

Demographics: New Cities for the Arts

Demographics will be the subject matter of two chapters. This one looks at the projected overall increase in population size and how this will be distributed around the states and regions and among age groups. There are very few regions identified as likely to lose population, but high growth in some states and cities, including regional cities, will present special opportunities for the development of cultural life. Having predicted where the populace will be found, the chapter concludes with the statistical evidence for various factors such as education and income that predispose people to consume or participate in the arts, or not.

The second of the demographics chapters considers in some depth the prospects for the arts arising from the demographic predicted to change most dramatically, the increase of older people within the age distribution of the population.

Demographic prediction depends upon a faith in linear cause and effect relationships, not necessarily of billiard ball certainty, but of probabilities statistically determined. This treatment therefore takes one step backwards from complexity theory, which in its outer reaches describes but cannot predict, to a more familiar, contained and orderly construct.

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We look first to the big picture. The Australian Bureau of Statistics' most recently published population projections have a base year of 1993, and give predictions up to 2041 (*Projections of the Populations of Australia States and Territories 1993 to 2041*. Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 3222.0, May 1994). Generally, the movements are shown in ten year periods and one of these culminates in 2011- near enough to our official cut-off point of 2010.

In predicting population size, the ABS uses varying assumptions: high or low estimates of fertility rates, mortality rates, migration departures and arrivals both for Australia as a whole and between states, and so on. These assumptions produce a range of possible outcomes. The assumptions include a scenario of no net migration, which seems most unlikely to transpire. For purposes of this study, it should be sufficient to show the extremes of the range of outcomes, excluding those based on zero net migration..

For greater ease of reading, the key statistics in the text of this chapter are shown in italics. They are followed in ordinary type with an account of various contributing factors, perhaps of more interest to some readers than others. The subsequent sections titled *Implications* consider the potential impact of these changes on the arts.

Total Population

The Australian population in the base year of 1993 was 17,661,500. The projected total population in 2011 is in the range 20,952,000 to 21,452,000.

The lower projection assumes a fertility rate persisting at the present level of 1.92 children per woman, and annual net overseas migration rising from 40,000, approximately the current level, to 70,000 in 1999 - 2000 and then remaining unchanged. The higher projection is based on the same fertility rate with net migration rising to 100,000 instead of 70,000.

It should perhaps be noted that the projected population by 2041 falls in the range 24.9 million to 26.8 million.

Decisions on migration policy have great bearing on population outcomes - and it is a variable which is relatively speaking under political control, compared with fertility rates which depend upon individual decisions.

The ABS has lowered its growth estimates following the government's recession-time policy to reduce immigration.

Migration counters the trend towards ageing in the present population because the median age of migrants is younger than the median for the whole population. This has consequences for the fertility rate and the population increase from natural causes, the dependency ratio (the ratio of the population

which is not of working age to that of working age, 15-64 years), and various other measures of relevance to this study.

Net migration sets immigration against permanent and long term departures. ABS projections show numbers of departures moving in orderly progression with numbers of arrivals, year by year. However, the statistics of years past do not show the two moving with each other. As often they are in a contrary relationship, and one could conjecture that there is some independence between them. For instance, in recent recessionary years, arrivals decreased while departures increased. It may be that immigrants take one or more years to decide to stay or leave. In that case, a fall in arrivals would be followed at some distance by a fall in departures. It may be that many of the departures are not immigrants. In either of these cases, hypothetically a fall in the numbers of immigrants could see a disproportionate drop in net migration. The published figures do not illuminate that possibility.

Implications

An increase of about 20% in the national population over the next fifteen years has *prima facie* implications for the demand for and provision of the arts, arts education and funding support, among other factors. However, to the extent that population statistics will influence these matters, the population changes in cities and regions, and in various attributes of the population such as age, educational level and ethnicity will be more influential.

The greater the increase in the national population, the greater must be the immigration, according to the ABS analysis. This has obvious implications for arts planning since arts provision for an immigrant population must meet demands different from those arising from long-standing residents.

This and other similar matters will be addressed further below.

Population by State and Territory

The distribution of population between states and territories will change over the period to 2011, with proportional gains especially to Queensland and Western Australia, but actual population gains to all jurisdictions under all scenarios.

The changes result from fertility rates, net overseas migration and, as an additional factor, migration within Australia. The last factor accounts for the extra growth in Queensland and Western Australia

POPULATION PROJECTION BY STATE ('000)

State/ Territory	1993	2011 High estimate	2011 Low estimate
NSW	6,009	7,139	6,916
VIC	4,462	5,064	4,934
QLD	3,117	4,312	4,242
SA	1,462	1,603	1,580
WA	1,678	2,191	2,139
TAS	472	530	521
NT	168	224	221
ACT	298	404	399

POPULATION PERCENTAGES BY STATE

NSW	34.0	33.2	33.0
VIC	25.3	23.6	23.6

QLD	17.6	20.1	20.2
SA	8.3	7.5	7.5
WA	9.5	10.2	10.2
TAS	2.7	2.4	2.5
NT	1.0	1.0	1.1
ACT	1.7	1.9	1.9

Implications

The principal challenge for arts planning arising from the national and state population increases will be to maintain or improve arts provision per capita, whether from government or private support. The proportionate allocation of national arts funding between states, were it a matter of precision, would need minor adjustment in favour of Queensland and Western Australia, at the expense of most of the other states.

