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Introduction

Population statistics are not themselves indicators of well-being, whether of individuals, groups or the population as a whole. However, they underpin the discussion of a wide range of issues relating to the population, including immigration, multiculturalism, ageing and population sustainability.

The changing nature and distribution of Australia's population has implications for service provision and delivery in areas such as health, education, housing and the labour market. Population trends underlie many social changes and assist in the planning of all areas of social and economic policy.

Population structure

Introduction

Changes in the composition and structure of the population underpin changes in society, the environment and the economy.

This section examines the structure of the population: its size, age profile and distribution. There is an emphasis on changes in the structure over time, especially changes in the growth rate of the population.

For example, with baby boomers (people born in the baby boom following World War II) starting to reach retirement age, recent projections of the Australian population show the number of people aged 65 years or over growing by 86% between 1995 and 2021. On current trends, it is also projected that by 2021 Sydney will have a population of around 4.5 million compared with 3.8 million in 1995.

Population size

Until 1961 population estimates in Australia excluded full blooded Aboriginal people. The non-Indigenous population grew very rapidly last century. In the first half of the century, it grew from 6,000 to 400,000. In the second half it increased 900%, to 3.8 million by 1900. This growth was fuelled by a very high level of immigration and a very high fertility rate.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the growth rate slowed significantly, the population growing 120% in 50 years. In the second half of the century, the population growth rate has

increased. High levels of immigration in the period following World War II and a 20 year baby boom have meant that the growth in the 50 years is expected to be around 142%.

The population growth rates in the first half of the twenty-first century are expected to be much slower than any experienced since European settlement. The population is projected to grow by 37% in 50 years.

The ABS publishes projections of the population of Australia and the States and Territories to 2051. It publishes four different sets of projections based on different assumptions. Series A, which assumes a medium level of fertility, low level of overseas migration and a medium level of interstate migration, has been used throughout this chapter.

Graph 5.1 sets out the growth in Australia's non-Indigenous population since 1788, and the projected population numbers to the year 2048.

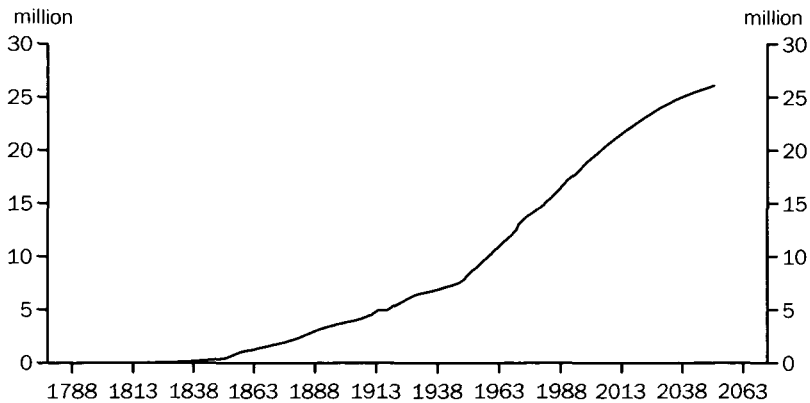
The growth in population has not been evenly distributed across the States and Territories. At Federation in 1901, South Australia had nearly twice the population of Western Australia, which in turn had only marginally more people than Tasmania. However, in 1982 Western Australia surpassed South Australia as the fourth most populous State. In 1995 Western Australia had 3.7 times as many people as Tasmania.

Queensland is projected to replace Victoria as the second largest State by 2026, and the Australian Capital Territory is projected to grow to be larger than Tasmania by 2044.

Australian women, on average, have less than two children, which is expected to continue for the near future. If there were no net migration, Australia's population would peak at 20.7 million in 2033. On the assumption of net overseas migration of 70,000 a year, population growth rates are projected to slow to the extent that the populations of Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria would peak within the next 50 years.

On those assumptions, Tasmania's population is projected to peak first, around the year 2020, with a population of about 500,000, 6% higher than the 1995 population. The South Australian population is projected to peak in 2033 at 1.6 million, 12% larger than the population in 1995. The Victorian population would peak

5.1 POPULATION OF AUSTRALIA, Actual and Projected, 1788–2051



Note: Excludes full blooded Aboriginal people before 1961.

Source: *Australian Demographic Trends* (3102.0).

around 2038 when it would reach 5.3 million, a level 18% higher than its 1995 level.

Although low fertility and the ageing of the population are also expected to reduce the growth rates of Queensland and Western

Australia, the populations of these States are projected to grow by 94% and 77% respectively by 2045, when Queensland is projected to be home to 6.2 million people.

These projections are summarised in table 5.2.

5.2 POPULATION, Australia's States and Territories — 1905–2045(a)(b)

Year	NSW '000	Vic. '000	Qld '000	SA '000	WA '000	Tas. '000	NT '000	ACT '000	Aust. '000
1905	1 470	1 205	529	359	248	183	4	—	3 999
1915	1 889	1 432	696	445	321	195	4	3	4 986
1925	2 293	1 671	841	539	373	214	4	5	5 939
1935	2 645	1 837	968	585	447	229	5	10	6 726
1945	2 918	2 007	1 077	627	488	249	11	15	7 392
1955	3 491	2 517	1 350	820	657	314	18	33	9 200
1965	4 175	3 164	1 645	1 068	826	368	54	88	11 388
1975	4 932	3 787	2 051	1 265	1 155	410	93	199	13 893
1985	5 465	4 120	2 571	1 371	1 419	443	149	251	15 788
1995	6 115	4 502	3 277	1 474	1 732	473	174	304	18 054
2005	6 751	4 830	3 959	1 547	2 028	490	202	345	20 154
2015	7 263	5 051	4 578	1 600	2 303	499	226	385	21 909
2025	7 717	5 209	5 167	1 636	2 560	500	248	419	23 459
2035	8 084	5 291	5 705	1 645	2 786	487	267	448	24 716
2045	8 340	5 278	6 176	1 625	2 983	463	284	472	25 623

(a) There is a break in series before 1961 (see p1 1966 Demog bulletin) and before 1971 (ERP). All data up to 1995 is at 31 December. All projections are at 30 June. (b) Until 1955, data exclude full-blooded Aboriginal people.

Source: *Australian Demographic Trends* (3101.0).

Growth

Population growth results from natural increase (the difference between births and deaths) and net overseas migration (the difference between immigration and emigration).

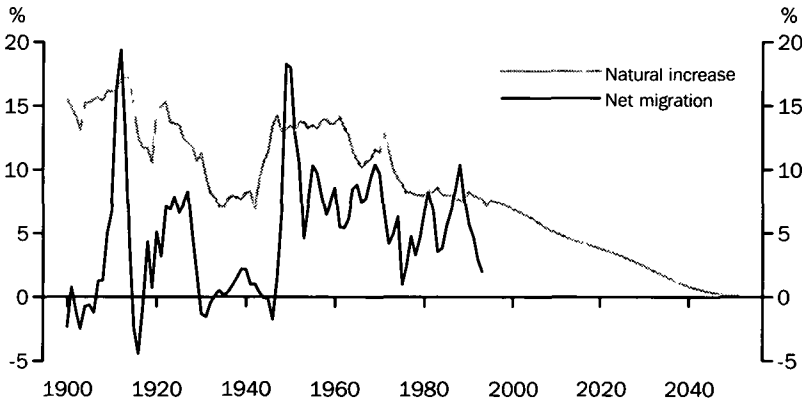
Australia's population grew from 3.8 million at the turn of the century to 18.1 million in June 1995. The second half of the century has seen higher rates of growth than the first, due to strong natural increase, with the post World War II baby boom and falling death rates, and increased net overseas migration. Natural increase has been the main source of the

growth since the turn of the century, contributing two-thirds of the total increase between 1901 and 1994.

Net overseas migration, while a significant source of growth, is much more volatile, fluctuating under the influence of government policy as well as political, economic and social conditions in Australia and the rest of the world.

The growth rates due to natural increase and net migration from 1900 to the present, and projections to the year 2051, are shown in graph 5.3.

5.3 COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH 1900–2051, Australia



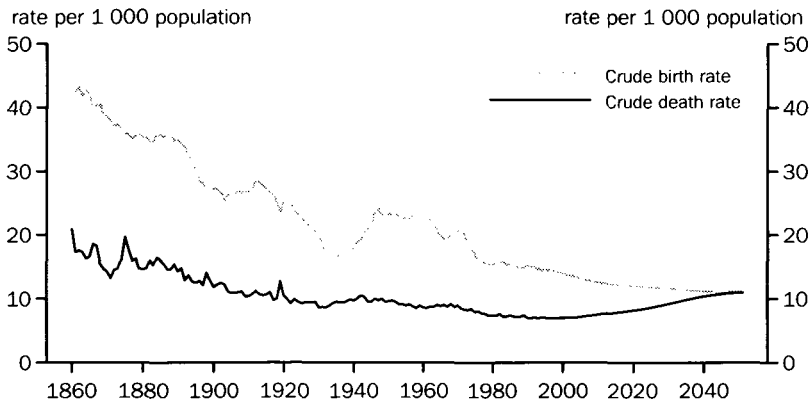
Source: Australian Demographic Trends (3102.0).

In the 1860s, the average annual rate of natural increase was 24 per 1,000 population. It fell rapidly over the next 80 years, and by the mid 1930s the rate was 7.1 per 1,000. In the post war years the baby boom, and the immigration of many young people who then had children in Australia, increased Australia's birth rate and the rate of natural increase. Natural increase was over 13 per 1,000 population every year from 1946 to 1961.

Since 1961 falling fertility has led to a fall in the rate of natural increase, which is projected to fall below 7 per 1,000 for the first time shortly.

Since 1860, the crude death rate has fallen from 21 deaths per 1,000 population to 7 in 1994. Improvements in medical technology and healthier lifestyles are projected to continue, increasing people's life expectancy. Despite this, the ageing of the population is projected to lead to an increase in the crude death rate. The rate of natural increase is projected to fall to zero around the middle of next century. If there were no net migration to boost the population of childbearing age, natural increase would be negative by 2033. Crude birth and death rates from 1860 to the present, and projections to the year 2051, are shown in graph 5.4.

5.4 COMPONENTS OF NATURAL INCREASE



Source: *Australian Demographic Trends* (3102.0).

