

Media Release

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NEW DATA REINFORCES NEED FOR NATIONAL POPULATION PLAN

The case for a National Strategic Population Plan has been reinforced by release of new data showing Australia's population continuing to increase and growth consolidated in our largest states, according to the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data released today shows Australia's population now sits at 25.2 million people – an increase of 1.6 percent in 2018.

UDIA National has consistently sought a National Strategic Population Plan that forecasts population settlement patterns and the demand for housing, infrastructure and services.

"Australia's population will keep growing and we need to get ahead of the task of understanding the implications," says UDIA National Executive Director Connie Kirk.

"A clear national plan that includes rolling short and long-term forecasts, maps settlement patterns and informs land use, housing, infrastructure and service delivery is essential.

"The Commonwealth Government's proposal for a Centre for Population can help drive more informed policy making and decisions around land use and infrastructure planning."

UDIA National believes the mandate for the new Centre should include:

- Establishing one, three and five-year population forecasts that are updated on an annual basis
- Better mapping the interaction between Government's visa program, settlement patterns and workforce requirements
- Collaborating with the States and Territories to ensure the geographic spread of population is devised in partnership
- Using the population forecasts to inform strategic land use and infrastructure plans, as well as service delivery and environmental outcomes
- Opening a dialogue with the community on the economic and social benefits of population growth.

"Population policy has rarely been done well in Australia but there is increasing consensus around the case for better data, analysis and policy making," says Ms Kirk.

"We can use the opportunity to open a stronger dialogue with the community around the trajectory and consequences of change that can create stronger, more prosperous cities and regions."

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