

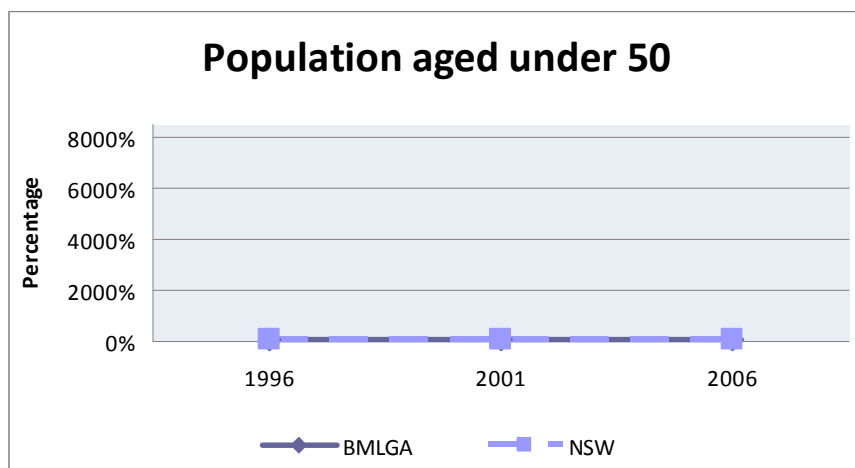
## Population – demographic structure

### What are we monitoring?

*The percentage of the population aged under 50 years*

### What is the trend?

The percentage of the Blue Mountains population aged under 50 is declining.

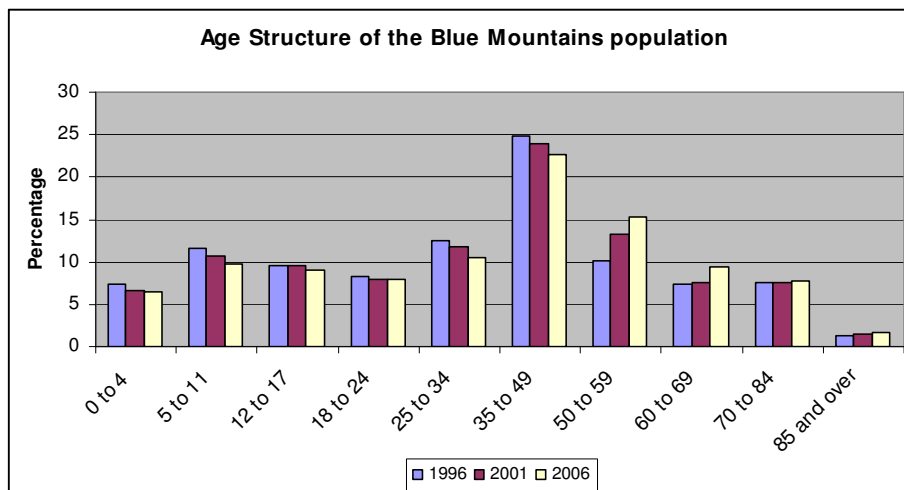


POPULATION AGED UNDER 50 YEARS			
Year	1996	2001	2006
<b>BMLGA</b>	73%	71%	69%
<b>NSW</b>		70%	69%

### Why is monitoring this trend important?

A diversity of age groups in the population contributes to a sustainable Blue Mountains. A decline in the percentage of people under fifty indicates an aging population. It also indicates that younger people (aged 25 to 49) are leaving the Blue Mountains. Whilst the community benefits from the experience of people in all stages in life, retaining younger people is particularly important. Younger people are more likely to be economically active and make fewer demands on health and social service infrastructure. People aged between 25 and 34 are also at the primary age for childbearing. Reductions in this age group will reduce the number of children in the Blue Mountains. The Australian population is ageing generally, with the proportion of people aged under 50 declining at a national and state level. Ideally, in the Blue Mountains, the proportion of the population aged under 50 can remain steady or decline at no less than the state rate. Encouraging young people to stay in the Blue Mountains or move to the area will contribute to a more sustainable and diverse population structure.

The table and chart below show the age structure of the Blue Mountains for each of the last three census years. These show how the proportion of younger people is gradually declining, and the proportion of people over 50 increasing.



Age structure age group (years)	1996	2001	2006
<b>0 to 4</b>	7.3%	6.6%	6.4%
<b>5 to 11</b>	11.6%	10.6%	9.7%
<b>12 to 17</b>	9.5%	9.5%	9%
<b>18 to 24</b>	8.2%	8%	7.9%
<b>25 to 34</b>	12.5%	11.7%	10.5%
<b>35 to 49</b>	24.9%	24%	22.6%
<b>50 to 59</b>	10.1%	13.2%	15.2%
<b>60 to 69</b>	7.3%	7.5%	9.3%
<b>70 to 84</b>	7.5%	7.5%	7.7%
<b>85 and over</b>	1.2%	1.5%	1.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	100%	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Census (1996, 2001, 2006)