

Regional Forum 2025

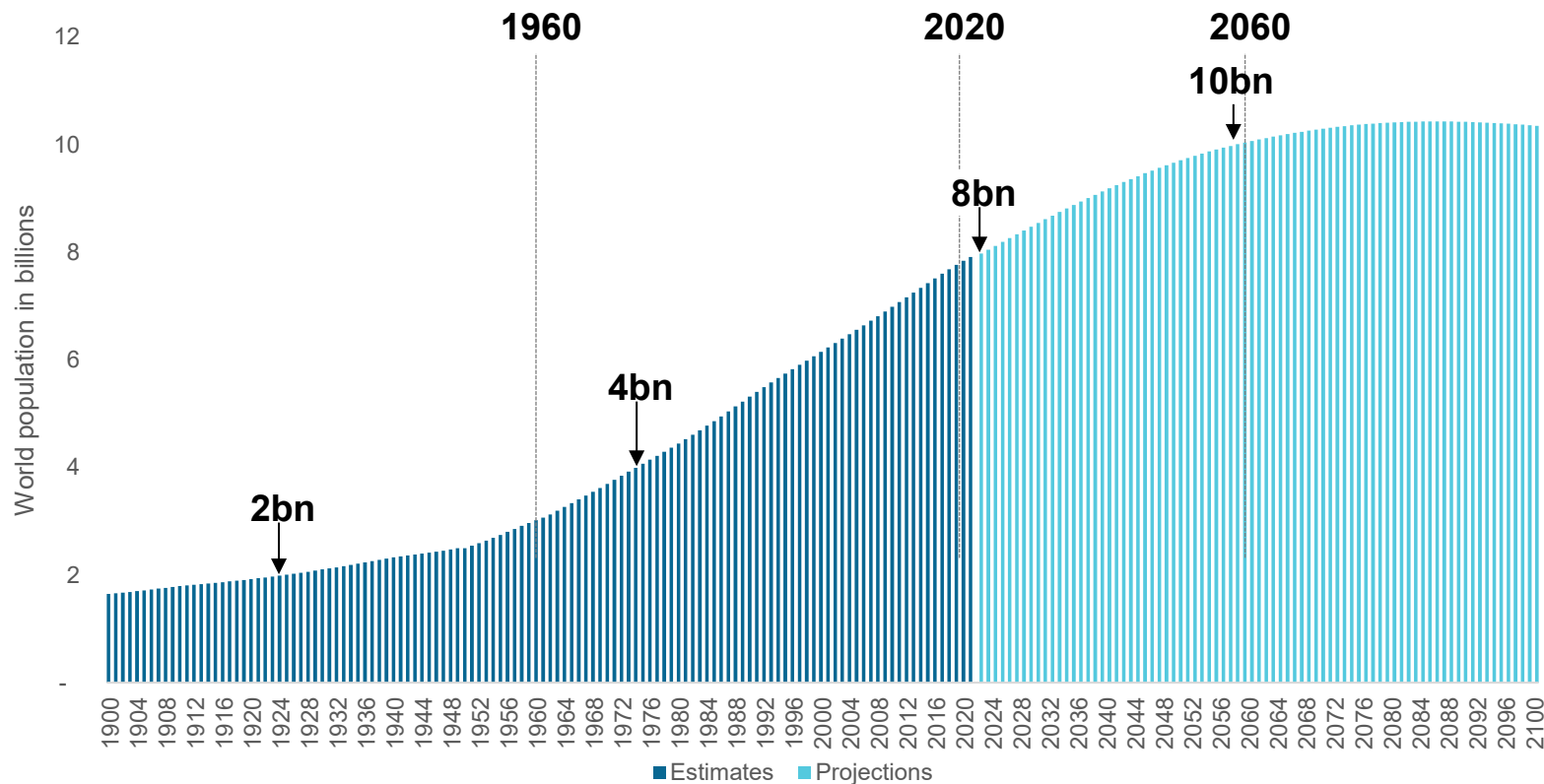
Regions on the rise: Demographic forces reshaping non- metropolitan Australia

Bernard Salt AM

24 June 2025



25% increase in population lifts demand for Australian resources



World and Australia population between 1900 - 2100
Source: UN World Population Prospects Oct 2024 Revision

Australians spend their wealth on housing, super, quality of life



1.
Luxembourg
\$135,321



2.
Switzerland
\$106,098



3.
Ireland
\$103,500



4.
Norway
\$90,434



5.
Singapore
\$89,370



6.
United States
\$86,601



7.
Iceland
\$85,787



8.
Qatar
\$71,568



9.
Denmark
\$69,273



10.
Netherlands
\$67,984



11.
Australia
\$65,966



12.
Austria
\$58,669



13.
Sweden
\$57,213



14.
Belgium
\$56,129



15.
Germany
\$55,521



16.
Finland
\$54,774



17.
Canada
\$53,834



18.
Israel
\$53,111



19.
United Kingdom
\$52,423























20.
UAE
\$49,550



21.
France
\$48,012

There's a gap in Australia's corporate asset base

United States	Jun 2025 USbn	Australia	Jun 2025 USbn
 Microsoft (1975)	\$3,559	 CBA (1911)	\$195
 NVIDIA (1993)	\$3,536	 BHP (1885)	\$129
 Apple (1976)	\$2,975	 NAB (1893)	\$77
 Amazon (1994)	\$2,263	 CSL (1916)	\$75
 Google (1988)	\$2,137	 Westpac (1817)	\$74
 Meta Platforms (2004)	\$1,743	 Wesfarmers (1914)	\$62
 Broadcom (1991)	\$1,204	 ANZ (1835)	\$57
 Berkshire Hathaway (1955)	\$1,057	 Macquarie (1970)	\$53
 Tesla (2003)	\$1,027	 Atlassian (2002)	\$52
 Walmart (1962)	\$757	 Goodman Group (1989)	\$45

Most valuable US and Australian businesses as measured by market capitalisation Jun 2025

