

How have migration patterns changed in Noosa?

Migration is an essential driver of population change and, along with natural increase (births minus deaths), is the only way an area's population can grow. Noosa Shire has a natural decrease if the births and deaths totals are summed. For example, in 2020, there were 357 births but 443 deaths in Noosa Shire, resulting in a natural decrease of 86. Since 2016, Noosa Shire has lost 45 residents each year, on average, to natural decrease, and the rate has been increasing over time, with more deaths but also fewer births.

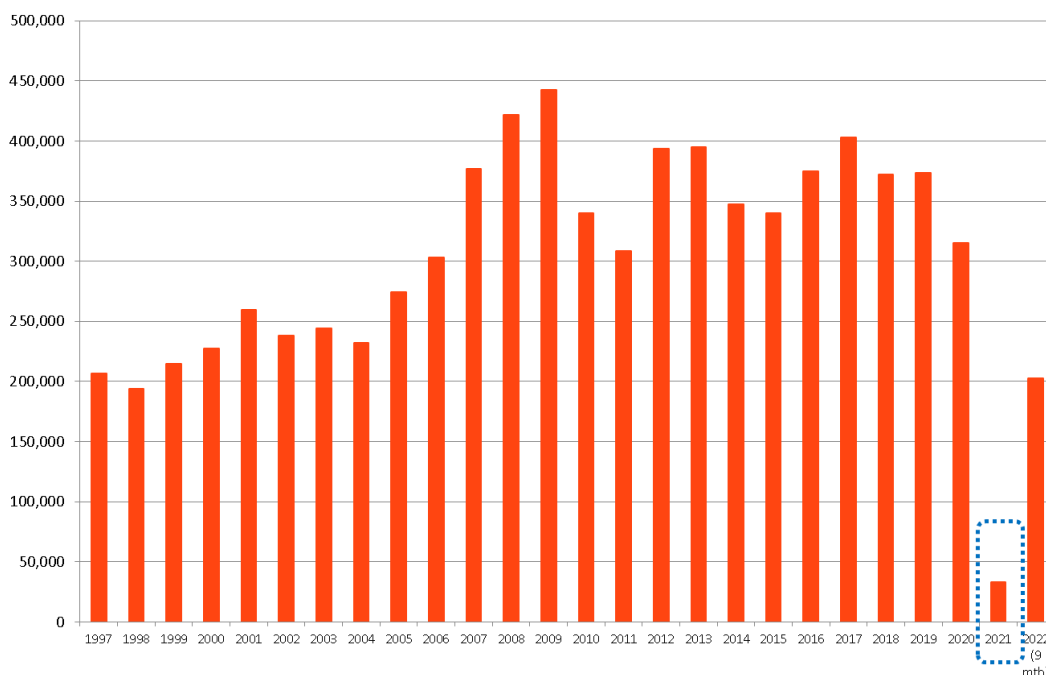
Population growth has been driven by migration. Between 2016 and 2021, Noosa Shire gained 1,441 residents from within Australia, an average of 288 per year. Noosa Shire also gained 2,134 residents from overseas, an average of 427 residents per year with a currently unknown component being the number who left Noosa and Australia to live overseas.

Migration is a component of population growth that comes with its own specific characteristics. For example, migration to Noosa Shire will be of different types of residents than those who are migrating out of Noosa Shire. This is most seen through the age structure of the two migration flows.

The Australian and Queensland migration story

Australia ended a record period of growth with Covid-19 border closures from March 2020. This vital component of Australia's population growth meant that the year ending June 2021 was the lowest growth rate in over 100 years. The chart below shows the impact of Covid-19 on Australia's absolute population growth, from 315,000 in 2020 to only 32,800 in 2021.