While arts planning may be carried out mainly at national and state levels, arts activity is mainly local, and new arts policy considerations will depend in part on the population distribution within each state. (See *Population of Cities and Towns* section below.) In Western Australia, it seems that most of the population increase will be concentrated in the Perth region. That state's future planning concerns therefore will not change radically. It will continue to be a one-city state, building the main arts infrastructure in Perth and from there servicing small, remote communities through touring and support to local community-based arts production. By contrast, in Queensland, where the population is already more decentralised than in any other state, the growth of regional centres will pose questions for policy and funding bodies, especially at the state level, about the distribution of available resources, the appropriate developmental goals for major population centres flung along that long coast, and the interconnections among them.

Populations of Cities and Major Towns

The ABS does not publish population projections for population centres below the state level. However, it has published figures showing actual population changes in the capital cities and main regional centres. (Population Growth and Distribution in Australia. Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 2504.0, 1990) Unfortunately, the current figures are for the period ending in 1986, and so may not capture some important migration towards the north and west, and to Queensland in particular, caused by the bite of the recession on Victoria and South Australia and the burgeoning tourist industry in the north.

POPULATION OF CAPITAL CITIES, 1986

City	Population ('000)	% of State population	% of national population	% growth 1976-86
Sydney	3,473	62.8	21.7	10.5
Melbourne	2,932	70.5	18.3	7.6
Brisbane	1,196	45.6	7.5	19.5
Adelaide	1,004	72.6	6.3	8.6
Perth	1,050	72.0	6.6	26.1
Hobart	164	40.1	1.1	8.9
Darwin	75	48.5	0.5	69.2
Canberra (incl. Queenbeyan)	281	---	1.8	24.1

"The slow growth of Sydney and Melbourne, despite the considerable gain from overseas migration to these cities, reflects significant internal migration losses to other areas. For Melbourne, the slowest growing capital, net loss due to internal migration almost entirely counterbalanced net gain from overseas migration. In contrast the high growth cities of Brisbane, Perth and Darwin attracted both overseas and internal migrants, and over half of their growth in this period was due to net migration gain." (Ibid. p.9)

While increasing farm mechanisation and the flight from the land have reduced many small country towns, especially those inland, to husks or even ghosts of their pre-WW2 selves, some of the larger centres are doing very well.

As noted, no forward population projections are available for these centres. While growth rates could be extrapolated from those in recent history, the detail of ABS figures shows that the rates for some cities have varied substantially within the ten-year period. For instance the growth rate per annum on the Queensland Gold Coast was 8% from 1976-81, but only 5.2% from 1981-86. Further, such estimates must be affected by the national population growth, which will increase at a decreasing rate.

However, to form some indication of regional centre populations by 2010, let us assume that the average growth rate from 1981 to 1986 is sustained. This might produce too high a figure in some instances, but any other method available to a non-statistician would depend upon even greater guesswork. Newcastle (around a half million) would have a population nearly triple that of Hobart now. If the high growth rates of the Gold Coast were sustained, which is perhaps unlikely, the

POPULATIONS IN MAJOR NON-CAPITAL CITIES

City	Resident population ('000)	% average annual growth 10 years 1976-86
<i>NSW</i>		
Newcastle*	416	0.9
Wollongong*	233	0.4
Bathurst-Orange*	65	1.1
Wagga Wagga	54	1.3
Albury-Wodonga (NSW)	45	1.6
Lismore	38	2.1
Tamworth	34	1.0
Dubbo	31	2.6
Broken Hill	25	-1.3
Gold Coast (NSW)*	25	6.3
<i>QUEENSLAND</i>		
Gold Coast (Qld)*	184	6.5
Townsville*	106	1.6
Sunshine Coast*	87	7.6
Toowoomba	78	1.2
Cairns*	71	3.6
Rockhampton*	60	1.1
Mackay*	50	2.0
Bundaberg*	43	1.1
Gladstone*	31	4.4
Mount Isa	24	-1.2
Maryborough	23	0.2
<i>VICTORIA</i>		
Geelong*	146	0.5
Ballarat*	78	0.9
Bendigo*	65	1.3
Shepparton-Mooroopta*	38	1.7
Albury-Wodonga (Vic)	36	2.9
Warrnambool	24	0.9

SOUTH AUSTRALIA		
Whyalla	28	- 1.9
WESTERN AUSTRALIA		
Bunbury	25	2.0
TASMANIA		
Launceston	91	0.8
Burnie-Devonport*	77	#
NORTHERN TERRITORY		
Alice Springs	22	4.7

* Statistical district # Figures not available. Burnie-Devonport annual growth might be about 1%

NSW and Queensland sections combined would have a population of around 700,000. The Sunshine Coast would grow to over 400,000. Other cities would have populations in excess of 100,000 - Wollongong (a quarter million), Cairns (180,000) overtaking Townsville (170,000) and, especially if tourist numbers are added, together making quite a large potential arts market, Geelong (160,000), Albury-Wodonga (both states) (135,000), and Toowoomba, Gladstone, Ballarat, Launceston and Burnie-Devonport each reaching around 100,000. Bathurst-Orange, Rockhampton and Bendigo would each have between 80,000 and 100,000, and the majority of the remainder would exceed 50,000.

