 per cent) but similar to the Gold Coast (41.3 per cent). As expected, the percentages of unemployed for the Sunshine Coast (13.2 per cent) and the Gold Coast (11.4 per cent) are considerably higher than for Brisbane City (9.3 per cent). This lends some support to the perception that these areas are attractive to the unemployed. The proportion of 'movers not in the labour force aged 15 years and over' is substantially higher for the Sunshine Coast (35.9 per cent) than for either Brisbane City (25 per cent) or the Gold Coast (29.9

Figure 2: Net interstate migration by age distribution, selected areas south east Queensland, 1986 - 1991



Source: 1991 Census Table USQ 6015

**Figure 3: Net migration by labour force status,
selected areas south east Queensland, 1986 - 1991**



Source: 1991 Census Table USQ 6017

per cent). This reflects both the older age structure of the movement to the Sunshine Coast and lack of employment opportunities.

While the migration patterns for the total labour force are significant, and are a useful benchmark, they do mask major differences between segments of the work force.

Table 3 shows the in, out and net migration flows for south east Queensland broken down by major occupational groupings.

It is interesting to note that while all categories had significant levels of movement in both directions, south east Queensland recorded a net gain for each category.

However, the outflow in the professional and para-professional category is relatively high, perhaps reflecting the relatively low share of the nation's head offices in south east Queensland. These employ large numbers of staff in this category. Conversely the inflow of those employed

Table 3: Net interstate migration by occupation, south east Queensland, 1986-1991

Occupation Grouping	In		Out		Net	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Managers and administrators	8493	5.04	4537	6.25	3659	4.12
Professionals and para-professionals	13876	8.23	9170	12.64	4706	4.90
Tradespersons	9264	5.49	4437	6.12	4827	5.02
Clerks	10287	6.10	5291	7.29	4996	5.20
Personal service workers	13727	8.14	5562	7.67	8165	8.50
Plant operators and labourers	12902	7.65	5610	7.73	7292	7.59
Inadequately described and N/S	4077	2.42	1978	2.73	2099	2.18
Not applicable	96035	56.94	35968	49.57	60067	62.50
TOTAL	168661	100.00	72553	100.00	96108	100.00

Source: 1991 Census Table USQ 6016

in lower-skilled occupations is relatively high, which may be due to the high rate of growth of the tourism, construction and service sectors in south east Queensland.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INTERSTATE MIGRATION

The statistical data analysed do not enable any direct assessment of the factors driving Queensland's attractions for interstate movers. Many studies seek to relate such movements to the levels of unemployment in the places of origin and destination.⁵ However, it is more likely that movers relocate to areas where the prospects for employment seem more promising in the medium to longer term.

Perhaps even more important than the precise details of economic performance is the perception about a particular state or region. During the 1980s Queensland and south east Queensland had developed an impression of offering increasing opportunities, no doubt helped by the 1982 Commonwealth Games and 1988 World Expo in Brisbane.

There is also a circular and cumulative relationship between migration and job creation, since rapid population growth usually stimulates demand for more jobs.

One must also recognise the importance of non-economic factors, such as climate and other life style or amenity factors. The search for what are perceived as more attractive environments is suggested by the varying age categories attracted to particular sub-regions:

- . Brisbane City — couples in their 30s and 40s with dependent children,
- . Gold Coast Area — a fairly even distribution up to age 44 years, peaking in the 40 to 44 age cohort

with a discernible but much smaller secondary peak for these at, or approaching, retirement,

- . Sunshine Coast Area — couples in their mid-twenties to mid-forties with their dependent children plus a similar secondary peak to the Gold Coast for the age cohort 60 to 64 years.

It is also likely that the high interstate migration to south east Queensland over the past decade has resulted in a 'chain migration effect'. This occurs where one or more members of a family having moved then act as a 'pull factor' for other family members. This situation is similar to the well documented international chain migration to Australia has experienced with its 'Family Reunion Program'.

The future growth of south east Queensland is inextricably linked with its ability to attract and retain a sizeable number of interstate migrants.

Constant monitoring of the characteristics of the migration flows is essential for a proper understanding of its impact on the region.

References

- ¹ R. Barker, 'Recent Trends in Migration, Qld,' Migration in Australian Symposium, Royal Geographical Society of Australasia and Australian Population Association, Brisbane 1984; Maher & J McKay, '1981 Internal Migration Study — Final Report Internal Migration in Australia' Dept of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra, 1986; M Bell, 'Internal Migration in Australia 1981 - 1986', BIR, Canberra, 1992; G Ward, 'Traveling North — Impacts and Implications of Migration in South east Queensland' Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, Monash University, 1993.
- ² Assumed net migration in this context is derived as a residual component after subtracting natural increase from total population change for the period in question. As overseas departures data are not collected by the census it is not possible to calculate a net migration

figure for any geographical level in Australia using census data. In addition the components of population change for an intercensal period do not add to the total population change due to intercensal discrepancy.

³ G Ward, *op. cit.*, p.15.

⁴ Balance of Brisbane Statistical Division (BSD) comprises the Local Authorities of Logan, Pine Rivers, Redcliffe, Ipswich, Redland & Parts of Caboolture, Morton, Beaudesert and Albert.

⁵ Maher & McKay, *op. cit.*, p.55.

ETHNIC ALP BRANCHES — THE BALKANISATION OF LABOR

■ Ernest Healy

Multiculturalism, as formulated in the 1977 Galbally Report proposals, was an integral component of the Fraser Government's pluralistic reaction to the universalistic thrust of the Whitlam years. It came to mean the primacy of ethnic identity and organisations over a broader notion of community.¹ Ethnic leaders were posited as virtually the only legitimate intermediaries between government and the migrant population. As such, elements of the migrant intelligentsia were further legitimised as key definers of migrant 'communities' and 'migrant needs'. Significantly, class questions were no longer seen as relevant to issues of culture and ethnicity.² Consistent with Labor's retreat from class concerns during the 1980s, this concept of multiculturalism was subsequently taken up by the Hawke Government.³ Since the Fraser era, both the left and right wings of Labor have adopted this perspective.

One manifestation of this embrace of multiculturalism has been a tolerance towards, and at times an encouragement of ethnic branches within the Labor Party. The implications of this development for the Victorian branch of the Party are the subject of this article.

Ethnicity has penetrated both the party factions within the Victorian Labor Party and the more traditional party alignments with the trade union movement. For some of Labor's Victorian factional power brokers, the ethnic factor now appears to be crucial to securing the numbers in internal party elections and factional struggles. This is especially noteworthy for Victoria's socialist left. This preoccupation can be distinguished from that of Victorian Labor parliamentary leaders who tend to see ethnicity in more general electoral terms as a key factor in appealing for votes. As a result of these attitudes, ethnic branches made up almost exclusively of members of particular ethnic communities now operate freely in the Victorian ALP.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ethnic factor is not a new development in Victorian Labor. The Irish element was an important factor before 1955. Many party branches, particularly in inner Melbourne, were dominated by Irish Catholics or Catholics of Irish descent. However, these branches did not consider themselves as Irish or Catholic.⁴ Many of the best ALP leaders, including Prime Minister Scullin and Victorian Senator