Distribution

Most of Australia's population is concentrated in two widely separated coastal regions. By far the largest of these, in terms of area and population, lies in the south-east and east. The smaller of the two regions is in the south-west of the continent. In both coastal regions the population is concentrated into urban centres, particularly the State/Territory capital cities. Half the area of the continent contains only 0.3% of the population, and the most densely populated 1% of the continent contains 84% of the population. The distribution of Australia's population is shown in map 5.5.

Between 1986 and 1993 Australia experienced an average population growth of 1.4% a year. However, the statistical local areas (SLAs) which experienced population growth covered less than half the area of the country.

There was very rapid growth along the east coast. Almost all SLAs there experienced population growth. Most SLAs along the New South Wales and southern Queensland coasts increased their population density by more than 1 person per km².

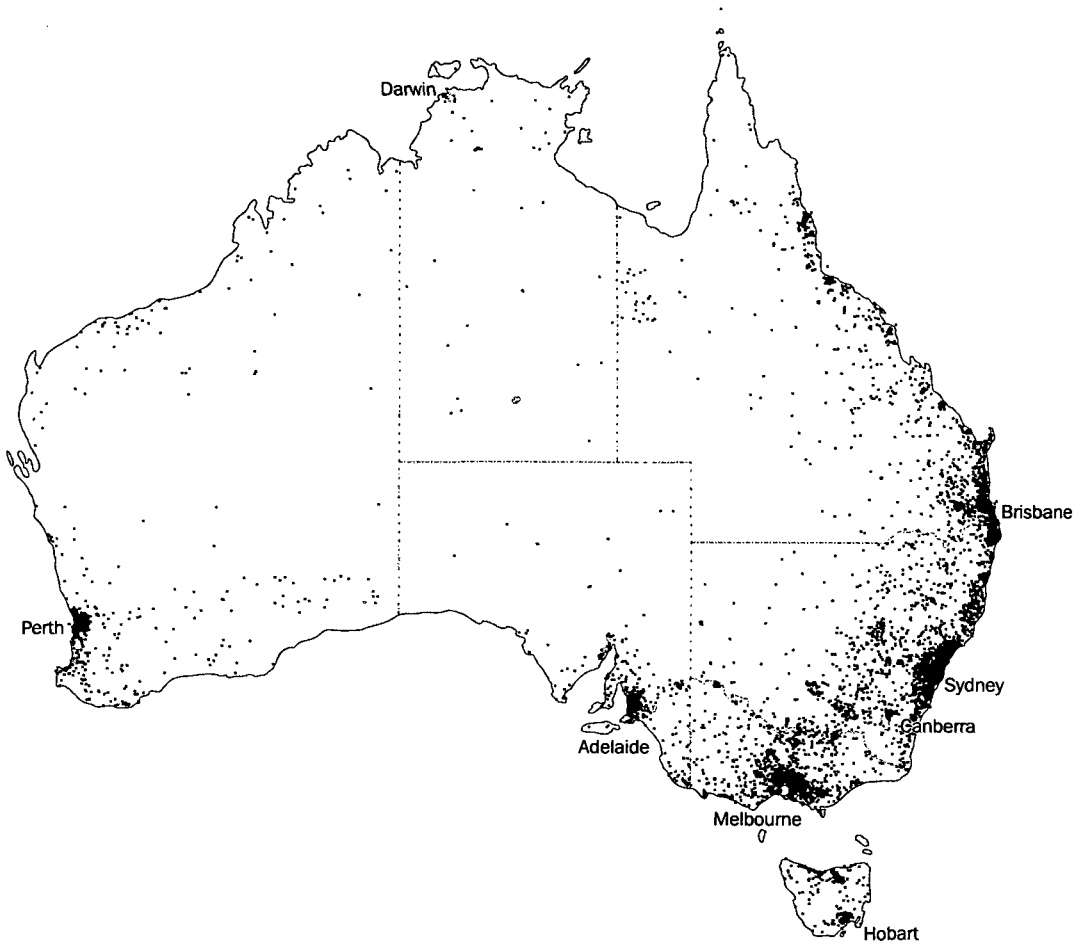
The areas with the most significant population increase were those on the outskirts of capital cities. These areas grew very rapidly over the period. As they were absorbed into the growing cities their population density changed from a low rural level to a much higher urban level.

There were also areas with significant population decline. The inner city areas experienced population decline primarily because residential areas have been redeveloped for commercial uses. In some areas this decline has been slowed, or even reversed, by the influx of young people.

Surrounding the inner city areas are suburbs which developed in the post war period. These areas have declining population, primarily because most children in their twenties leave their parents' home (though later than 15 years ago).

There are also areas outside the capital cities with rapid population decline as local industries restructure. A notable example is Whyalla in South Australia. These changes in the distribution of the population are illustrated in map 5.6.

5.5 POPULATION(a) DISTRIBUTION, AUSTRALIA — 1993

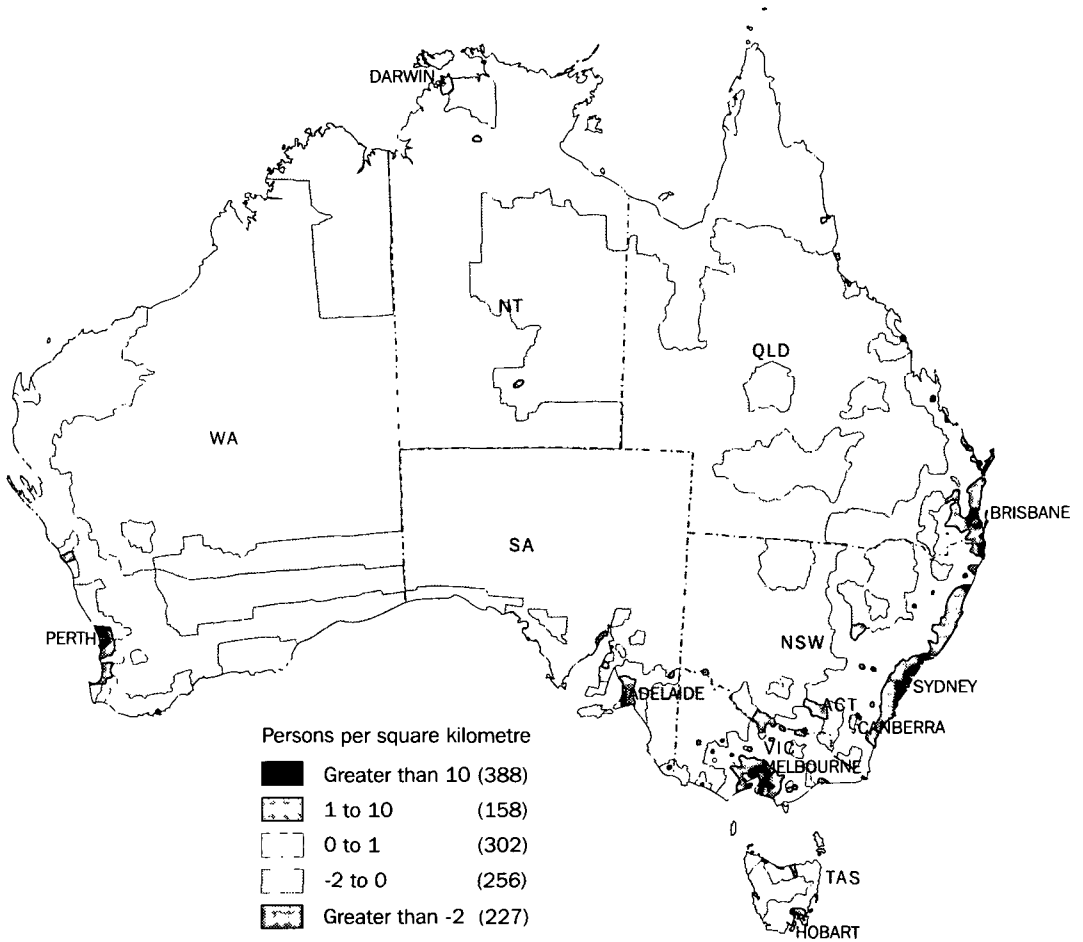


Based on Statistical Local Area boundaries. 1 dot = 1 000 people.

(a) Estimated resident population.

Source: ABS 1993 (3227.0).

5.6 CHANGE IN POPULATION(a) DENSITY — 1988-93



Based on Statistical Local Area boundaries.

(a) Estimated resident population.

Source: ABS 1993 (3227.0)

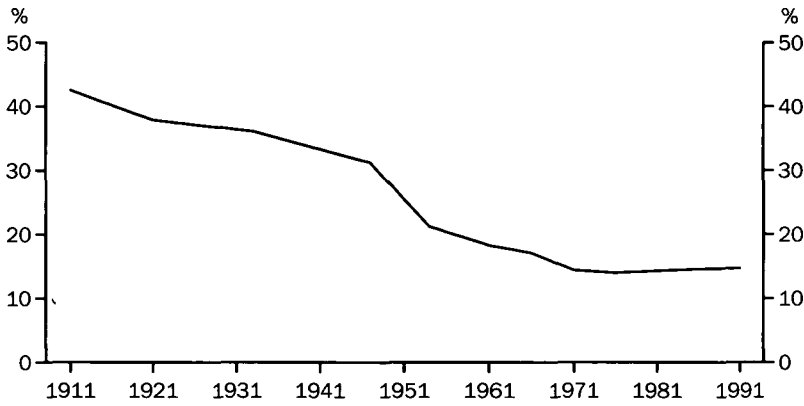
In 1911, 43% of Australians lived in rural areas. Since then this proportion fell steadily. By 1976, 14% of the population lived in rural areas. However, since 1976, this trend has been reversed, and the proportion of people living in rural areas has increased slightly (see graph 5.7). This is mainly due to people moving to rural areas surrounding the cities, especially Melbourne and Sydney, but still working, shopping etc in the city.

The main factor changing the distribution of Australia's population is internal migration. In 1994-95, Queensland's population grew by

about 78,000 people. About 58% of this growth was due to internal migration. However, Tasmania's population grew by only 400 people, as the natural increase in the State was largely offset by the net movement to the other States (see table 5.8).

There are large flows of people from Sydney to the rest of New South Wales and to other States. Migration from Sydney is largely balanced by migration to Sydney, though there are variations from year to year, depending largely on the size of net overseas migration. The growth of Sydney is primarily due to births of people living there.

5.7 RURAL POPULATION



Source: Population census data.

