

THE AGEING OF THE POPULATION AND ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRATION

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Large numbers of immigrants have a considerable effect on the size of the population but very little effect on its age structure. Despite this demographic fact, many advocates argue that high immigration is an effective way to keep a population young. New survey data show that they may have had some influence on public attitudes. Worry about the ageing of the population ranked among the top three concerns held by Australian voters in 2005, and those who had this concern tended to be more supportive of immigration than those who did not.

CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRATION

Attitudes to immigration have fluctuated in Australia over the last 50 years. A series of commercial polls that asked much the same question shows that, during the 1950s, around 45 per cent of Australians thought that the number of migrants coming into the country was too many. This opposition eased during the 1960s, with some polls showing only 20 per cent opposed. But it rose again in the 1970s. By the late 1980s more than two thirds thought the numbers too many. Dissatisfaction remained high in the early 1990s with one poll, in 1991, recording 73 per cent as saying the numbers were excessive.¹

As is now well known opposition began to fade after the election of the Howard Government in March 1996.² Unfortunately the commercial pollsters have paid little attention to it, but this shift in public opinion has been well covered by the Australian Election Studies series of surveys (AES). These have been conducted by scholars associated with the Australian National University (ANU) after each Federal election, since 1987. Attitudes to immigration are also reported in the new Australian Surveys of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) conducted in 2003 and 2005 (again by scholars associated with ANU).

MEASURING THE SHIFT

The AES series has regularly asked this question: 'The statements below indicate some of the changes that have been happening in Australia over the years. For each one please say whether you think the change has gone too far, not gone far enough or is about right'. The response categories are: gone much too far, gone too far, about right, not gone far enough, not gone nearly far enough. This preamble is followed by a list of changes and, since 1990, immigration has been included in the list, giving a time series spanning 15 years (see Figure 1). Like the commercial polls, the AES shows strong opposition to the size of the migrant intake in the early 1990s. For the subsequent years the AES goes on to document the decline in this opposition.

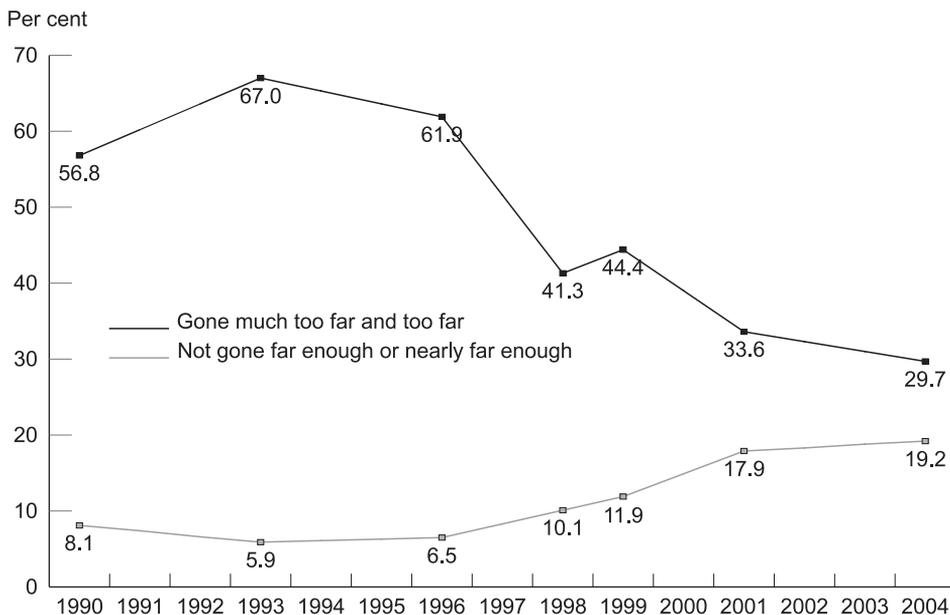
While the AuSSA surveys also ask about immigration, they do not use the gone-too-far/not-gone-far-enough format. Here the question is: 'Do you think the number of immigrants allowed into Australia nowadays should be: increased a lot; increased a little; remain the same as it is; be reduced a little; be reduced a lot; can't choose'. Since 1996 this question has also been included in the AES (except for the post-referendum survey in 1999), though without the final option of 'can't choose'.³ Thus we have a ten-year series of similar surveys asking the same question. This series begins with 1996, the

start of the major decline in opposition but, thanks to the 2005 AuSSA survey, it takes the story one year further than do the data in Figure 1.

