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# **Older People, Australia: A Social Report**

**1999**

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AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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## P R E F A C E . . . . .

*Older People, Australia: A Social Report* is an important contribution to the International Year of Older Persons, 1999. This publication describes the social conditions of Australia's older people, across a number of aspects of their lives, and brings together data from the ABS and other official sources. Older people are defined as those aged 65 and over, in line with international standards.

The information is presented in six chapters, and organised by major areas of social concern: population and cultural diversity; living arrangements and care; health and disability; economic environment; physical environment; activities and lifestyles. The report also includes summary tables which illustrate the changes which have taken place over the last decade, and highlight State and Territory differences.

*Older People, Australia: A Social Report* is the final in a series of three social reports focusing on specific population groups. The first in the series, *Youth, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4111.0), was published by the ABS in 1997. The second, *Children, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4119.0) was published in February this year.

ABS publications draw extensively on information provided by individuals, businesses, government and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated; without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

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## SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....

### ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
BMI	Body Mass Index
CBCS	Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics
CD	Collection District
DFaCS	Department of Family and Community Services
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs
MESC	Main English-Speaking Country
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
PHIAC	Private Health Insurance Administration Council
SD	Statistical Division
SLA	Statistical Local Area

### SYMBOLS

hrs	hours
kJ	kilojoules
m	million
mg	milligrams
min	minutes
ml	millilitres
n.a.	not available
n.e.c.	not elsewhere classified
n.p.	not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
p	preliminary data
r	revised data
*	this estimate has a relative standard error between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution
**	subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes (relative standard error greater than 50%)
—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable

### ROUNDING

Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of component items and totals. Unless otherwise stated, proportions are based on stated or classifiable responses.

## MAIN FINDINGS .....

### POPULATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

At 30 June 1998 there were 2.3 million older people (those aged 65 and over) in Australia. The older population is increasing—both in number and as a proportion of the total population—each year. Whereas older people comprised 12% of the total population in 1998, they are projected to form almost one-quarter (24%) of the total population by 2051.

As with people of all ages, the older population comprises a diverse cultural mix. In 1998, 32% of all older Australians had been born overseas, most commonly in the United Kingdom and Ireland (37% of all overseas-born) or Italy (12% of all overseas-born). There are relatively few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 65 and over (around 10,600 people, or 3% of the Indigenous population in 1997), reflecting both the higher fertility and lower life expectancy of Indigenous people.

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND CARE

In 1996, 63% of older people were living in family households, mostly with their partners. Just over one-quarter (28%) of all older people lived alone.

As people grow older their living arrangements may be influenced by a number of factors associated with ageing, such as the death of a spouse, or the need for care resulting from increasing illness or disability. Accordingly, people aged 85 and over were more likely than those aged 65–84 to live in cared accommodation (32% and 4%, respectively), or alone (33% and 27%).

In addition to those older people who require care and assistance from others, many are actively involved as carers themselves. In 1998, around one in six carers (401,000 people) were aged 65 and over; the majority of these (69%) were caring for their partner. Of the 96,700 older people who were primary carers, almost two-thirds (62%) were women.

### HEALTH AND DISABILITY

As people age they become more vulnerable to ill-health. In 1995, 90% of older people had experienced a recent illness, and virtually all (99%) reported at least one long-term health condition. Hypertension and heart disease were commonly reported recent illnesses, while the most common long-term conditions were sight and hearing loss. Arthritis had affected half (50%) of all older people either recently or in the long-term.

In 1995, 57% of older people reported that they exercised, mainly through less vigorous activities such as walking. Although older people were less likely to exercise and more likely to be overweight than younger people, they were less likely to smoke or consume hazardous amounts of alcohol. In 1998, heart disease and cancer remained the leading causes of death among older people.

## ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Major changes occur in the sources and level of income as people grow older. The declining labour force participation of older people contributes significantly to these changes. In 1998, 6% of older people were in the labour force, compared with 33% of those aged 60–64 and 59% of those aged 55–59.

Average income falls markedly with age. In 1996–97, government pensions and allowances were the principal source of income for almost three-quarters (74%) of all income units where the reference person was aged 65 and over. Superannuation was the principal source of income for just 9% of these income units. Between 1986 and 1997 the proportion of people aged 45 and over holding superannuation coverage at retirement rose from 35% to 58%.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

In 1996, 70% of all older people lived in separate houses and 17% were in semidetached dwellings, flats, units and apartments. In addition, around 3% of older people lived in self-care accommodation in retirement villages. Overall, 7% of older people lived in non-private dwellings such as nursing homes and other forms of cared accommodation; this increased rapidly among the very old to 31% of people aged 85–94 and 58% of those aged 95 and over.

Older people have higher rates of home ownership than younger people, with around 80% owning their home outright. As a result, in 1997–98 housing costs for older households were generally much lower than those for all households.

Older households are aware of safety in the home. In 1998, 90% of households with the reference person aged 65 and over had at least one fire safety measure in place.

Older people are less likely to be victims of personal crime than younger people, although they do not always feel safe.

## ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLE

Older people contribute to community and society through voluntary work for welfare and community organisations, child care for grandchildren and other forms of caring. In 1997, older people spent around 30% of their waking hours on unpaid work, comprising domestic activities, shopping, child care and voluntary work.

In 1997, older women spent more than twice as much time as men on housework, although this pattern was reversed for other household work such as grounds care and home maintenance. Nearly one-third (30%) of older people purchased at least one domestic service (during a two-week reference period) with gardening assistance being the most common.

In the 12 months to June 1999, 42% of older men and 33% of older women participated in some form of sport or physical activity, with walking and lawn bowls being the most popular. Older people attended cultural venues such as the cinema (36%), library (34%), and the botanic gardens (27%).

The current generation of older people has relatively low rates of use of electronic technologies such as personal computers, the Internet and electronic finance services.

KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS FOR OLDER PEOPLE, National and State Summary