Source: companiesmarketcap.com

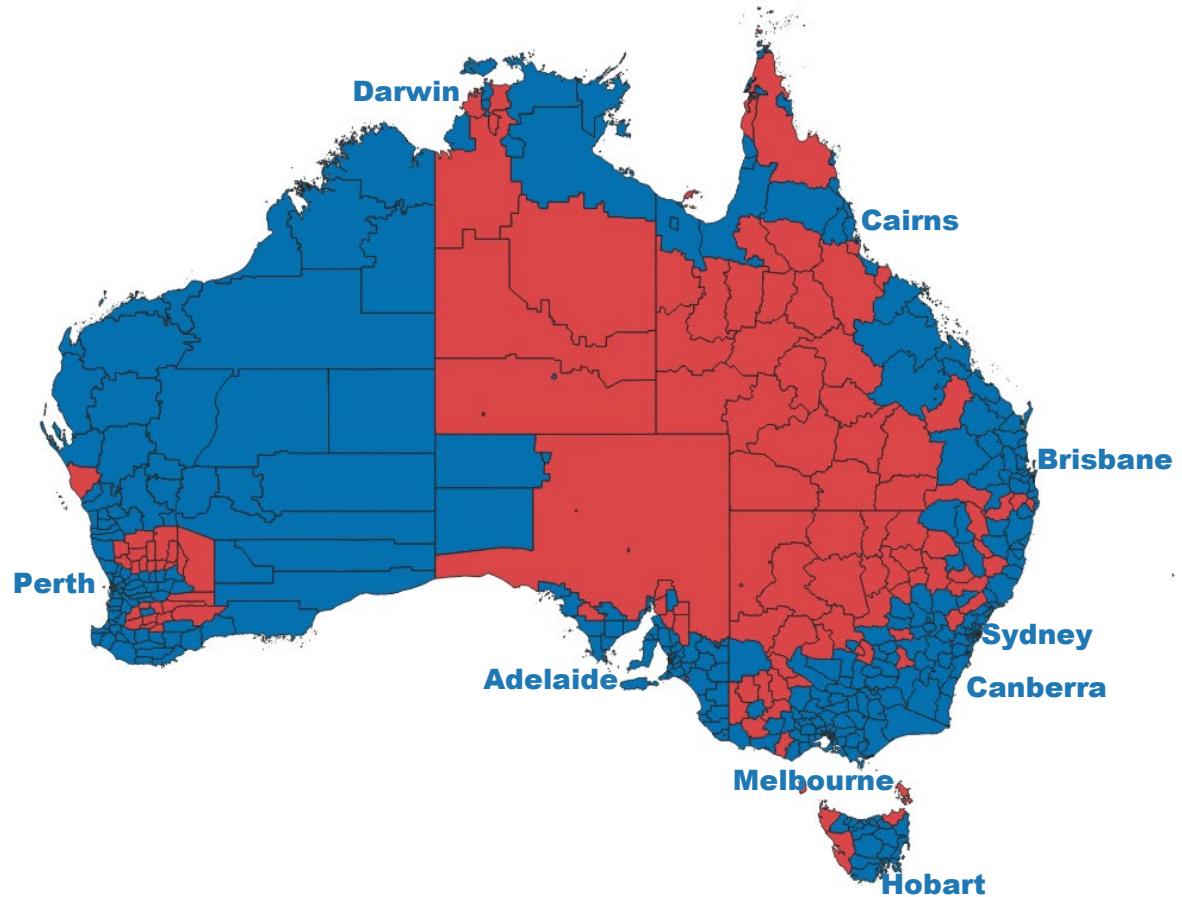
Stronger growth expected across regional WA in the decade ahead

Areas (LGAs) of projected population growth (blue) and loss (red) between 2025 and 2035

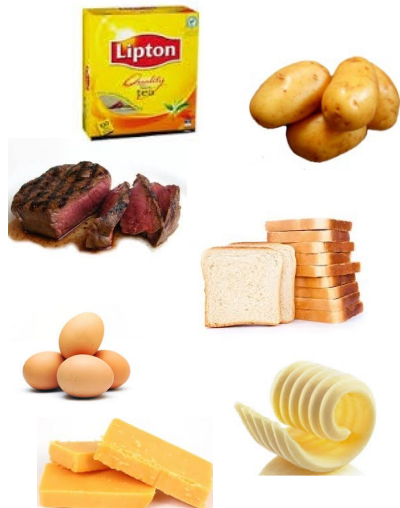
Pop 2025: 28m

Pop 2035: 32m

Growth: 4m



Australia's food preferences shift with immigration



ANGLO



MEDITERRANEAN



ASIAN



MIDDLE EASTERN

Demographers just love inventing acronyms...

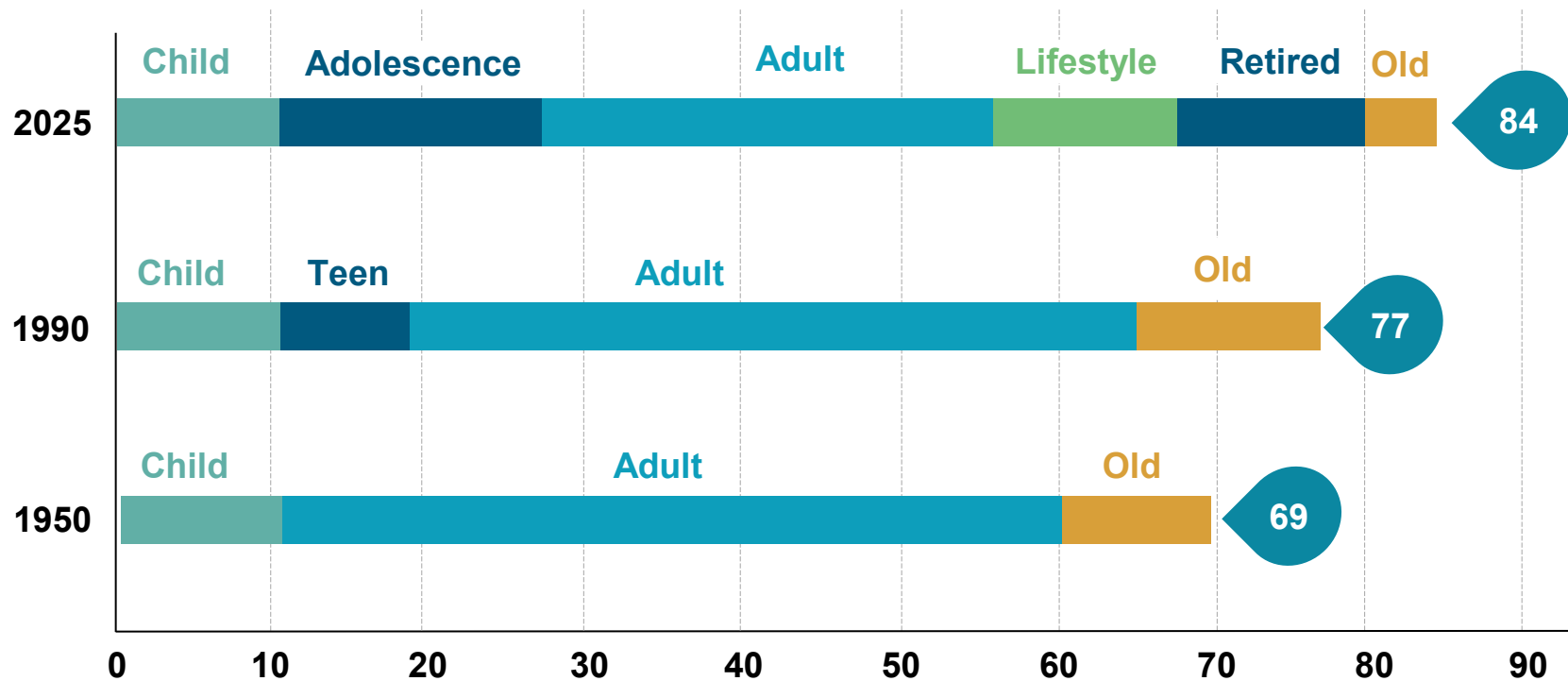
PUMCINS ... Professional **U**rban **M**iddle **C**lass In **N**ice **S**uburbs