5.8 PATTERN OF INTERNAL AND OVERSEAS MIGRATION — 1994–95

State/ Territory	Internal migration			Overseas migration			Total net migration '000	Natural increase '000	Total growth '000
	Arrivals '000	Departures '000	Net migration '000	Arrivals '000	Departures '000	Net migration '000			
NSW	87 051	102 030	-14 979	38 056	10 123	27 933	12 954	43 739	56 693
Vic.	53 445	78 393	-24 948	19 968	5 598	14 370	-10 578	31 368	20 790
Qld	114 873	70 099	44 774	13 179	5 246	7 933	52 707	25 453	78 160
SA	24 704	31 233	-6 529	3 782	1 328	2 454	-4 075	8 022	3 947
WA	31 737	26 815	4 922	10 379	3 585	6 794	11 716	14 780	26 496
Tas.	10 142	12 857	-2 715	552	368	184	-2 531	2 897	366
NT	18 002	18 350	-348	496	270	226	-122	2 686	2 564
ACT	19 079	19 256	-177	1 001	424	577	400	3 173	3 573
Aust.	359 033	359 033	0	87 428	26 948	60 480	60 480	131 954	192 434

Source: Australian Demographic Statistics (3101.0).

Of the 87,000 permanent and long term overseas arrivals to Australia in 1994–95, 44% intended to settle in New South Wales.

However, due to high levels of internal migration, both among previous immigrants and among the Australian born population, total net migration to New South Wales was only 13,000.

Age and sex of the population

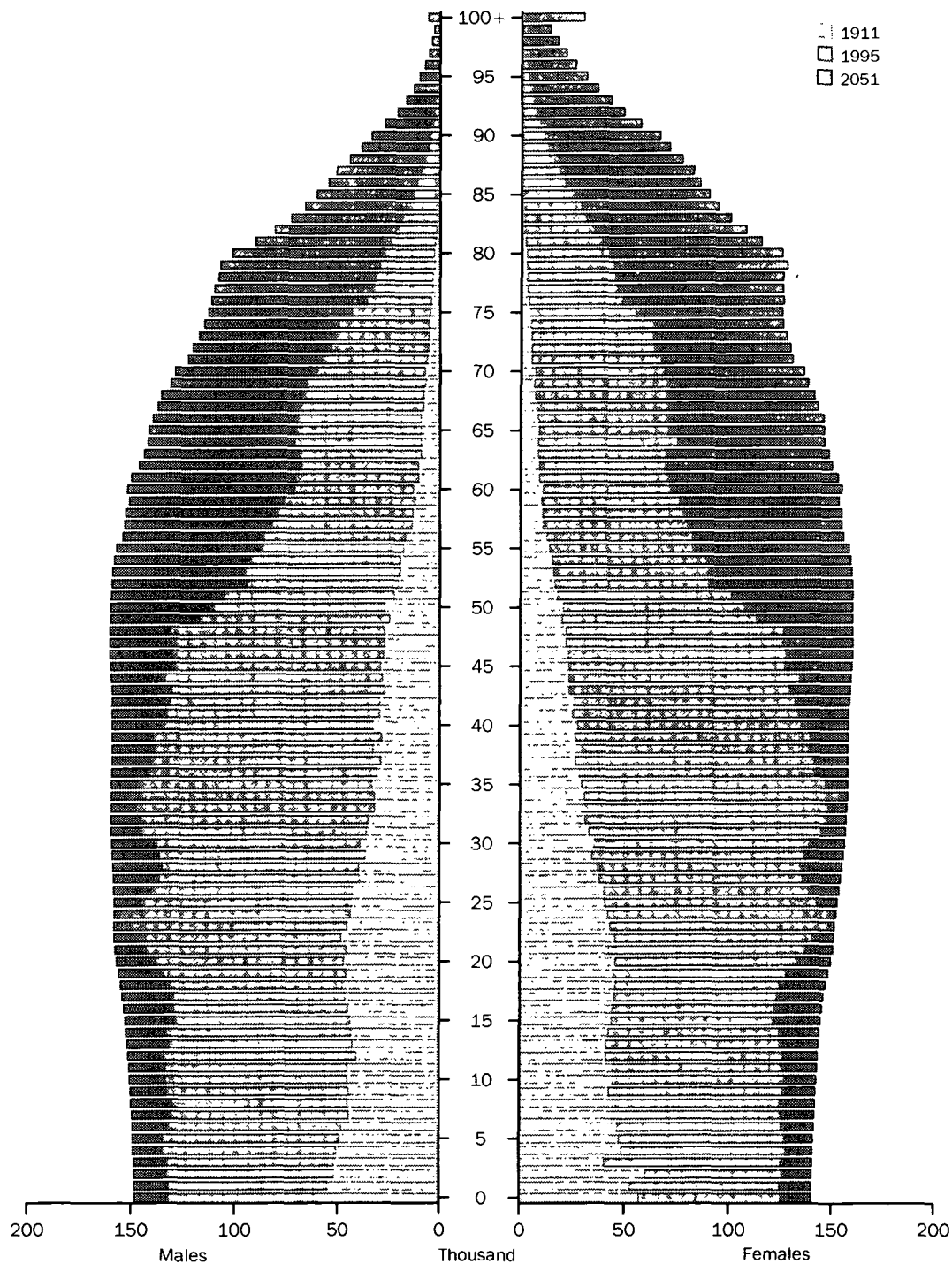
Since 1911 the population has grown significantly, but it has also aged. With Australians having smaller families, there has been a fall in the proportion of children.

In 1911, about a quarter of the population were aged under 15. By 1995, this had fallen to

around 18% and by 2051, this is projected to fall to around 14%.

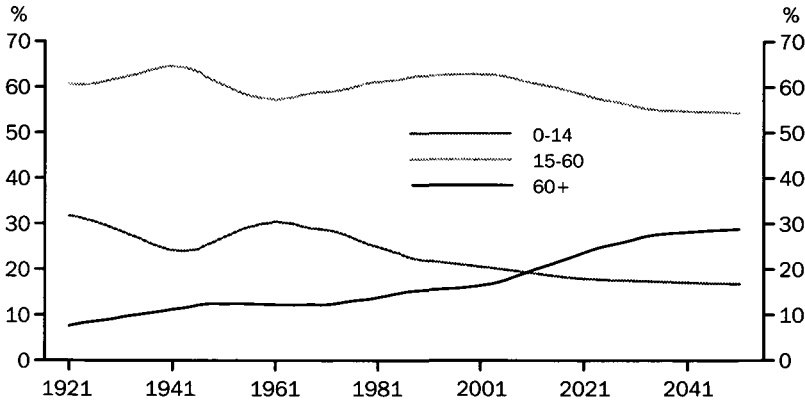
With improved health, life expectancy has increased, and so the proportion of the population over 60 has increased markedly. In 1911, 6% of the population were aged 60 or over. By 1995 this had increased to 16% and it is projected to reach around 28% by the middle of next century. The proportion of the population aged 85 and over is projected to increase from 1.0% in 1995 to 4.4% in 2051 (from 190,000 to 1.2 million people). These features are illustrated in graphs 5.9 and 5.10.

5.9 PROFILE OF AUSTRALIA'S POPULATION, 1911–2051



Source: Australian Demography (A CBS&S publication); Australian Demographic Statistics (3101.0); Projections of the Populations of Australia, States and Territories, 1993 to 2041 (3222.0).

5.10 PROPORTION OF POPULATION IN AGE GROUPS



Source: Projections of the populations of Australian States and Territories 1995-2051 (3222.0)

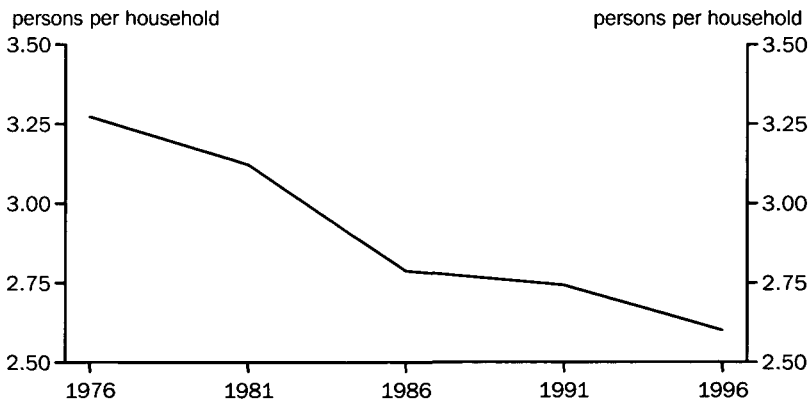
Births, deaths and marriages

This section explores the issues of family formation and dissolution. It examines the structure of Australian families and the factors that change them, in particular births, deaths, marriages and divorces.

Families are central elements of society. In 1995 the Parliamentary paper *An Agenda for Families* stated 'Families are the basic building blocks of our national life. They provide care like no

government or other agency ever can. They are the most important providers of education, health, welfare and personal development. Families nourish our potential, and nurture our individual and collective aspirations. They shape our character and pass on our values. They create a sense of belonging and continuity. They tell us who we are and what we might be. They teach us how to live with one another.'

5.11 AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



Source: 2443.0; 3101.0; Unpublished ABS data.

Households and families

Over the past 20 years the average size of households has fallen dramatically (see graph 5.11). The number of one person households has grown, due largely to the ageing of the population, as has the number of one parent families. Couples having smaller families have also contributed to the fall in household size.

In 1976, 60% of families were couples with children. By 1996, this had fallen to 51% (table 5.12). Part of this change can be attributed to the increase in one parent families

with dependent children, but most of the change is due to the increase in the proportion of couple-only families. People are having children later in life, and are living longer. Therefore they are spending more time living in couple-only families, both before they have children and after their children have left home.

However, children are leaving home later. In 1981, 34% of children aged 20–24 lived with their parents. By 1991 this had increased to 40%. This increase has, to some extent, countered the fall in the couples with non-dependent children only.