	Units	Reference period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<b>POPULATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY</b>											
Total population											
Aged 65 and over	%	Jun 1998	12.7	12.6	11.3	14.2	10.5	13.1	3.3	7.8	12.2
Aged 85 and over	%	Jun 1998	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.3	0.2	0.6	1.2
Aged 65 and over in 2051	%	1998	24.6	25.7	23.0	28.9	22.2	31.8	9.5	20.9	24.2
Persons aged 65 and over	'000	Jun 1998	807.2	588.2	390.5	211.6	191.9	62.0	6.3	24.0	2 281.7
Males	'000	Jun 1998	351.5	254.9	175.0	91.8	85.3	26.9	3.3	10.5	999.2
Females	'000	Jun 1998	455.7	333.3	215.5	119.8	106.6	35.0	3.0	13.5	1 282.5
Persons aged 85 and over	'000	Jun 1998	77.7	59.5	37.7	21.7	19.3	6.0	0.4	1.9	224.3
Females	%	Jun 1998	70.4	69.6	67.8	70.2	68.9	69.8	59.3	69.9	69.6
Indigenous population(a)											
Aged 65 and over	'000	Jun 1997	2.9	0.7	2.9	0.6	1.7	0.3	1.4	—	10.6
Aged 65 and over	%	Jun 1997	2.5	3.1	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.1	2.6	—	2.6
Persons aged 65 and over born overseas	'000	Aug 1996	202.3	170.6	88.9	63.8	71.6	10.0	2.3	8.5	618.0
From a MESC	%	Aug 1996	39.2	32.4	57.8	47.9	55.8	62.6	46.7	42.4	43.3
With Australian citizenship	%	Aug 1996	77.9	75.7	74.6	77.1	76.2	71.3	81.2	78.3	76.4
<b>LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND CARE</b>											
Males aged 65 and over											
Living with partner(b)	%	1998	76.7	77.1	74.3	79.9	74.8	74.4	76.4	75.7	76.4
Living alone(b)	%	1998	17.1	15.3	18.9	15.2	17.4	21.5	11.8	22.3	17.0
Widowed(c)	%	Apr 1997	15.2	13.5	15.3	16.0	13.1	*16.5	**19.9	**10.6	14.7
Females aged 65 and over											
Living with partner(b)	%	1998	46.1	46.0	46.2	46.6	49.0	48.4	56.9	44.9	46.4
Living alone(b)	%	1998	37.2	38.4	37.8	44.8	39.8	43.3	18.3	42.3	38.7
Widowed(c)	%	Apr 1997	45.0	44.0	47.4	47.0	46.6	50.6	*57.8	44.8	45.6
Persons aged 65 and over(c)											
Living in cared accommodation	'000	1998	61.4	42.9	29.0	13.6	14.4	4.2	n.p.	*1.2	166.8
Living in cared accommodation	%	1998	7.6	7.3	7.5	6.4	7.5	6.8	n.p.	* 5.1	7.3
Who are carers	'000	1998	149.8	107.3	60.5	37.5	30.5	10.9	n.p.	4.3	401.0
<b>HEALTH AND DISABILITY</b>											
Persons aged 65 and over											
Who reported a recent illness(c)	%	1995	90.7	88.2	90.3	88.5	90.8	87.7	83.3	90.7	89.7
Who reported recent use of medication(c)	%	1995	92.4	88.9	90.7	89.0	90.8	89.9	90.5	93.1	90.7
With a disability(c)	%	1998	54.0	51.2	56.0	54.4	55.8	57.4	58.0	59.3	53.9
Average Medicare services processed per person	no.	1997-98	22.5	21.6	21.3	19.7	19.9	18.3	12.9	19.5	21.4
Life expectancy—males											
At birth	years	1997	75.4	75.8	75.4	75.7	75.7	74.8	70.0	77.1	75.6
At age 65	years	1997	16.0	16.0	16.3	16.1	16.2	15.4	14.3	16.8	16.1
Life expectancy—females											
At birth	years	1997	81.2	81.4	81.3	81.5	81.6	80.1	74.7	81.3	81.3
At age 65	years	1997	19.7	19.7	20.0	19.9	20.0	19.0	16.7	19.8	19.8

(a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates are high series projections—see Glossary.

(b) Based on classifiable relationship in household responses.

(c) Estimates for the NT exclude remote and sparsely settled areas.

KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS FOR OLDER PEOPLE, National and State Summary *continued*

	Units	Reference period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<b>HEALTH AND DISABILITY <i>continued</i></b>											
Causes of death per 100,000 persons											
Males aged 65 and over											
Ischemic heart disease	rate	1998	1 226	1 151	1 347	1 314	1 137	1 272	942	908	1 226
Cancer	rate	1998	1 407	1 460	1 462	1 369	1 385	1 476	1 277	1 271	1 425
Stroke	rate	1998	458	398	428	424	397	504	274	344	429
Females aged 65 and over											
Ischemic heart disease	rate	1998	955	894	1 020	998	845	903	630	649	940
Cancer	rate	1998	807	839	789	822	818	823	962	900	816
Stroke	rate	1998	564	502	513	512	505	578	431	494	529
<b>ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT</b>											
Persons receiving age pension(a)	%	1998	63.0	65.0	63.3	68.2	62.7	64.7	66.3	49.7	65.4
Males(a)	'000	1998	204.8	154.9	102.7	58.3	48.8	16.0	2.0	4.6	613.6
Females(a)(b)	'000	1998	367.3	276.1	176.2	103.1	87.8	29.1	3.0	9.2	1 069.0
Persons aged 65 and over who were employed											
Males	%	1998	8.7	7.3	10.0	8.7	8.6	8.6	n.p.	13.5	8.7
Females	%	1998	3.2	2.8	3.1	1.7	3.4	2.3	n.p.	*3.0	2.9
<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>											
Persons aged 65 and over in private dwellings											
Retirement village(c)	'000	Aug 1996	18.8	10.2	11.3	5.0	7.1	0.9	—	0.7	54.0
Other	'000	Aug 1996	651.1	460.1	305.9	170.2	147.3	50.0	4.8	17.9	1 807.4
Total	'000	Aug 1996	669.9	470.2	317.2	175.2	154.5	50.8	4.8	18.6	1 861.4
Persons aged 65 and over in private dwellings(d)											
Owner	%	Aug 1996	85.6	88.1	86.0	80.7	83.4	85.5	49.4	78.8	85.5
Renter	%	Aug 1996	12.3	10.0	11.8	16.3	13.9	11.9	43.2	19.5	12.3
Living in separate house	%	Aug 1996	77.5	81.4	83.0	75.8	75.8	84.9	63.7	77.8	79.3
Living in semidetached/townhouse	%	Aug 1996	7.5	6.8	5.5	12.7	16.2	5.9	11.7	15.7	8.2
Living in flat/unit/apartment	%	Aug 1996	13.6	11.2	9.6	10.9	6.9	8.6	15.2	6.3	11.3
<b>ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLE</b>											
Persons aged 65 and over engaging in voluntary work											
Males	%	Jun 1995	13.2	16.8	15.5	20.3	15.9	16.8	*21.0	28.0	15.7
Females	%	Jun 1995	15.6	20.8	19.6	25.3	19.0	15.3	*18.8	22.6	18.9
Persons aged 65 and over attending cultural venues(e)											
National, State or local library	%	Apr 1999	32.5	32.8	31.6	37.9	36.0	41.0	23.0	41.2	33.5
Botanic garden	%	Apr 1999	24.8	30.3	27.3	32.3	22.3	29.9	*14.0	36.0	27.4
Cinema	%	Apr 1999	36.5	35.8	32.9	38.0	39.2	18.6	38.9	40.3	35.6
Persons aged 65 and over with post-school qualifications(e)											
Males	%	Jul 1996	43.9	40.6	39.8	43.0	49.2	*35.2	n.p.	**61.5	42.7
Females	%	Jul 1996	27.7	26.6	23.5	*13.9	*26.1	*33.0	n.p.	**35.6	25.7
Persons aged 55 and over frequently using a home computer(e)(f)											
	%	1998	11.4	9.4	10.4	9.2	10.6	8.5	11.2	26.0	10.6

(a) Australian total includes pension recipients not resident in Australia.

