Regional Movers Index

September 2022 Quarter Report

Powered by:

Commonwealth Bank

REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE

What is Regional Movers Index?

The **Regional Movers Index** presents fresh analysis of movements between Australia's regions and capital cities.

The **Index** is a partnership between CBA and the Regional Australia Institute (RAI), powered by analysis of proprietary data to create an up-to-date and granular picture of a large sample of relocations.

The **Index** updates the trends identified in the RAI's 2019 Big Movers report – that in recent decades more people have been moving from Australia's capital cities to regions than in the opposite direction.

- The **Index** is powered by CBA data from relocations amongst its 10 million customers.
- Quarterly and annual changes are presented in the Index.
- The **Index** is an invaluable resource for both the public and private sectors. By tracking people movements it enables early identification of growth trends, and flags places emerging as hot spots needing fresh thinking on housing and infrastructure.

See Appendix A1 for definitions and methodology.

Regional Movers Index

Post-lockdown migration from capitals to regions remains high

1

Capital to region migration is still well above pre-COVID levels, even as public health measures ease. These quarterly migration flows in the past 12 months have averaged a level that is 15.1 percent higher than during the two years prior to the pandemic.

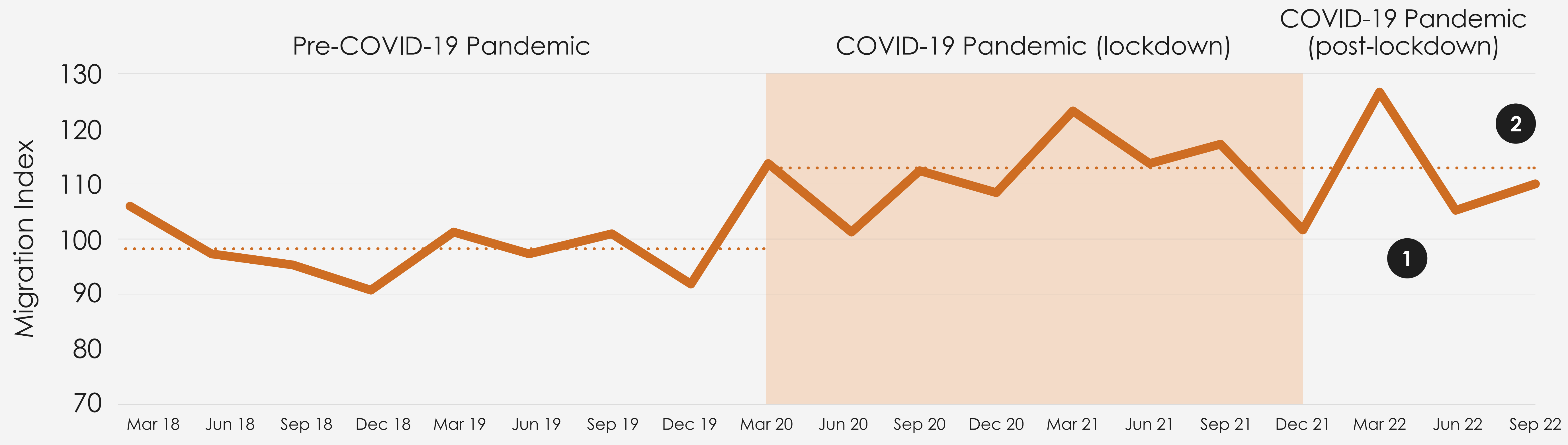
2

Rising interest rates, associated economic uncertainty and more wild weather did not dampen enthusiasm for a regional move in the September quarter. Migration flows from capitals to regions during the quarter recorded a slight uptick (up by 2.4 percent). The latest level of migration is 7.2 percent lower than a year earlier, when a near-record number of capital city people, predominantly from Sydney and Melbourne, moved to regional areas during pandemic lockdowns.

3

During the September 2022 quarter, capital to region migration represented a smaller share of all Australian relocations compared with a year earlier, reflecting those reduced flows and the increased flows in the other direction (region to capital migration).

Regional Movers Index: population flows from Capital cities to Regional Australia



Index = 100, March 2016

3 Breakdown of total relocations within Australia

To

From

September 2021

From \ To	Regional Australia	Capital Cities
Regional Australia	22.6%	3.9%
Capital Cities	6.2%	67.3%

September 2022

From \ To	Regional Australia	Capital Cities
Regional Australia	22.0%	4.4%
Capital Cities	5.6%	68.0%

Net Internal Migration to Regional Australia

Net migration to regions down from record levels of 2020 and 2021, but still well above pre-COVID