5.12 FAMILY TYPE — 1976–96

Family type	1976 %	1981 %	1986 %	1991 %	1996 %
One parent family with dependent children	6.5	8.6	7.8	8.8	9.4
Couple only	28.0	28.7	30.3	31.4	33.9
Couple with dependent children	48.4	46.6	44.8	44.4	40.8
Couple with non-dependent children only	11.1	10.0	10.9	9.5	9.9
Other families	5.9	6.0	6.2	5.9	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

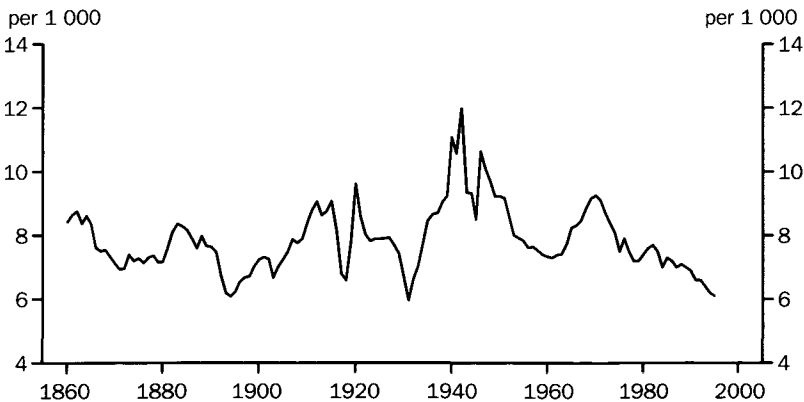
Source: 1976–91: *Australian Social Trends* (4102.0), 1994; 1996: *Labour Force Australia* (6203.0).

Marriages

The crude marriage rate (the number of registered marriages or weddings per 1,000 population) in Australia has fluctuated since it was first recorded in the 1860s. Broadly, the crude marriage rate has followed the pattern of prevailing economic and social conditions. It

has fallen in times of depression or recession, e.g. in the 1890s and 1930s, and increased in times of prosperity such as the gold rush in the 1860s and the immediate post-war years of the early 1920s and late 1940s. Marriage rates have also generally increased during times of war.

5.13 CRUDE MARRIAGE RATES



Source: *Australian Social Trends* (4102.0).

The highest recorded crude marriage rate was 12 per 1,000 of the population in 1942, while the lowest was 6 per 1,000 of the population in 1931.

Since 1970 the crude marriage rate has declined, although by 1995 it had not quite reached the record low of 1931. This decline in the marriage rate can mostly be attributed to changes in attitudes to marriage and living arrangements that have occurred since 1970.

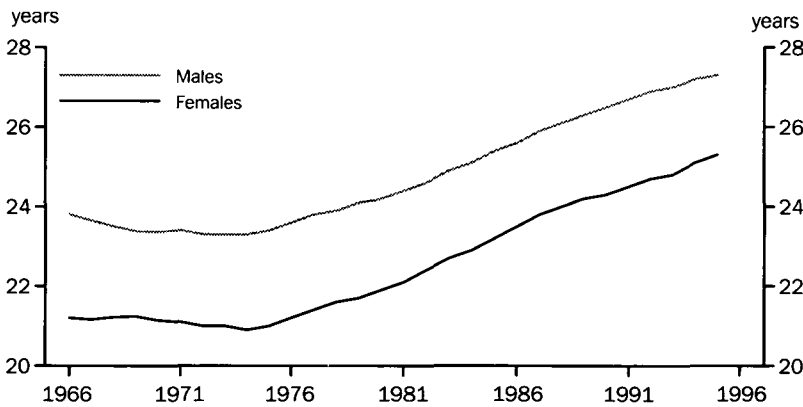
The fluctuations in the crude marriage rate between 1860 and 1995 are shown in graph 5.13.

Between 1975 and 1995, the median age of brides entering their first marriage increased

from 21.0 to 25.3 years, while for grooms the median age at first marriage increased from 23.4 years to 27.3 (graph 5.14). Part of this increase can be attributed to the increasing incidence of de facto relationships. Another factor is that young people are staying in education longer.

Traditionally, grooms have been older than their brides. However the difference between the median ages at marriage is slowly narrowing. In 1993 the difference between the median ages of brides and grooms was 2.4 years, compared to 2.7 years in 1966 and 3.1 years in the period 1921–25.

5.14 MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE



Source: Australian Social Trends 1995 (4102.0)

In 73% of all marriages in 1995 the groom was older than the bride. However, there is a strong tendency for couples to be about the same age, with 38% of couples being within two years of each other, and only 9% being more than 10 years apart in age (graph 5.15). This tendency is much stronger for first marriages than for remarriages. In 45% of first marriages, the couple are within two years of each other. For remarriages the proportion is only 23%.

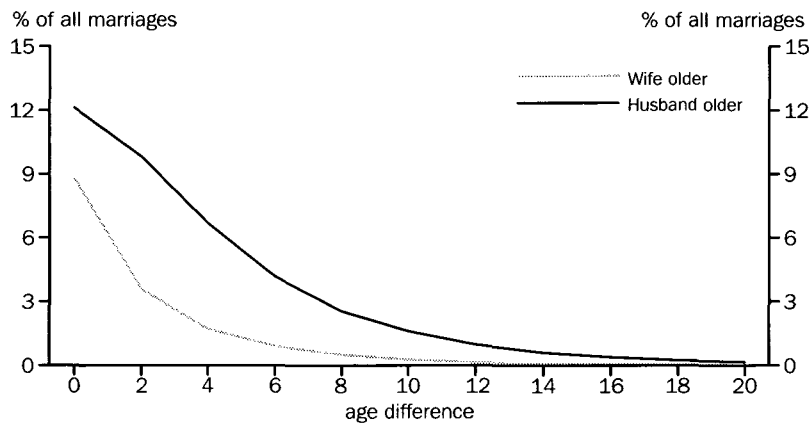
De facto marriages

Most of the decrease in the crude marriage rate since 1970 can be attributed to the increasing incidence of de facto marriages. In 1992, 8% of all couples were in de facto marriages. The proportion was much higher among younger

age groups; 40% of 20–24 year olds in a couple were in a de facto relationship (see graph 5.16).

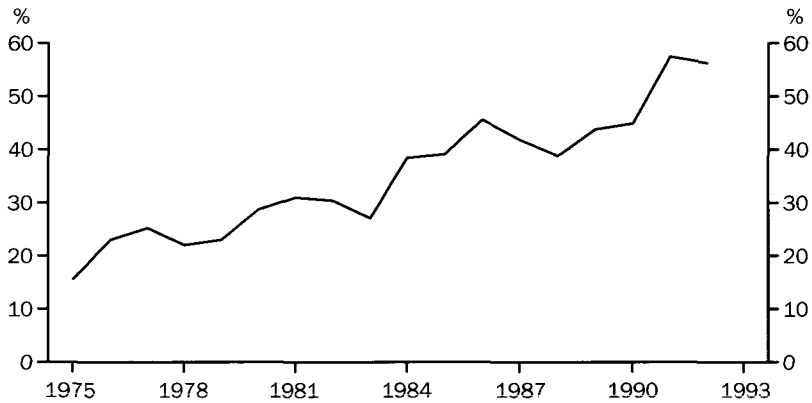
De facto marriages take many forms. They may be a prelude to a registered marriage or an alternative. Over half (56%) of the couples who married in 1992 lived together before their marriage. With 27% of babies born outside a registered marriage in 1995 (graph 5.17), many people seem to be choosing to form long term relationships and have children with no intention of marrying. There are other relationships that have very little permanence or stability, which are also classified as de facto relationships.

5.15 AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARRYING COUPLES — 1995



Source: Unpublished ABS data.

5.16 COUPLES COHABITING BEFORE MARRIAGE



Source: Australia's families — Selected findings from the Survey of Families in Australia (4418.0).

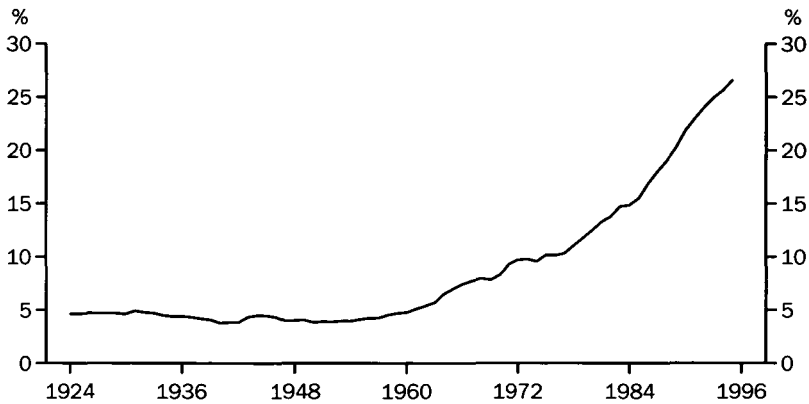
Divorce

The *Family Law Act 1975* allows only one ground for divorce: irretrievable breakdown of the marriage, measured as the separation of the spouses for at least one year. The implementation of this law resulted in a large increase in the divorce rate in 1976. The rate then declined until 1979 as the backlog of applications was cleared. Since then the crude divorce rate has fluctuated between 2.4 and 2.9 divorces per 1,000 population (see graph 5.18). The pattern of divorces per

1,000 married couples is very similar, although data are not available before 1981. In 1995 there were 12.3 divorces per 1,000 married couples. About 40% of first marriages end in divorce.

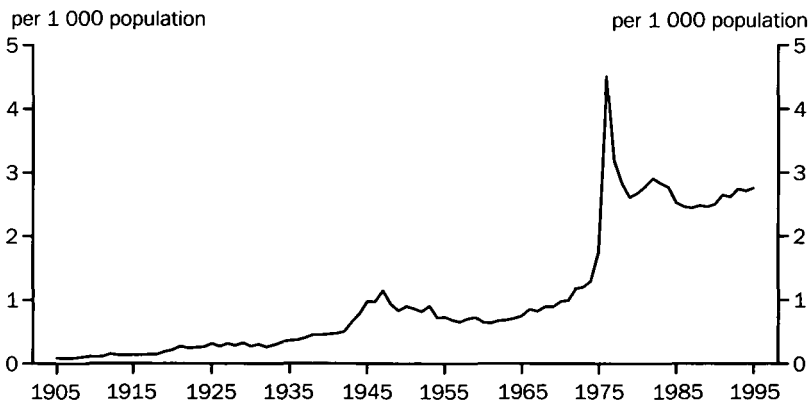
Couples are having children later in their marriage, and divorcing sooner. Therefore since 1975 the probability of divorce before the birth of the first child has increased, and the proportion of divorces involving children has decreased.

5.17 PROPORTION OF BIRTHS OUTSIDE MARRIAGE



Source: *Births, Australia* (3301.0).

5.18 CRUDE DIVORCE RATE



Source: *Australian Demographic Trends* (3102.0).