(b) Includes eligible recipients aged less than 65 years.

(c) Self-care accommodation only.

(d) Excluding self-care accommodation in retirement villages.

(e) Estimates for the NT exclude remote and sparsely settled areas.

(f) Once a week or more.

## KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS FOR OLDER PEOPLE, Annual Comparisons

	Units	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<b>POPULATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY</b>												
Total population												
Aged 65 and over	%	10.7	10.8	11.0	11.1	11.3	11.5	11.6	11.8	11.9	12.0	12.1
Aged 85 and over	%	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2
Persons aged 65 and over	'000	1 739	1 791	1 847	1 893	1 951	2 004	2 056	2 106	2 151	2 203	2 244
Males	'000	736	760	786	809	836	862	887	911	934	959	980
Females	'000	1 003	1 032	1 060	1 085	1 114	1 142	1 169	1 194	1 217	1 244	1 264
Persons aged 85 and over	'000	133	138	143	147	154	163	172	181	191	202	213
Females	%	72.8	72.5	72.1	71.8	71.3	70.9	70.8	70.5	70.3	70.1	70.0
Indigenous population(a)												
Aged 65 and over	'000	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	10.0	9.5	9.3	9.2	9.3	10.1	10.6
Aged 65 and over	%	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6
<b>LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND CARE</b>												
Males aged 65 and over												
Living with partner(b)	%	75.1	76.3	76.5	76.9	76.1	75.5	75.3	76.0	76.4	75.3	75.1
Living alone(b)	%	16.4	16.6	15.8	16.0	16.4	17.2	18.5	16.9	16.7	17.9	19.2
Widowed	%	14.3	14.2	14.0	13.8	13.6	13.7	13.8	13.9	14.0	14.0	13.9
Females aged 65 and over												
Living with partner(b)	%	42.4	43.2	44.1	44.0	44.6	44.6	44.5	46.0	45.7	45.5	45.0
Living alone(b)	%	40.6	39.7	38.6	39.1	39.4	38.9	41.0	39.4	39.4	39.7	40.1
Widowed	%	48.1	47.6	47.1	46.6	45.4	45.9	46.3	46.7	47.1	47.4	47.1
<b>HEALTH AND DISABILITY</b>												
Average Medicare services processed per person aged 65 and over	no.	14.6	14.8	15.2	15.3	15.4	16.4	17.9	18.8	19.6	20.5	20.9
Life expectancy—males												
At birth	years	73.1	73.1	73.3	73.9	74.4	74.5	75.0	75.0	75.0	75.2	75.6
At age 65	years	14.7	14.8	14.7	15.2	15.5	15.4	15.7	15.7	15.7	15.8	16.1
Life expectancy—females												
At birth	years	79.5	79.5	79.6	80.1	80.4	80.4	80.9	80.9	80.8	81.1	81.3
At age 65	years	18.7	18.7	18.7	19.0	19.3	19.2	19.5	19.7	19.5	19.6	19.8
Causes of death per 100,000 people												
Males aged 65 and over												
Ischemic heart disease	rate	1 796	1 733	1 755	1 624	1 554	1 554	1 460	1 468	1 390	1 362	1 286
Cancer	rate	1 428	1 465	1 460	1 444	1 430	1 467	1 459	1 494	1 474	1 489	1 420
Stroke	rate	581	571	554	502	496	494	479	510	485	483	438
Females aged 65 and over												
Ischemic heart disease	rate	1 274	1 224	1 256	1 189	1 130	1 171	1 068	1 106	1 040	1 025	1 005
Cancer	rate	783	802	800	798	825	816	833	828	842	843	828
Stroke	rate	692	664	659	629	590	582	591	602	591	579	543
<b>ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT</b>												
Persons receiving age pension(c)	%	62.7	61.5	60.2	59.2	59.3	61.0	62.8	64.3	63.0	62.7	64.4
Males(c)	'000	407.7	404.9	403.3	404.5	418.4	447.9	481.2	514.2	544.6	570.3	597.9
Females(c)(d)	'000	914.5	923.9	931.0	936.0	957.5	998.3	1 034.5	1 067.7	1 034.1	1 032.5	1 082.4
Persons aged 65 and over who were employed												
Males	%	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.3	9.0	9.2	8.2	9.0	9.1	9.1	9.8
Females	%	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.1	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.5

(a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates from 1987 to 1990 have been benchmarked to the 1991 Census. From 1991 to 1996, estimates have been benchmarked to the 1996 Census. Data for 1997 are high series projections—see Glossary.

(b) Based on classifiable relationship in household responses.

(c) Includes pension recipients not resident in Australia.

(d) Includes eligible recipients aged less than 65 years.

# CHAPTER 1 POPULATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY ....

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLDER POPULATION

In 1998 there were 2.3 million people aged 65 and over living in Australia (the 'older population'). They comprised 12% of the total Australian population.

### Age and sex

More than half of all older people were in the 65–74 year age group while 10% were aged 85 and over. There were 15,400 Australians aged 95 and over, less than 1% of the older population.

Because women live longer than men on average, there were more older women than older men in the population, and this imbalance increased with age. Of people aged 85–94, 69% were women, as were 77% of those aged 95 and over. In contrast, females comprised 49% of children aged 0–14.

### 1.1 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION, By Age Group—1998

Age group (years)	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....		% of older persons	% female
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%		
0–14	2 009.6	21.6	1 910.2	20.3	3 919.8	20.9	..	48.7
15–24	1 365.7	14.7	1 305.0	13.9	2 670.7	14.3	..	48.9
25–34	1 440.5	15.5	1 440.1	15.3	2 880.5	15.4	..	50.0
35–44	1 443.8	15.5	1 451.5	15.4	2 895.3	15.5	..	50.1
45–54	1 246.1	13.4	1 219.8	13.0	2 465.9	13.2	..	49.5
55–64	815.0	8.7	801.3	8.5	1 616.3	8.6	..	49.6
65–69	334.3	3.6	348.7	3.7	683.0	3.6	29.9	51.1
70–74	286.0	3.1	329.9	3.5	615.9	3.3	27.0	53.6
75–79	200.5	2.2	267.9	2.8	468.4	2.5	20.5	57.2
80–84	110.1	1.2	180.0	1.9	290.1	1.5	12.7	62.1
85–89	50.6	0.5	105.2	1.1	155.8	0.8	6.8	67.5
90–94	14.1	0.2	38.9	0.4	53.1	0.3	2.3	73.4
95 and over	3.6	—	11.9	0.1	15.4	0.1	0.7	76.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 319.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9 410.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18 730.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>50.2</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

## POPULATION GROWTH

The proportion of older people in the Australian population has grown steadily over the time statistics have been available. In 1861 only 1% of the population were aged 65 and over. Older people had grown to 4% of the total population by the turn of the century and remained around that level throughout the period before and during World War I (see table 1.22). During the 1920s and 1930s there was a rise in the proportion of both older men and older women, but since then the proportion of older women has increased faster than that of older men. This is in line with the difference between male and female life expectancy evident since the 1930s (see table 1.4).