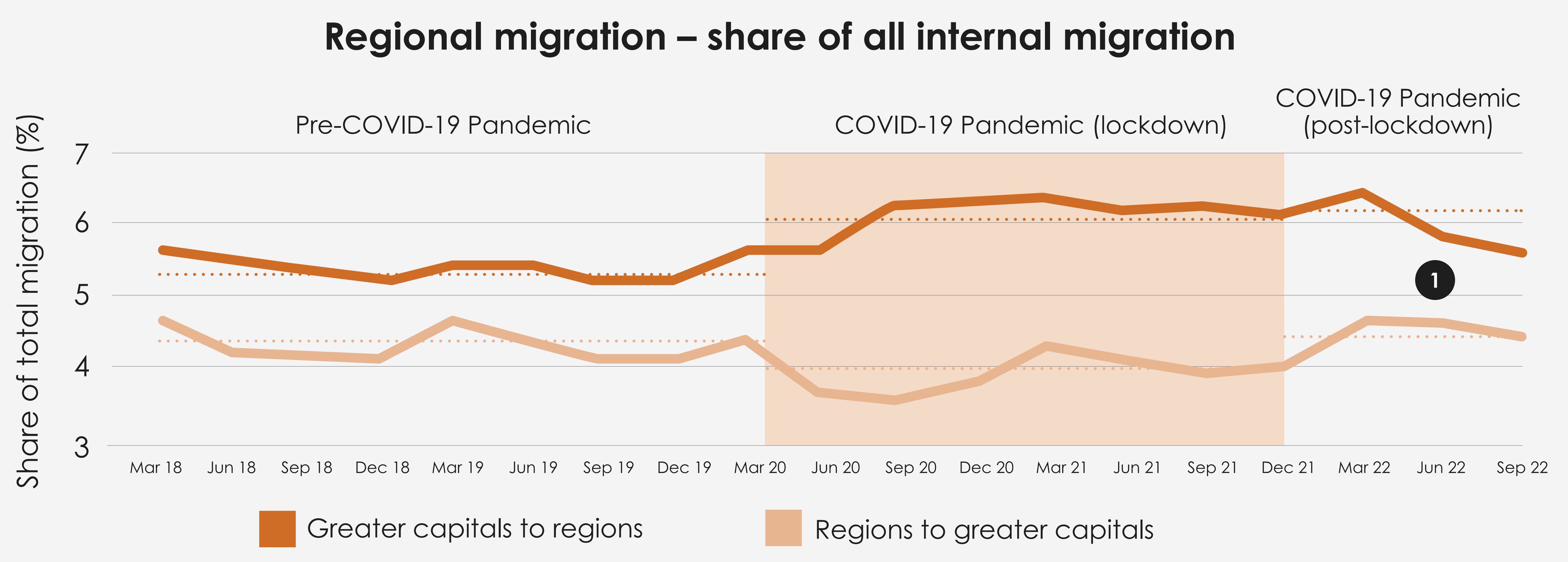
1

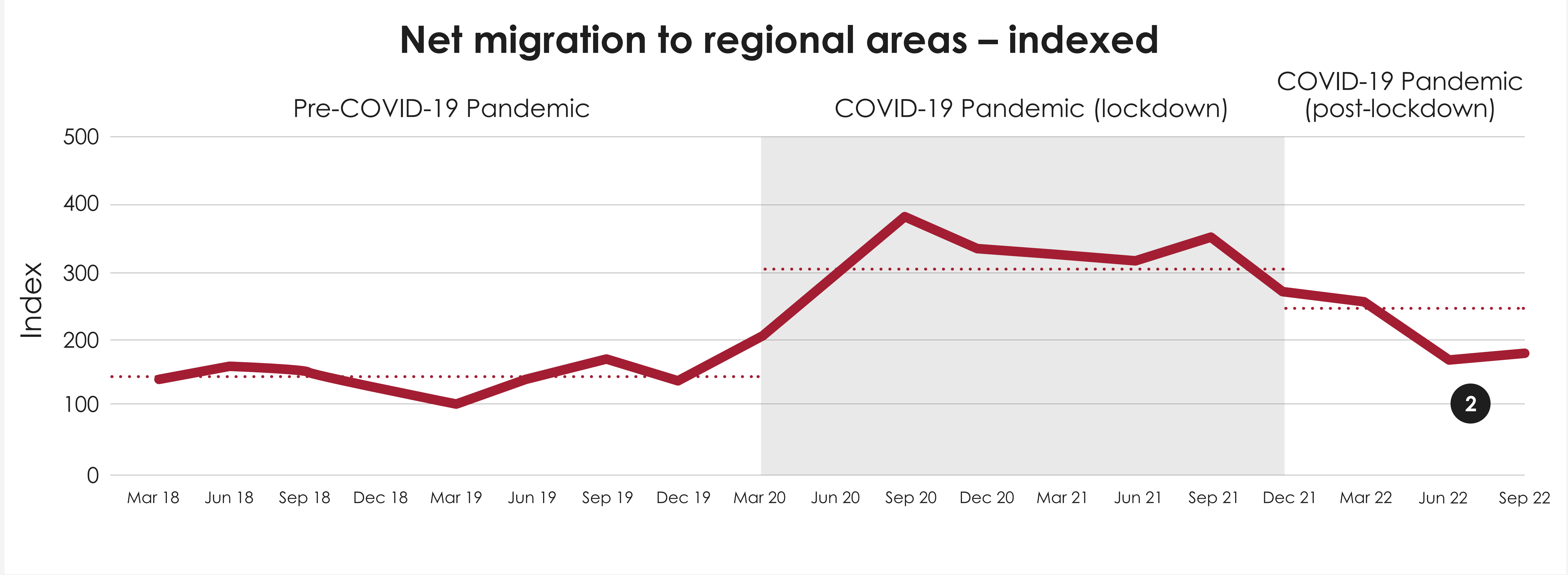
On average, quarterly capital to region migration flows have accounted for 6 percent of all relocations throughout the past 12 months. This share is on-par with the share during the time of lockdowns, and is higher than the share that prevailed prior to the pandemic (up by 0.7 of a percentage point). Nevertheless, as 2022 has progressed this share has been declining. It fell from a 6.4 percent share in the March 2022 quarter to a 5.6 percent share in the latest September 2022 quarter.

Meanwhile migration flows in the other direction picked up noticeably once the severe capital city lockdowns were lifted. Regional people moving into capitals accounted for 4.4 percent of all relocations during the September 2022 quarter. While this is a slightly smaller share than in the previous quarter it is higher than the 4.0 percent share that prevailed during the height of lockdowns.

2

Accordingly, overall net migration has pulled back from the record levels of 2020 and 2021. Net migration to regions during the 12 months to September 2022 has averaged a level that is 23.9 percent less than in the lockdown period of the pandemic, but nearly 70 percent higher than the levels in the two years pre-pandemic.





Regional Hotspots: Top Five LGAs

(by growth in capital-to-regional migration)

Top Five LGAs for growth in regional migration

1

For a second quarter running, Mount Gambier has experienced the largest growth in annual capital to region migration. The number of capital city people who moved into the LGA during the 12 months to September 2022 is double the previous 12 months.

More broadly, South Australian LGAs continue to dominate the list, taking out first, fourth and fifth places.

