



SESSION 2

Hard Truths, Real Communities, and Shared Futures

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*Internal migration and
urbanisation of non-urban
towns in the Western Cape:
implications for development
planning*

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Internal migration & urbanisation of non-urban towns in the W-Cape: Implications, for development planning

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Objective of presentation

- Importance of migration in development planning
- Illustrate internal migration as key demographic process in determining population distribution within provincial boundaries
- Note implications, pressures and risks for development planning

Migration and Development planning

1. Migration is one of the 3 demographic process that shape the characteristics of society
2. As population size and composition change, people must adjust and these adjustments result in several alterations in the way society operates.
3. Although demographic change does not demand a society response, different societies will respond differently to the changes. Sometimes for the better but mostly not.
4. Type of reaction is often determined by the speed of the change

Why is it important to measure and understand migration?

It has the potential to:

- significantly affect the lives of the people who move, and those that are left behind and those with whom they interact after making the move.
- dramatically alter the demographic structure of a community within a very short period of time.
- dramatically alter the social and economic structure of a community.
- place significant pressure on service delivery.



Internal migration trends in SA

Province	Net migration rates p.a. (%)			
	1996–2001	2001–2006	2006–2011	2011–2022
Western Cape	4.05	3.20	2.64	2,14
Eastern Cape	-0.04	-1.11	-1.16	-1,20
Northern Cape	-0.74	-0.21	-0.23	0,50
Free State	-1.63	-0.33	-0.28	-0,65
KwaZulu-Natal	-0.79	-0.07	-0.06	-0,42
North West	-0.75	1.91	1.92	0,41
Gauteng	4.30	9.75	4.02	0,63
Mpumalanga	-0.81	1.06	0.93	-0,34
Limpopo	-3.15	-1.14	-1.23	-1,47

What are we observing in the W-Cape?

- Urbanisation and densification of non-urban (small) towns that lie outside the urban centers.
- Primary source – mostly the Eastern Cape BUT also from inside the province
- Exclusion of migration data in most IDPs (demographic info in general poorly dealt with)

Internal migration in the W-Cape

A. Inter-provincial trends (2011 Census)

In-migrant distribution

Districts	1996–2001 (%)	2001–2006 (%)	2006–2011 (%)
West Coast	5,76	6,89	6,63
Cape Winelands	9,21	7,49	9,31
Overberg	5,21	6,67	5,84
Eden	12,11	14,71	12,19
Central Karoo	0,55	0,51	0,73
CPT	67,15	63,73	65,29
Total	100	100	100

Outmigration distribution

Districts	1996–2001 (%)	2001–2006 (%)	2006–2011 (%)
West Coast	4,7	4,1	4
Cape Winelands	8,3	6	5,6
Overberg	2,3	2,7	2,6
Eden	12,5	11,7	12,7
Central Karoo	1,4	1,5	1,4
CPT	70,8	74	73,6
Total	100	100	100

Interprovincial flows (2011 Census)

Inter-provincial net-migration rates for MD

Municipal Districts & metro	Net-migration rates (%)		
	1996–2001	2001–2006	2006–2011
West Coast	0.65	0.54	1.11
Cape Winelands	-0.60	0.16	0.40
Overberg	0.79	0.81	1.09
Eden	-0.38	0.04	0.09
Central Karoo	-8.65	-0.27	0.06
CPT	-0.18	-0.13	-0.29

Receiving migrants of intra-provincial migrants

Overberg municipalities	Percentage		
	1996–2001	2001–2006	2006–2011
Theewaterskloof	29.3	20.4	24.73
Overstrand	49.4	50.4	44.73
Cape Agulhas	11.5	14	17.85
Swellendam	9.8	15.2	12.69
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Erf 8323 Grabouw

Oct 2003



Erf 8323 Grabouw



Feb 2009

2011 census
30 337
people

Jan 2014



Feb 2017



Feb 2020



Nov 2024

**Survey
2023
80000
people**



Grabouw November 2025

Write a description for your map.