The ABS additionally reports on a number of regions on the NSW coast with very high growth - ranging from 2.4% to 7.0% average over the ten years. These are not listed as statistical districts but as statistical divisions, and some comprise a number of townships. This perhaps draws no longer a bow than the ABS's inclusion of the Gosford-Wyong region in the Sydney statistical district.

HIGH GROWTH AREAS ON NSW COAST 1986

Statistical local area	Resident population ('000)	% average annual growth 10 years 1976-86
<i>Richmond-Tweed</i>		
Tweed	20	3.1
Ballina	24	5.7
Byron	18	5.0
<i>Mid-North Coast</i>		
Coff's Harbour	42	5.6
Hastings	41	5.0
Greater Taree	36	2.8
Kempsey	23	2.8
<i>Hunter</i>		
Great Lakes (Port Stephens)	20	4.7
<i>Illawarra</i>		
Shoalhaven	58	4.0
<i>South Eastern</i>		
Bega Valley	23	3.0
Eurobodalla	21	6.2

If the growth rates for 1981-86, generally a little lower than the ten-year averages, were sustained to 2010, Coff's Harbour and Shoalhaven could be heading towards 130,000, with substantial centres in Ballina (75,000), Hastings (100,000) and Eurobodalla (85,000). Kempsey would be the smallest, with 50,000 - a number which not too many years ago would have made it one of the largest country towns.

Some regions have been especially attractive to retirees. That there are implications for arts planning is certain, but what they are is open to opinion. This is taken up in the next chapter.

Implications

The significance for arts policy of the large increases in some state populations will depend in part, as noted above, on the distribution within each state. To argue by extremes, if all of the additional population in Queensland went to Brisbane, the result might be an increasing depth and diversification of an infrastructure based on that already in place. If much of the increase went to the north, a city like Townsville could in a relatively short time have a case for a major development of arts infrastructure. For instance, there has been discussion there for a number of years of forming a professional symphony orchestra. With the present population, this probably is not feasible financially, even with a subsidy comparable to that of an ABC orchestra. But when Townsville has a population larger than that of Hobart, which has its own ABC orchestra, and the orchestra could also service Cairns if the two cities could agree, its case would look much stronger.

Artists tend to congregate in the large cities. In Queensland, the population is dispersed away from the capital to large regional centres more than in other states. It has been a particular problem for Queensland, among the larger states, to win its proportionate share of Federal arts funds for some arts genres. This is because fundamentally the Australia Council supports professional artists., and in the regions, much of the arts activity is not professional and therefore does not attract Australia Council support. It seems likely that, consistent with the present Australian pattern, most of Queensland's extra 1.2 million people will live in an urban area - whether in Brisbane or one of the expanded regional cities. In either case, the population of professional artists and outlets for their activities will increase, and there could be a call for some redistribution of, or addition to, available arts funding. The distribution of population in NSW has been much more capital city based, but with the diaspora along the coast, it could also face the need to build arts infrastructure where little has existed. Victoria, in its inland cities, and Tasmania on its north coast, also could face this problem

To the extent that these regional populations materialise, they offer the prospect of some very interesting developments in the arts. For instance, to have so many more regional centres of substantial population could enormously enhance the viability of arts touring since the potential audience sizes increase and the distances between venues are reduced. More importantly, perhaps, larger local populations/audiences could be sufficient to sustain local arts production at a previously unconceived level.

In seeking to make the most of the opportunities offered by the expanding populations in regional centres, it would be helpful to attempt to anticipate the expectations for increased arts services, and the possibilities for support offered through the larger population bases. Any such exercise needs to begin with some more reliable population projections. It would be possible for the Australia Council to commission the ABS to provide these. It would also be very interesting to commission a study which gives an inventory of, say, current full time arts bodies and artist populations, as related to population size and density in these centres.

If the study also were able to discover when the arts organisations appeared in relationship to population growth, some other questions could be asked. For instance, at what size population might one have an expectation of finding a full time art gallery in operation? In a growing centre, is there a population size at which there usually is a demand for a resident professional theatre company? What population sizes are sufficient, on the face of it, to make various types of artistic enterprise financially or artistically viable? What are the qualifications on this attempt at defining a simple relationship between population size and the possibilities for maintenance of arts organisations, by other factors such as the density of settlement, history of settlement, age and ethnic make-up of the population, the wealth of the community, its history to date in the arts, the presence of a major tertiary institutions, and proximity or distance from competing urban centres?

Like the professional artists, people who are strongly predisposed towards the arts could be expected to gravitate to population centres where the arts provision is already strong, i.e. usually the capital cities. Those who move to regional centres with a minimal arts life therefore might be supposed to give the arts a lesser priority than other pleasures, or have little interest in them. To the extent that the prospects for an expansion of the arts in a regional centre are thought to emerge from an influx of

new residents, there is then a need for some caution. The immigrants may have self-selected themselves as of less than average promise as arts supporters.

While these people have had the initiative to make what may be an adventurous change of residence, they often will be the product of mainstream socialisation pressures and what someone has called the “mediocrity principle”: “we don’t want to be different”. They will move to an area thought to harbour like-minded souls. These pressures to conform will never be stronger than when an immigrant arrives in a new town, an outsider wanting to be an insider.

For these reasons it is especially important that ample opportunity is developed in growing regions for participatory arts activity. Even when the adults do not want it themselves, they may want it for their children. The availability of services on the Tamworth model will be valuable because access to them is so simple. But better still if these are offered in a wider developmental context along the lines of the Dandenong Ranges model, which allows so much more latitude for individual initiative and in due course so much more opportunity for participation. All the relevant considerations in the discussion in the previous chapter come to bear here.