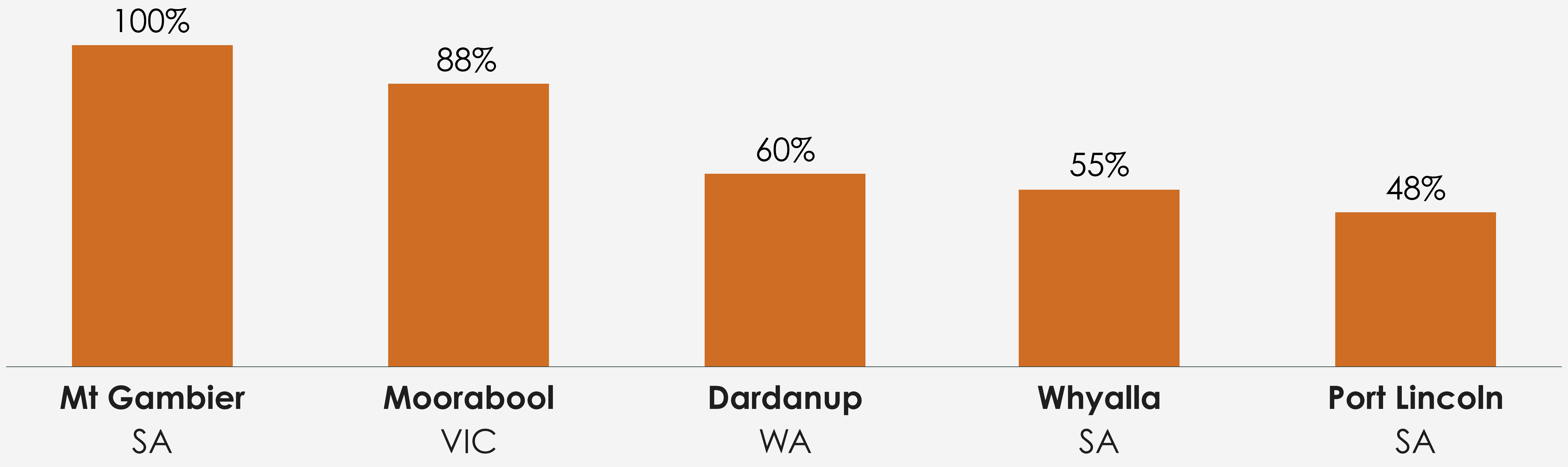
Western Australia has made its debut onto this Top Five list. The south-west LGA of Dardanup saw the third-largest growth in capital to region migration among all regional LGAs.

2

With the exception of Port Lincoln, each of these Top Five LGAs experienced a quarterly increase in migration inflows from capitals – in line with the small quarterly increase across regions generally.

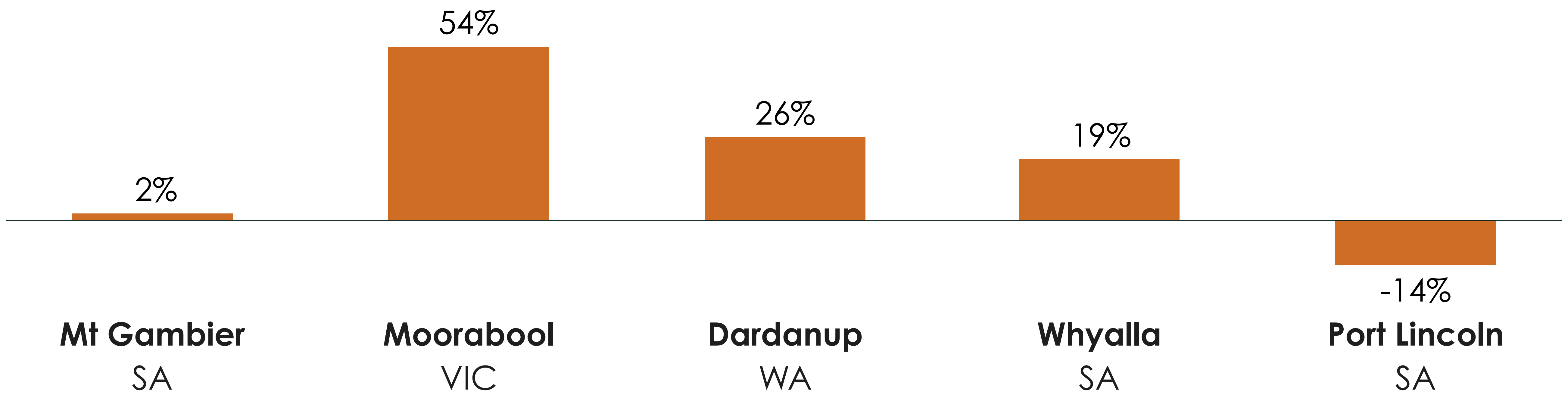
1 Top Five LGAs by annual growth in migration

12 months to Sep 22 vs 12 months to Sep 21, % change



2 Quarterly change in migration for Top Five LGAs

Sep qtr 2022 vs Jun qtr 2022, % change



Regional Hotspots: Top Five LGAs

(by share of capital-to-regional migration)

Top Five areas for size of regional migration

1

The major LGAs close to the east coast capitals continue to maintain their positions as the most popular migration destinations for city-dwellers making a regional move.