Kids In **P**arents **P**ockets **E**roding **R**etirement **S**avings **...KIPPERS**

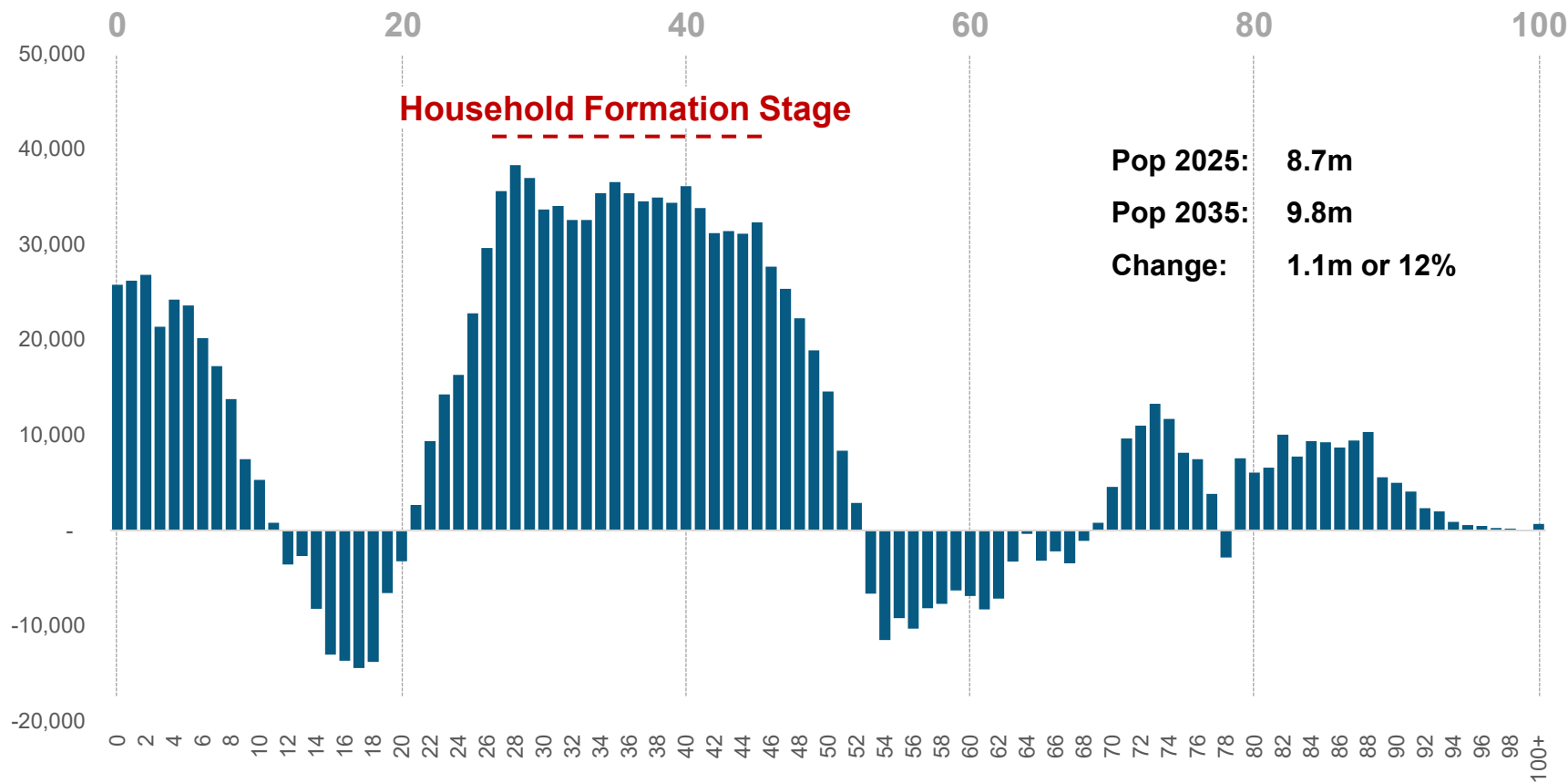
VESPAs... Virus **E**scapees **S**eeking **P**rovincial **A**ustralia