In addition to the obvious implications of a redistribution of the population for a redistribution of arts funding, there are special problems arising out of the history of the arts in Australia. In each state there has been one large city, with the remainder much smaller. There has never been a need to consider the establishment of really major arts institutions outside of the capitals. Structures have grown to reflect this, appropriate at the time but maladaptive to new circumstances.

Let us look more deeply at orchestral funding, as an example. The major concert orchestras were established by the ABC, which thereby became not only the primary orchestral entrepreneur but also, in a sense, the de facto Commonwealth funding body for concert orchestras. The later Commonwealth funding to the service orchestras for the national opera and ballet is in some ways not dissimilar. In both instances, the funding is in effect tied to a specified set of orchestras.

Canberra and Newcastle have respectively twice and more than three times the population of Hobart. Hobart has a full-time symphony orchestra, belonging to the ABC. Newcastle has established a professional part time orchestra and Canberra a pro-am orchestra. Given the sizes of population serviced by these orchestras, on equity grounds they should be treated at least as well as Hobart. But there is no adequate source of national funds available to them. The states generally have been saved by the ABC structure from having to contemplate full support to an orchestra, and they are probably not keen to break this precedent (Queensland’s support to a small full-time Brisbane theatre orchestra notwithstanding). Even if they were, the cry would then arise as to why the Commonwealth will support full orchestras for the capital cities but none for the very large regional centres. The Newcastle and Canberra orchestras have the support of the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council to an appropriate level considering the funds available to it and its range of responsibilities. But it has never been supplied with the level of funds necessary to seriously contemplate support to new orchestras on the ABC model. (It did encourage the development of the Australian Chamber Orchestra as a full time body, but now can support it for only about 5% of its total budget.)

So where can the Newcastle orchestra turn for its needs? The ABC? “Sorry, we only have the funds for our own orchestras.” The Commonwealth Government? “All our music funding money goes to the Australia Council. Well, except for the ABC and the armed services bands. You should talk to the Australia Council.” The Australia Council: “We are happy to give you what we can. But you *need* about a quarter of our funds. Sorry.” The NSW government? “We have only ever given supplementary funds for professional orchestras.” City of Newcastle? “Gee, we think you’re great, but...”

The orchestral situation may not be typical. But the growth of new, sizeable metropolises could bring demands for theatre and dance companies, galleries, museums on a scale not previously envisaged beyond the capitals. The historical alibis for withholding funding support now have a limited shelf life.

The above is written on the assumption that place of physical residence will continue to be an important factor in arts attendance and participation. It may be, however, that delivery of and participation in the arts electronically over the communications highway will bring a sort of democracy in which all locations are equal. This may soften the push for live arts in the newly large regional centres.

Distribution of Overseas Immigrants

Some states accrue proportionately more population from immigration than others. Proportionately, in the year 1989 there were slightly fewer departures than arrivals for NSW, Victoria and WA, with the reverse for the other states and territories.

The ABS publishes figures on the percentage distribution of permanent and long-term overseas arrivals and departures. It does not relate the two in the tables provided. The figures for arrivals may be indicative. They show the state populations as a percentage of the whole, and the number of arrivals in each state as a percentage of the total number of arrivals (Figures from the 1990 edition of the same publication.)

PERCENTAGE OF IMMIGRANTS INTENDING TO SETTLE IN EACH STATE 1989

	State population/ Australian population (%)	Immigrants to state/ immigrants to Australia (%)
NSW	34.3	39.7
VIC	25.7	24.3
QLD	16.8	13.4
SA	8.5	4.9
WA	9.5	13.2
TAS	2.7	0.9
NT	0.9	0.9
ACT	1.7	2.6

Implications

The ethnic identities of the migrant populations clearly have significance in defining the nature and opportunities for arts development in particular localities. These would fall within the general considerations already canvassed in the preceding sections. The ABS does not publish figures to show the places of residence of ethnic groups, nor does it prepare projections for immigration from countries or regions. The former may be available from state or local government sources.

Population by Age

The ABS's main age categorisations depend upon conceptions which are shifting in the world beyond statistics.

The ABS defines the "working age" as years 15 to 64. People of lower or higher age are in the "dependent" category. But now, a majority of children remain at school to the twelfth year, and many continue with tertiary training. 15-17 year-olds therefore cannot be routinely categorised as of working age. At the other end of the age scale, the changes in the economy have forced many people into retirement in their 50's, while at the same time changes in the law have removed the concept of mandatory retirement age so that people aged 65 or more can continue in employment in some circumstances where previously it was not permitted. Increasing wealth, better nutrition, medical advances and other factors have stretched longevity and made it possible for people to have a lively and productive old age, and expectations of life in old age are changing accordingly. The categorisation of an age group, 65 and older, has lost some of its former real-world significance

PROJECTED NUMBERS AND GROWTH RATES OF AGED POPULATION

	Highest estimate	Lowest estimate
<i>AGED 65 YEARS AND OVER</i>		
Number ('000)		
1993	2,061	2,061
2011	2,907	2,889
Growth rate p/a %		

1993 - 2001	1.73	1.70
2001 - 2011	2.09	2.05
AGED 80 YEARS AND OVER		
Number ('000)		
1993	426	426
2011	762	760
Growth rate p/a %		
1993 - 2001	3.75	3.74
2001 - 2011	2.91	2.89
MEDIAN AGE		
1993	33.0	33.0
2011	38.0	37.3

The ageing

The Australian population is entering a period during which the median age of the population will climb, and the number of people of advanced age will increase dramatically.