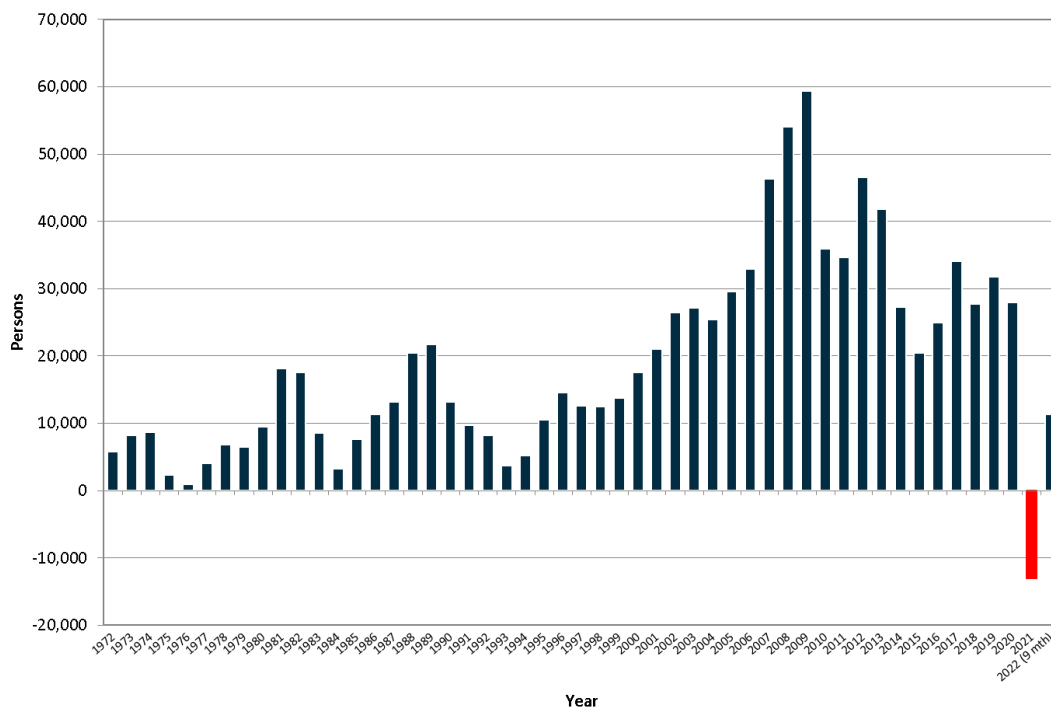
Encouragingly, since Australia's borders opened in December 2021, the population has returned to higher levels. Nine months of migration data has 2022's population growth at 202,600. If extrapolated to 12 months, Australia's 2022 population increase could be 270,100, a level of growth close to what we recorded in 2005.



Annual population growth, Australia, 1997-2022 (source: ABS)

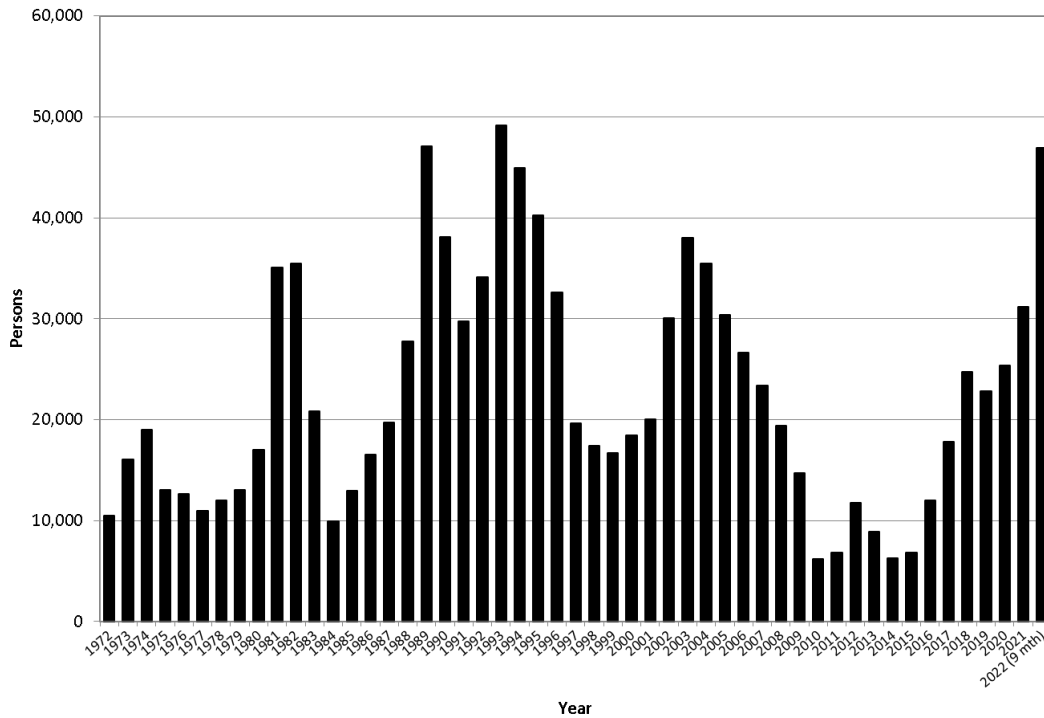
Queensland’s population growth between 2016 and 2021 was 7.7% (1.54% p/a), or an additional 372,500 residents to the State. Between 2020 and 2021, Queensland’s population grew at 0.8%, which can be considered low in a historical context but was much higher than what Victoria, NSW, or all other States and Territories recorded, except Western Australia.