POPULATION GROWTH *continued*

The growth in the share of the population aged 65 and over is expected to continue. By 2051, almost one-quarter of the Australian population (6 million people) is projected to be aged 65 and over (see table 1.7).

**1.2** PROPORTION OF THE POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER(a), By Sex

(a) Includes some imputed data prior to 1921.

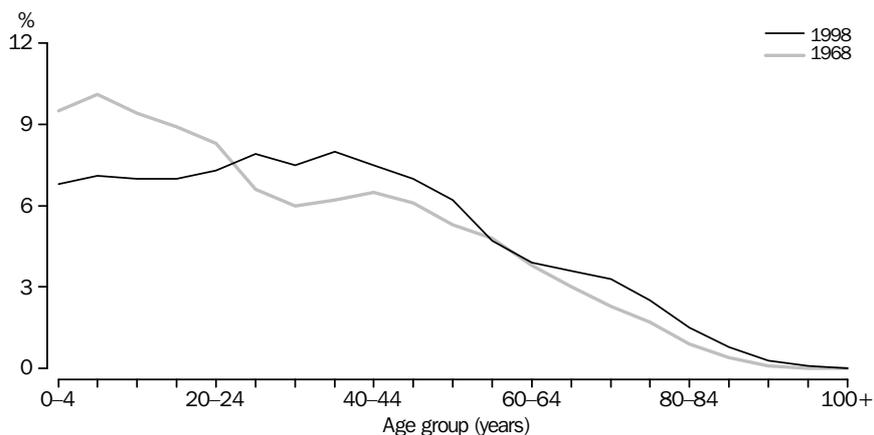
Source: CBCS 1913, CBCS 1968; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

## An ageing population

The rate of ageing of the population, as measured by the proportion of the population aged 65 and over, has been substantially affected by changes in fertility. The older population has grown more slowly relative to other age groups in times of high fertility, and more quickly in times of low fertility. Much of the increase in the proportion of older people in Australia during the 1920s and 1930s was due to a decline in the relative size of the young age groups, and in particular to the relatively low numbers of children being born during the Depression. Shortly after World War II the growth in the proportion of older people declined, primarily because of the post-war baby boom but also through the large post-war immigration program. As the fertility boom associated with post-war growth subsided, there was a period of high mortality among older males. The proportion of the population aged 65 and over did not begin to increase again until after 1971 (see table 1.22). See *Australian Social Trends, 1996* (ABS 1996a) for more information on changing fertility in Australia over the last century.

The movement of age cohorts through the population can be followed by comparing the age distribution of the Australian population in different years. Because fertility peaked in 1961, those aged 5–9 were the largest cohort in 1968. Thirty years later (in 1998) those aged 35–39 were the largest cohort. Those aged 40–44 in 1968 represented a second peak in the population. They can still be seen in 1998, now aged in their early 70s.

**1.3 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION, Age Distribution—1968 and 1998**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

Life expectancy

The ageing of the population has also been affected by improved life expectancy throughout this century. Life expectancy is a measure of the average number of years a person might expect to live if current death rates continued throughout their lifetime.

Around the turn of the century, average life expectancy at birth was below 60 for both females and males. It was not until the 1930s and the 1940s respectively that females and males could expect to live longer than 65 years. Females born in 1995–97 could expect to live to 81 years and males to 76 years.

**1.4 LIFE EXPECTANCY(a), At Birth and Age 65**

Reference period	AT BIRTH.....		AT AGE 65.....	
	Males years left	Females years left	Males years left	Females years left
TOTAL POPULATION				
1881–1891	47.2	50.8	11.1	12.3
1891–1900	51.1	54.8	11.3	12.8
1901–1910	55.2	58.8	11.3	12.9
1920–1922	59.2	63.3	12.0	13.6
1932–1934	63.5	67.1	12.4	14.2
1946–1948	66.1	70.6	12.3	14.4
1953–1955	67.1	72.8	12.3	15.0
1965–1967	67.6	74.2	12.2	15.7
1975–1977	69.6	76.6	13.1	17.1
1985–1987	72.7	79.2	14.6	18.6
1990–1992	74.3	80.4	15.4	19.3
1995–1997	75.6	81.3	16.1	19.8
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION(b)				
1991–96	56.9	66.5	10.3	13.3

(a) Average remaining lifetime (in years).

(b) Experimental estimates.

Source: Office of the Australian Government Actuary 1980–82, 1985–87 and 1990–92; ABS 1996a; ABS 1997a.

*Life expectancy continued*

For people who reach 65 years, average life expectancy has also increased, though not as markedly as at birth. In 1901–10 men aged 65 could expect to live a further 11 years; by 1995–97 they could expect to live 16 more years. In comparison women aged 65 could expect to live a further 13 years in 1901–10, but by 1995–97 women aged 65 could expect 20 more years of life.

Throughout the twentieth century females have had a longer life expectancy than males. At birth in 1901–10 females could expect to live four years longer than males. At age 65 they could expect to live two years longer. The gap between male and female life expectancy was widest in the mid 1970s. In 1975–77 females could expect to live seven years longer than males from birth and four years longer at age 65. By 1995–97 this gap had narrowed a little, with the life expectancy of females six years longer than that of males at birth and four years longer at age 65.

The differences between male and female life expectancy in countries with low mortality such as Australia have, in part, been attributed to differing incidences of lifestyle factors such as cigarette smoking (United Nations 1993a; Ruzicka, L.T. and Lopez, A.D. 1983). Also, some of the difference in life expectancy at birth can be explained by higher infant mortality rates in males than in females, reflecting the greater inherent vulnerability of males to most causes of infant death (Waldron, I. 1983).