As noted, this effect would be ameliorated if net migration remains high, mortality does not fall and fertility is high. Of those three factors there is some question about immigration since it is subject to changing government policies. It seems clear that mortality rates will continue to fall. Fertility rates will be affected by migration because it adds to the percentage of people of child-bearing age.

The population over 65 years accounted for 11.7% of the total in 1993. By 2011 it has moved up slightly to around 13.7%. Given the publicity for our imminent engulfment by an ageing population, it is interesting that the most dramatic expansion of the over 65 year group does not come until after 2011, when it is joined by the "baby boomers" (born late 1940's to early 1960's).

The number of people 65 years or older could be as high as 4.1 million in 2023 and 5.7 million in 2041, almost doubling as a proportion of the population to around 21.5%.

The baby boomers will expand the ranks of the 50 - 64 year-olds in the years leading to 2011. In 1993, the 50 - 64 age group accounted for 2.36 million of a population of 17.66 million, or 13.4%. In 2011, the boomers will have brought this number up to 4.00 million or more, or between 18.6 and 19.1%.

The baby boomers have broken through many traditional social patterns in their progress through the generations. The next chapter will consider the possible effects as they approach and enter old age. Because of new possibilities or demands upon them for early retirement, some of these effects could begin to show up in the next few years.

The number of those aged 80 or more increases substantially to the year 2011, representing up to 3.6% of the population then as compared with 2.4% in 1993. But the most dramatic increase comes later, as the number increases to as many as 1,751,000 in 2041, or an astonishing 8% of the population.

Whether this will result in a new arts market (for instance with a greater demand for daytime theatre or music performances), or will have the effect of withdrawing a substantial portion of the population from the arts market, is a matter for speculation. It is interesting that the growth rate of this sector drops to only 1.47% in the decade after 2011, due to the low fertility rates in the depression years and pre-WW2. However, it bounces back to 4.05% as the baby boomers arrive in 2021 - 2031.

Note that the percentage of ageing people to total population is attributable not only to their increasing number, but also to the decline in the number of children. In combination, the two account for the rising median age.

Implications

The implications are explored at length in the next chapter.

The young

The ABS has published projections for the age category 0 - 14 years. Even the highest projection of change shows a very modest average annual growth rate for this sector, and with low or no migration there will be a negative growth rate and a decline in numbers. Under both the most positive and most negative scenarios for growth, there is a slight positive alteration in the decade 2021 - 2031.

PROJECTED NUMBERS AND GROWTH RATES OF POPULATION AGES 0 - 14

	Highest estimate	Lowest estimate
Numbers ('000)		
1993	3,831	3,831
2011	4,389	4,041
Growth rate p/a %		
1993 - 2001	0.85	0.45
2001 - 2011	0.80	0.17

Assuming the lowest projected increase, the 0-14 years population will be virtually static between now and 2011, with an increase of only 200,000 or about 5% for the whole period. It grows by only another 260,000 in the subsequent 30 years. At the highest rate of increase, the population of this age sector grows to 5.2 million in 2041, an increase of 31% over 48 years.

As a proportion of total population, there is a decline of 0-14 year-olds from 21.7% in 1993 to between 19.3% and 20.8% in 2011. The number could fall as low as 17.3% in 2041.

The ABS also projects figures for the school age population, which it takes as being 5 - 16 years, and the population of tertiary education age, 17 - 22 years. The population of the former group was 3.0 million in 1993. The estimates for 2011 are for between 3.3 million and 3.6 million. The numbers are greatest when fertility rates are assumed to be high.

The tertiary age population is projected to decline for a period from 1993 under all published scenarios, reaching a nadir by 1998 and then rising again to 2011 and beyond. The tertiary aged population in 1993 was 1.7 million. It declines to 1.6 million in 1998, but the 1.7 million is restored by 2011, then rising to between 1.8 and 2.0 million in 2041.

Implications

Post WW2 Australia is unaccustomed to dealing with static population numbers. The normal assumption has been for an increasing population - an optimistic assumption for those who value a growing market. The imminent near-stasis in the numbers of the young contradicts this pattern, and obviously has implications for all aspects of the educational system. The percentage of young people undertaking upper secondary and tertiary education may continue to increase. The educational establishment has produced a report to show an imminent shortage of teachers and a need for increased investment in teacher training, presumably based on increased retention rates at upper levels. But with a static population there must be an end-point to increased demand from the young population, and implications for teacher training programs insofar as they have been based upon the probability of healthily growing numbers of children in the lower grades.

In these circumstances, it would seem that if the numbers of school arts teachers are to grow, the costs must be borne either by a greater resourcing of education or, more probably, on wresting away existing resources now applied to other subject areas. In other circumstances, the decline in the school age population as a percentage of the whole might translate into a richer division of available community wealth among the smaller number of school children. However, these resources will also be called upon to support a larger number of retirees. A political decision to spend more per child on education therefore will not be made easier by the overall population demographics. And the chance of diverting resources to arts education from other subject areas seems remote unless there is an unexpected change in the Australian values hierarchy. That proposition carries us back to the possible larger objectives for arts policy bodies.