Historic net overseas migration trends show the impact of Covid-19 on Queensland’s population (red bar in the chart below), a loss of over 13,000. As with Australia, the first 9 months of 2022 showed a strong bounce-back in net overseas migration, with Queensland recording a net gain of 11,400 residents over 9 months, which, if extrapolated to one year, could result in net overseas migration of 15,200, or levels of net migration last recorded in the late 1990s.



Net overseas migration, Queensland, 1972-2022 (source: ABS)

Net interstate migration to Queensland is a different story. Queensland, and in particular South East Queensland, has been a destination for many Australians from other States and Territories. Queensland has been recording an increase in net interstate migration (year-on-year) since 2014, with Covid-19 having no adverse effect. In fact, Queensland recorded a net gain of 31,200 interstate residents in 2021 and an even higher total in 2022. Nine months of data show an interstate net gain of 46,900, a 50% increase from the previous year and, when extrapolated to one year – possibly the highest level of net interstate migration ever. This migration was primarily driven by an exodus of New South Wales and Victoria residents. In those two States, 2021 (and in Victoria’s case 2022) were significant net migration losses.



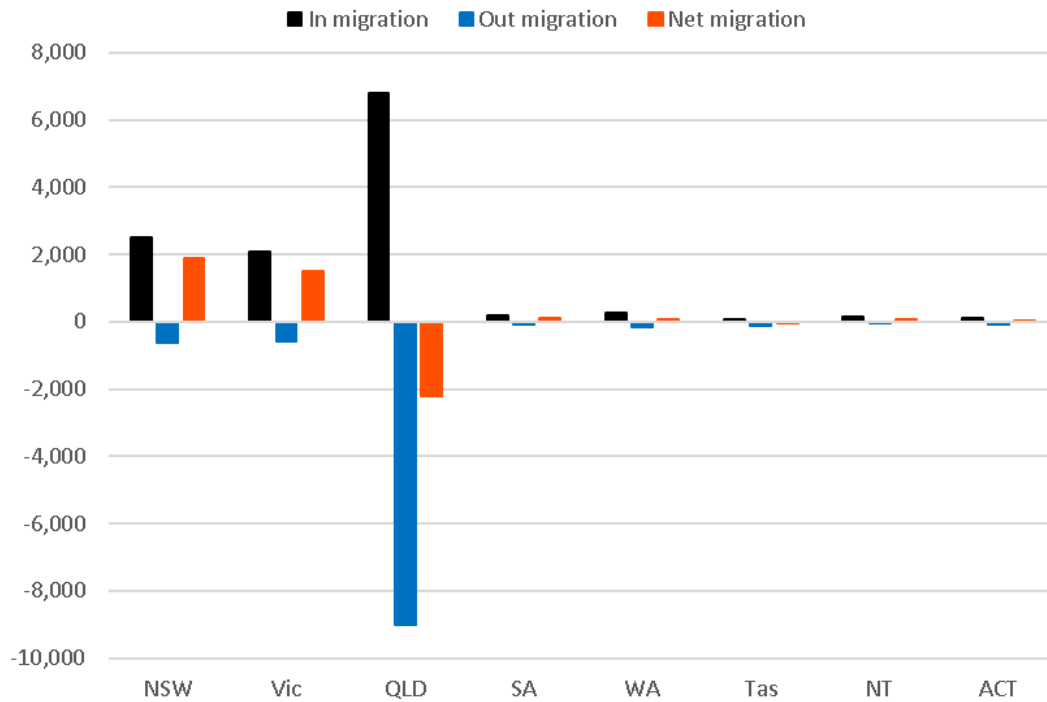
Net interstate migration, Queensland, 1972-2022 (source: ABS)