Table 1 shows a similar pattern to Figure 1; between 1996 and 2005 the percentage wanting a reduction in immigration falls from over sixty per cent

to under forty per cent while the proportion happy with an increase rises from single figures to nearly a quarter in 2001. There is a slight falling away in support in 2005 compared to 2001 (and 2003 and 2004). This change is best captured by changes in ratio of those wanting an increase divided by those wanting a decrease (see

Figure 1: Attitudes to immigration—the gone-too-far/not-gone-far-enough question, 1990 to 2004, per cent



Source: Australian Election Studies (AES)—see Betts, 2005 (in endnote 2), Table 1, p. 31.

Table 1: Attitudes to immigration—the increased/reduced question, 1996 to 2005, per cent

	§1996	§1998	§2001	*2003	§2004	*2005
Increased a lot or a little	8.3	13.4	24.7	23.7	23.3	22.6
Remain about the same as it is	27.8	37.7	37.3	32.9	40.1	33.0
Reduced a lot or a little	62.6	47.1	36.2	36.7	34.3	38.7
Can't choose	—	—	—	5.9	—	4.9
Missing	1.2	1.8	1.8	0.9	2.4	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100.0	100.0
Total N	1797	1897	2010	4270	1769	3902
Increased/reduced ratio**	0.13	0.28	0.68	0.65	0.68	0.58

Sources: §AES 1996, 1998, 2001 and 2004; *AuSSA 2003 and 2005; see appendix for details.

Note: The 'can't choose' response was not offered in 1996, 1998, 2001 and 2004.

**A larger number in this ratio (such as 0.68) indicates relative satisfaction with immigration while a smaller number (such as 0.13) indicates relative dissatisfaction.

the final row in Table 1). But the change between 2001 and 2005 is not statistically significant and may be due to sampling variation.

The wording of the two questions appears similar, but the four AES surveys which used both questions (1996, 1998, 2001 and 2004—in different sections of lengthy questionnaires) show that the second question (which in fact came second in the schedule) produces rather more polarised answers than the first. In Figure 1 the proportion favouring an increase never rises to 20 per cent. Table 1 shows that, as measured by the second question, the proportions saying they want an increase are well over 20 per cent in the 2001 and 2004 AES surveys (as they are in the two AuSSA surveys in 2003 and 2005). The proportions wanting a reduction are also higher in the second question than in the first.

But irrespective of these differences both questions show considerable softening in opposition to immigration

from 1996 to 2005. It is remarkable that this change should have taken place during a period when the number of immigrants, after an initial lull, increased sharply. Net overseas migration was 72,000 in 1997 and 89,000 in 1998 but it averaged 114,000 per annum from 2000 to 2005.⁴ The planned permanent immigration program issued around 80,000 visas from 1997–98 to 1999–2000. Since June 2000 this intake has risen steadily, from 94,000 in 2000–01 to 120,000 in 2002–03 and 129,000 in 2003–04 and 2004–05, with 148,000 planned for 2005–06.⁵

The surveys themselves can give us some ideas about why the shift in opinion has occurred, and a number of these possibilities have already been documented (see below). But AuSSA 2005 suggests one possible cause that has not appeared in the literature to date: worry about the ageing of the population, combined with a belief that higher immigration can provide a remedy. Before we explore this possibility it is helpful to

Table 2: Projected population in 2051 under varying assumptions, millions

Annual net migration	Low fertility (TFR 1.5)		Medium fertility (TFR 1.7)		High fertility (TFR 1.9)	
	<i>Life expectancy:</i>		<i>Life expectancy:</i>		<i>Life expectancy:</i>	
	Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium	High
Nil net migration	19.9	21.4	21.1	22.6	22.4	23.9
80,000	^(C) 24.9	26.5	26.3	27.9	27.7	29.3
110,000	26.7	28.3	^(B) 28.2	29.8	29.7	31.3
140,000	28.5	30.2	30.1	31.8	31.7	^(A) 33.4

Source: *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101*, Cat. no. 3222.0, ABS, 2005, pp. 10, 80

Notes: In 2005 the population was 20.5 million.

TFR: This stands for total fertility rate, the average number of children that would be born if women were to pass through their childbearing years experiencing the age-specific birth rates of a given year. (In 2004–05 the Australian TFR was 1.797. Replacement fertility is 2.1.)

Life expectancy: Under the medium assumption life expectancy at birth rises to 84.9 for males and 88.0 for females, from 2050–51. Under the high assumption it rises to 92.7 for males and 95.1 for females, also from 2050–51. In 2002 to 2004, it was 78.1 for males and 83.0 for females.

Migration: In 2005 net overseas migration was 111,600; this figure includes net long-term movement as well as net permanent movement.