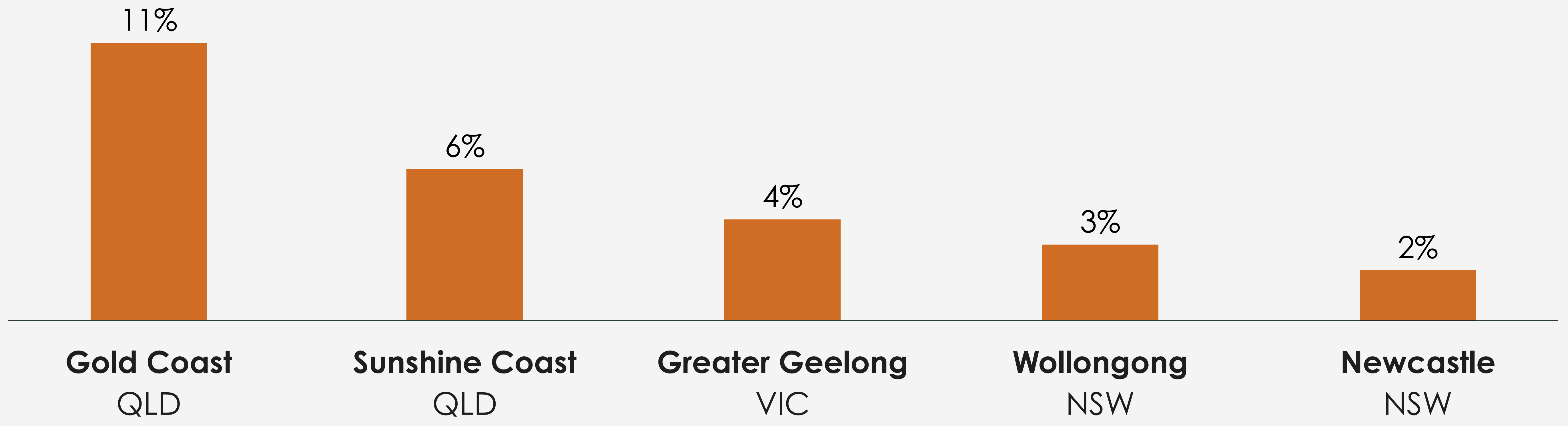
The Gold Coast is the most popular destination – the inflow into the LGA represents 11 percent of all capital to region relocations. Meanwhile the usual favourites round out the Top Five: the Sunshine Coast, Greater Geelong, Wollongong and Newcastle.

2

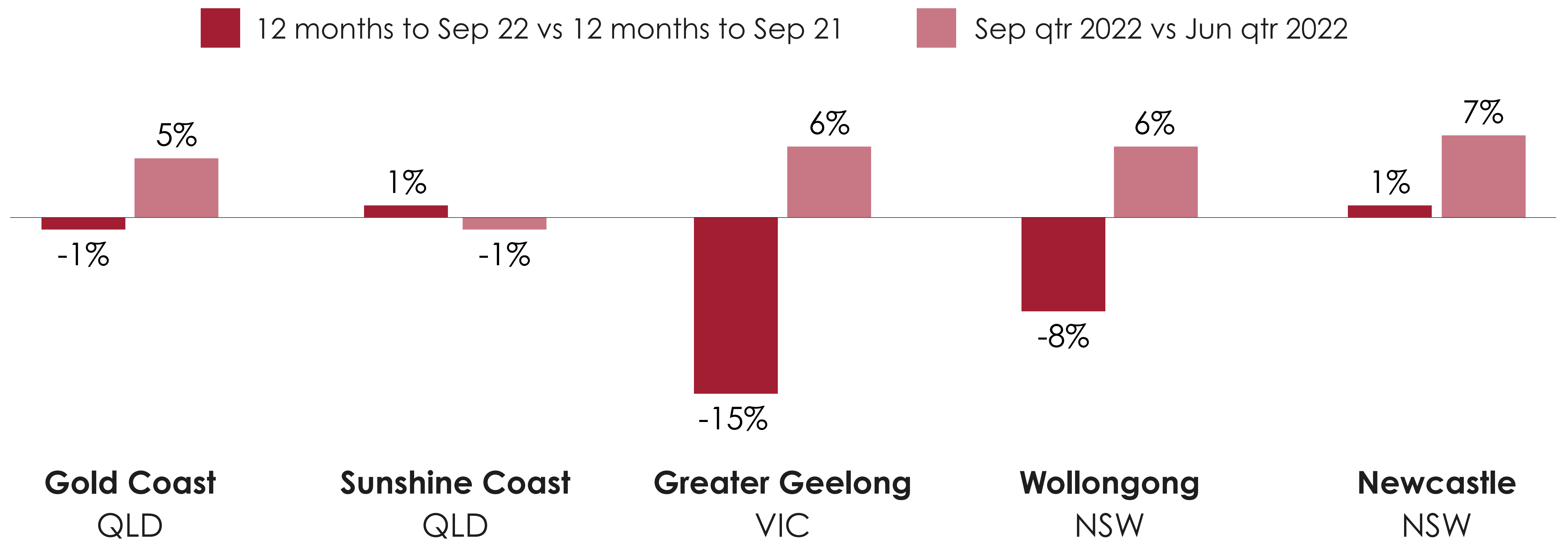
The quarterly uptick in capital to region migration across the country was reflected in the inflows to these Top Five LGAs. Each of the Top Five – bar the Sunshine Coast – saw the number of capital city people moving into their LGAs increase during the quarter. The quarterly reduction in inflows to the Sunshine Coast was marginal.

During the full 12 months to September 2022, however, the number of capital city people making a regional move to three of these LGAs – Gold Coast, Greater Geelong and Wollongong – was fewer than in the previous 12 months. The Sunshine Coast and Newcastle saw marginal increases in these inflows over this period.