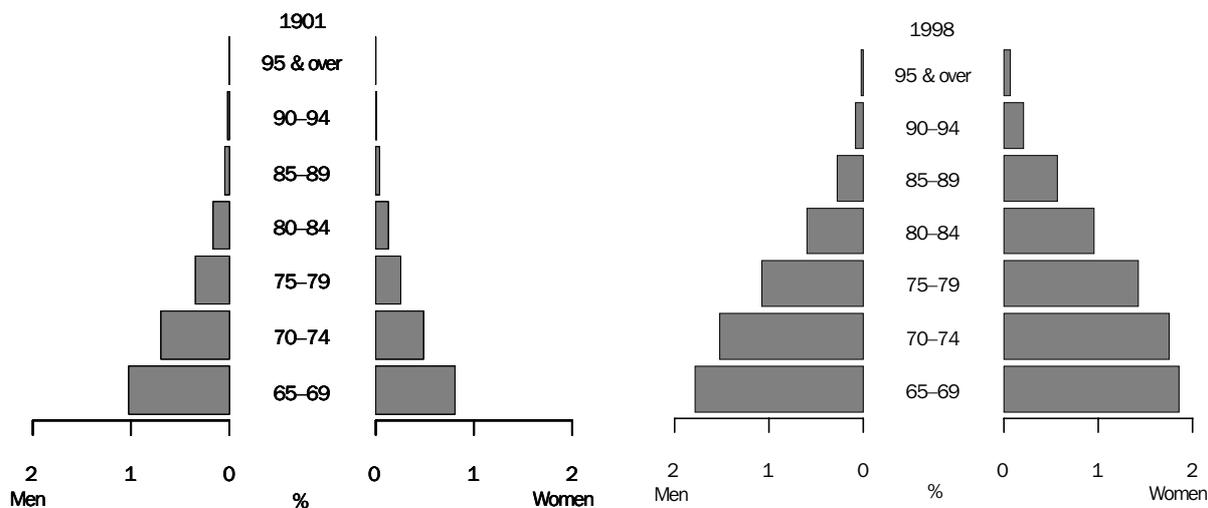
The life expectancy of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Australia's Indigenous population, is considerably lower than that of other Australians. In the period 1991–96, the life expectancy of Indigenous Australians was equivalent to the life expectancy of all Australians in the 1920s and 1930s.

*Changes in the structure of the older population*

The growth in the Australian population over the last century has resulted in changes to the structure of the older age groups. In 1901, 46% of the older population were aged 65–69 and 3% were aged 85 and over. In 1998, 30% of the older population were aged 65–69 and 10% were aged 85 and over. The rate of growth in the proportion of people aged 85 and over is projected to outpace the rate of growth in the proportion of the younger age groups over the period to 2051 (see table 1.7).

Over the twentieth century there has also been a shift in the sex distribution of older people. In 1901, 56% of people aged 65 and over were men. In 1998, 44% of this population were men. The ratio of older men to older women has been transposed over the century. In 1901 there were 1.3 men to every woman; in 1998 there were 1.3 women to every man.

**1.5 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER, Proportion of the Total Population—1901 and 1998**



Source: CBCS 1908; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

**Centenarians**

Though few people live past 100 years of age, more do so now than a century ago. In 1901, there were only 50 people aged 100 and over. By 1961 there were similar numbers of male centenarians as in 1901, but the number of female centenarians had increased substantially. The greatest leap in both the number and the rate per million of the population has occurred since 1981. In that year there were 30 centenarians per million of the population, whereas there were 126 per million in 1998. In 1998 there were 2,400 people aged 100 and over, of whom 75% were women.

**1.6 PERSONS AGED 100 YEARS AND OVER, By Sex**

Year	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....		
	no.	rate(a)	no.	rate(a)	no.	rate(a)	% female
1901	30	15.2	20	11.2	50	13.3	40.0
1921	25	9.1	11	4.1	36	6.6	30.6
1947	15	4.0	21	5.6	36	4.8	58.3
1961	32	6.0	112	21.6	144	13.7	77.8
1971	57	8.7	146	22.5	203	15.5	71.9
1981	69	9.3	374	50.0	443	29.7	84.4
1991	237	27.5	1 031	118.9	1 268	73.4	81.3
1998	598	64.2	1 758	186.8	2 356	126.0	74.6

(a) Persons aged 100 years and over per one million population.

Source: CBCS 1924; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

## Population projections

The ABS has published projections of the Australian population to the year 2051 (ABS 1998b), based on a combination of assumptions concerning future levels of births, deaths and migration. Three main series of projections have been compiled, based on differing levels of these variables.

Series I assumes an annual net overseas migration gain of 90,000, small net internal migration gains and losses for States and Territories, and that the total fertility rate falls to 1.75 births per woman by 2005–06, and then remains constant. Series II assumes an annual net overseas migration gain of 70,000, medium net internal migration gains and losses for States and Territories, and that the total fertility rate falls to 1.75 births per woman by 2005–06, and then remains constant. Series III assumes an annual net overseas migration gain of 70,000, large net internal migration gains and losses for States and Territories, and that the total fertility rate declines to 1.6 births per woman in 2005–06, and then remains constant. All series assume that the decline in mortality experienced between 1987–91 and 1992–96 would continue to 2005–06. From 2005–06 onwards, the average rates of decline experienced in successive five-year periods from 1967–71 to 1992–96 are assumed to continue. By 2051, the outcome of this mortality assumption is a life expectancy for males of 82.0 years and for females of 86.1 years.

All three series of projections indicate that declining fertility along with low mortality will continue the ageing of the Australian population well into the next century. On the basis of the three series of projections, by 2051 there will be between 6 million and 6.3 million people aged 65 and over, and they will comprise around one-quarter (24–26%) of the total population of Australia. The proportion will increase most rapidly in the first part of the new millennium, from 12% to 18% in 20 years. Between 2001 and 2011 there will be a 24% increase in the numbers of older people, followed by a 36% increase between 2011 and 2021.

### 1.7 POPULATION PROJECTIONS(a), Older Persons by Age Group

	AGED 65 AND OVER.....			AGED 85 AND OVER.....		
	Number	Proportion of population	Increase(b)	Number	Proportion of population	Increase(b)
As at 30 June	'000	%	%	'000	%	%
1991(c)	1 950.7	11.3	..	154.2	0.9	..
2001	2 384.7	12.4	6.2	255.6	1.3	18.3
2011	2 952.9	14.0	23.8	368.1	1.8	44.0
2021	4 021.9	17.9	36.2	440.5	2.0	19.7
2031	5 052.5	21.3	25.6	612.2	2.6	39.0
2041	5 696.9	23.3	12.8	920.4	3.8	50.3
2051	6 027.3	24.2	5.8	1 134.8	4.5	23.3

(a) Series II projections.

(b) Percentage growth between the reference points shown.

(c) Data for 1991 are estimated resident population rather than projected population.

Source: ABS 1998b.

Population projections *continued*

Over the next 50 years the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to increase more than four-fold, reaching between 1.1 million and 1.2 million by 2051. The proportion of the population who are aged 85 and over will also increase, from 1% to 5% of the total population. The growth is expected to be most rapid in the period mid-2031 to mid-2041, during which a 50% increase is projected in the number of people in this age group.

## Indigenous population growth

In 1996, 3% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) people were aged 65 years and over compared with 12% of the total Australian population. By 2006, the proportion of the Indigenous population aged 65 and over is projected to remain around the same level (3%), while the proportion of older people in the total Australian population is expected to rise to 13%. The lower proportion of older Indigenous people reflects both the higher fertility and lower life expectancy of Indigenous people (see also table 1.4).