(A) (B) (C): These particular combinations of assumptions are published by the ABS as projections A, B and C. Projection B is closest to current levels of fertility and migration.

review some facts about demographic ageing and the role of immigration.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS, IMMIGRATION AND AGEING

In December 2005 there were 20.5 million people in Australia. Table 2 shows the size of the population in 2051 according to the most recent projections published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), under different fertility, mortality and migration assumptions.

Bearing in mind that Australia’s population was 20.5 million in 2005, the first row of Table 2 shows that, if we assume nil net migration, a combination of high fertility and high life expectancy could add an extra 3.4 million in 2051 (even though the ‘high’ fertility is still below the replacement level of 2.1). In contrast, high migration (net 140,000 per annum) could add between 8.0 and 12.9 million people in 2051, depending on the accompanying fertility and mortality assumptions.

An older age structure is an inevitable consequence of the demographic transition to lower mortality and lower fertility. Table 3 shows that extra immigration does reduce the median age a little but that it requires very high numbers to achieve this end.

While most commentators (and most members of the public) have a limited understanding of demography,⁶ the minimal effect of immigration on the age structure is well know amongst the demographically informed. For example, researchers ranging from the Productivity Commission to university-based demographers have long established that, while immigration can do a great deal to make the population larger, it can do very little to offset demographic ageing.⁷ Indeed in 2000, in the context of an earlier series of projections, the ABS concluded that:

Even large differences in the level of net overseas migration will have a relatively small impact on the age distribution. With net overseas migration of 50,000 per year, the median age of the

Table 3: Population size and median age in 2005 and as projected in 2051

	TFR	Life expectancy	Annual net migration	Population in millions	Median age in years
2005 (actual data)	1.797	78.1m/83.0f*	111,600	<i>in 2005</i> 20.5	<i>in 2005</i> 36.7
<i>Projections:</i>	<i>(Projection assumptions)</i>			in 2051	in 2051
C1	1.5	medium	0	19.9	51.2
C2	1.5	medium	80,000	24.9	48.2
B1	1.7	medium	0	21.1	48.8
B2	1.7	medium	110,000	28.2	45.2
A1	1.9	high	0	23.9	49.1
A2	1.9	high	140,000	33.3	44.6

Sources: *Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101*, Cat. no. 3222.0, ABS, 2005, pp. 80, 89, and unpublished data provided by the ABS

Notes: Projections C2, B2 and A2 are projections C, B and A as published by the ABS. C1, B1 and A1 are projections C, B and A but with the assumption of nil net migration. See notes to Table 2 for definitions of ‘medium’ and ‘high’ life expectancy at birth. *Life expectancy at birth in 2003 to 2004 for males and females.

population in 2051 would be 47.2 years, compared to 44.6 years when 150,000 net overseas migrants are added to the population per year, a difference of 2.6 years.⁸

This finding, however, has had only a limited effect on public and political debate.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING 'DISEASE' AND THE IMMIGRATION PANACEA

The cool assessments referred to above have not inhibited a raft of alarmist public comment which may have influenced public attitudes. The last 30 years have seen a growing stream of worried talk from politicians and opinion makers about the negative implications of demographic ageing, coupled with claims that importing more people offers a solution. These range from Alan Reid's article in 1976 'How Australia may become a senile country'⁹ to Tony Berg (Business Council of Australia) saying in 1998 that an ageing population and low fertility amounted to collective suicide,¹⁰ and Greg Barns' claim in 2001 that an ageing and declining population is a 'cancer that is eating away at our social cohesion', but a cancer that can be readily cured by even higher immigration.¹¹

A search in the Factiva database (which covers major Australian newspapers) for articles mentioning the ageing of the population shows an annual average of 60.5 such articles from 1996 to 2001. However, in 2002 there were 133, in 2003 101, in 2004 274 and in 2005 243.¹²

Before he lost office in 1999 (and indeed after his departure) Victorian premier Jeff Kennett (Liberal) was a tireless advocate of high immigration, often invoking the spectre of demographic ageing as a justification.¹³ He also caused a mild sensation by making a speech to high-school girls in April 1999 in which

he urged them to have large families, adding that 'declining fertility rates made the need for further immigration more pressing'.¹⁴ In 2002 his Labor successor, Steve Bracks, argued, in the face of the evidence to the contrary, that the 'trend in the rate of migration is steadily down' and that we face 'a declining workforce and the healthcare demands of an ageing population'. In October 2005, Morris Iemma, newly installed as Labor premier of NSW claimed that skilled migration was necessary to offset an ageing workforce in Sydney.¹⁵