1 Top Five LGAs by share of regional migration – 12 months to Sep 22



2 Quarterly and Annual Change in Migration for Top Five LGAs



Spotlight: Job Growth

in capital to regional migration hotspots

Attracting people to the regions: jobs

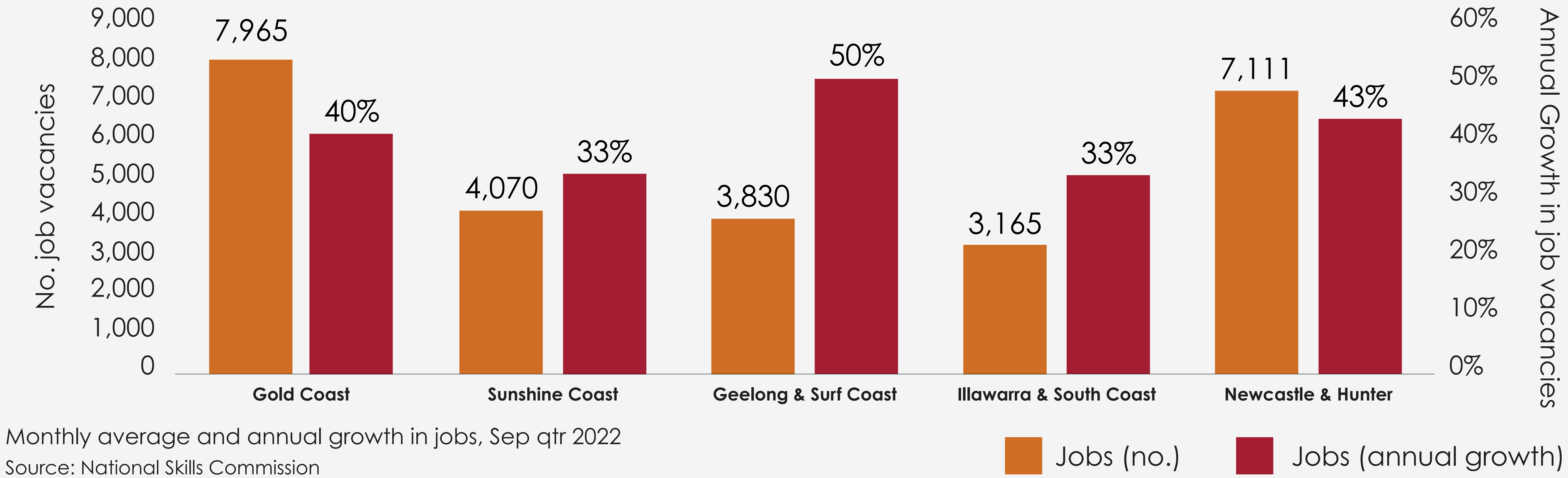
The RMI reports have focused on the push effect that lockdowns have had on capital city people considering a regional move, but there are significant pull factors as well. In particular, demand for workers in regions has grown to record levels over the past two years, with the single largest group of job vacancies advertised online being for professional roles.

National Skills Commission data show online job vacancies at a geographical scale that is larger than the LGA boundaries – they provide a sense of the demand for labour in and around the Top Five population hotspots.

Across the Top Five regions attracting the largest inflows of capital to region migration, the growth in online job ads has been in the order of 30-50 percent. For the LGAs experiencing the largest growth rates of capital to regional migration, the growth in online job ads for their wider regions has been in the order of 20-30 percent.

Jobs in Migration Hotspots

(hotspots by **size** of inflows)

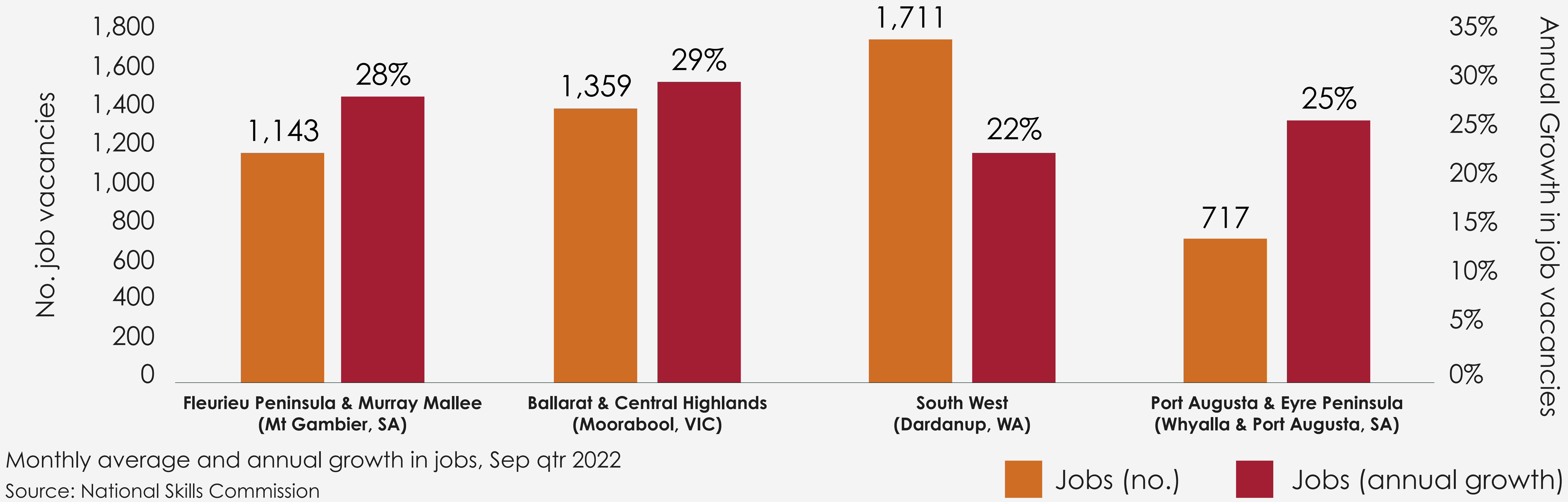


Monthly average and annual growth in jobs, Sep qtr 2022

Source: National Skills Commission

Jobs in Migration Hotspots

(hotspots by **growth** in inflows)