Lots **O**f **M**oney **B**ut **A** Real **D**ickhead **...LOMBARDS**

The Aussie lifecycle is longer, more nuanced, allows for... geo-shuffling



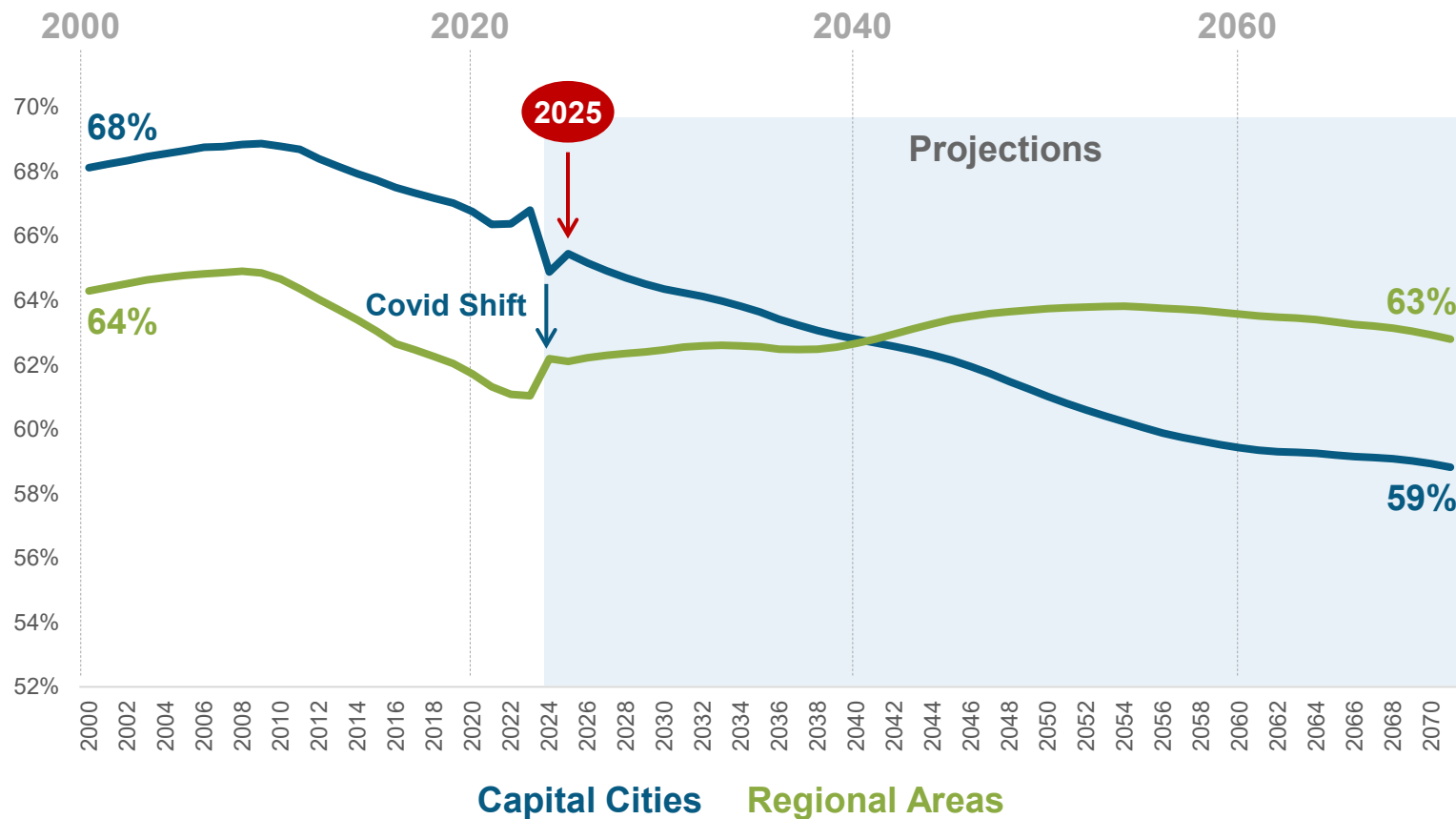
Official projections show an influx of key workers into the regions



Change in population by age for non-metropolitan Australia (outside the capital cities), 2025-2035

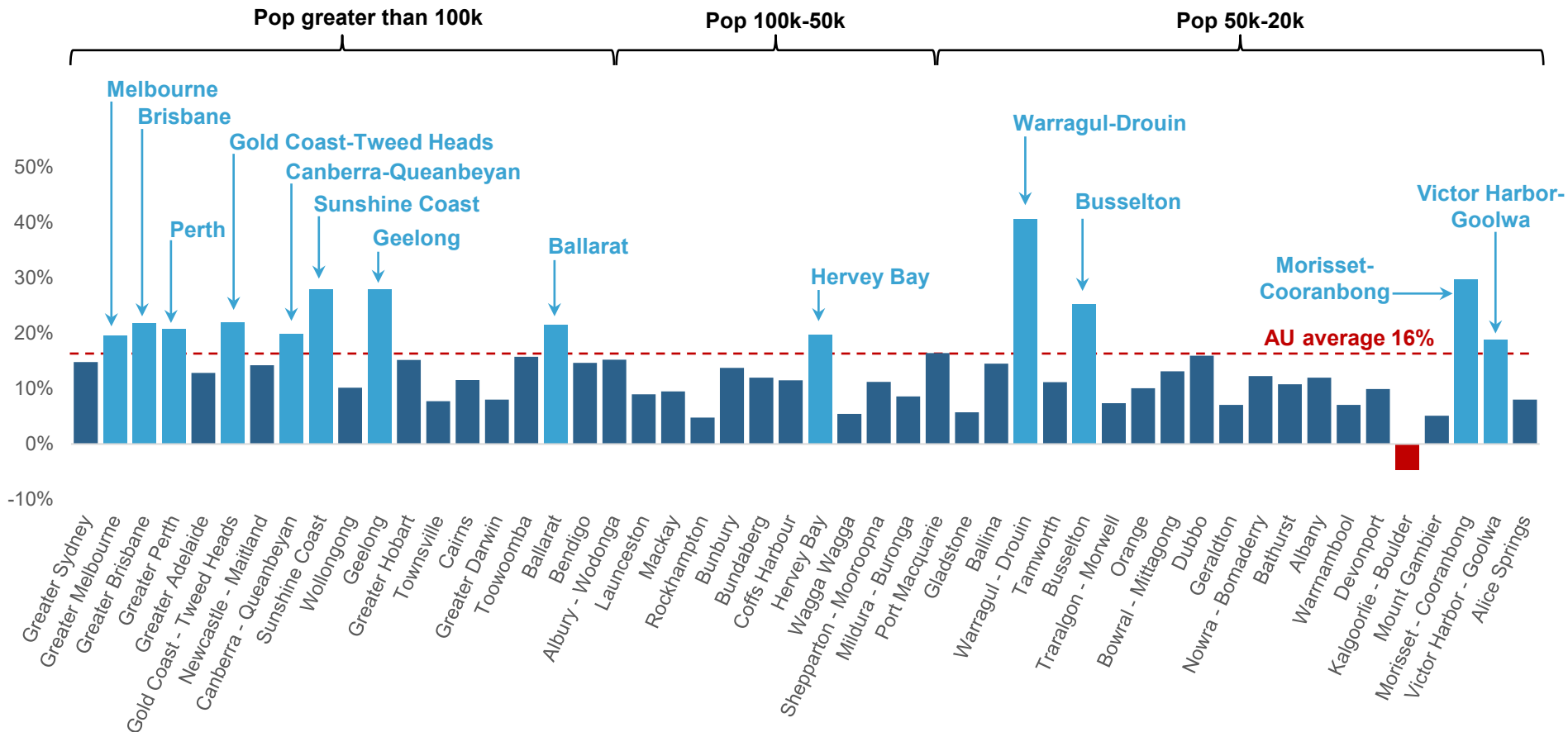
Source: ABS Population Projections

We're moving into the era of the regions... boomers, vespas, lifestylers



Proportion working age (15-64) population 2000-2071; Source: ABS Population Projections

Gateway, lifestyle and tradie towns on all of the rise in Australia



Meet the technicians, the believers, the volunteers of regional Australia

Most Growth 2025-2035	Owner Manager % Workforce	Bachelor Degree % Population	Trades Technicians % Workforce
Gold Coast 130,000 or 17%	Broomehill-Tambellup, WA 37%	Queenscliffe, Vic 38%	East Pilbara, WA 28%
Sunshine Coast 73,000 or 17%	Lake Grace, WA 37%	Byron, NSW 14%	Roxby Downs, SA 27%
AU Regional Av 12%	AU Average 14%	AU Average 13%	AU Average 13%