Further comments supporting those of State Premiers come from sections of the business community. For example, the web site of the Australia Population Institute (APop), a group that has links to the Urban Development Institute of Australia and which lobbies for population growth, says: 'Ageing of the population over the next five decades is set to create staggering numbers of State dependant retirees and unsustainable health care costs' and, 'Without corrective population growth there may not be enough working people to support the nation'. They applaud recent increases in the intake but say: 'APop would like to see further increases in Australia's official Migration Program'.¹⁶

Despite general ignorance of demography, the link between low fertility and demographic ageing appears to be now well understood. Colourful remarks from Kennett and more recent publications such as Treasurer Peter Costello's Inter-generational Report, published with the 2002–03 budget papers¹⁷ have highlighted this. Indeed Costello almost matched Kennett in media coverage with his controversial plea to parents, in May 2004, to have three children, 'one for the father, one for the mother and one for the country'.¹⁸ Slightly higher fertility does indeed lower the median age (compare, for example, projections C1 and B1 in Table

3) and the hyper ageing and population decline that would eventually result from very low fertility are real.¹⁹ But the media drama associated with pleas of the kind made by Kennett and Costello may serve to cement the fear of ageing in people's mind, together with the notion that immigration provides a quicker and surer cure than any attempt to support fertility.

In the face of public figures asserting that that immigration can reverse demographic ageing, and implying that the country is in immanent danger of actually shrinking in size,²⁰ it would not be surprising if people who believed these myths favoured an increase in immigration. This is especially likely if, like Bracks, they were under the misapprehension that the number of migrants was low, a possibility that is likely given the energy with which some groups

and opinion makers arguing for even higher immigration have promoted this idea.²¹ However, prior to the 2005 AuSSA survey we have not been able to use existing survey data to explore this possibility.

ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRATION AND CONCERN ABOUT DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING

As mentioned above, one probable reason for the shift in public attitudes to immigration is public ignorance about the size of the intake and its demographic implications. Other possible reasons include: a drop in unemployment (from 11.9 per cent in December 1992 to 4.9 per cent in May 2006);²² reforms in the permanent migration scheme which, since 1996, reoriented it away from family reunion and towards skilled migration; restrictions on new mi-

Table 4: Most important issue facing Australia, first and second choices, AuSSA 2005, per cent

	First ranking	Second ranking	First and second combined
1 Health care and hospitals	15.2	14.1	29.3
2 Taxes too high on ordinary Australians	14.5	9.2	23.7
3 An ageing population	14.2	8.2	22.4
4 Gap between rich and poor	8.2	10.0	18.2
5 Environmental damage	8.1	6.2	14.3
6 Lack of moral values in the community	7.3	6.2	13.5
7 Australian jobs going to other countries	5.4	7.8	13.2
8 Terrorism	5.3	4.6	9.9
9 Crime	4.7	5.2	9.9
10 Lack of affordable housing	3.4	3.5	6.9
11 Drugs	2.5	4.3	6.8
12 Australian involvement in military conflicts overseas	2.5	5.3	7.8
13 Corruption in government	2.0	2.1	4.1
14 Minorities having too much say in politics	1.3	3.7	5.0
15 Refugees and asylum seekers	1.2	3.0	4.2
16 Too much red tape holding business back	0.9	1.8	2.7
17 Inadequate public transport	0.5	1.1	1.6
18 Not enough progress towards Aboriginal reconciliation	0.4	1.3	1.7
Missing	2.4	2.6	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	200.0
Total N	3902	3902	

Table 5: Attitudes to immigration by most important issue facing Australia, the first eight issues, AuSSA 2005, per cent

Number of immigrants to Australia should be:	1 Taxes too high on ordinary Australians	2 Health care and hospitals	3 An ageing population	4 Gap between rich and poor	5 Environmental damage	6 Lack of moral values in the community	7 Australian jobs going to other countries	8 Terrorism	Total
Increased a little or a lot	21.1	16.8*	27.6	27.7	35.4**	19.0	17.3	18.2	22.8
Remain the same as it is	28.1	38.7	38.7	30.5	37.9	30.8	31.7	29.1	33.3
Reduced a little or a lot	47.4*	39.9	29.8**	35.2	23.2**	43.4	47.6	46.8	39.1
Can't choose	3.4	4.6	3.8	6.6	3.5	6.8	3.4	5.9	4.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total N	563	591	550	318	314	279	208	203	3778
Increase/reduce ^a	0.45	0.42	0.93	0.79	1.52	0.44	0.36	0.39	0.58

Notes: Subtotals and grand total exclude missing values for the question on the number of immigrants (n=124).

