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2. THE PEOPLE			
2.1 Population growth and projections	Population estimates, projections and trends have wide application in many aspects of modern society and are an important information tool for the evaluation of any region. Population data are particularly needed in the formulation of most government policies, especially those involving service delivery. A growing population indicates that a region is successfully attracting and retaining people.	2.1.1 TABLE: Estimated Resident Population—1991, 1996, 2001 and 2002	18
		2.1.2 TABLE: Projected Population Growth—2006 to 2016	19
		2.1.3 TABLE: Population Counts, Urban Centres and Localities—1986 to 2001 Censuses	20
2.2 Components of population change	The population growth or decline of a region is determined by a mix of two factors: natural increase (i.e. births less deaths) and net migration (i.e. the net inflow or outflow of residents). There can be considerable variation in the way each of these factors perform between regions and also over time.	2.2.1 TABLE: Components of Population Change—1996–97 to 2001–02	21

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2.3 Age structure	The age structure of the population is of importance in the planning of infrastructure and services, such as schools and health services. Together with fertility rates, it also has implications for the future growth or decline of the population.	2.3.1 TABLE: Age Structure—2001	22
		2.3.2 GRAPH: Age Structure—2001	22
		2.3.3 TABLE: Median Age—2001	23
2.4 Other selected characteristics	The Population Census, undertaken by the ABS every five years, enables users to examine topics such as 'Birthplace' and the 'Indigenous Population' for any small area or region. This information helps in understanding the 'fabric' or complexion of the region and how it may change over time and can be used to examine the need for health, education, employment and other services for migrant groups and the Indigenous population.	2.4.1 GRAPH: Selected Characteristics—1986 and 2001 Censuses	24
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2.5 Household and family structure	The family unit and its characteristics can be regarded as central to the wellbeing or otherwise of communities. Over time family and household structures have changed which to some extent shows the change in values and lifestyles in our society. Social commentators sometimes focus on the proportion of one-parent families as an indicator of changing circumstances. More recently, the increase of lone person households in Australia has emerged as a social trend of interest, which places demands, amongst other things, on housing availability.	2.5.1 TABLE: Household Type—1991, 1996 and 2001 Censuses	29
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2.6 Home ownership	Data on home ownership is important to monitor such issues as housing and income security and mobility. Home ownership can provide greater security of tenure, improved lifestyle and an investment for the future. In broad terms, the existence of a high proportion of home ownership in a region may be seen as contributing to a sense of community and commitment. Conversely, an area with a high proportion of public sector rental housing may often be associated with relative socio-economic disadvantage, particularly if located in a large metropolitan area.	2.6.1 TABLE: Housing Tenure, Occupied Private Dwellings—1991, 1996 and 2001 Censuses	30
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2.7 Income	Income and income distribution are indicators of the relative economic health or otherwise of the residents of an area. In conjunction with other topics, such as unemployment, qualifications of employed persons and income support, they provide information on the main economic or financial resources available to households or individuals to support their standard of living. Two perspectives are presented—household income distribution from the 2001 Census and average taxable income from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).	2.7.1 GRAPH: Weekly Household Income Distribution—2001 Census 2.7.2 TABLE: Weekly Household Income Distribution—2001 Census 2.7.3 TABLE: Average Individual Annual Taxable Income—1990–91 to 1999–2000 2.7.4 GRAPH: Average Individual Annual Taxable Income—1990–91 to 1999–2000	32 32 33 34
2.8 Income support	Information about the number and proportions of people receiving some form of income support from the Federal Government provides broad indicators of relative advantage or disadvantage in an area. High rates of income support (for example, more than 40% of the population aged 15 years and over) may indicate that an area is likely to be economically stressed. A high proportion of aged persons in an area may contribute to a high rate but will also indicate the level of financial resources available from such people in a region.	2.8.1 TABLE: Centrelink Income Support Customers—June 2001 2.8.2 GRAPH: Centrelink Income Support Customers—June 2000 and 2001 2.8.3 TABLE: Selected Income Support Customers—June, 1992 to 2002 2.8.4 GRAPH: Selected Income Support Customers—June, 1992 to 2002	36 36 37 37
2.9 Youth	It is important that young people are given every opportunity to reach their potential. In this section participation in school and post-school education and participation in employment are covered. These data are useful for assessing educational needs including employment training programs such as apprenticeships and assessing skills levels available for the labour force. Education and employment contributes to economic growth and improves social and individual wellbeing. Low rates of education participation can be indicators of disadvantage.	2.9.1 TABLE: Youth, Selected Characteristics, Persons Aged 15–19 and 20–24—1996 and 2001 Censuses 2.9.2 GRAPH: Youth, Selected Characteristics, Persons Aged 15–19—2001 Census 2.9.3 GRAPH: Youth, Selected Characteristics, Persons Aged 20–24—2001 Census	39 40 40
2.10 Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)	ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) have been derived to measure different aspects of social and economic conditions in Australia by geographic areas. They are indicators that can identify areas of relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage. The Index selected for this 'Overview' is the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage—the most commonly used SEIFA Index, which was derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.	2.10.1 TABLE: Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage—1996 Census 2.10.2 MAP: Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage—1996 Census	42 43