Migration dynamics in Noosa

Between 2016 and 2021, Noosa Shire gained 1,441 residents from within Australia. As mentioned earlier, overseas arrivals made up a significant chunk of migration-based population gain too with 2,134 arrivals and even if assume an approximate long-term factor of “out-migration being 80% of in-migration”, this would still be a net gain of around 430 over the five years, composing around 23% of all net migration gain. However, given that the net overseas migration patterns in 2016-2021 were so different to previous years, the 80% rule is likely no longer applicable and would vary across Australia.

Internally, most Noosa Shire migration happened within Queensland, and Noosa Shire lost residents to other parts of Queensland.

- Between 2016 and 2021, Noosa Shire gained 6,809 from other local government areas in Queensland but lost 9,022 residents to LGAs within Queensland, resulting in a net loss of 2,213 residents over five years.
- Most net gain to Noosa Shire since 2016 has been from New South Wales (a net gain 1,889 residents) and Victoria (1,509 residents).
- Other States and Territories have had little impact on Noosa Shire’s population since 2016, as seen in the chart and table overleaf.



Breakdown of net interstate migration, for Noosa Shire, 2016-2021 (source: ABS)

State/Territory	In-migration	Out-migration	Net migration
NSW	2,505	-616	1,889
Vic	2,095	-586	1,509
QLD	6,809	-9,022	-2,213
SA	195	-95	100
WA	248	-171	77
Tas	78	-121	-43
NT	133	-46	87
ACT	104	-69	35
Total interstate migration (2016-2021)	12,167	-10,726	+1,441

Breakdown of net interstate migration, for Noosa Shire, 2016-2021 (source: ABS)

Migration by location statistics are also available by local government area, which can tell us a bit about where new Noosa migrants are coming from within Australia and where Noosa residents are migrating to, within Australia. Location specifics of migration data will usually have a driver behind them. So, for many people leaving Noosa Shire for nearby Sunshine Coast, it can be assumed that these are migration patterns driven by employment, education and lifestyle opportunities.

There is usually an age-specificity to migration between certain places. For example, in Noosa Shire, all age groups recorded some migration loss to the Sunshine Coast between 2016 and 2021, with family-aged adults being top.

Between 2016 and 2021, the top destinations for Noosa Shire residents, which resulted in the highest levels of net migration loss, were all in Queensland and all relatively close to Noosa Shire:

- **Sunshine Coast, QLD:** net loss of 1,394 residents (279 per year)
- **Gympie, QLD:** net loss of 724 residents (145 per year)
- **Moreton Bay, QLD:** net loss of 210 residents (42 per year)
- **Fraser Coast, QLD:** net loss of 178 residents (37 per year)
- **Gold Coast, QLD:** net loss of 67 residents (13 per year).