Births

In 1903, when the crude birth rate was lower than it had ever been before, the Royal Commission On the Decline in the Birth-rate and On the Mortality of Infants in New South Wales was appointed. It reported in 1904 and concluded that '...the cause or causes of the Decline of the Birth rate must be a force or forces over which the people themselves have control...'. In other words, couples were limiting the size of their families.

At the turn of the century there were 117 births per 1,000 women of child bearing age (15–44 years). This approximates a total fertility

rate of 3.5 babies per woman. By 1924 the total fertility rate was 3.0 and falling.

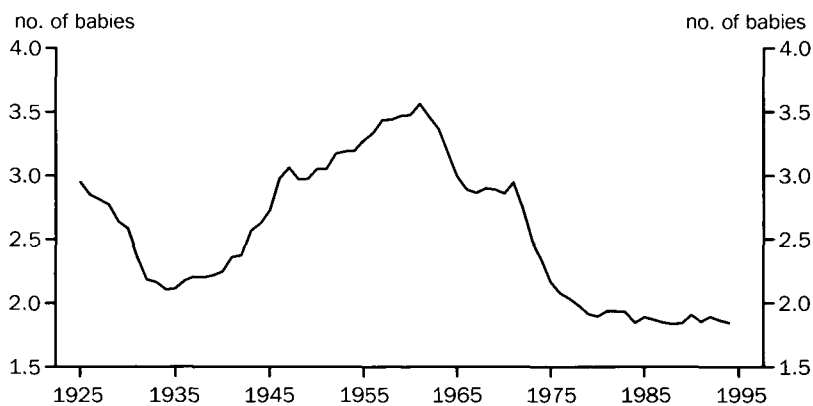
In 1934, in the middle of the Great Depression, the total fertility rate fell to 2.1 babies per woman. It then increased during the second half of the Depression, as women who had deferred childbearing in the early years of the Depression began to have children. Fertility increased through World War II and the 1950s, and peaked in 1961 when the total fertility rate reached 3.6 babies per woman. This period of high fertility is known as the baby boom (see graph 5.19).

After the 1961 peak, the total fertility rate fell rapidly, to 2.9 babies per woman by 1966. This fall can be attributed to the contraceptive pill becoming available and to changing social attitudes, in particular a change in people's perception of desired family size.

During the 1970s the total fertility rate dropped again, falling to below replacement level in 1976

where it has remained since. This fall was more marked than the fall in the early 1960s, but has not been attributed to further improvements in contraceptive methods. Rather it has been linked to the increasing participation of women in the labour force, coupled with changing attitudes to family size, standard of living and lifestyle choices.

5.19 TOTAL FERTILITY RATE



Source: *Australian Demographic Trends* (3102.0).

Women are starting childbearing later in life, and are having fewer children. In 1964, peak fertility was among 24 year old women, with 23% having babies. By 1994, peak fertility was among 29 year old women, but only 13% had babies.

In the last 30 years there has been a decrease in the proportion of births to teenage mothers, falling from 10% of all births in 1964 to 5% in 1994.

Primarily because fewer women are having large families, the proportion of women having babies after they turn 40 has fallen. In 1994, only 1.8% of babies had a mother over 40, compared with 3.8% in 1964. (See graph 5.20.)

Deaths

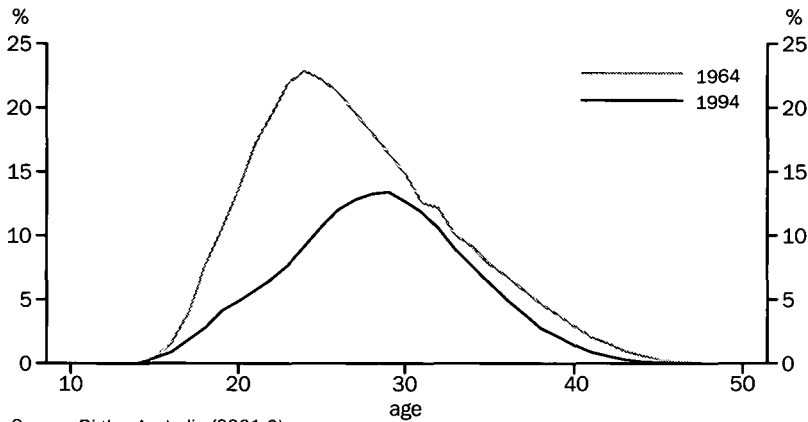
In the period 1901–10 the average life expectancy of a new-born boy was 55 years and that of a new-born girl 59 years. By 1995, a new-born boy had a life expectancy of 75 years and a new-born girl 81 years. This represented an increase of 20 years for boys and 22 years for

girls. Graph 5.21 shows the changes in life expectancy for males and females between 1905 and 1995.

The increase in life expectancy is mainly due to fewer deaths of young children, particularly in the first year of life (infant mortality). The high mortality rates among infants during the period 1901–10 (about 1 in 10 died in the first year of life) kept the average life expectancy at birth low. Children who survived these early years then had life expectancies nearer to those currently experienced. For example, the life expectancy of a five year old boy improved by 13 years between 1901–10 and 1995 compared to 20 years improvement for a new-born boy.

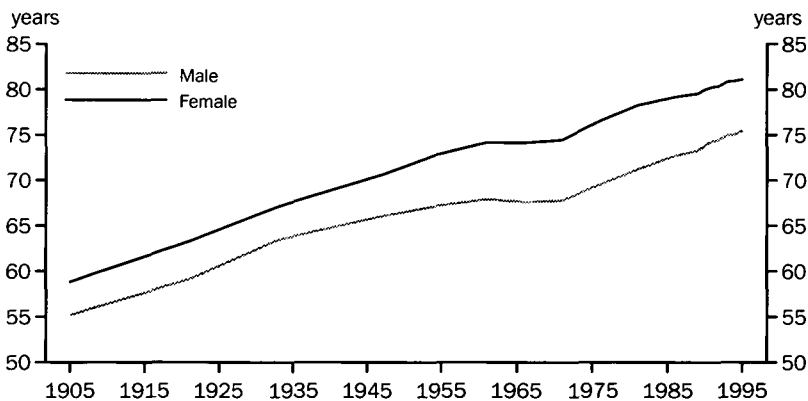
The reduction in mortality in the early part of this century is attributed to improvements in living conditions, such as better water supplies, sewage systems, food quality and health education. The continuing reduction in mortality in the latter half of the century is attributed to improving social conditions and advances in medical technology such as mass immunisation and antibiotics.

5.20 PROPORTION OF WOMEN HAVING BABIES



Source: *Births, Australia* (3301.0).

5.21 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH



Source: *Australian Social Trends 1995* (4102.0), *Deaths Australia* (3302.0).

The past two decades in particular have seen further increases in life expectancy. These increases are due in part to lower infant mortality, fewer deaths among young adults from motor vehicle accidents and fewer deaths among older men from heart disease. The reduction in the number of deaths from heart disease is related to behavioural changes, such as dietary improvements, reduced smoking and increased fitness.

Australians have an average life expectancy that compares well with that experienced in other

developed nations. Among the countries shown in table 5.22, the life expectancy at birth of Australian males and females (75 and 81 years respectively) was exceeded by that in France, Hong Kong, Japan and Sweden. Life expectancy in Australia was greater than that in Canada, Italy, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Life expectancy in Australia was also greater than that experienced in developing nations.

5.22 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH, Selected Countries

Country	year	Males years	Females years
Australia	1995	75.4	81.1
Canada	1985-87	73.0	79.8
China(a)	1990-95	66.7	70.4
France	1991	72.9	81.1
Hong Kong	1992	74.8	80.5
Indonesia(a)	1990-95	61.0	64.5
Italy	1989	73.5	80.0
Japan	1992	76.1	82.2
Korea (Republic of)	1989	66.9	75.0
Malaysia(a)	1990-95	68.7	73.0
New Zealand	1990-92	72.9	78.7
PNG(a)	1990-95	55.2	56.7
Singapore	1992	73.7	78.3
Sweden	1992	75.4	80.8
United Kingdom	1992	73.5	79.0
USA	1991	72.0	78.9

(a) Estimated by the Population Division of the United Nations.

Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1993; Deaths, Australia (3302.0).

The standardised death rate removes the effect of different age structures from the crude death rate. Over the last 20 years, the standardised death rate in Australia has fallen from 10 to 7 deaths per 1,000 population (see table 5.23).

The Northern Territory has had the highest standardised (and crude) death rate in the country for the last two decades. This can largely be attributed to high death rates among the Aboriginal population. In 1994 the Indigenous population made up 27% of the Northern Territory population, but accounted for 48% of its deaths.

Of the other States, in 1994 only Tasmania had a standardised death rate outside the relatively narrow range of 6.3 to 6.8 deaths per 1,000 population. In 1974 Tasmania had a lower standardised death rate than New South Wales and Queensland. However, since 1974 Tasmania's death rate has not fallen as fast as the death rates in the rest of the country.

5.23 STANDARDISED DEATH RATES

State/Territory	1974			1984			1994		
	Males %	Females %	Persons %	Males %	Females %	Persons %	Males %	Females %	Persons %
NSW	14.2	8.6	10.7	10.7	6.3	8.2	8.8	5.2	6.8
Vic.	13.2	8.1	10.1	10.2	6.0	7.8	8.5	5.1	6.6
Qld	14.0	8.6	10.8	10.0	6.0	7.8	8.7	5.1	6.7
SA	13.1	7.5	9.7	10.0	5.7	7.5	8.8	5.0	6.7
WA	12.8	7.3	9.4	9.9	5.8	7.6	8.2	4.9	6.4
Tas.	14.0	8.5	10.6	11.3	6.8	8.8	10.0	5.7	7.6
NT	17.9	11.5	14.6	11.7	9.5	10.4	12.0	9.2	10.8
ACT	13.2	8.7	10.1	9.4	6.0	7.4	7.8	5.1	6.3
Aust.	13.7	8.2	10.4	10.3	6.1	7.9	8.7	5.2	6.7

Source: Deaths, Australia (3302.0).

Australia's cultures

Australia has a rich cultural diversity. *Chapter 11, Culture and recreation* discusses the range of cultural activities in Australia.