* The difference between the sub category and the total is significant at the .05 level.

** The difference between the sub category and the total is significant at the .01 level.

^a See Table 1 for an explanation of this ratio.

grants' access to welfare (also introduced in 1996); a tough attitude to illegal entry which reassures the public that selection is under control; and a greater emphasis on national unity from Government politicians, together with a de-emphasis on the virtues of multiculturalism. These possibilities have been explored before.²³ They are all plausible, however the 2005 AuSSA study offers an additional possibility: public anxiety about the ageing of the population.

AuSSA 2005 asked respondents to chose the most important issue facing Australia from a list of 18 issues, one of which was 'an ageing population'. Respondents were then invited to chose the second most important issue from the same list. Table 4 shows the two sets of choices ranked by the first most important issue. There is considerable congruence between the two sets of ranks. Seven of the top eight issues in the first set appear in the top eight of the second. When the two sets are added, the rankings established by the first set are maintained for the first eight issues, with the minor exception that crime now ties with terrorism in the eighth spot.

Overall, Australian voters are very concerned about the ageing of the population; more than 22 per cent say it is either the first or second most important issue facing Australia, only slightly fewer than those who cite health care and hospitals or high taxation. Table 5, which analyses attitudes to immigration by concern with the first eight issues, shows that anxiety about ageing is indeed associated with significantly stronger support for immigration.

Table 5 shows that people who worried about taxation or about health care and hospitals are less supportive of immigration than are the sample as a whole, and these differences are significant (at the .05 level). However the group nominating the ageing of the population

as their first area of concern are much more supportive of immigration. Indeed they are almost 10 percentage points less likely to want a reduction in the intake than is the sample as a whole, and this difference is significant at the .01 level.²⁴

The standout group of immigration supporters, however, are those who say that environmental damage is their first area of concern. The seeming paradox of environmentalists opting for immigration-fueled population growth has been analysed elsewhere. A probable explanation is that many environmentalists are more focused on international social justice than they are on the preservation of the national environment.²⁵ Nevertheless, the proportion concerned about ageing is much higher than that of those concerned about the environment. Table 5 suggest that the demographic entrepreneurs who alarm us with stories about the cancer of ageing, and who offer us their immigration cure-all, may well have made an impression.

The people who chose an ageing population as the most important issue facing Australia do not differ very much from the rest of the sample. They are similar in terms of income, education, place of residence, marital status, and occupation (except for rather higher levels of concern amongst managers and administrators). They do, however, differ by age and political identification. Table 6 shows that older people are much more likely to be concerned about demographic ageing than are younger people, a finding that is particularly true of older men (20.6 per cent of all men aged 50 plus are concerned compared with 17.2 per cent of all women aged 50 plus).

Table 6 also shows that people who identify with the Liberal Party are more likely to be concerned than are those who identify with Labor. Among the over 50s, 21.6 per cent of Liberal supporters are concerned compared with 18.1 per cent of

Labor supporters. In general, in the AuSSA 2005 data, older people are slightly less supportive of immigration than are younger people, and Liberal identifiers are less supportive than Labor identifiers. Older Liberal identifiers are however rather more supportive, though still less so than Labor identifiers: for example 20.5 per cent of Liberal identifiers aged over 50 support an increase compared to 26.0 per cent of Labor supporters over 50. If

we exclude older people who are concerned about the ageing of the population, the proportion of older Liberal identifiers who support an increase falls to 18.8 per cent, well below the sample average of 22.6 per cent. (In contrast, the proportion of older Labor identifiers supporting an increase actually rises fractionally to 26.5 per cent.)

Thus concern about the ageing of the population may have weakened opposition

Table 6: Most important issue by age and political identification, AuSSA 2005, per cent

The most important issue facing Australia is:	Age group				Political identification		
	18–34	35–49	50–64	65 plus	Liberal	Labor	Total
An ageing population	6.9	10.4	17.5	21.0	18.0	12.6	14.2
Some other issue	92.0	88.3	80.0	75.1	78.8	85.6	83.4
Missing	1.1	1.2	2.5	3.8	3.2	1.8	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total N	709	1122	1175	837	1362	1201	3902

Note: * The difference between the subgroup and the total is significant at the .05 level.