Monthly average and annual growth in jobs, Sep qtr 2022

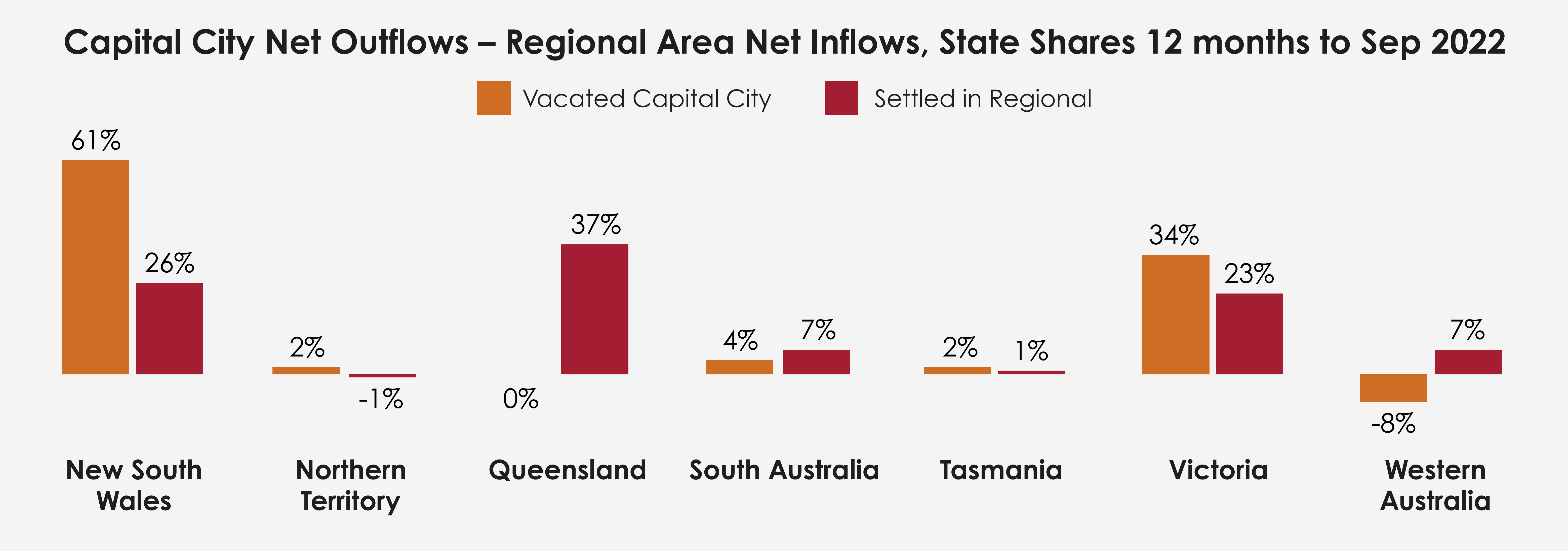
Source: National Skills Commission

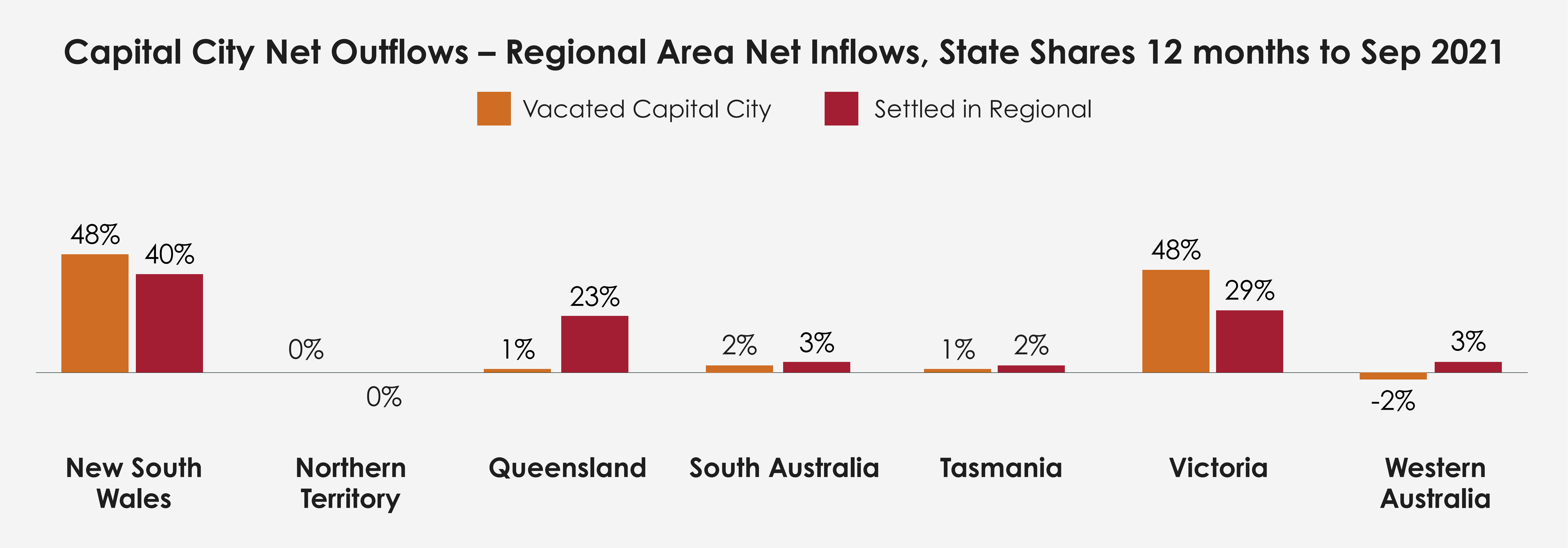
Migration Patterns By State

These capital city net outflows – regional area net inflows charts show the breakdown of net migration by state. They show the state by state shares of net migration **out of capital cities** and state by state shares of **net migration into regional areas.**

During the 12 months to September 2022, Sydney accounted for a significant majority **(61 percent)** of all capital city outflows to regions, a significantly larger share than in the previous 12 months. In contrast, Melbourne's share of all capital city net outflows over the past 12 month period is down to just over a third, a significantly smaller share than the 48 per cent in the previous 12 month period.

These capital city outflows are being distributed mainly across the regional areas of the eastern seaboard states. But it is regional Queensland in particular that is seeing its popularity grow. The Sunshine State's regional areas now account for the largest share of net inflows from capital cities (37 percent), eclipsing regional NSW (26 percent) and regional Victoria (23 percent).





Appendix

A1: Regional Movers Index
Methodology Notes

(1) CBA-RAI Regional Movers Index is defined as movement of CBA personal customers from capital cities to regional areas (see A1.2). Index = 100, March 2016 quarter.

(2) Customer movement or population flows refers to CBA personal customers changing their address as stored in CBA technological systems. Customers must have stayed at one address for 6 months (prior to moving) to be counted.

(3) Capital cities/Regional areas defined through ABS 1270.0.55.001 GCCSA boundaries. Capital cities go by the GCCSA_NAMES of: Greater Sydney, Greater Melbourne, Greater Brisbane, Greater Adelaide, Greater Perth, Greater Hobart, Greater Darwin and Australian Capital Territory. Regional areas go by the GCCSA_NAMES of: Rest of NSW, Rest of Vic, Rest of QLD, Rest of SA, Rest of TAS, Rest of NT. Offshore and 'No usual address' GCCSA_NAMES excluded. ACT has no regional areas.

(4) The Net regional migration index is calculated as movement from capital areas to regional less movement from regional areas to capital cities. Index = 100, March 2016 quarter.