**1.8 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION, By Indigenous Status and Age**

Age group (years)	1986.....		1996.....		2006.....	
	Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous(a)	All persons	Indigenous(a)	All persons(b)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
0-44	88.1	70.4	87.0	67.0	85.1	61.9
45-54	5.7	9.9	6.7	12.6	8.2	14.0
55-64	3.6	9.2	3.6	8.4	4.2	11.1
65 and over	2.6	10.5	2.6	12.0	2.5	12.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
65 and over	6.5	1 682.1	10.1	2 203.1	16.3	2 611.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>250.7</b>	<b>16 018.4</b>	<b>386.0</b>	<b>18 310.7</b>	<b>649.0</b>	<b>20 189.4</b>

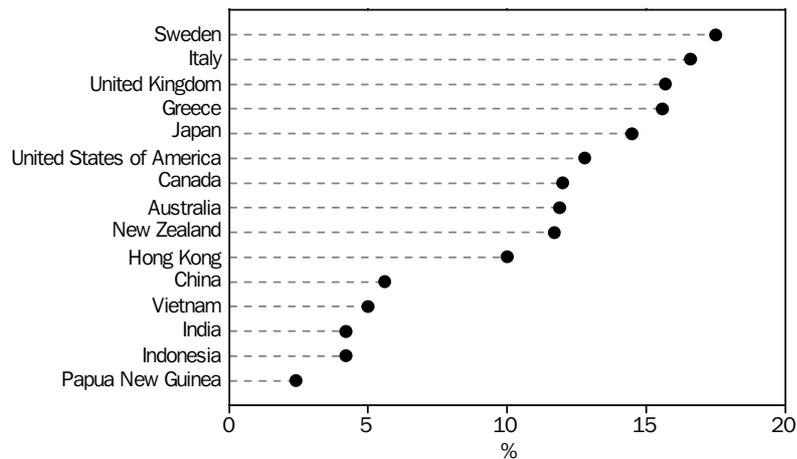
(a) Indigenous population projection 'high' series—see Glossary.

(b) Population projections—series II.

Source: ABS 1994a; ABS 1998b; ABS 1998c; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

## INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

Australia's population structure follows a similar pattern to that found throughout the developed world. Other countries are experiencing a similar ageing of their populations because fertility is falling while life expectancy is increasing. Australia (along with Canada, New Zealand and the United States) has lower levels of ageing than many European countries. In 1995, 12% of Australians were aged 65 and over compared with 18% in Sweden, 17% in Italy, and 16% in both the United Kingdom and Greece. Other countries (especially many in the Asia/Pacific region) have low proportions of older people because fertility and mortality are still high relative to the pattern in Australia.

**1.9** INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996(a)

(a) Closest year to 1996 available from each country.

Source: United Nations 1998.

Most nations have more older women than older men. However in a number of developing countries where the proportion of people aged 65 and over is small, there are fewer older women than older men. For example, in Papua New Guinea in 1990 only 2% of the population were aged 65 and over and 48% of that age group were female (see table 1.24). The trend in developing countries parallels Australia's experiences earlier this century. At that time, when both mortality and fertility were high, there were more men in the older age cohorts than women (see table 1.23).

## International population projections

Many countries are undergoing a demographic transition as the age structure of the world's population changes from younger to older. Four stages have been recognised in this transition: high fertility and high mortality; high fertility and declining mortality; declining fertility and declining mortality; low fertility and declining mortality (United Nations 1993b).

While Australia has reached the last stage of the transition of its population structure, many of its neighbours throughout Asia and the Pacific are still in the earlier stages. In particular India, Indonesia and Malaysia are currently experiencing fertility decline and appear likely to reach the last stage within the next 50 years. Papua New Guinea has not yet experienced a substantial decline in fertility. In 2050 it is projected to have a lower proportion of older people (10%) than Australia 50 years earlier (12% in 2000).

International population projections *continued*

While the proportion of the Australian population who will be aged 65 and over in 2050 is higher than in some neighbouring countries, it will be lower than in many other developed nations. In 2050, the proportion of Italy's population aged 65 and over is projected to be 36%, that of Hong Kong's population 32%, and that in both Greece and Japan 30%.

**1.10 INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS**

Selected countries	AGED 65 AND OVER....		1996 total fertility rate	1996 life expectancy at birth years
	2000(a) % of total population	2050(a) % of total population		
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>78</b>
Canada	12.6	24.5	1.6	78
China	6.7	19.2	1.8	70
France	16.2	26.4	1.7	78
Greece	17.8	30.4	1.3	77
Hong Kong	11.0	32.3	1.2	78
India	5.0	15.2	3.4	59
Indonesia	4.7	15.8	2.9	63
Italy	17.7	35.7	1.2	77
Japan	16.5	30.4	1.5	80
Malaysia	4.1	15.0	3.3	72
Netherlands	13.6	26.3	1.6	77
New Zealand	11.3	20.4	2.0	76
Papua New Guinea	3.0	9.7	4.7	56
Sweden	16.7	23.2	1.9	78
United Kingdom	15.8	23.2	1.7	77
United States	12.4	21.2	2.0	76
Viet Nam	5.2	16.1	3.7	65

(a) Medium variant of international projections calculated by the United Nations unless otherwise specified.

(b) Series II projection calculated by the ABS.

Source: ABS 1998b; United Nations 1997; Population Reference Bureau 1996.

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The proportion of older people in the Australian population differs by State. In 1997, the State with the highest proportion of people aged 65 and over was South Australia (14%), followed by Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria (all 13%). Both the Territories had younger population structures, with older people comprising 3% of all people in the Northern Territory and 8% in the Australian Capital Territory.

Over the next 50 years the proportion of older people in the population is projected to increase in every State and Territory. Tasmania is expected to overtake South Australia as the State with the largest proportion of older people (30–39% compared with 28–32%). The proportion of older people in the Australian Capital Territory is expected to approach that in the other States. However the Northern Territory will continue to have a noticeably younger population, with 9–11% of its population aged 65 and over compared with 24–26% of the total Australian population in 2051.

**1.11 POPULATION PROJECTIONS(a), By States and Territories**

State or Territory	1997.....			2051.....		
	0-64 years '000	65 years and over..... '000	% <sup>(b)</sup>	0-64 years '000	65 years and over.... '000	% <sup>(b)</sup>
New South Wales	5 477.4	797.0	12.7	5 923.4	1 937.5	24.6
Victoria	4 026.5	578.6	12.6	3 892.2	1 349.8	25.7
Queensland	3 019.3	381.9	11.2	4 778.2	1 425.0	23.0
South Australia	1 270.6	209.2	14.1	995.6	404.6	28.9
Western Australia	1 610.1	188.0	10.5	2 410.5	687.4	22.2
Tasmania	412.4	61.1	12.9	211.1	98.6	31.8
Northern Territory	181.0	6.1	3.3	398.1	42.0	9.5
Australian Capital Territory	286.7	23.1	7.5	306.4	80.9	20.9
<b>Australia(c)</b>	<b>16 287.2</b>	<b>2 245.0</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>18 917.5</b>	<b>6 027.2</b>	<b>24.2</b>

(a) Series II projections.

(b) Proportion of the total population.

(c) Includes Other Territories.

Source: ABS 1998b.