** The difference between the subgroup and the total is significant at the .01 level.

Table 7: Attitudes to immigration by occupation, AuSSA 2005, per cent

Number of immigrants to Australia should be:	Managers and administrators	Social Professionals	Other Professionals	Other ^a	Total
Increased a little or a lot	*32.9	*32.6	*31.4	*18.3	22.6
Remain the same as it is	35.9	33.7	36.6	31.8	33.0
Reduced a little or a lot	**27.9	**26.0	**26.9	*43.8	38.7
Can't choose	3.0	6.3	4.9	5.0	4.9
Missing	0.3	1.4	0.2	1.0	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total N	365	365	465	2707	3902
increased/reduced ratio	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.4	0.6

Note: People who are retired or unemployed are classified by their last 'main' paid job.

^a People who have never held a paid job or who did not answer the question on occupation are included in 'Other'.

* The difference between the subgroup and the total is significant at the .05 level.

** The difference between the subgroup and the total is significant at the .01 level.

to immigration among two segments of the electorate which would otherwise have been less likely to change their views—older people and Liberal voters.

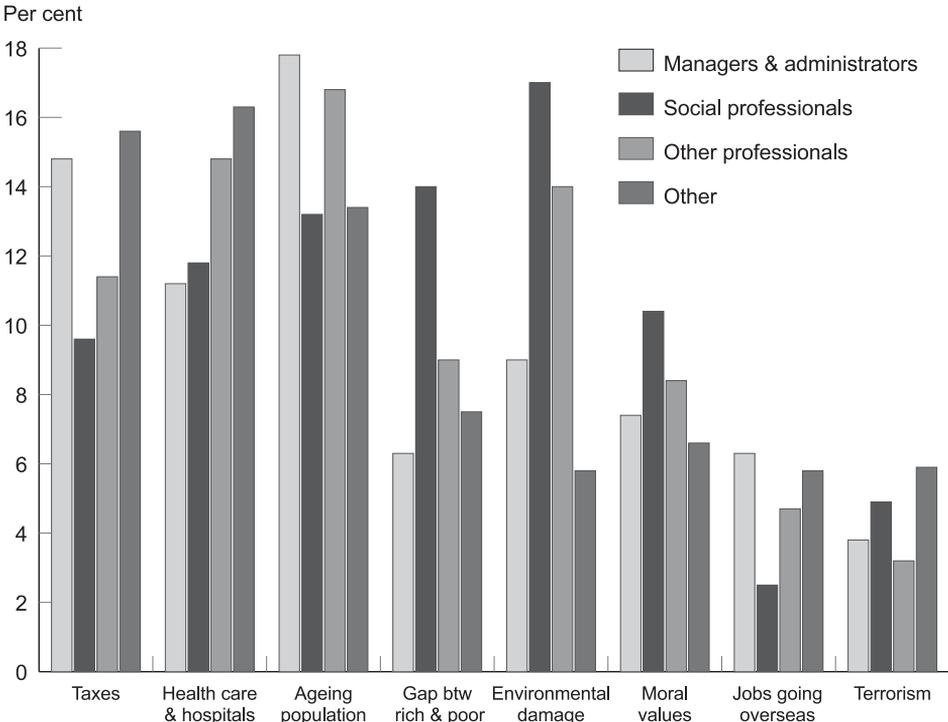
AuSSA 2005 also confirms the well-established association between occupations in the social professions and support for immigration.²⁶ But it shows that managers and administrators and other professionals, people who, like social professionals, tend to feel less threatened by immigration, share their preference.²⁷ The bulk of the respondents, the 69 per cent who are in ‘Other’ occupations are much less enthusiastic (see Table 7).

But while people in the three groupings at the upper end of the occupational spectrum are much more supportive of immigration than the majority in lower

status occupations, their pattern of concerns about the issues facing Australia suggests that their motives differ. Figure 2 shows the first eight areas of concern by the four occupational groupings of respondents set out in Table 7.

Social professionals include teachers, journalists, artists, ministers of religion and social workers. They are worth examining separately because of their disproportionate capacity to be heard in public debates and because of their role in the media and in education. We may not always agree with their views but we tend to hear them more frequently than others. Figure 2 shows that social professionals are much more likely to be concerned about environmental damage than are people in other occupations, and also

Figure 2: The most important issue facing Australia by occupational group, AuSSA 2005, per cent



Note: Figure 2 only shows data on the top eight issues. For example, among Managers and administrators 14.8 per cent said that, of all the 18 issues set out in Table 4, taxation was the most important.

disproportionately likely to be concerned about the gap between rich and poor—another indication of their concern for social justice. (It is interesting that people in the lower-status ‘Other’ occupations are much less concerned about this gap.)

Overall, however, there is a high degree of consensus across the four occupational groups on the importance of demographic ageing, higher than there is on any of the other seven issues. While older people and Liberal Party supporters are disproportionately affected, their concern is widely shared.