(5) LGAs are defined through ABS 1270.0.55.003 ASGS Volume 3 – Non ABS Structures. An LGA must have received at least 100 persons in capital to regional migration during the previous 12 months. 14 LGAs have a percentage of their constituency defined as Capital and the other percentage defined as Regional. These LGAs include Scenic Rim (R), Light (RegC), Barossa (DC), Yarra Ranges (S), Lockyer Valley (R), Kingborough (M), Murrindindi (S), Derwent Valley (M), Murray (S), Mallala (DC), Moorabool (S), Mitchell (S), Macedon Ranges (S), Unincorporated NT.

(6) The proportion of CBA customers in each state as percentage of total customers is representative of overall Australian population (ABS National, state and territory population released 18th March 2021 for September 2020 reference period).

A2: All LGAs
Share of Migration, Changes in Migration

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Gold Coast	QLD	11%	5%	3%	-1%
Sunshine Coast	QLD	6%	-1%	1%	1%
Greater Geelong	VIC	4%	6%	-18%	-15%
Wollongong	NSW	3%	6%	-7%	-8%
Newcastle	NSW	2%	7%	-12%	1%
Lake Macquarie	NSW	2%	-2%	-14%	-2%
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional	NSW	2%	0%	-17%	6%
Cairns	QLD	2%	13%	20%	5%
Townsville	QLD	2%	0%	19%	5%
Toowoomba	QLD	1%	8%	8%	3%
Shoalhaven	NSW	1%	5%	-15%	-6%
Ballarat	VIC	1%	7%	-11%	-14%
Fraser Coast	QLD	1%	2%	-5%	4%
Tweed	NSW	1%	1%	-10%	-1%
Launceston	TAS	1%	5%	-2%	-19%
Mid-Coast	NSW	1%	-1%	-14%	-4%
Baw Baw	VIC	1%	-1%	-27%	-12%
Port Macquarie-Hastings	NSW	1%	-8%	-16%	2%
Greater Bendigo	VIC	1%	-10%	-23%	-15%
Wingecarribee	NSW	1%	-12%	-41%	-15%
Byron	NSW	1%	-8%	-30%	-18%
Bass Coast	VIC	1%	-5%	-38%	-15%
Bundaberg	QLD	1%	16%	14%	7%
Noosa	QLD	1%	-7%	-19%	-13%
Coffs Harbour	NSW	1%	0%	-17%	-14%

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Mackay	QLD	1%	-6%	18%	6%
Wagga Wagga	NSW	1%	13%	-22%	16%
Dubbo Regional	NSW	1%	4%	-26%	11%
Port Stephens	NSW	1%	9%	-15%	-2%
Moorabool	VIC	1%	54%	132%	88%
Albury	NSW	1%	-8%	-49%	4%
Hindmarsh	VIC	1%	0%	1%	-15%
Latrobe	VIC	1%	-10%	-10%	-5%
Shellharbour	NSW	1%	-21%	1%	17%
Greater Shepparton	VIC	1%	5%	-26%	-31%
Maitland	NSW	1%	-14%	-17%	0%
Surf Coast	VIC	1%	-18%	-51%	-26%
Bathurst Regional	NSW	1%	3%	-8%	23%
Busselton	WA	1%	-3%	12%	12%
East Gippsland	VIC	1%	-1%	-19%	-8%
Mitchell	VIC	1%	2%	-20%	-7%
Gladstone	QLD	1%	-7%	16%	14%
Cessnock	NSW	1%	12%	-19%	-2%
Eurobodalla	NSW	1%	-12%	-19%	-14%
Orange	NSW	1%	0%	-17%	-1%
Tamworth Regional	NSW	1%	-4%	-29%	-1%
Alice Springs	NT	1%	-1%	-1%	-10%
Kalgoorlie/Boulder	WA	1%	18%	1%	0%
Mildura	VIC	1%	-6%	-30%	-26%
Ballina	NSW	0%	-5%	-16%	-6%
Wellington	VIC	0%	4%	-24%	-13%

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Whitsunday	QLD	0%	16%	-16%	-15%
Gympie	QLD	0%	25%	14%	4%
Rockhampton	QLD	0%	16%	-7%	-18%
Southern Downs	QLD	0%	-15%	9%	8%
Karratha	WA	0%	25%	26%	4%
Goulburn Mulwaree	NSW	0%	-20%	-13%	11%
Bega Valley	NSW	0%	3%	7%	12%
Clarence Valley	NSW	0%	10%	-1%	-2%
South Burnett	QLD	0%	43%	10%	12%
Mount Gambier	SA	0%	2%	66%	100%
Alexandrina	SA	0%	28%	22%	9%
Snowy Monaro Regional	NSW	0%	2%	-19%	4%
South Gippsland	VIC	0%	5%	-34%	-19%
Wodonga	VIC	0%	-15%	-26%	-12%
Lismore	NSW	0%	-21%	-25%	4%
Western Downs	QLD	0%	28%	10%	12%
Albany	WA	0%	36%	64%	21%
Bunbury	WA	0%	26%	30%	11%
Lithgow	NSW	0%	26%	16%	8%
Lockyer Valley	QLD	0%	14%	8%	0%
Port Hedland	WA	0%	10%	-12%	-2%
Huon Valley	TAS	0%	-3%	3%	-4%
Griffith	NSW	0%	10%	-27%	5%
Augusta-Margaret River	WA	0%	26%	37%	2%
Macedon Ranges	VIC	0%	-11%	-39%	-18%
Mid-Western Regional	NSW	0%	-10%	-9%	7%

See Appendix A1 for definitions and methodology.