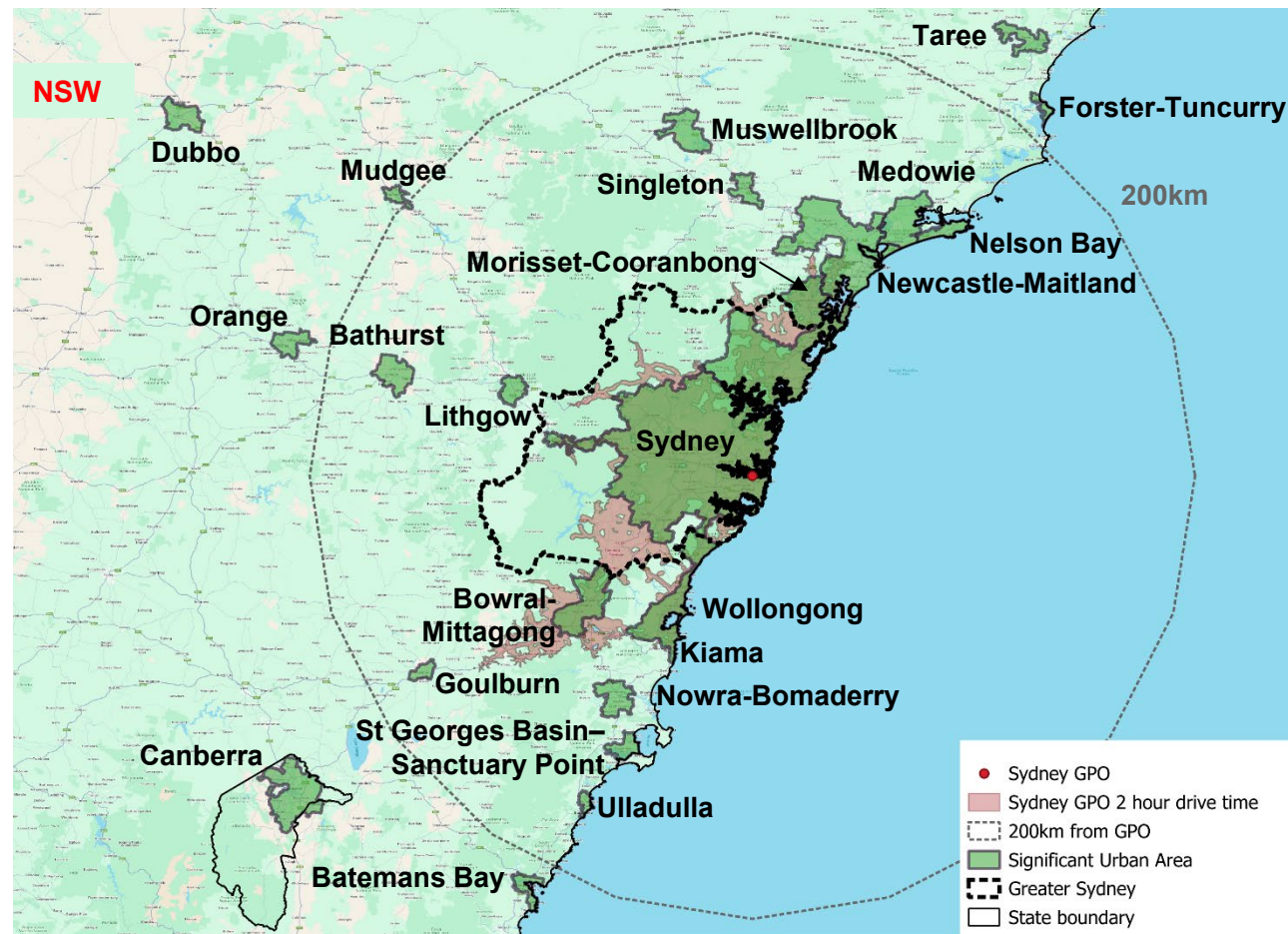
Religious Belief % Population	Volunteering % Population
Griffith, NSW 80%	Kimba, SA 48%
MacDonnell, NT 79%	Wudinna, SA 44%
AU Average 58%	AU Average 15%

**Regional Australia
is a patchwork of
vastly different
communities**

(Excludes LGAs of less than 1000 pop)

Source: ABS Census 2021, State
Projections

Australia's heartland... Sydney and seachange, lifestyle, regional towns



Top 8 Regional Centres

- **Newcastle-Maitland: 534k**
- **Wollongong: 318k**
- **Albury-Wodonga: 101k**
- Coffs Harbour: 76k
- Wagga Wagga: 58k
- Port Macquarie: 53k
- Ballina: 48k
- Tamworth: 46k