CONCLUSION

The 2005 AuSSA study offers a further piece of evidence for the attempt to explain the shift in public attitudes towards immigration. Support for immigration was

particularly strong among respondents worried about the ageing of the population. People who say that the ageing of the population is their first-order concern account for more than 14 per cent of respondents and, among this sub group, the proportion wanting lower immigration is very much lower than it is among respondents as a whole.

Cross-sectional surveys cannot establish causation, but data from the 2005 AuSSA study suggest that demographic myths may have had a real effect on public attitudes. There are no data on fears about demographic ageing for earlier years. But this particular worry, together with the influence of advocates claiming that immigration can alleviate it, could have been a factor in the post-1996 shift in public attitudes to immigration.

Appendix: Details of surveys referred to

AES 1990: McAllister, Ian et al. Australian election study, 1990 [computer file]. Principal investigators Ian McAllister, Roger Jones, Elim Papadakis, David Gow. Canberra: Roger Jones, Social Science Data Archives, Research School of Social Sciences, The Australian National University [producer], 1990. Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University [distributor], 1990. 1 data file (2,037 logical records) and accompanying user’s guide. (124 p.).

AES 1993: Jones, Roger et al. Australian Election Study, 1993 [computer file]. Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, 1993.

AES 1996: Jones, Roger et al. Australian Election Study, 1996 [computer file]. Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, 1996.

AES 1998: Bean, Clive et al. Australian Election Study, 1998

[computer file]. Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, 1998.

AES 1999: Gow, David John, Clive Bean and Ian McAllister, Australian Constitutional Referendum Study, 1999 [computer file]. Canberra: Australian Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, 2000.

AES 2001: Bean, Clive et al. Australian Election Study, 2001 [computer file]. Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, 2002.

AES 2004: Bean, C. et al., Australian Election Study, 2004, [computer file]. Canberra: Australian Social Science Data Archive, The Australian National University, 2005.

AuSSA 2003: Gibson, R. et al. The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2003. Canberra: Australian Social Science Data Archive, The Australian National University, 2004

AuSSA 2005: Wilson, S. et al., Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2005, [computer file]. Canberra: Australian Social Science Data Archive, The Australian National University, 2006.

All of the data files of these surveys were obtained from the Australian Social Science Data Archives (ASSDA) at the Australian National University: <<http://assda.anu.edu.au>>. None of the authors of these data sets are responsible for my interpretation of their work.