A2: All LGAs
Share of Migration, Changes in Migration

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Yass Valley	NSW	0%	22%	15%	1%
Broome	WA	0%	38%	-11%	-4%
Moira	VIC	0%	25%	-9%	-23%
Campaspe	VIC	0%	-2%	-25%	-28%
Armidale Regional	NSW	0%	-52%	-43%	18%
Barossa	SA	0%	-4%	37%	16%
Greater Geraldton	WA	0%	15%	18%	-3%
Devonport	TAS	0%	-29%	-33%	-26%
Kempsey	NSW	0%	-31%	28%	16%
West Tamar	TAS	0%	6%	25%	7%
Katherine	NT	0%	-19%	-9%	0%
Snowy Valleys	NSW	0%	15%	27%	15%
Warrnambool	VIC	0%	-18%	-17%	-15%
Wangaratta	VIC	0%	-27%	-29%	-19%
Kiama	NSW	0%	-4%	-13%	-19%
Hepburn	VIC	0%	-4%	-24%	-21%
Harvey	WA	0%	36%	20%	-1%
Mount Alexander	VIC	0%	-20%	-41%	-19%
Whyalla	SA	0%	19%	106%	55%
Burnie	TAS	0%	-4%	77%	36%
Livingstone	QLD	0%	4%	28%	-4%
Port Augusta	SA	0%	4%	-22%	29%
Nambucca Valley	NSW	0%	-31%	2%	32%
Scenic Rim	QLD	0%	15%	5%	-9%
Cassowary Coast	QLD	0%	5%	-5%	-16%
Copper Coast	SA	0%	35%	45%	37%

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Victor Harbor	SA	0%	20%	82%	6%
Hilltops	NSW	0%	-51%	-43%	6%
Murray Bridge	SA	0%	0%	10%	2%
Central Highlands	QLD	0%	26%	18%	1%
Douglas	QLD	0%	-17%	-39%	-31%
Murrindindi	VIC	0%	13%	-37%	-31%
Swan Hill	VIC	0%	8%	-27%	-44%
Singleton	NSW	0%	13%	35%	16%
Benalla	VIC	0%	-2%	-10%	-13%
Chittering	WA	0%	-17%	11%	22%
Murray River	NSW	0%	-4%	55%	15%
Mount Isa	QLD	0%	55%	48%	1%
Central Coast	TAS	0%	-16%	-16%	-13%
Mansfield	VIC	0%	-22%	-52%	-27%
Alpine	VIC	0%	-18%	-37%	-27%
Northam	WA	0%	-8%	-16%	-16%
Colac-Otway	VIC	0%	15%	-31%	-26%
Port Lincoln	SA	0%	-14%	57%	48%
Southern Midlands	TAS	0%	-4%	-6%	-8%
Strathbogie	VIC	0%	10%	-38%	-14%
Muswellbrook	NSW	0%	-28%	6%	19%
Horsham	VIC	0%	-5%	-16%	1%
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	TAS	0%	16%	3%	-5%
Golden Plains	VIC	0%	22%	11%	-11%
Dardanup	WA	0%	26%	100%	60%
Port Pirie City and Dists	SA	0%	39%	34%	42%

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Yorke Peninsula	SA	0%	-5%	3%	39%
Capel	WA	0%	17%	17%	10%
Tablelands	QLD	0%	-33%	-20%	0%
Mareeba	QLD	0%	-5%	-43%	-29%
Mid Murray	SA	0%	-20%	0%	22%
Berri and Barmera	SA	0%	116%	69%	19%
Broken Hill	NSW	0%	0%	-6%	9%
Bellingen	NSW	0%	3%	-23%	4%
Esperance	WA	0%	46%	-5%	-2%
Renmark Paringa	SA	0%	-17%	-32%	-5%
Richmond Valley	NSW	0%	23%	-29%	-9%
Central Goldfields	VIC	0%	-36%	-27%	-10%
Isaac	QLD	0%	19%	-9%	-11%
Ashburton	WA	0%	-21%	-13%	-11%
Indigo	VIC	0%	-3%	-15%	-16%
Glenelg	VIC	0%	-12%	-56%	-32%
Meander Valley	TAS	0%	33%	-11%	-32%
Upper Lachlan Shire	NSW	0%	10%	-6%	27%
Parkes	NSW	0%	27%	18%	13%
Light (RegC)	SA	0%	14%	24%	5%
Maranoa	QLD	0%	3%	42%	0%
Cowra	NSW	0%	11%	-12%	-4%
Gingin	WA	0%	-15%	-21%	-11%
Federation	NSW	0%	-17%	-33%	-15%
Unincorporated NT	NT	0%	34%	70%	45%
Clare and Gilbert Valleys	SA	0%	19%	33%	26%

See Appendix A1 for definitions and methodology.

A2: All LGAs
Share of Migration, Changes in Migration

LGA	State	Share of Migration %	Sep qtr 2022 vs June qtr 2022	Sep qtr 2022 vs Sep qtr 2021	Year to Sep 2022 vs Year to Sep 2021
Toodyay	WA	0%	9%	19%	19%
Carnarvon	WA	0%	15%	7%	11%
Yankalilla	SA	0%	-25%	-4%	2%
Break O'Day	TAS	0%	-48%	-42%	1%
Moree Plains	NSW	0%	8%	-36%	-8%
Manjimup	WA	0%	-11%	-9%	-8%
Wyndham-East Kimberley	WA	0%	23%	-16%	-24%
Inverell	NSW	0%	16%	71%	42%
North Burnett	QLD	0%	75%	25%	14%
Latrobe	TAS	0%	-12%	26%	4%
Berrigan	NSW	0%	-8%	-43%	-9%
East Pilbara	WA	0%	-8%	14%	-9%
Northern Midlands	TAS	0%	26%	26%	-12%
Southern Grampians	VIC	0%	122%	21%	-14%
Kingborough	TAS	0%	30%	25%	-18%
Ararat	VIC	0%	32%	0%	-22%
Corangamite	VIC	0%	-17%	-27%	-25%
Loxton Waikerie	SA	0%	-47%	-31%	8%
Banana	QLD	0%	-24%	-27%	1%
Unincorporated SA	SA	0%	24%	0%	-5%
Waratah/Wynyard	TAS	0%	26%	7%	-19%
Upper Hunter Shire	NSW	0%	-25%	-40%	-19%
Oberon	NSW	0%	-8%	-33%	-20%
Northern Grampians	VIC	0%	-37%	-51%	-34%
Circular Head	TAS	0%	-48%	-53%	-35%
Southern Grampians	VIC	0%	0%	0%	0%

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