## Section of State

The proportions of older people living in urban and rural areas, as with people of all ages, reflect the highly urbanised nature of the Australian population. In 1996, 64% of older Australians were located in major urban areas (cities with a population of 100,000 or more), as were a similar proportion of those aged 0-64. Those aged 85 and over were more likely than younger age groups to have been located in larger cities (67%), and least likely to have been located outside of urban areas (7%).

**1.12 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION, By Section of State(a)—1996**

Section of State	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....				
	0-64	65-84	85 and over	Total 65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Major urban	63.4	64.2	67.0	64.4	63.5
Other urban	22.5	25.0	25.8	25.1	22.8
Locality(b)	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.5
Rural balance	11.7	8.1	4.7	7.8	11.3
<b>Total(c)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total(c)</b>	<b>14 912.3</b>	<b>1 817.4</b>	<b>187.5</b>	<b>2 004.9</b>	<b>16 917.2</b>

(a) Shows location of persons on census night.

(c) Excludes migratory collection districts.

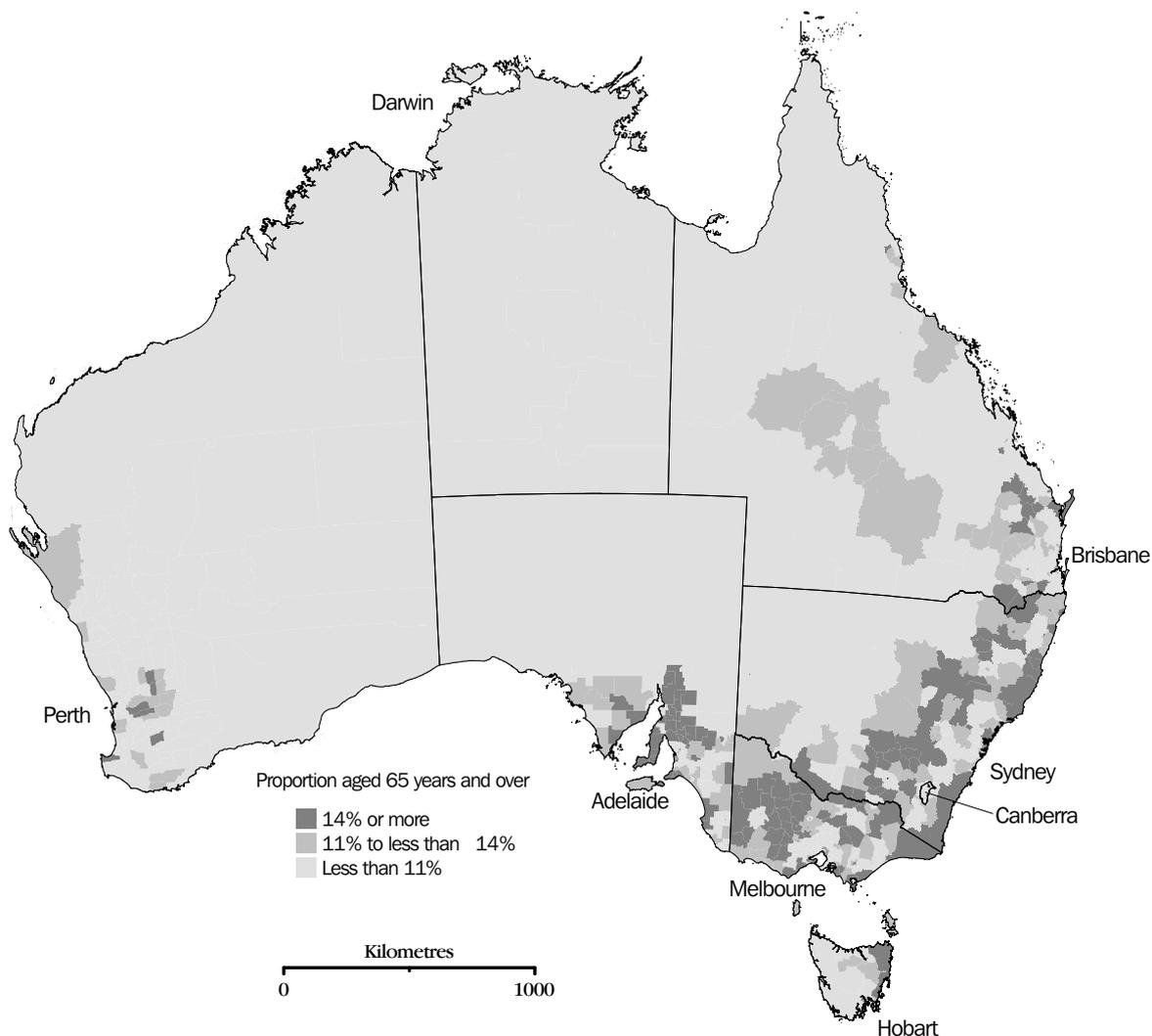
(b) A population cluster of between 200 and 999 persons which is classified as rural for statistical purposes.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

Proximity to the coast

Most older people, like other Australians, live along the south-east coast of Australia, and older people comprise significant proportions of the population living there. There are also relatively high proportions of older people among the populations of cities and towns along the inland plains, from southern Queensland through New South Wales and into western Victoria.

**1.13** PROPORTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER(a)—1996



(a) Mapped by Statistical Local Area.  
Source: ABS 1998d.

The great majority (83%) of Australians live within 50 kilometres of the coastline (ABS 1998e), but older people are likely to live closer to the coast than others. In 1996, 32% of people aged 65 and over lived within five kilometres of the coast. In comparison, 25% of Australians aged 0–64 lived five kilometres from the coast. The pattern of higher proportions of older people living near the coast was the same across all the States with the exception of the Northern Territory.

**1.14 PERSONS LIVING WITHIN FIVE KM(a) OF THE COAST—1996**

State or Territory	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....					Total
	0-64	65-74	75-84	85 and over	Total 65 and over	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
New South Wales	20.5	29.3	29.7	27.2	29.2	21.6
Victoria	20.0	25.0	27.5	27.3	26.0	20.8
Queensland	27.7	39.9	38.4	33.5	38.9	29.0
South Australia	31.5	38.3	38.1	34.4	37.9	32.4
Western Australia	34.6	39.2	38.2	34.3	38.4	35.0
Tasmania	56.3	61.4	63.3	62.3	62.1	57.0
Northern Territory	47.2	42.8	46.8	47.9	44.0	47.0
Australian Capital Territory	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Australia</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>25.8</b>

(a) Based on the population of Collection Districts (CDs) where the centre of a CD was 5 km or less from the coastline.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

**MIGRATION**

Older people are generally less likely to move overseas, interstate or even within their local area than other age groups. However, some sub-groups of people aged 65 and over have a higher propensity to move than others.

**Internal migration**

Population census results showed that, between 1991 and 1996, 22% of older people had moved residence compared with 43% of the total population. However, among older people, mobility rates increased with age. Of people aged 95 and over, 37% had moved during that five-year period, compared with 21% of people aged 65-74.