Source: based on ABS SUA 2024

Affordable housing plus lifestyle drives 'forever home' seekers

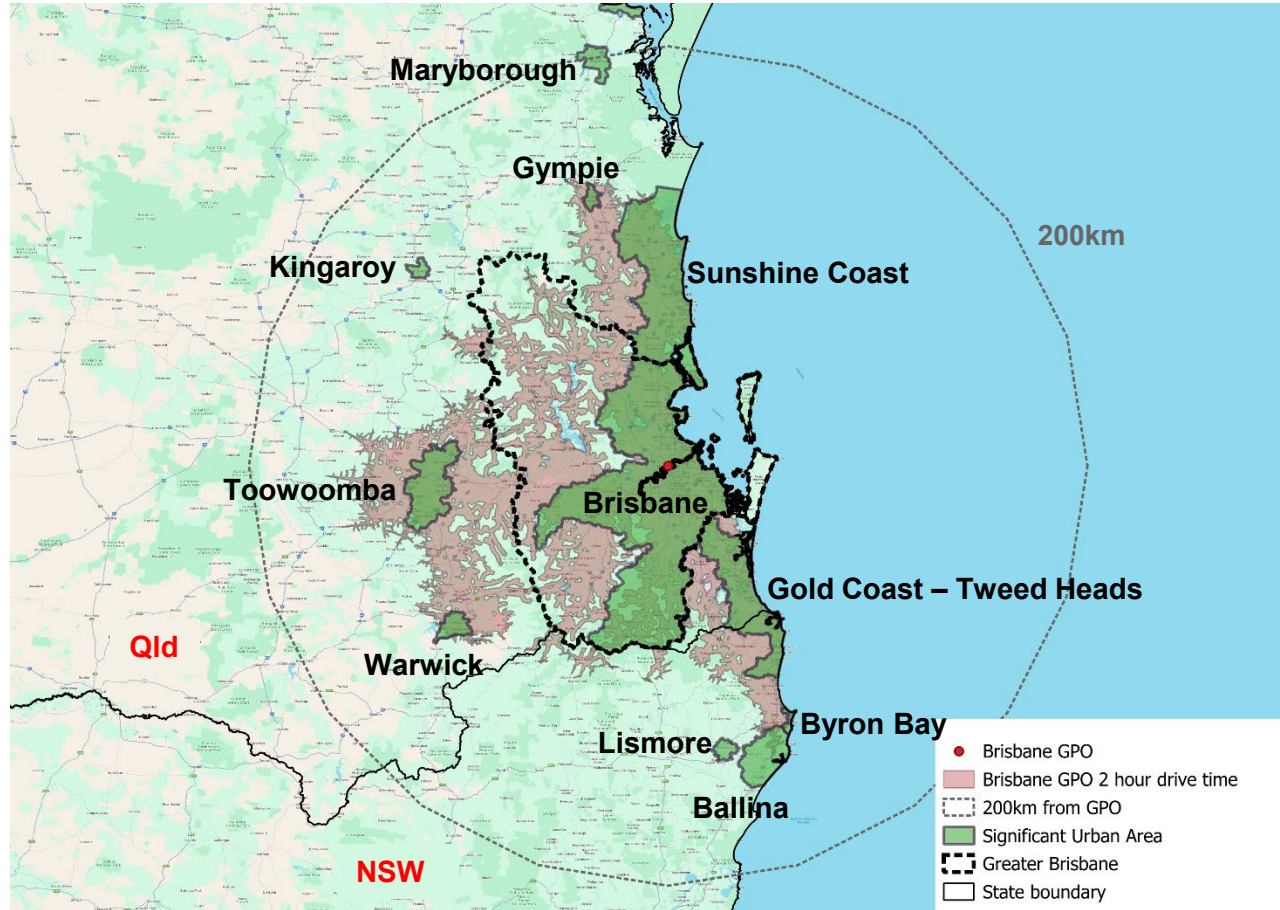


Top 8 Regional Centres

- Geelong: 309k
- Ballarat: 119k
- Bendigo: 106k
- Shepparton-Mooroopna: 55k
- Mildura-Buronga: 55k
- Warragul-Drouin: 47k
- Traralgon-Morwell: 44k
- Warrnambool: 36k

Source: based on ABS SUA 2024

SEQ's seachange and treechange communities are simply irresistible

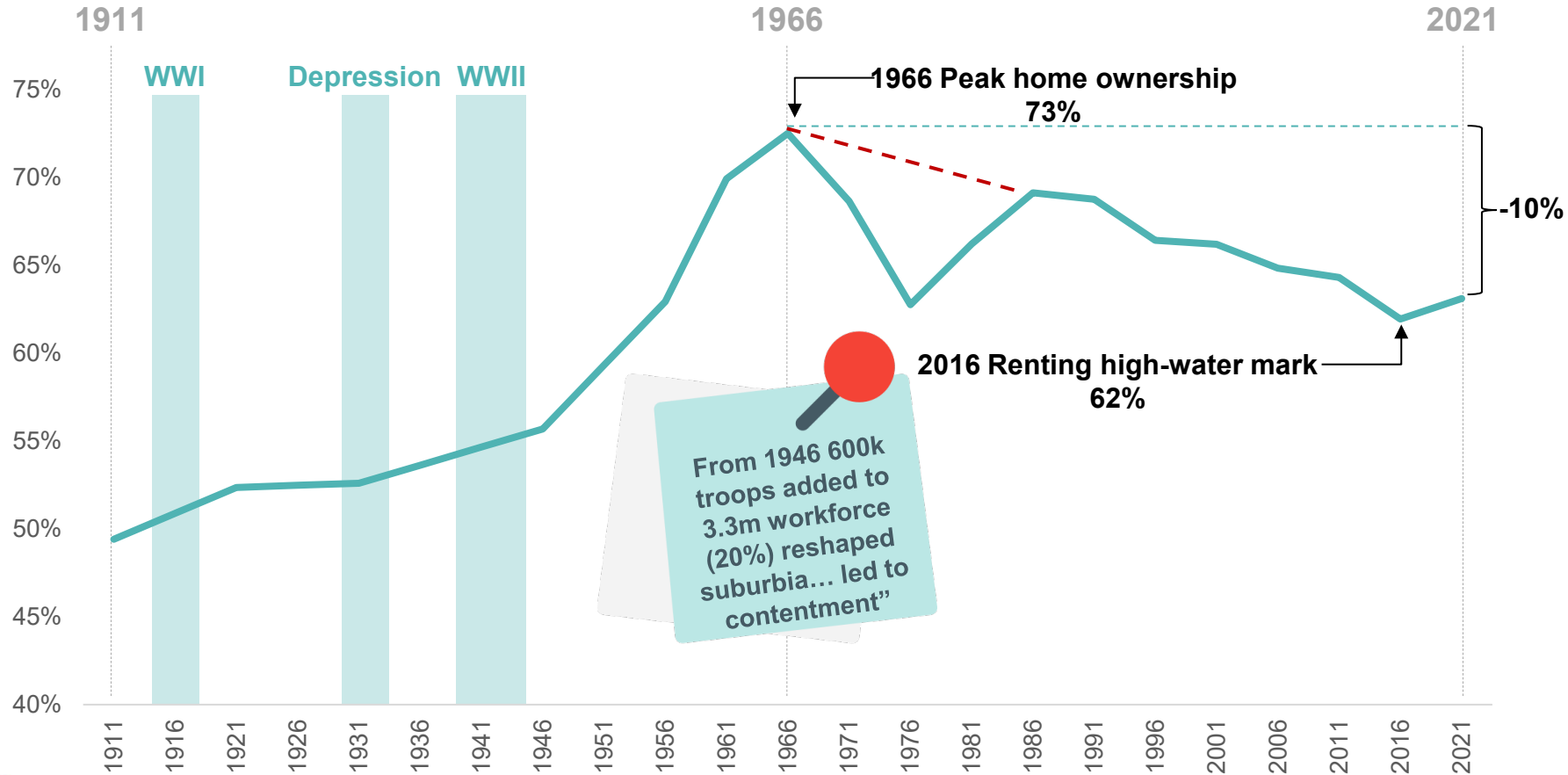


Top 8 Regional Centres

- **Gold Coast-Tweed Heads: 751k**
- **Sunshine Coast: 418k**
- **Townsville: 189k**
- Cairns: 163k
- Toowoomba: 152k
- Mackay: 89k
- Rockhampton: 83k
- Bundaberg: 79k