The Workers

The working age population is defined for ABS purposes as aged 15 - 64 years. In all scenarios there is an increase in the numbers to the year 2011, although without a positive net overseas migration there would be a subsequent decline to 2041.

**PROJECTED NUMBERS AND GROWTH RATES OF POPULATION
OF WORKING AGE 15 - 64 YEARS**

	Highest estimate	Lowest estimate
Numbers ('000)		
1993	11,769	11,769
2011	14,366	14,022
Growth rates p/a %		
1993 - 2001	1.19	1.09
2001 - 2011	1.06	0.89

It is interesting that the discussion of the imminent greater burden of the aged on the working community derives from the growing number of retirees who will be unproductive and therefore dependent upon those who work. However in the ABS projections, the working population as a percentage of the whole varies up to the year 2021 only within a couple of percentage points of the level in 1993. This is because the declining numbers of those below the working age balance the increasing numbers of those above it. So the percentage of the population which is dependent remains fairly stable during that period.

This is expressed by the ABS as a dependency ratio: i.e. the relationship of the number of dependents in the young and ageing categories, to the number of people in the population of working age. The dependency ratio was 50.1 in 1993. In the projections for 2011 it is fairly stable at between 49.3 and 52.2. The decline in the percentage of young people balances the increase in the number of ageing. Subsequently there is an increase in the growth rate of the ageing population, and the dependency ratio rises to the year 2041 as high as 66.4.

Implications

An obvious implication from these figures is that, contrary to the impression given by the general drift of media comment, in the period to 2011 wealth creation per capita, insofar as it is dependent only on the number of available workers, will remain stable. The call upon this wealth by the combined dependent sectors of the population will also remain stable, assuming that the community investment in each member of the young and the ageing sectors were to be approximately the same. Of course, there are so many other important factors at play that these observations are not very meaningful. However, if the financial requirements on government support are greater for the aged than for the young, and the government is politically motivated to address them, greater expenditures on the aged could detract from possibilities of support to other areas, including the arts.

Some attributes of the populace that influence the predisposition for involvement with the arts.

Statistical analyses reveal that arts participation varies with factors such as place of residence, education, gender and income.

State of residence

ABS figures for arts participation in each state are surprising. They may come as a shock to certain arts bodies that like to trumpet their state as the centre of Australian culture. Arts lovers who want to find themselves among sympathetic souls should migrate to the ACT or the Northern Territory!

*USERS AND NON-USERS OF CULTURAL VENUES/ACTIVITIES BY STATE
12 MONTHS ENDING JUNE 1991*

Venue/activity					Participation rates			
NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST

Library	34.4	36.2	34.5	41.2	43.3	40.7	<i>43.9</i>	45.7	36.7
Art gallery	21.8	24.0	23.4	24.2	26.5	27.9	<i>37.2</i>	41.9	23.9
Museum	29.7	26.9	27.1	36.4	32.8	36.8	<i>48.5</i>	50.0	30.0
Popular music	28.5	27.5	29.3	27.2	28.9	31.0	<i>36.9</i>	37.4	28.6
Dance perf.	10.8	11.1	11.0	10.5	11.5	9.5	<i>18.4</i>	21.6	11.2
Musical theatre	20.0	21.3	20.2	22.4	16.6	14.4	<i>13.7</i>	<i>21.1</i>	20.1
Theatre	17.3	17.4	17.1	18.2	18.6	17.0	<i>21.4</i>	27.6	17.8
Classical music	8.4	7.7	6.9	8.4	8.5	<i>10.1</i>	9.0	17.0	8.2

Musical theatre includes opera and operetta. Dance means dance performance of any sort except cabaret, for a live audience. Museums fall mostly within the usual understanding of the term, but include combined museums and arts galleries.

For easy analysis, the top scoring state for each art form is shown in **bold** and the next highest participation rate is shown in *italics*. Nearly twice the proportion of Territorians attend arts galleries and dance performances as Victorians and New South Welsh. Indeed, in almost all arts categories the proportions of South Australians, West Australians, Tasmanians, Territorians and Canberrans attending arts events is higher than in the most populous states.

Capital city and regional attendance rates are also shown in the ABS charts but not reproduced here. Generally the regional rates are lower than those for capital cities, although library and pop music concert attendances are not dramatically different. For other arts categories regional attendance rates generally are about 60-80% of capital city rates. Presumably the regional rates also can be explained partly by lack of availability.

Implications

The high participation rate in the ACT is probably explained by the higher level of tertiary graduates in its population (see next section), and by the fact that no citizen is remote from the city facilities. The high rates for WA and SA probably have to do also with their high percentage of urban population, and for SA perhaps also its strong arts education program. The higher rates generally in the Northern Territory and Tasmania are more difficult to explain. Presumably, low rates in some arts forms in some states can be explained by lack of availability - e.g. the low scores for musical theatre in the smaller states.

The relatively high domestic immigration into QLD and WA might, on the face of it, lead to slightly higher national arts participation rates. However, that assumes that residence in those states somehow induces a greater love of the arts. The reasons for the higher rates probably lie elsewhere.

Educational level.

Zahava Doering, Director of Institutional Studies at The Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, is responsible for surveying that organisation's audience. Doering stated succinctly to the author her belief that "Completion of college is the threshold for attendance at live arts". For the Smithsonian "Population and educational projections as related to arts or cultural participation rates show that the rates are 90% explained by educational level, the rest by race".