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2.11 Health services	Health is an important aspect of community wellbeing. Poor health reduces the quality of life of the population within a community and the contribution that individuals can make through work, social or volunteer efforts. Poor health also imposes monetary costs on a community through the provision of health care services.	2.11.1 TABLE: Standardised Death Rates, Two Main Causes of Death—1997–2000	44
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2.12 Computer use at home and Internet use	New questions asked in the 2001 Census have provided data for small areas on computer use at home and Internet use. Domestic Internet connectivity and computer usage data help to identify how widespread the use of computers have become across regions in Australia and help to assess information technology access and equity levels in rural and more remote areas.	2.12.1 TABLE: Computer Use at Home and Internet Use—2001 Census	47
2.13 Gaming machines	In recent years, gambling and, in particular, gaming machine gambling, has emerged as an issue of major public concern. Commentators reflect on the conflict of interest between State Government revenue streams and the debilitating effects of problem gambling on individuals, their families and the broader community.	2.13.1 TABLE: Gaming Machine Statistics—2001–02	48
3. THE LABOUR MARKET			
3.1 Unemployment and labour force participation	Labour force statistics measure various aspects of the labour market and are important economic and social indicators. They provide measures of demand (e.g. employment, job vacancies) and supply (e.g. unemployment, labour force participation). As a measure of the proportion of the labour force that is underutilised, the unemployment rate is an indicator of the performance of the economy. A high rate indicates limited employment opportunities or a scarcity of skilled labour.	3.1.1 TABLE: Labour Force Status and Unemployment Rates—1991–92 to 2001–02	49
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3.2 Employed persons by industry	A breakdown of employed persons by industry for Census years gives an insight into the relative importance of different sectors of the economy within a region and also how this changes over time.	3.2.1 GRAPH: Employed Persons by Industry—1996 and 2001 Censuses 3.2.2 TABLE: Employed Persons by Industry—1991, 1996 and 2001 Censuses 3.2.3 TABLE: Employed Indigenous Persons by Industry and Sector—2001 Census	56 56 57
3.3 Detailed industry breakdown of employed persons by industry		3.3.1 TABLE: Detailed Industry Breakdown, Employed Persons, SSDs—2001 Census	59
3.4 Level of qualification of the labour force	Education and training are important aspects in the preparation of people for the labour market and the maintenance of skills once in the labour market. Information on post-school qualification of the labour force for small areas is available from the five-yearly Population Census. A well-qualified workforce is likely to be better placed to embrace change and new technologies.	3.4.1 TABLE: Employed Residents, Level of Qualification—2001 Census 3.4.2 GRAPH: Employed Residents, Level of Qualification—2001 Census 3.4.3 TABLE: Unemployed Residents, Level of Qualification—2001 Census 3.4.4 GRAPH: Unemployed Residents, Level of Qualification—2001 Census	65 66 67 67
4. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY			
4.1 Business locations	The ABS Business Register provides details of the number of 'Business Locations by Industry by Employment Size' for LGAs as at September 1998. These data provide another view of business and economic activity in a region. For each sector an indication of the number of small, medium and large businesses, in terms of employment size, can be analysed.	4.1.1 TABLE: Count of Business Locations by Industry and Employment Size—September 1998	69
4.2 Manufacturing		4.2.1 TABLE: Manufacturing Industry, Summary of Operations—1993–94 and 1996–97	75
4.3 Agriculture		4.3.1 TABLE: Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced, LGAs—2000–01 4.3.2 GRAPH: Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced—1996–97 and 2000–01 4.3.3 TABLE: Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced—1996–97 and 2000–01	77 78 79

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4.7 Building approvals	ABS Building Approvals data are a leading economic indicator. Demand for new housing fluctuates according to a range of determinants such as interest rates, first home buyer incentive schemes, household formation rates, growth or decline in employment opportunities and house price signals. Non-residential building approvals are an indicator of investment in a region while residential building approvals may indicate the availability of financial resources and commitment to live in an area.	4.7.1 TABLE: Building Approvals—1991–92 to 2001–02	88
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		4.7.3 GRAPH: Value of Non-Residential Building Approvals—1991–92 to 2001–02	89
4.8 Median sales value of houses	Changes in residential property prices are worth examining as an economic indicator. To some extent they can be regarded as a litmus test of confidence (or otherwise) in the future of a region, although broader influences come into play that impact at a national state or capital city level.	4.8.1 TABLE: Median Sales Values of Houses—1996–97 to 2001–02	90
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4.9 New motor vehicle registrations	Registrations of new motor vehicles are another indicator of economic activity. For individuals it shows the availability of financial resources to outlay on expensive commodities. (Note: Data should be treated with care as a distorted picture may emerge if large multi-location businesses register fleets of new vehicles within a region that will be used elsewhere.)	4.9.1 TABLE: New Motor Vehicle Registrations—1993–94 to 2000–01	91
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For each of the eight Profiles for the regions in the *Sustainable Regions Program* a standard set of indicators and/or tables has been provided. This standard set is listed below. In addition, a number of other ‘non-standard’ indicators or tables appear according to the characteristics of a region and the availability of data. Examples of ‘non-standard’ indicators might include residential property price trends, journey to work data and statistics on gaming machine gambling.

Key Points and Introduction

- Selected summary indicators for Region, State and Australia
- Location and physical environment
- Selected summary indicators: Region expressed as a proportion of State total

The People

- Population growth and projections
- Components of population change
- Age structure
- Household and family structure
- Home ownership
- Income
- Income support
- Youth
- Socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA)
- Computer use at home and Internet use

The Labour Market

- Unemployment and labour force participation
- Employed persons by industry
- Level of qualifications of the labour force

Economic Activity

- Business Locations
- Important sector for the Region—e.g. Manufacturing, Tourism, Information Technology or Mining
- Agriculture
- Building approvals
- New motor vehicle registrations

The Environment

- Regional environmental issues

Sources and References

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