Source: ABS SUA 2024

We passed 'peak house' in 1966... housing now 63:37 for ownership

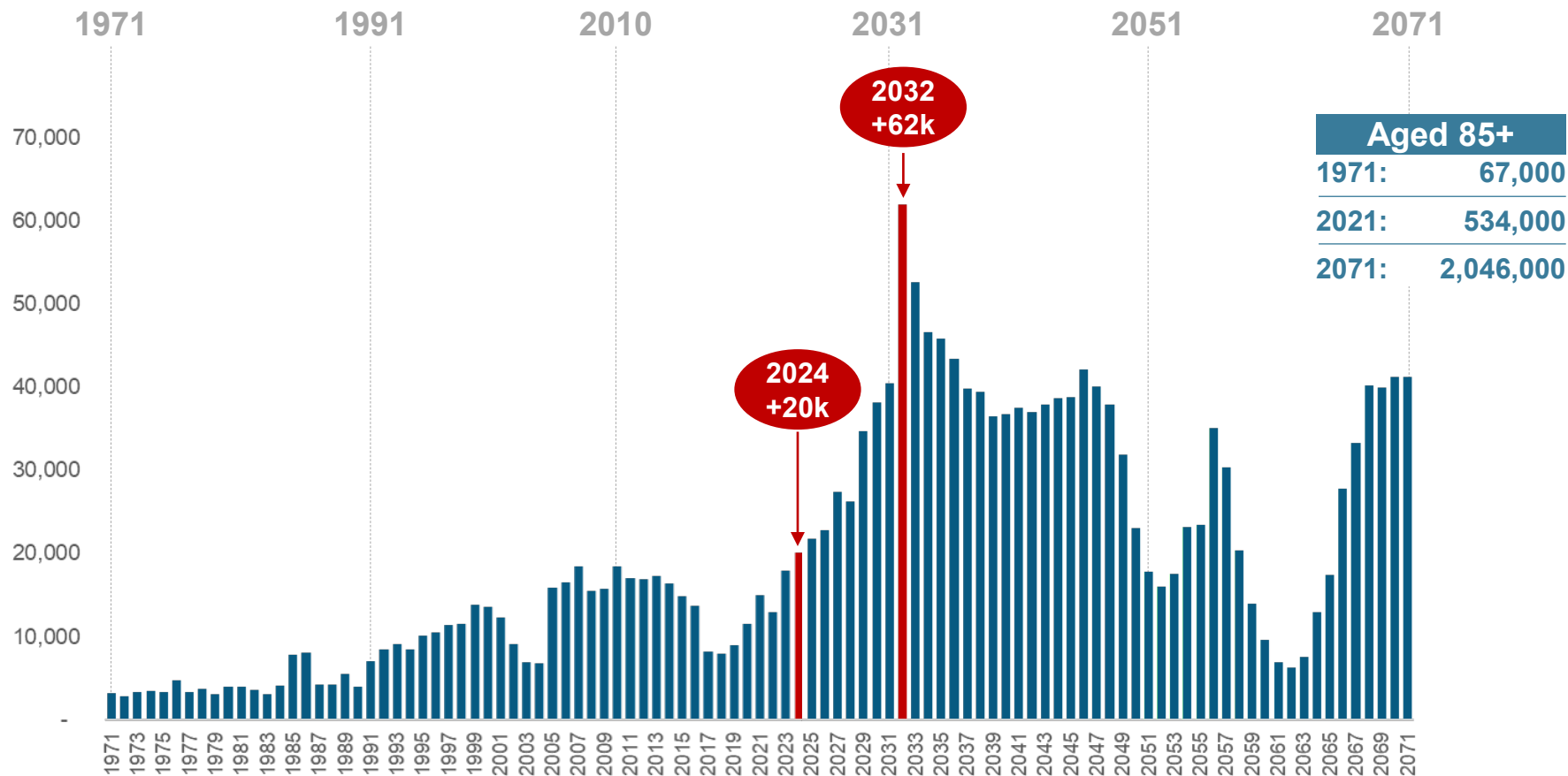


Opportunities for home ownership amongst 32-year-olds in the regions

	NSW	Victoria	Queensland	WA	SA	Tasmania
High	Bowral-Mittagong 65%	Warragul-Drouin 69%	Mackay 59%	Albany 61%	Victor Harbor-Goolwa 67%	Ulverstone 63%
Low	Byron Bay 29%	Swan Hill 48%	Emerald 37%	Port Hedland 22%	Port Augusta 39%	Launceston 44%
Capital	Sydney 41%	Melbourne 50%	Brisbane 48%	Perth 58%	Adelaide 55%	Hobart 48%

- Other capitals: Darwin 36%, Canberra 53%
- Tradie towns most likely to deliver home ownership to 32-year-olds
- Build TAFE infrastructure, programs, skills
- Encourage entrepreneurship

There's an aged care 'freight train' heading straight for us!



Net growth in the 85+ cohort for Australia, 1971-2071; Source: ABS Population Projections (med series) 2023

Most job growth in regional Australia... care, sales, construction

Aged/Disabled Carers

Up: 61,000 or 78%

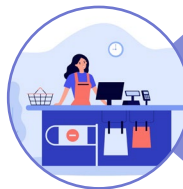
Total: 139,000



Checkout Operators

Down: 16,000 or -28%

Total: 42,000



Sales Assistants

Up: 30,000 or 19%

Total: 191,000



Livestock Farmers

Down: 10,000 or -13%

Total: 68,900



Registered Nurses

Up: 17,000 or 18%

Total: 114,000



Commercial Cleaners

Down: 7,000 or -11%

Total: 57,000



Electricians

Up: 12,000 or 22%

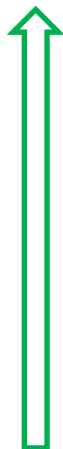
Total: 67,000



Crop Farmers

Down: 5,000 or -16%






















Total: 26,000



The top 5 most popular jobs in WA's Esperance region since 2011

Biggest Occupations	2011 No.	Biggest Occupations	2016 No.	Biggest Occupations	2021 No.
1. Mixed Crop and Livestock Farmers	445	1. Sales Assistants (General)	309	1. Crop Farmers	314
2. Sales Assistants (General)	287	2. Crop Farmers	294	2. Sales Assistants (General)	285
3. Crop Farmers	263	3. Mixed Crop and Livestock Farmers	267	3. Mixed Crop and Livestock Farmers	260
4. Metal Fitters and Machinists	196	4. Truck Drivers	197	4. Truck Drivers	243
5. Truck Drivers	191	5. Livestock Farmers	166	5. Metal Fitters and Machinists	169