At the 1991 Census 3.8 million people had been born overseas in one of over 200 countries. A further 3.3 million had one or both parents born overseas. There were 2.5 million people who spoke a language other than English at home. The 1996 Census will classify 282 major languages, including 170 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and 92 religious denominations.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

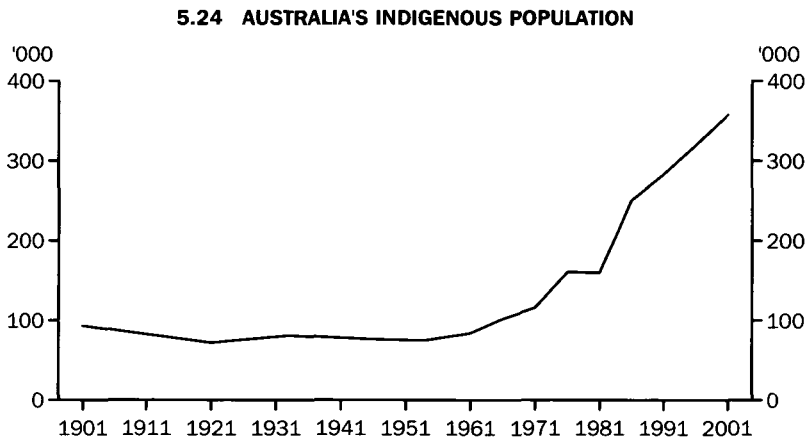
There are no accurate estimates of the population of Australia before European settlement. Many estimates were based on post-1788 observations of a population already reduced by introduced diseases and other factors. In 1930, the anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown postulated a minimum figure of 300,000. In 1980, L.R. Smith estimated the absolute minimum pre-1788 population at 315,000. Other estimates have put the figure at over 1 million, while recent archaeological finds suggest that a population of 750,000 could have been sustained.

Whatever the size of the Indigenous population before European settlement, it declined dramatically under the impact of new diseases, repressive and often brutal treatment, dispossession, and social and cultural disruption and disintegration (*Year Book Australia, 1994*). The decline of the Indigenous population continued well into the twentieth century.

Poor quality data on births and deaths make it difficult to monitor the dynamics of the

Indigenous population, so that estimates of this population since 1991 are projections based primarily on data from the 1991 Census. On the basis of these projections, the 1997 Indigenous population will probably be about 327,000.

The estimated and projected Indigenous population between 1901 and 2001 is shown in graph 5.24.

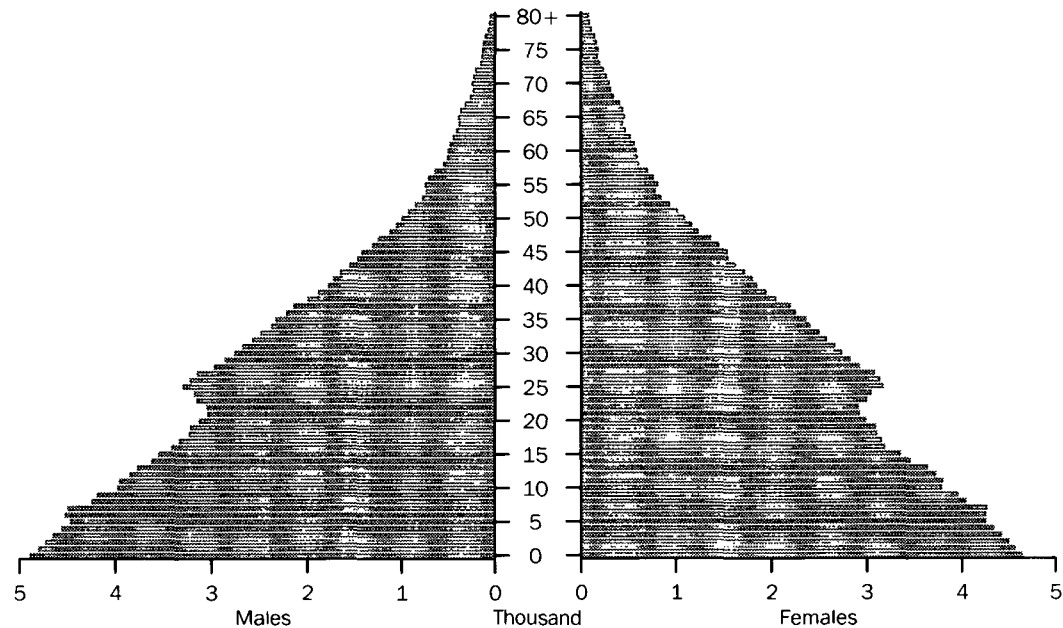


The Indigenous population has a very young age structure (graph 5.25). With 38% of the population aged under 15, and 4% aged over 60, it has a younger age structure than that of the total Australian population at the beginning of this century.

This age structure is largely a product of high fertility rates. During the 1960s Indigenous women had, on average, about six children each. By the 1980s this had fallen to about three children each, compared to 1.9 for all Australian women.

The age structure also reflects high death rates. Life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at birth in 1991 was about 57 years for males and 64 years for females.

5.25 1997 PROJECTED AGE STRUCTURE OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION



Source: *Experimental projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population*

While most of the Australian population is concentrated along the east and (to a lesser extent) the south west coasts, the Indigenous population is much more widely spread. About 90% of the total population are contained within the most densely settled 2.8% of the continent. About 90% of the Indigenous population live in areas covering 28% of the continent. This partly reflects the higher level of urbanisation among the non-Indigenous population than the Indigenous population. However, Indigenous people are also much more likely to live in very remote areas than the rest of the population.

Just over half (56%) of the continent contains 0.3% of the total population, and 3.9% of the Indigenous population (see map 5.26).

While areas with a high density of Indigenous population also tend to have a high total population density, it is important to recognise that the areas with the highest concentrations are not necessarily the same areas. The area with the highest concentration of Indigenous people is in Darwin, while the areas with the highest total population density are in Sydney and Melbourne.

5.26 DISTRIBUTION OF AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS POPULATION — 1991

One dot = 100 indigenous people.

Map is based on 1991 Statistical Subdivision boundaries

Source: Unpublished ABS data from the 1991 Census of Population and Housing.

Migration

Until 1971 the population was defined as anyone in the country at a specified time. However, largely because of the growth in tourism and business travel, the population has been defined since 1971 as those people who live in Australia for at least a year.

Overseas migration plays an important role in changes in the population. Between 1991 and 1995, 1.1 million people arrived in Australia intending to stay for one year or more (table 5.27). This includes permanent (settler) arrivals, Australian residents returning from an overseas

trip of 12 months or more, and overseas visitors intending to stay 12 months or more in Australia. About 700,000 people left Australia for overseas on a permanent or long term basis, including Australian residents emigrating or going overseas for 12 months or more, and overseas visitors leaving Australia after staying for 12 months or more.

Because population estimates include permanent and long-term movers and exclude short-term movers, adjustments for the net effect of changes in travel intention from short-term to permanent/long-term and vice

versa are required. For example, an Australian resident may state on departure an intention to stay abroad for less than 12 months (a short term movement). If this resident remains overseas for 12 months or more, he or she has

changed their travel category to long-term and is regarded as a category jumper. Estimates for category jumping ensure that the estimated population truly reflects the usual resident population at any point in time.

5.27 PERMANENT AND LONG-TERM MIGRATION

	1976-80 no.	1981-85 no.	1986-90 no.	1991-95 no.	Total no.
Arrivals					
Permanent (settlers)	369 100	459 360	635 820	451 440	1 915 720
Long-term					
Australian residents	295 730	268 200	273 710	357 670	1 195 310
Overseas visitors	143 640	159 950	234 830	322 290	860 710
Permanent and long-term arrivals	808 460	887 540	1 144 330	1 131 480	3 971 810
Departures					
Permanent departures	118 770	109 070	114 800	140 950	483 590
Long-term					
Australian residents	296 200	243 620	278 000	332 880	1 150 700
Overseas visitors	99 230	115 540	159 790	244 940	619 500
Permanent and long-term departures	514 040	468 220	552 530	718 800	2 253 590
Category jumping	24 585	10 584	54 326	-76 743	12 752
Net overseas migration	319 005	429 904	646 126	335 937	1 730 972

Source: *Migration, Australia* (3412.0).

5.28 BIRTHPLACE OF SETTLER ARRIVALS

Country	'000	%
1961-65		
United Kingdom and Ireland	267.3	46.4
Italy	67.3	11.7
Greece	65.6	11.4
Yugoslavia	25.6	4.4
Malta	19.5	3.4
Germany	17.8	3.1
1971-75		
United Kingdom and Ireland	227.2	41.4
Yugoslavia	39.2	7.2
Greece	21.2	3.9
USA	20.0	3.7
Italy	18.5	3.4
New Zealand	18.5	3.4
1981-85		
United Kingdom and Ireland	116.8	25.4
New Zealand	48.6	10.6
Viet Nam	47.2	10.3
Philippines	15.4	3.4
Poland	14.8	3.2
South Africa	12.2	2.7
1991-95		
United Kingdom and Ireland	59.4	13.2
New Zealand	41.3	9.1
Hong Kong	36.3	8.0
Viet Nam	33.7	7.5
Philippines	23.0	5.1
India	20.8	4.6

Source: *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (3401.0).

Over the last 30 years there has been a significant change in the source countries of settlers. In the early 1960s the top six countries of birth represented 80% of all settler arrivals to Australia, including 46% born in the United Kingdom or Ireland. In the early 1990s 48% came from the top six countries, with 13% from the United Kingdom and Ireland (table 5.28).

In 1994-95, 87,000 people arrived in Australia intending to settle. The vast majority (82%) held permanent visas. Another 16% were eligible to settle in Australia because of their New Zealand citizenship. The remaining 3% were in other categories, such as overseas-born children of Australian citizens.

The number of visas issued to prospective settlers varies significantly from year to year, depending largely on the economic and political climate in Australia. So too does the balance between the types of visas issued. Skilled migration is a very volatile component of the migration intake. In times of high unemployment, fewer skilled migration visas are issued. However, there can be lengthy delays between the issuing of the visas and the actual migration. Based on table 5.29, in the six years to 1994-95, the skilled migration category ranged from 40% of settler arrivals in 1990-91,

to 18% three years later. In 1994–95, 33% of skilled immigrants came from Europe, especially the United Kingdom and Ireland. North East, and Southern Asia also contributed a high proportion of skilled immigrants to Australia, with 20% and 19% of the total intake respectively. Sub-Saharan Africa contributed about 10% of skilled immigrants to Australia, representing 41% of all immigrants from the region.