Migration as key driver of rapid population size

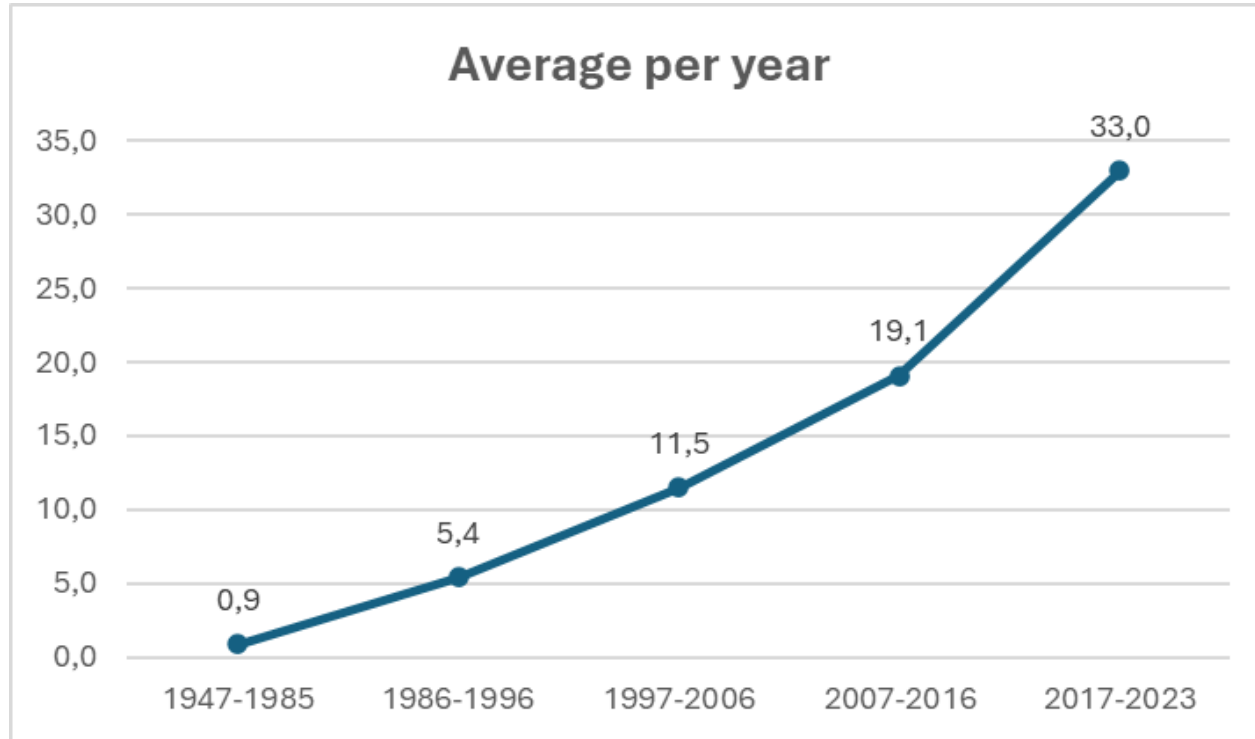


Figure 6.2: Average number of persons per year that moved to Grabouw, 1947 to 2023

Where do in-migrants come from?

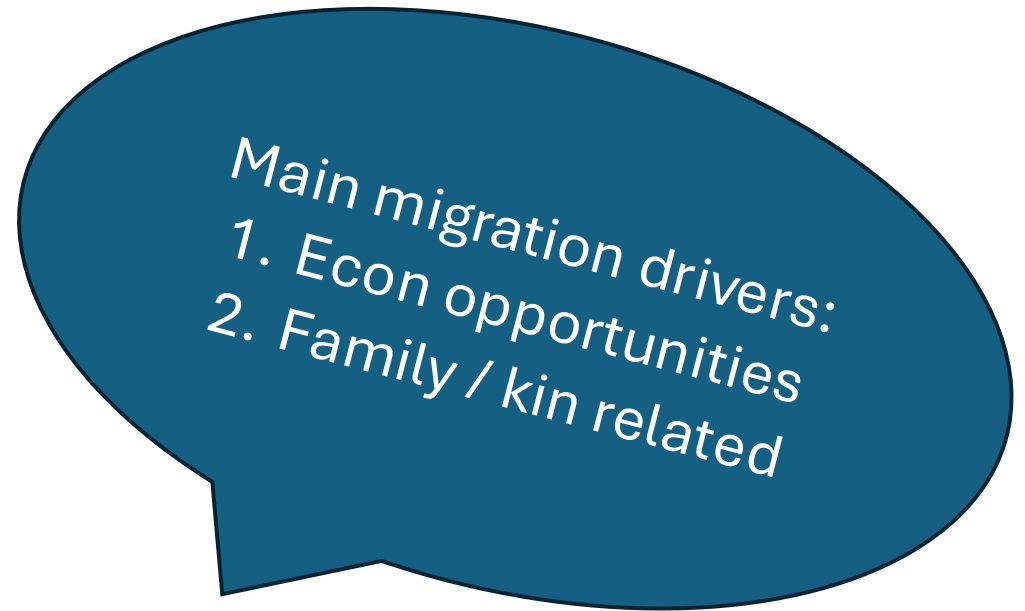
In-migrants mostly came from Eastern Cape (76%) and Western Cape (just short of 20%).

Who are these migrants?

44% are women of which 52% are single

Migrate to Grabouw?

- Why they moved to Grabouw:
 - 81% - better economic opportunities
 - 10,5% - kin/family related
 - 5% - better infrastructure & services
- Context:
 - Historic labour practices
 - Networks (old & new)
- Asked if they consider moving away from Grabouw:
 - 17% - Yes
 - 83% - No





Implications of drastic population change and growth

- High unemployment rate due to educational profile of migrants (seasonality of employment)
- Fast growth in informal dwelling units and uncoordinated settling of new migrants – LG is completely absent
- Growing population density – health risk
- Pollution (effluent: drinking water & agricultural and ecological impact)
- Invasion and pollution of ecological sensitive land
- Social cohesion: distrust & racism



Pressure on service delivery

- Grabouw has 24 police officers to deal with a growing densely populated area, formal town & farms – great safety concerns
- One hospital with the resources of a day hospital
- Lack of waste removal and water provision
- Pressure on schools to provide to growing learner numbers

The issues noted on previous slide are all exasperated by:

- Lack of/ inaccurate data,
- persistent classification of municipality as rural, all hampering service delivery.
- Lack of incorporation of internal migration trends & characteristics of migrants when thinking about development planning .

Why is it important to consider migration in all its dimensions and understand the population change it brings?

1. To estimate rate at which pop change take place and to understand nature of change (i.e.profile of migrants) – directly links to community dynamics, thus service delivery needs & development planning
2. When planning for demographic change breaks down (as is often the case in context of weak governance and/or rapid population growth) the result can be a certain amount of chaos, social unrest and even political upheaval.

End thank you

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