The late 20s to early 40s are a time of transition for many Australians. With this transition comes a change in priorities which shape our desires about how and where we want to live. For many regional Australians who have left their home-towns as young adults, entering this new stage of life has created a desire to return to regional Australia to resettle their roots in familiar ground.

These ‘Regional Returners’ are important contributors to regional populations.

Research suggests that lifestyle, proximity to friends and family – particularly the ‘granny factor’ – and access to good schools, childcare and health services are attracting people back to the regions. This finding was supported by conversations the RAI had with a number of Regional Returners.

Returners are not the only ones benefiting from this trend. Regions are already gaining a wealth of skills and experiences that are helping to develop the social and economic fabric of their communities.

‘[We] have great local schools who are really interested in our kids without the anonymity of the city schools (or the cost!).’

Rebecca McGowan, Regional Returner
Although there are more people aged between 25-44 years moving to regional Australia from the capital cities than vice versa, this trend often slips below the radar.

To help regional areas understand this trend – and encourage people who are thinking about making the move – the Regional Australia Institute has developed "Talking point: Returning to regional Australia." This is the first in a series of papers that celebrates grassroots action and showcases regional experiences.

Like to know more? Keen to share your own story? Please visit our website and join the discussion.

Where are they going?
Australians aged 25-44 years on the move

About the Regional Australia Institute
Independent and informed by both research and ongoing dialogue with the community, the Regional Australia Institute develops policy and advocates for change to build a stronger economy and better quality of life in regional Australia – for the benefit of all Australians. The Regional Australia Institute was established with support from the Australian Government.