Services required by regional farming communities

	Post Office		Bank(s)		Housing \$500+k		Newspaper
	Primary School		Newsagent (?)		Hardware/farming supplies		Courthouse
	Secondary School		Church (?)		Football/Netball		Cinema
	Hotel/Pub(s)		Kindergarten		Community Centre/Hall		Dept. Store
	Petrol Station		Ag Machinery Service		War Memorial		Car Sales
	Pharmacy		Aged Care		Avenue/Park/Clock		Video Store
	Medical Practice		Motel		Recreation Reserve		White Goods
	Dental (?)		Council Offices (?)		Fruit & Veg		Shoe Repair
	Supermarket		Railway Station (?)		Cafe		Bakery
	Car Service		Hospital		Event (?)		Public Housing
	Legal Service		Funeral Director		Police Station		Butcher

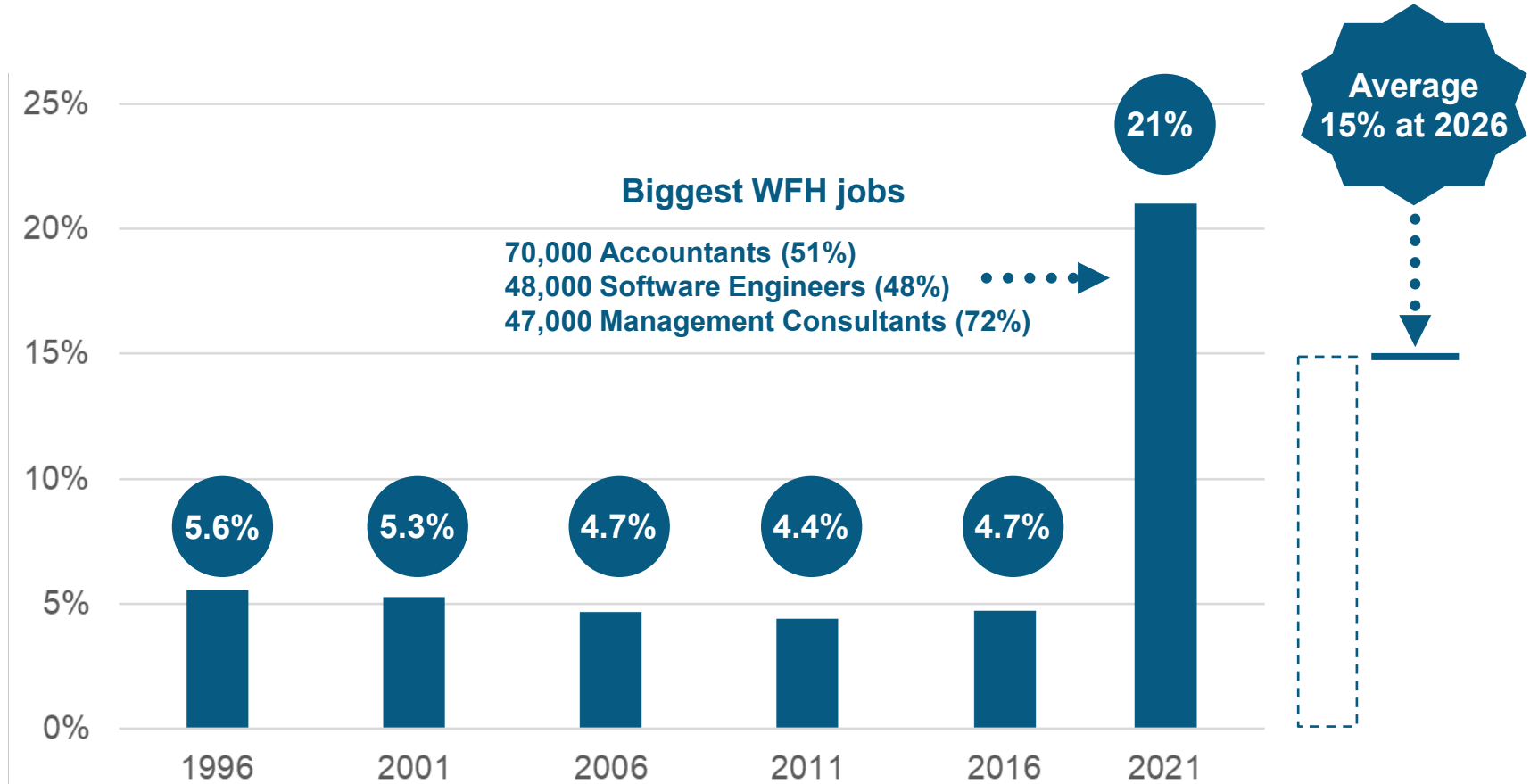
Small town defined as 2,500 population plus region; Source: The Demographics Group concept; ? denotes possibly removed or not functional

Consumers have 'leant into' the idea of accessing services via apps



Selection of apps downloaded by Australians over the last decade

The concept of WFH aligns with Australia's 'lifestyle' obsession



Proportion Australian workforce working from home 1996 - 2021; Source: ABS Census data

How Middle Australia expects to live in the city... and in the regions

1960s

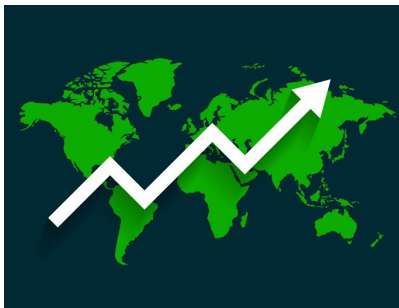


Today



Key points for the demographic drivers reshaping regional Australia

- 1.**
World pop set to jump 25% over 50 years lifts demand for food



World pop now 8bn heading for 10bn by 2075 which is 25% increase in 50 years... this will prompt demand for a 25% increase in demand for food, energy, resources

Australia should aim to increase food exports by 40%... we need to expand port facilities, boost logistics & support rural communities

- 2.**
Population shifts to the 'near regions' in search of lifestyle



Young Australians still typically leave rural communities and move to the city for job opportunities, education, training... relationships

But the evidence is that the regions are attracting young Aussies in search of affordability, quality of life... & perhaps a sense of community

- 3.**
Regional Australia demands high standard of housing & services



Australians have focussed on lifestyle and quality of life since the rise of suburbia... but the suburban home has had a makeover and has evolved into the modern forever home

The home is now a place to shop, study, watch Netflix, raise a family... this standard is now also expected in the regions

- 4.**
Australian agribusiness relies of local towns to deliver critical services



If Australia is to pursue a national agenda of lifting agricultural exports by 40% by mid century, then we will need strong and vital towns to deliver local services

Regional let alone a farming lifestyle requires viable towns with strong businesses and a pipeline of skilled workers



I stopped eating smashed avocado ... and now I own a castle



B220

SUNRAYSIA HWY

SMASHED
Avocado \$13

Ballarat 83

Melbourne 191

vicroads



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