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## Australia's uncertain demographic future

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### Abstract

The techniques of probabilistic population forecasting are increasingly being recognised as a profitable means of overcoming many of the limitations of conventional deterministic variant population forecasts. This paper applies these techniques to present the first comprehensive set of probabilistic population forecasts for Australia. We stress the disadvantages of directly inputting net migration into the cohort component model in probabilistic forecasting, and propose a gross migration flows model which distinguishes between permanent and non-permanent immigration and emigration. Our forecasts suggest that there is a two thirds probability of Australia's population being between 23.0 and 25.8 million by 2026 and between 24.4 and 31.8 million by 2051. Comparisons with the latest official population projections of the Australian Bureau of Statistics are made.

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