In 1994–95, 42% of settlers came as part of the family component of Australia's immigration

program. The birthplaces of these immigrants partly reflect past migration patterns. About 29% were born in Europe, with another 26% born in South East Asia.

Of settlers arriving as part of the humanitarian program, 46% come from Europe, almost exclusively from the Former Yugoslav Republics. Nearly a quarter of immigrants on humanitarian visas had been born in North Africa and the Middle East.

5.29 SETTLER ARRIVALS, By Eligibility Category

	1989–90 no.	1990–91 no.	1991–92 no.	1992–93 no.	1993–94 no.	1994–95 no.
Family	49 941	53 934	48 621	32 102	33 580	37 078
Skilled	42 836	48 421	40 334	22 137	12 794	20 210
Humanitarian	11 948	7 745	7 157	10 939	11 350	13 632
Other visaed	1 223	976	1 403	1 157	709	517
New Zealand	13 345	8 338	8 201	8 355	9 616	13 618
Other non visaed	1 934	2 274	1 675	1 640	1 719	2 373
Total	121 227	121 688	107 391	76 330	69 768	87 428

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Permanent migrants tend to have higher level occupations than the Australian population. This is true for both immigrants and emigrants. In 1994–95, 14% of the employed population were professionals, as against 29% of emigrants who stated an occupation (table 5.30). This appears

to reflect a 'brain drain' of skilled workers out of the country. However, settler arrivals had a similar range of occupations to emigrants, and there were eight times as many settler arrivals as emigrants who stated an occupation in 1994–95.

5.30 OCCUPATION OF PERMANENT MIGRANTS(a) — 1994–95

Occupation	Permanent departures			Settler arrivals %	Australian population %
	Australian born %	Overseas born %	Total %		
Managers and administrators	19.0	15.5	16.7	11.4	10.9
Professionals	36.0	25.3	29.0	34.0	13.7
Para-professionals	9.6	7.6	8.3	8.1	5.7
Tradespersons	8.4	16.8	13.9	18.5	14.6
Clerks	10.6	11.1	11.0	10.3	16.5
Salespersons and personal service workers	10.9	9.5	10.0	8.5	16.5
Plant and machine operators	1.9	4.7	3.7	3.8	7.1
Labourers and related workers	3.6	9.5	7.4	5.5	15.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Migrants who stated an occupation.

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, and Labour Force, Australia (6203.0).

Country of origin

Since the end of World War II, due to high levels of migration the population has increased rapidly, and the proportion of the population born overseas has increased from 10% in 1947 to 23% in 1995 (based on table 5.31). As well as this increase, there has been a diversification of the population. In 1947, 81% of the overseas born population came from the main English speaking countries (the United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and the United States), mainly from the United Kingdom and Ireland. By 1995, only 40% of the overseas born population had been born in the main English speaking countries.

For the last few decades, the Italian, Greek and Dutch born populations in Australia have been declining. There were large flows of people from these countries after World War II, and relatively little migration more recently. Therefore these populations are ageing, and so experience high death rates. There are also significant numbers of people returning to their countries of birth in their retirement.

The 1991 census identified 23% of the population as overseas born. A further 19% of Australians had been born in Australia and had at least one overseas born parent, that is, they

5.31 MAIN COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF THE POPULATION

Country	1947 '000	1954 '000	1961 '000	1971 '000	1981 '000	1991 '000	1995 '000
United Kingdom	502.0	626.0	718.3	1,046.4	1,175.7	1,244.3	1,210.9
United Kingdom and Ireland	541.3	664.2	755.4	1 088.3	1 175.7	1 244.3	1 210.9
New Zealand	43.6	43.4	47.0	80.5	175.7	286.4	290.1
Italy	33.6	119.9	228.3	289.5	285.3	272.0	261.4
Yugoslavia	5.9	22.9	49.8	129.8	156.1	168.0	179.8
Greece	12.3	25.9	77.3	160.2	153.2	147.4	144.7
Viet Nam	—	—	—	0.7	43.4	124.8	146.6
Germany	14.6	65.4	109.3	110.8	115.2	120.4	118.7
Netherlands	2.2	52.0	102.1	99.3	100.5	100.9	97.7
China	6.4	10.3	14.5	17.6	26.8	84.6	92.7
Philippines	0.1	0.2	0.4	2.6	15.8	79.1	91.8
Malaysia	—	—	—	—	—	—	91.5
Hong Kong	—	—	—	—	—	—	91.3
Ireland	39.3	38.2	37.1	41.9	—	—	—
Total overseas	744.2	1 286.5	1 778.8	2 579.3	3 111.0	3 965.2	4 122.3
Australia	6 835.2	7 700.1	8 729.4	10 176.3	11 812.3	13 318.8	13 931.7
Total population	7 579.4	8 986.5	10 508.2	12 755.6	14 923.3	17 284.0	18 054.0

Source: *Australia in Profile* (2821.0) Estimated resident population by country of birth, age and sex, Australia (3221.0).

were second generation Australians. The variety and size of second generation populations reflect past migration and intermarriage patterns. In long established migration groups, such as those from the United Kingdom and Ireland, and from northern and southern Europe, second generation Australians form more than half the total birthplace group. In more recently arrived groups, such as those born in Viet Nam, second generation Australians form a smaller part of the birthplace group. This is illustrated in table 5.32.

Citizenship

The concept of Australian citizenship is less than 50 years old. Prior to the *Nationality and*

Citizenship Act 1948 (since renamed the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*) coming into effect on Australia Day 1949, Australians were simply British subjects. Between that day and 31 December 1995, 2.8 million grants of citizenship were made.

In 1994 the Joint Standing Committee on Migration stated 'Citizenship is the cornerstone of national identity. It defines an individual's legal relationship with Australia, and signals an individual's membership of the Australian community... citizenship represents an individual's commitment to Australia, including the principles on which Australian society is based.'

5.32 FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION AUSTRALIANS

Country	1991 '000	Overseas born(a) '000	Second generation Australians '000	Total '000
United Kingdom and Ireland	1 244.3	1 121.5	1 460.6	2 582.1
Italy	272.0	254.8	327.3	582.1
New Zealand	286.4	254.8	167.6	422.4
Greece	147.4	136.3	151.2	287.5
Former Yugoslavia	168.0	161.1	120.7	281.8
Germany	120.4	114.9	137.7	252.6
Netherlands	100.9	95.8	139.7	235.5
Viet Nam	124.8	122.3	25.2	147.5
China	84.6	78.8	28.7	107.5
Total population	—	3 756.5	3 139.3	6 895.8

(a) The population identified in this table is based on Census counts, and not the Estimated resident population, it therefore has slightly lower estimates than that in table 5.31.

Source: *Australian Social Trends* (1995).

Generally, older people, and those who have lived in Australia a long time, tend to have a higher citizenship rates than younger, more recently arrived migrants. For example, 94% of the Greek born population, which is relatively old and has been in Australia for a comparatively long time, had taken out Australian citizenship in 1991.

Standardising for these factors gives the citizenship rates that would be expected if a given overseas born population had the same profile of age and period of residence as the total overseas born population (see table 5.33).

The standardised citizenship rate for the Greek born population was 81%.

People born in the main English speaking countries, such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand, have a very low standardised citizenship rate. This may be because '...the shared language, and strongly similar legal, political, and industrial relations arrangements of Australia and the other Anglo-American countries lead these immigrants to feel less need to make a choice of national identity' (Evans, M. 1988).

5.33 CITIZENSHIP RATES, By Country of Birth — 1991

Country	Persons '000	Citizenship rate %	Standardised citizenship rate(a) %
Greece	136.3	93.9	81.3
Former Yugoslavia	161.1	89.2	80.0
Viet Nam	122.3	71.4	78.0
China	78.8	49.0	75.8
Germany	114.9	73.2	58.6
Netherlands	95.8	75.3	55.8
Italy	254.8	76.9	54.5
United Kingdom	1 121.5	50.4	46.5
New Zealand	276.1	23.9	34.4
Total overseas born	3 756.5	60.3	60.3

(a) The rates of citizenship that would be expected if the population had the same age and period of residence profile as the total overseas born population.

Source: *Australian Social Trends* 1996 (4102.0).

5.34 FORMER NATIONALITY, People Granted Australian Citizenship — 1994–95

Citizenship	no.	%
British and Irish	38 016	33
New Zealander	9 033	8
Vietnamese	7 772	7
Chinese	5 971	5
Filipino	5 408	5
Other Former Yugoslav	3 283	3
Indian	3 107	3
Russian	2 329	2
Fiji (citizen of)	2 204	2
USA (citizen of)	1 912	2
Sri Lankan	1 730	2
Iraqi	1 719	1
Polish	1 707	1
Turkish	1 468	1
Lebanese	1 392	1
South African	1 324	1
Italian	1 079	1
Salvadorian	1 077	1
Portuguese	1 018	1
Maltese	1 017	1
Canadian	938	1
Korean	905	1
Iranian	895	1
Egyptian	892	1
Malaysian	838	1
Afghan	669	1
Thailand	665	1
Chilean	658	1
Romanian	584	1
Greek	570	—
Ukrainian	561	—
Jordanian	504	—
German	489	—
Pakistani	489	—
Bangladeshi	488	—
Argentinian	484	—
Croatian	251	—
Other countries	34 570	30
Stateless	1 152	1
All other countries	10 159	9
Total	114 757	100

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research: 'Australian Immigration: Consolidated Statistics and Immigration Update'.

The United Kingdom and Ireland have consistently been the largest source of new Australian citizens since the early 1970s, with about one-third of all citizenship grants since 1970. This reflects the large numbers of migrants that have come from the United Kingdom and Ireland over this period (see table 5.34).

However, this was not always the case. In 1949–65, only 4% of citizenship grants were made to former citizens of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Former Italian citizens made up

21% of new citizens in that period, followed by former citizens of the Netherlands (13%), the then USSR and Poland (both 12%). In the late 1960s former citizens of the United Kingdom and Ireland increased their take-up of Australian citizenship and represented 10% of grants of citizenship in 1965–70, third after former Italian citizens (21%) and former Greek citizens (13%).

Religion

In 1983 the High Court of Australia defined religion as 'a complex of beliefs and practices which point to a set of values and an understanding of the meaning of existence'.

At the time of European settlement, the Aboriginal inhabitants followed their own religions which were animistic in nature, involving belief in spirits behind the forces of nature and the influence of ancestral spirit beings.