Detailed in-migration and out-migration totals over the 2016-2021 period for local government areas that Noosa Shire lost most residents to are:

LGA	In-migration	Out-migration	Net migration
Sunshine Coast	2,713	4,107	-1,394
Gympie	367	1,091	-724
Moreton Bay	316	526	-210
Fraser Coast	104	282	-178
Gold Coast	253	320	-67
Bundaberg	61	104	-43
South Burnett	25	51	-26
Gladstone	82	104	-22
Townsville	58	78	-20
Somerset	16	34	-18

Top 10 LGAs to which Noosa Shire lost most residents to, 2016-2021 (source: ABS)

Between 2016 and 2021, the top-ranked areas within Australia from which Noosa Shire gained residents were a mix of interstate LGAs located in Greater Sydney or Greater Melbourne, or Brisbane, an area which records a lot of “traffic” between Noosa residents moving there and Brisbane residents moving to Noosa.

The very different characteristics of locations from which Noosa gains residents from as opposed to areas to which it loses population (typically nearby/adjacent LGAs), show that Noosa Shire is a desirable area, drawing residents in from afar.

Areas from which Noosa Shire gained the most residents between 2016 and 2021 are:

- **Northern Beaches, NSW:** net gain of 386 residents (77 per year)
- **Mornington Peninsula, Vic.:** net gain of 208 residents (42 per year)
- **Brisbane, QLD:** net gain of 147 residents (29 per year)
- **Central Coast, NSW:** net gain of 104 residents (21 per year)
- **Sutherland Shire, NSW:** net gain of 100 residents (20 per year).

Detailed in-migration and out-migration totals over the 2016-2021 period for local government areas that Noosa Shire gained the most residents from are:

LGA	In-migration	Out-migration	Net migration
Northern Beaches	442	56	+386
Mornington Peninsula	236	28	+208
Brisbane	1,567	1,420	+147
Central Coast (NSW)	131	27	+104
Sutherland Shire	110	10	+100
Sydney	148	51	+97
Bayside (Vic.)	126	30	+96
Port Phillip	137	43	+94
Inner West	97	6	+91
Randwick	103	15	+88

Top 10 LGAs from which Noosa Shire gained most residents, 2016-2021 (source: ABS)

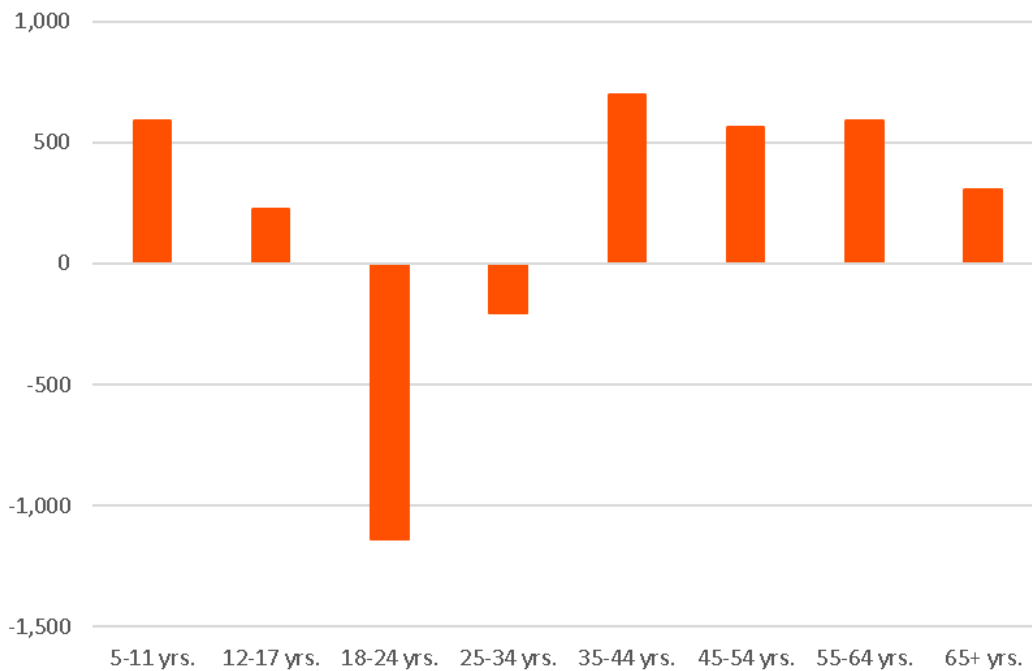
Migration by age

The age structure of people who move into and out of Noosa Shire Council area is strongly influenced by the residential role and function of the area and can influence demand for particular services. For instance, inner city areas near employment, education and entertainment tend to attract many young people in their late teens and early twenties, who move out in their late twenties and thirties to start families in suburban areas. Conversely, rural areas tend to lose young people and gain older families and retirees.

