

POPULATION IN THE MEDIA

The past few months has seen a flurry of further interest in population issues in the media. The following represents a 'best of' list of articles and issues.

IT'S OFFICIAL: THERE'S A BABY BOOM (OF SORTS)

"You should have ... one for your husband, one for your wife, and one for your country" argues Federal Treasurer Peter Costello. The Commonwealth has in fact substantially boosted family payments including the introduction of the much publicised baby bonus.

And it seems that the government's tactics are working. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 133,400 babies were born between March and September last year, which was the highest number for a six-month period in 14 years. This would suggest the nations fertility rate is beginning to stabilise and possibly even increase.

Or does it?

Leading demographer, Professor Peter McDonald of the Australian National Univeristy believes the ABS data is the result of a statistical anomaly. He argues the 'mini boom' is actually the result of a delay by the current 30 – 40 age cohort's decision to delay starting a family until well into their 30's. Time will tell.

AND MELBOURNE'S BOOMING TOO!

Perhaps 'booming' is too strong a word for it, but Victoria has once again performed strongly in the cut throat world of interstate population comparisons.

Official Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate Melbourne outstripped Sydney in actual growth by over 10,000 people in the year to 30 June 2004.

Melbourne's population grew to over 3.6 million with an increase of 44,800 (1.3%), closing the gap on Sydney by more than 10,000 persons.

But the big winner was again Brisbane which added almost 40,000 new residents. At a growth rate of 2.3% - nearly double the national average – the Sunshine State capital along with the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast remains the nations biggest growth centre.

City	(Source: ABS)	Population	Growth Rate (%)	Actual growth
Melbourne		3,600,000	1.3	44,800
Brisbane		1,770,000	2.3	39,700
Sydney		4,230,000	0.8	33,500
Perth		1,460,000	1.8	26,100
Adelaide		1,120,000	0.5	5,200
Hobart		202,000	1.1	2,200
Darwin		109,500	1.3	1,400
ACT (Canberra)		324,000	0.2	660



PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION ON AGEING

The Productivity Commission released its research report "Economic Implications of Ageing" on 12 April 2005. The report can be found at www.pc.gov.au.

The study examines the productivity, labour supply and fiscal implications of likely demographic trends over the next 40 years, and is aimed at further improving the understanding of the challenges and opportunities resulting from an ageing Australia.

IMMIGRATION UP

The Howard Government has confirmed a further increase in the migration program and the Australian Population is proud to have been an important part of the decision making process. Representatives from the Institute sat as part of Minister Vanstone's business advisory group in both Victoria and South Australia and argued for a substantial rise in the official overseas migration program ("around 20,000"). The result has been an increase in the official program (in the skilled category) of 20,000 per annum.

THE POPULATION CLOCK

On 27 June 2005 at 10:23:43 (Canberra time), the resident population of Australia is projected to be:

20,348,677

This projection is based on the estimated resident population at 31 December 2004 and assumes growth since then of:

- one birth every 2 minutes and 4 seconds,
- one death every 3 minutes and 53 seconds,
- a net gain of one international migrant every 4 minutes and 10 seconds leading to
- an overall total population increase of one person every 2 minutes and 9 seconds.

For more information please contact:

Australian Population Institute Inc.
"A Vision of a Greater Australia"
ABN 50 345 044 681
Suite 1, 1396 Waverley Road.
Glen Iris VIC 3146 Phone: 03 9822 3155

Chris McNeill (Executive Director)