During the 1800s, European settlement brought the traditional churches to Australia. These included the Church of England (now the Anglican Church), and the Methodist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Baptist churches. In 1838 German Lutherans arrived in South Australia. From the 1840s onwards, groups arrived such as Mormons, Swedenborgians, Spiritualists, Christadelphians, Seventh-day Adventists, Christian Scientists, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

With the exception of a small but significant Lutheran element, Australian society in 1901 was predominantly Anglo-Celtic, with 74% of the population being Protestant, 23% Roman Catholic and about 50,000 professing a non-Christian faith. In 1950, with over twice the population, the profile was similar with 67% Protestant, 22% Roman Catholic, 0.5% Eastern Orthodox, and a non-Christian figure of less than 50,000 persons.

Immigration to Australia has reshaped the religious profile. The impact of migration from Europe in the aftermath of World War II led to an increase of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the forming of Reformed bodies, and the growth of Roman Catholicism — particularly from Italian migration, as well as the formation of ethnic parishes in many other denominations. More recently immigration from South East Asia and the Middle East has expanded Buddhist and Muslim numbers considerably, while also adding to the ethnic dimension in Christian groups. As the year 2000 approaches, Australia is nominally

43% Protestant, 27% Roman Catholic, 3% Eastern Orthodox and 3% non-Christian, with some 23% uncommitted or professing no religion.

In every national census taken in Australia, a voluntary question on religious affiliation has been asked. Since 1933, the voluntary nature of

the religion question has been specifically stated. In 1971, the instruction 'if no religion, write *none*' was introduced. Table 5.35 provides a summary of the major religious affiliations at each census since 1911. At the 1991 Census, 74% of the population stated a Christian religion compared with 95.9% in 1911.

5.35 MAJOR RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS

Census year	Religious affiliation								Total '000
	Christian				Non-Christian %	No religion %	Religion not stated %	Other(a) %	
	Anglican %	Catholic %	Other %	Total %					
1911	38.4	22.4	35.1	95.9	0.8	0.4	(b)2.7	0.2	4 455.0
1921	43.7	21.7	31.6	96.9	0.7	0.5	(b)1.7	0.2	5 435.7
1933	38.7	19.6	28.1	86.4	0.4	0.2	12.8	0.1	6 629.8
1947	39.0	20.9	28.1	88.0	0.5	0.3	10.9	0.2	7 579.4
1954	37.9	22.9	28.5	89.4	0.6	0.3	9.5	0.2	8 986.5
1961	34.9	24.9	28.4	88.3	0.7	0.4	10.5	0.2	10 508.2
1966	33.5	26.2	28.5	88.2	0.7	0.8	10.0	0.3	11 599.5
1971	31.0	27.0	28.2	86.2	0.8	6.7	6.0	0.2	12 755.6
1976	27.7	25.7	25.2	78.6	1.0	8.3	11.0	0.4	13 548.4
1981	26.1	26.0	24.3	76.4	1.4	10.8	10.9	0.5	14 576.3
1986	23.9	26.0	23.0	73.0	2.0	12.7	11.9	0.4	15 602.2
1991	23.8	27.3	22.9	74.0	2.6	12.9	10.2	0.3	16 850.3

(a) Comprises non-theistic affiliation and religion inadequately described. (b) Includes 'object to state'.

Source: Census 86 — Religion in Australia (2510.0) and Census 1991.

Australia's population grew by 15.6% in the decade to 1991. For the same period, many religions grew at a rate greater than the national population.

Of the Christian groups, the Pentecostal and Baptist faiths experienced the greatest increase in support. Only the Churches of Christ and the Salvation Army demonstrated declining or static adherence. Buddhism and Islam showed the most significant increase in allegiance within the non-Christian religion group.

Catholics have recently replaced Anglicans as the largest religious group in Australia. A small part of this growth can be attributed to recent overseas migration. According to the 1991 Census, over 320,000 Catholics had arrived in Australia since 1981. The majority originated from Europe and the former USSR (34%) and South East Asia (28%).

Non-Christian religions, while comprising only 2.6% of the population in 1991, have grown from 1.4% in 1981. The number claiming such allegiances have increased by 24,500 (125.3%). Part of this growth is attributable to recent immigration. For example, 23,560 Muslims (16% of all Australian adherents) migrated from the Middle East and North Africa, 69,593 Buddhists (49.8%) from South East Asia and 14,215 Hindus (32.6%) from Southern Asia, during the 1981–91 period.

During the period 1981–91, the majority of migrants without a religious affiliation came from the United Kingdom and Ireland (35,237), Hong Kong (25,854) and Vietnam (20,740).

Table 5.36 shows the breakdown of religious groupings by the number and percentage of affiliates within each at the 1981 and 1991 Censuses, and the growth which occurred during that 10 year period.

5.36 RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION — 1981-91

Census year	1981		1991		Growth %
	No. '000	Proportion %	No. '000	Proportion %	
Christian					
Anglican	3 810.5	26.1	4 018.8	23.8	5.7
Baptist	190.3	1.3	279.8	1.7	47.0
Catholic	3 786.5	26.0	4 606.0	27.3	21.7
Churches of Christ	89.4	0.6	78.3	0.5	-12.5
Jehovah's Witnesses	51.8	0.4	74.8	0.4	44.4
Lutheran	199.8	1.4	250.9	1.5	25.6
Orthodox	421.3	2.9	474.8	2.8	12.7
Pentecostal	72.1	0.5	150.6	0.9	108.8
Presbyterian and Reformed	637.8	4.4	732.0	4.3	14.8
Salvation Army	71.6	0.5	72.4	0.4	1.1
Uniting Church	1 203.4	8.2	1 387.7	8.2	15.3
Other	598.8	4.1	339.6	2.0	-43.3
Non-Christian					
Buddhism	35.1	0.2	139.8	0.8	298.3
Islam	76.8	0.5	147.5	0.9	92.1
Judaism	62.1	0.4	74.3	0.4	19.5
Other	23.6	0.2	83.6	0.5	254.4
No religion	1 576.7	10.8	2 176.6	12.9	38.0
Not stated/inadequately described	1 668.8	11.4	1 762.2	10.5	5.6
Total	14 576.3	100.0	16 850.3	100.0	15.6

Source: Census 1981 and 1991.

Languages

English is the national language. At the same time, Australia's cultural vitality is also a product of other languages spoken in the community. These include the indigenous languages of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as European and Asian languages.

In the 1991 Population Census, people were asked whether they spoke a language other than English at home. Among those who stated that they did, 408,200 spoke Italian (13.8% overseas born, 24% Australian born), and a further 274,200 spoke Greek (8.7% overseas born, 17.5% Australian born). These were the two most prevalent responses, with other responses each representing less than 10%. Altogether

over 2.4 million people, most of whom were born overseas, spoke a non-English language at home (see table 5.37).

Within the group who spoke a language other than English at home, proficiency in English varied according to age and birthplace. Almost 91% of 5 to 24 year olds spoke English well or very well, compared with 60% of those aged 65 years and over. The influence of birthplace was evident in the consistently higher level of proficiency in English among those born in Australia. Of this group, 95% spoke English well or very well, compared with 81% overall.

5.37 PERSONS(a) WHO SPOKE A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME — 1991

Language spoken at home	Overseas born				Australian born			
	Males '000	Females '000	Persons '000	Persons %	Males '000	Females '000	Persons '000	Persons %
Aboriginal language	0.1	0.1	0.2	—	20.2	20.5	40.7	5.8
Arabic/Lebanese	50.5	46.0	96.5	5.5	25.2	24.4	49.6	7.1
Chinese(b)	114.2	114.3	228.5	13.1	10.9	9.5	20.4	2.9
Dutch	19.5	22.2	41.7	2.4	2.6	3.1	5.7	0.8
French	17.6	18.5	36.1	2.1	4.3	5.0	9.4	1.3
- German	45.5	47.4	92.9	5.3	10.4	10.9	21.4	3.1
- Greek	76.4	75.0	151.4	8.7	62.3	60.5	122.8	17.5
- Hungarian	11.7	12.5	24.2	1.4	2.3	2.4	4.7	0.7
- Italian	123.5	116.6	240.1	13.8	83.2	84.9	168.1	24.0
- Macedonian	20.9	19.8	40.7	2.3	10.4	10.1	20.5	2.9
- Maltese	18.8	18.3	37.1	2.1	7.5	7.2	14.8	2.1
- Polish	26.0	29.0	55.0	3.2	4.8	4.9	9.6	1.4
Russian	8.6	10.8	19.4	1.1	2.1	2.1	4.2	0.6
Serbian/Croatian	31.1	29.2	60.2	3.5	14.2	13.7	27.9	4.0
- Other Yugoslavian	14.4	13.7	28.1	1.6	4.7	4.7	9.3	1.3
Spanish	35.8	37.3	73.1	4.2	6.5	6.4	12.8	1.8
Turkish	14.7	13.7	28.3	1.6	4.8	4.7	9.6	1.4
- Vietnamese	49.4	43.8	93.2	5.3	4.1	4.0	8.1	1.2
Other	175.9	191.3	367.2	21.1	27.0	25.1	52.1	7.4
Total(c)	869.8	873.9	1 743.7	100.0	350.9	349.8	700.7	100.0

(a) Excludes children aged under 5 years and persons who did not state their birthplace. (b) Includes 'Chinese as stated', 'Cantonese', 'Mandarin', 'Chinese languages n.e.i.'. (c) Includes language not stated responses.

Source: Census 1991.

5.38 PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH, Persons Who Spoke a Language Other than English at Home — 1991

Proficiency in English	Age group (years)					Total
	Unit	5-24	25-44	45-64	>64	
Total population speaks English						
Well/very well	%	90.6	82.9	72.5	59.9	80.6
Not well	%	8.1	15.3	23.5	27.0	16.1
Not at all	%	1.3	1.7	4.0	13.1	3.3
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	no.	742 205	835 234	557 854	235 129	2 370 422
Total who speak a language other than English(a)	no.	748 157	841 466	561 665	237 517	2 388 805
Australian born speaks English						
Well/very well	%	95.2	95.9	89.1	85.4	94.9
Not well	%	4.0	3.2	8.5	10.0	4.1
Not at all	%	0.8	0.8	2.4	4.7	1.0
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	no.	416 852	174 020	29 817	11 587	632 276
Total who speak a language other than English(a)	no.	420 435	176 122	30 498	11 991	639 046

(a) Includes persons who stated that they speak a language other than English at home, but did not state how well they speak English.

Source: Census 1991.

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