(It might be noted that the Smithsonian receives US Federal funding about twice that of the National Endowment for the Arts and is visited by between nine and ten million *different* people each year.)

Given that characterisation, what do Australian statistics show about the relationship between educational level and arts participation?

*PERSONS ATTENDING CULTURAL VENUES/ACTIVITIES
BY LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION
12 months ended June 1991, Australia*

Qualification	Library	Art	Museum	Pop	Dance	Musical	Theatre	Classical
gallery	concert		theatre		music			

Some college	21	52	51	+10
High school graduate	12	30	31	- 10
Some high school	6	15	18	- 23
Grade school	3	8	13	- 28

Columns III and IV show the results of a statistical adjustment procedure called Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) , which “helps to separate the statistical effects of many variables that relate to a “dependent’ variable of interest (here arts attendance). For example, if higher arts participation is found both among people with higher education and among people with higher income, MCA determines whether the education differences are due to income or the income differences are due to education. In effect, MCA acts to “make other things equal” in determining which are the most effective predictors of participation.” (Ibid p.8)

The ABS does not present figures that show overall arts attendances by educational status. However, the US figures show overall a comparable trend for greater arts participation by the more highly educated, although statistical adjustment ameliorates the apparent effects of a lesser education. In other words, other factors such as income or race seem to contribute to the low 8% participation rate for the grade school-educated.

The US figures also show attendances for the separate benchmark art forms. It is of incidental interest that a comparison with ABS figures show higher attendance rates in Australia and less of a gulf between the more and less educated.

Implications

At first sight, the implication is that the more education the population receives, and the larger the proportion of the population receives education, the greater will be the attendance for the arts. In particular, the achievement of a university qualification at bachelor’s level or higher will predispose an individual for arts attendance. Ignoring the category of school students, who are not necessarily making their own choices for participation, and excepting popular music concerts, in most of the surveyed art forms those with bachelor’s degrees were about half again more likely to attend than those at the educational level with the next highest proportion of arts participants. More than twice as many would be likely to attend a classical music concert. The percentage difference is lower for library attendance, but then the second-highest participation rate, at 48.8%, is already very high. Only for popular music is attendance relatively unaffected by educational level.

It might be noted that the categories with the lowest participation rate for those with bachelor degrees, i.e. classical music and dance, were also the categories for lowest participation by school children. (We should except musical theatre here, since the category includes popular musicals, a branch of the pop music industry.) Only 9% of school children attended a classical music concert in 1990-91; presumably this includes concerts given at their schools. This could support the thesis that early exposure to an art form will influence the person to attend as an adult, since the 26.8% attendance at classical concerts by those with bachelor degrees is also the lowest participation rate for any art form. On the other hand, since this level of attendance is three times that at school level, it might be taken to show that other factors altogether were responsible for the change in interest between school days and later life and that school attendance is unimportant. The ABS figures show no regular correlation between the participation rates across the art forms at school and in later life, other than generally less participation by people who have left school, although more if they have taken a bachelor degree or more.

Zahava Doering says that in the USA no-one has ever been able to show that visits by school children to the symphony have led to attendance as adults. A study first published in 1980, *Australians’ Attitudes to the Arts* (Australia Council, Sydney), asked respondents whether subjects taken at school had an encouraging effect on their adult knowledge and appreciation of the arts. The scores showed that the study of classical music, and ballet or dance, had actually discouraged later interest. The study of visual arts, crafts and theatre seemed not to have much influence either way. Only the study of “good books” had encouraged later participation. Of course, much would depend on the manner in which these classes were presented. And it was notable that immigrant students were notably more positive than the Australian-born. The ocker heritage may have been an obstacle

So, while there is clearly a correlation between greater education and higher arts attendance, is this higher attendance caused by the greater education or, for instance, by attributes in the people who in the cultural context of recent decades have sought higher education? This issue is important in practical terms, for two reasons.

Firstly, the high school retention rates have risen dramatically in Australia in the last ten years or so, and a much higher percentage of students are going on to tertiary education. If this trend holds, many more people will achieve tertiary qualifications and therefore, on the face of it, without any additional initiative from arts providers, the demand for the arts will expand.

To put some numbers to this scenario:

- the number of students graduating with bachelor degrees rose from 38,000 in 1981 to 58,000 in 1990 (53%)
- the number of students gaining post-graduate qualifications rose from 12,600 to 22,000 (74%)
- in 1988 9.7% of the labour force had a higher education degree; only five years later, in 1993, this had risen to 12%
- 60% of higher education students are aged 19-22; the number of people in this age bracket will decline until the turn of the century and then increase
- if the 1991 tertiary participation rate holds, the number of FTE students in higher education will increase from 430,000 in 1991 to 506,000 in 2012 (17.6%)
- however, according to one study, higher participation rates will produce between 460,000 and 540,000 FTE tertiary enrolments by 2001, eleven years earlier
- enrolments in the TAFE system increased 40% from 1981 to 1991, and with renewed attention to development of TAFE, presumably these also will continue to rise. (Ross Clare and Kaye Johnston: *Education and Training in the 1990s*. Economic Planning Advisory Council, Parkes ACT, July 1993, pp.20-28)

Secondly, it has been something of an article of faith in the arts community that the key to producing a larger audience for the arts is to ensure that everyone receives an arts education. The figures above seem to show that a university education, even in non-art subjects, will increase the arts audience. Therefore, it would be in the immediate interests of the arts world to advocate a broader provision of tertiary education, even though it did not include an education in arts subjects.