Understanding Noosa Shire Council area's attraction to different age groups helps to plan services for the community and advocate with other levels of government and private enterprise to provide infrastructure, employment opportunities and facilities which may help retain age groups otherwise leaving the area.

Between 2016 and 2021, Noosa gained young and established families with children (that is, adults aged 35-44 years with children aged 5-17 years), mature adults aged 45-54 years, empty nesters and early retirees aged 55-64 years and retirees aged 65 years and older.

In the same five-year period, Noosa Shire lost a significant number of 18-24-year-olds, who represent independent young adults and tertiary education-aged adults that choose to leave an area like Noosa in search of education, employment and independence opportunities elsewhere.



Net migration by age, Noosa Shire, 2016-2021 (source: ABS)

For Noosa Shire's 18-24-year-olds, the top destinations outside of Noosa were:

- **Brisbane, QLD** (net loss of 596 residents between 2016 and 2021)
- **Sunshine Coast, QLD** (net loss of 194 residents)
- **Gympie, QLD** (net loss of 54 residents)
- **Gold Coast, QLD** (net loss of 46 residents)
- **Moreton Bay, QLD** (net loss of 33 residents).

Beyond this list of top 5, Noosa Shire also loses 18-24s to LGAs within Melbourne and Sydney, albeit at more negligible levels.

Most young and established families who migrated to Noosa Shire between 2016 and 2021 did so from interstate LGAs:

- **Yarra, Vic** (net gain of 18 residents)
- **Port Phillip, Vic.** (net gain of 16 residents)
- **Northern Beaches, NSW** (net gain of 14 residents)
- **Sydney, NSW** (net gain of 13 residents)
- **Sutherland Shire, NSW** (net gain of 11 residents)

Empty nesters and early retirees, aged 55-64 years, came to Noosa from nearby LGAs within Queensland or from inner city Sydney and outer Melbourne LGAs:

- **Brisbane, QLD** (net gain of 236 residents)
- **Northern Beaches, NSW** (net gain of 59 residents)
- **Mornington Peninsula, Vic.** (net gain of 30 residents)
- **North Sydney, NSW** (net gain of 24 residents)
- **Inner West, NSW** (net gain of 22 residents)

Finally, retirees aged 65 years and older also came to Noosa from a mix of local Queensland LGAs or inner Sydney/Melbourne and outer capital city LGAs:

- **Brisbane, QLD** (net gain of 131 residents)
- **Northern Beaches, NSW** (net gain of 74 residents)
- **Mornington Peninsula, Vic.** (net gain of 44 residents)
- **Port Philip, Vic.** (net gain of 25 residents)
- **Sutherland Shire, NSW** (net gain of 23 residents)

Knowledge of migration trends can help with better planning and community engagement

Overall, Noosa Shire remains a destination for families, mature adults, early retirees and empty nesters and retirees. Noosa Shire is widely known as an attractive destination. It brings in new residents not just from within Queensland's larger LGAs, but also from within inner Melbourne and Sydney and some outer capital city LGAs, such as Northern Beaches in New South Wales and Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, where older residents tend to come from.

As with most regional areas, young adults tend to leave once they reach the age of 18-24 years in search of education or employment elsewhere. As Noosa Shire is close to some large population centres such as Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay and further south – Greater Brisbane and the Gold Coast, the pull factors for young adults are strong in Noosa Shire.

From a council perspective, understanding, not just the volume but also the characteristics of your migration trends can help to plan accordingly and ensure that the incoming population is looked after. Councils can also use migration by location information to promote migrating to their LGA, if they're interested in continuing, increasing or targeting specific population cohorts to move to their municipality.