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References

- ¹ Respondents were usually told the number of migrants arriving and were then asked whether this was 'too many', 'about right' or 'too few'. See K. Betts, 'Immigration and public opinion: understanding the shift', *People and Place*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2002, p. 25. For a comprehensive listing of all polls from 1943 to 1998 see M. Goot, 'Migrant numbers, Asian immigration and multiculturalism: trends in the polls, 1943–1998: Statistical Appendix', *Australian Multiculturalism in a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness*, National Multicultural Advisory Council, Canberra, 1999.
- ² See M. Goot, 'More "relaxed and comfortable": public opinion on immigration under Howard', *People and Place*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2000, pp. 46–60; Betts, 2002, op. cit.; K. Betts, 'Cosmopolitans and patriots: Australia's cultural divide and attitudes to immigration', *People and Place*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2005, pp. 29–40; M. Goot and I. Watson, 'Immigration, multiculturalism and national identity', in S. Wilson et al. (Eds), *Australian Social Attitudes: The First Report*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2005
- ³ The International Social Survey Program also asked this question in 1995. It found that 11 per cent of Australians wanted an increase and 58 per cent wanted a decrease. See Goot and Watson, 2005, op. cit., Table 11.1, p. 184.
- ⁴ See *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Catalogue No. 3101.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Canberra, various issues.
- ⁵ See *Population Flows*, Department of Immigration, Canberra, various years, and Ministerial press releases. The numbers include the humanitarian program.
- ⁶ See, for example, evidence presented in K. Betts, *The Great Divide: Immigration Politics in Australia*, Duffy and Snellgrove, Sydney, 1999, pp. 100–109.
- ⁷ See Productivity Commission, *Economic Implications of an Ageing Australia: Productivity Commission Research Report*, 24 March, Productivity Commission, Melbourne, 2005; R. Kippen, 'A note on aging, immigration and the birth rate', *People and Place*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1999, pp. 18–22; C. Young and L. Day, 'Australia's demographic future: determinants of our population', Australian Academy of Science, *Population 2040: Australia's Choice*, Canberra, 1994
- ⁸ *Projections of the Populations of Australia, States and Territories: 1999–2101*, Catalogue no. 3222.0, ABS, Canberra, 2000, p. 2.
- ⁹ A. Reid, 'How Australia may become a senile country', *The Bulletin*, 1976, 25 September, p. 25
- ¹⁰ Quoted in B. Birnbauer, 'A land half-full', *The Age* (News Extra), 1998, 14 March, p. 4
- ¹¹ G. Barns, 'Why we need more migrants', *The Age*, 13 December 2001
- ¹² The search term was 'ageing of the population and Australia'. Pre-1996 data were not used because some major newspapers were not online before that date. However, by September 1996 all of the following newspapers had online editions: *Australian Financial Review*: 5 April 1982; *Canberra Times*: 3 September 1996; *Sunday Age*: 27 January 1991; *The Age*: 19 January 1991; *The Australian*: 8 July 1996; *The Sydney Morning Herald*: 1 September 1986. *The Herald-Sun* came online on 23 July 1997 and *The Bulletin* on 2 July 2002. Information provided by Robert Rochester of the Swinburne University of Technology Library.
- ¹³ See M. Davis and S. Lewis, 'Migrant policy "heartless and irresponsible"', *Australian Financial Review*, 30 April 1999, p. 24; Australian Associated Press, 'Aust state premier blasts feds on migrant intake', 29 April 1999; B. Birnbauer, 'Kennett in call to lift migration', *The Age*, 1998, 16 March, pp. 1, 6; B. Nicholson and M. Shaw, 'Clash on migrant limits', *The Age*, 1999, 8 March.
- ¹⁴ See Australian Associated Press, 'Aust population should double within 60 years—Kennett', 20 April 1999.
- ¹⁵ M. Iemma, 'The business of my Government is business', *The Australian*, 8 October 2005, p. 29; S. Bracks, 'Migrants guarantee prosperity', *The Australian*, 8 February 2002, p. 11
- ¹⁶ See <<http://www.apop.com.au/FURTHER.HTM#major>> accessed 9/6/06. See also sources quoted in: B. Crawford and A. Crossweller, 'Partisans "hijack" population debate', *The Australian*, 2002, 26 February, p. 4; S. Morris and D. Uren, 'We need people: business', *The Australian*, 2004, 28 April, p. 6; K. Murphy and S. Lewis, 'Business urges migration jump', *The Australian*, 2005, 4 March, p. 2.
- ¹⁷ See <<http://www.budget.gov.au/2002-03/bp5/html/index.html>> accessed 12 June 2006.
- ¹⁸ See L. Dodson 'Populate or perish with the burnt snags', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 May 2004, p. 4.

- ¹⁹ If projection C1 is continued to 2101 the population numbers 12.7 million with a median age of 53.4.
- ²⁰ See, for example, Andrew Theophanous, MP, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates: House of Representatives*, 31 March 1981, p. 1115 and 16 March 1982, p. 1028.
- ²¹ See sources quoted in: R. McGregor, 'ALP opens migrant door', *The Australian*, 1999, 19 February, p. 1; S. Morris and D. Uren, 'We need people: business', *The Australian*, 2004, 28 April, p. 6; D. Campbell, 'Growing pains of a nation', *The Australian*, 1999, 15 December, p. 13; and the Business Council of Australia quoted in D. Uren, 'Call for immigration boost', *The Australian*, 2004, 26 April, p. 6. See also G. Sheridan, 'Too many fogeys, not enough people', *The Australian*, 1998, 9 May, p. 21 and Editorial, 'Ageing Australia needs more people', *The Age*, 1999, 9 March.
- ²² *Labour Force, Australia*, Spreadsheets, Catalogue No. 6202.0.55.001, ABS, Canberra, 2006
- ²³ See Betts 2002 and 2005, op. cit.
- ²⁴ This means that there is less than one chance in a 100 that the observed difference is merely due to sampling variation.
- ²⁵ See Betts, 2005, op. cit., and K. Betts, 'Demographic and social research on the population and environment nexus in Australia: explaining the gap', *Population and Environment*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2004, pp. 157–172.
- ²⁶ See Betts 2005 op. cit.
- ²⁷ Occupations are classified in the AuSSA 2005 data file according to the *Australian Standard of Classification of Occupations, Second Edition*, Catalogue No. 1220.0, ABS, Canberra, 1997. The overall breakdown was: Managers and administrators 9.4%; Social professionals 9.4%; Other professionals 11.9%; Other 61.4%; missing 7.9%. People in 'Other' occupations include: associate professionals, trades people, salespeople, clerks, transport and production workers, and labourers. The missing data include people who had never held a paid job.