But if in the past, a higher education was a sort of by-product or consequence of the personality and social characteristics of a particular group, and these characteristics are not shared by many of the students who now are being pressed by circumstances into the colleges, then the newcomers may also not share that interest in the arts. For instance, take the very intelligent, middle class high school student of great intellectual curiosity who would be almost bound to go to university even when placements were much more restricted than in recent years. Contrast with a present-day high school graduate of mediocre achievement and little intellectual curiosity, pressured into a university by a poor job market and the government's desire to keep the official unemployment figures down by making more places available in the tertiary institutions. The first student would probably be interested in the arts, with or without benefit of a university of qualification. The second might be uninterested, despite a university education.

The author knows of no studies that throw light on this issue. Of course, there are many reasons that we all should support expanded opportunities for tertiary education. To what degree that expansion will benefit the arts is another matter.

Judith Balfe of the City University of New York pointed out to the author that in the USA, baby boomers have higher average educational levels than the preceding generation - 18.5% more have college degrees. However, they participate less in the arts, especially classical music. It is interesting that across the period of the baby boom generation there was a change in *what* was studied at college. College entrant interest in a liberal arts major was about 40% in 1970, but had halved to 21% by 1980. The proportion of liberal arts degrees declined 75% over those years, and the actual numbers also dropped. 46,000 music and art degrees were awarded in 1970, but only 41,000 in 1980, despite an increase in overall tertiary enrolments. In 1970, 154,000 people graduated in the social sciences, but

only 105,000 graduated in 1980. (See also Judith Balfe: *The Cost of the Arts*, American Council for the Arts, New York). It may not be the simple fact of tertiary attendance that influences arts participation, but *what* is studied - as well as the personal characteristics and circumstances that lead to the choice of study.

In sum, while an increase in the number of people receiving tertiary education over the years to 2010 probably will result in a greater percentage of the population participating in the arts, the increase may not be as great as might be suggested by the participation rates of the past.

Footnote: In 1988, there were about 2,500 full fee paying international students at Australian higher education institutions. In 1990, the number of international students, including non-fee paying students, was 29,000. Is there not some potential here for special initiatives from the Australian arts world?

Gender

In most categories surveyed by the ABS, female participation rates were markedly higher than those for males. Differences were minimal for popular music and museum attendance. ABS figures are also available for the combination of age and gender. These reveal for instance that there is little

*PERSONS ATTENDING CULTURAL VENUES/ACTIVITIES
BY GENDER 12 MONTHS ENDING JUNE 1991*

Venue/Activity	Males	Females
Library	30.4	42.9
Art gallery	20.8	26.9
Museum	29.2	30.9
Popular music concert	28.3	28.8
Dance performance	8.7	13.5
Musical theatre	16.0	24.0
Other theatre	14.2	21.3
Classical music concert	6.8	9.4

difference in the rates of attendance by the two sexes at classical music concerts up to the age of 34, and that attendance rate differences expand with age for art galleries.

Implications

It will be interesting to see whether the greater survival need for intellectual achievement and the softening of the pioneer mentality will lead in future to some amelioration of these gender differences. The author has heard a number of times from senior businessmen who have joined the Boards of, for example, opera companies: "Well, actually, it was my wife who was interested in the opera and took me along. One thing led to another and here I am on the Board. I don't know a lot about opera, but I've grown to quite like it now." Presumably, their sons will not feel that they have to make excuses. It is interesting that the US figures (Faucett, p.9) show much less difference overall between the sexes.

Cultural expenditure was higher in households with a majority of male members, although income in houses with a female majority tended to be lower. Even so, cultural expenditure as a proportion of income was higher in male households. An interesting exception is in the area of cultural education, where compared to male-majority households, female households allocated nearly twice the proportion of available income.

Because men die younger than women, women are over-represented in the older age groups. Given their higher participation rates when young, this may mean that there is a higher participation by the aged than might otherwise be expected. (See next chapter)

Income

The ABS Household Expenditure Survey shows that households with higher income have a higher weekly expenditure on culture, but that this expenditure increase is not proportionate to the increase in income. That is, the proportion of total income spent on culture actually decreases with an increase in income. (ABS: *Cultural Trends in Australia. No. 1: A Statistical Overview*. ABS Catalogue No. 4172.0, May 1994, p.35) “Culture” in this instance is broader than the arts, including television sets, newspapers and comics, sports clubs and so on.

In the more arts-directed US study, low income groups again showed relatively lower attendance rates than high income groups: less than 23% for those with less than US\$5,000 annual income compared with 65% among those with \$50,000 or more. It is interesting that the low participation rate persists for income groups up to \$15,000 per year. It rises to 36% for the \$15,000 - 25,000 group, 44% for \$25,000 - \$50,000, and then 65%.

Presumably there is a considerable overlap between the high income population and the high education population. Faucett’s analysis shows that education is the strongest contributing cause to participation rate differences, and that if it is taken into account, the spread of participation rates between the high and low income populations in the adjusted statistics is reduced by half, from 42% to 21%.

Implications

This is good news, because on the evidence, in order to increase arts participation, we do not have to make everyone rich. We only have to give them a good education, and everyone agrees on that objective already. In principle.