Although the very old were more likely to have moved in the last five years they were less likely to have moved very far. Of those aged 95 years and over who had moved, 42% moved within their own Statistical Local Area (SLA). Those aged 65-74 were more likely to have moved interstate or into another Statistical Division (SD) than the older age groups.

These differences reflect the tendency of the very old to move into closer proximity with family members, into more suitable dwellings (such as those without stairs) and into aged care accommodation (see chapter 2, Living Arrangements and Care and chapter 5, Physical Environment).

**1.15 PERSONS WHO MOVED RESIDENCE(a), By Age and Type of Move—1991–96**

Age group (years)	Within same Statistical Local Area	Other Statistical Local Area same Statistical Division	Other Statistical Division same State	Interstate	Total who moved(b)...	
	% of all persons	% of all persons	% of all persons	% of all persons	% of all persons	'000
5–64	15.0	17.8	7.1	5.5	46.3	6 127.9
65 and over						
65–74	7.6	7.4	3.6	2.1	21.1	249.8
75–84	8.6	7.9	2.8	1.7	21.3	136.2
85–94	12.6	12.0	3.1	1.5	30.3	49.3
95 and over	15.5	15.6	2.7	1.1	36.9	4.0
<i>Total</i>	8.4	7.9	3.3	1.9	22.0	439.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>6 567.3</b>

(a) Between 1991 and 1996, excluding persons who were overseas in 1991.

(b) Includes persons who indicated that they had moved, but did not state their previous address.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## Overseas migration

Older people were generally less likely to leave Australia permanently than younger people in 1997–98 (see *Migration, Australia, 1997–98* (ABS 1999a)). Likewise, older people born overseas were less likely to depart permanently than younger overseas-born. Of older people born overseas, two per 1,000 left Australia permanently compared with eight per 1,000 younger overseas-born. Those older people who did leave were more likely to return to their birthplace than go to another country. In the year to June 1998, about three-quarters (76%) of overseas-born older residents who left Australia permanently were returning to their country of birth. In comparison, 45% of younger Australian residents in the same situation were returning to their birthplace.

## 1.16 AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS BORN OVERSEAS, Permanent Departures—1998

Selected birthplaces	AGED 0–64.....			AGED 65 AND OVER.....		
	Returning to country of birth.....		All departures	Returning to country of birth.....		All departures
	%(a)	rate(b)	rate(b)	%(a)	rate(b)	rate(b)
United Kingdom and Ireland	75.6	3.1	4.1	81.0	1.4	1.8
New Zealand	89.7	15.5	17.3	96.6	7.9	8.2
Former Yugoslavia(c)	74.6	1.7	2.3	83.2	3.5	4.2
China	64.1	5.0	7.8	35.5	1.0	2.8
Greece	85.9	1.3	1.5	100.0	1.9	1.9
Italy	80.6	0.6	0.8	90.9	0.5	0.5
Viet Nam	100.0	1.2	1.2	100.0	2.9	2.9
Lebanon	100.0	1.7	1.7	96.2	4.1	4.3
Hungary	100.0	1.3	1.3	100.0	2.3	2.3
Netherlands	58.1	0.9	1.6	70.8	0.6	0.9
<b>All overseas-born departures</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>75.9</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>

(a) Proportion of all persons permanently departing who were born in that country.

(b) Rate of people permanently departing per 1,000 Australians (estimated resident population) in that age group, born in that country.

(c) Includes Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, and Former Yugoslavia (not further defined).

Source: ABS, unpublished data, Overseas Arrivals and Departures; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

## CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Since Australia was colonised by Britain in 1788, the composition of Australia's population has been influenced by government immigration policies and the economic conditions in both Australia and the rest of the world. Throughout the first half of this century, the only immigrants consistently encouraged to settle in Australia were from the United Kingdom or Ireland. After World War II this policy was broadened to include settlers from other European countries. Only in the last 20 years have substantial numbers of immigrants from Asian regions been accepted into Australia. These patterns of immigration have had a direct bearing on the cultural mix of older people now living in Australia (see *Australian Social Trends, 1994* (ABS 1994b)).

## Overseas-born people

In 1998, 32% of people aged 65 and over had been born overseas. The most common birthplace for older overseas-born people was the United Kingdom and Ireland, accounting for 37% of all older people born overseas.

Overseas-born people *continued*

The age structure of different overseas birthplace groups reflects changing immigration patterns over time. Accordingly, the countries from which immigration to Australia peaked in the 1950s and 1960s are now the birthplace groups with high proportions of people aged 65 and over. For example, immigration from Italy peaked in the period 1952–60, and Italy remained an important migration source throughout the 1960s; older people comprised 36% of the Italian-born population in 1998. Similar immigration patterns apply to Poland, the Netherlands and Germany, and each of these birthplace groups includes relatively high proportions of older people.

**1.17 PERSONS BORN OVERSEAS, Birthplace—1998**

Selected birthplaces	Aged 65 and over...		All persons
	%(a)	'000	'000
United Kingdom and Ireland	22.1	270.8	1 224.7
Italy	35.6	88.0	247.5
Greece	22.7	32.0	141.0
Germany	24.6	30.2	122.7
Poland	38.6	27.3	70.6
Former Yugoslavia(b)	14.7	30.0	203.5
Netherlands	28.4	26.3	92.8
New Zealand	6.3	21.6	342.7
China	15.0	22.4	149.1
India	12.8	12.2	95.3
<i>All birthplaces</i>	16.6	725.2	4 366.3
<i>Australia</i>	10.8	1 556.5	14 364.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>2 281.7</b>	<b>18 730.4</b>

(a) Proportion of persons born in each country who were aged 65 and over.

(b) Includes Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, and Former Yugoslavia (not further defined).

Source: ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population by country of birth.

## Citizenship

Before 1949, Australian citizenship was not granted to people born in countries other than Britain, and those born in Australia were regarded as British subjects. From 1949 onwards, people born in Australia automatically became Australian citizens, while all overseas-born people needed to apply to become citizens.

The population holding Australian citizenship increases with age for most overseas birthplace groups. In 1996, 76% of older people born overseas were Australian citizens compared with 66% of people aged 0–64. This is chiefly because the older a person is, the longer that person is likely to have been in Australia, which in itself increases the tendency towards citizenship (ABS 1996a).

## 1.18 OVERSEAS-BORN POPULATION(a), Proportion With Australian Citizenship—1996

Selected birthplaces	AGED 0–64.....				AGED 65 AND OVER.....			
	Arrived prior to 1981	Arrived in or after 1981	Total(b).....		Arrived prior to 1981	Arrived in or after 1981	Total(b).....	
	%	%	%	'000(c)	%	%	%	'000(c)
United Kingdom and Ireland	61.9	53.5	59.7	880.0	64.7	46.0	63.3	239.8
Italy	77.9	45.0	76.7	163.6	83.9	36.8	83.5	74.4
Greece	97.0	76.4	95.8	102.5	98.3	59.3	97.4	23.9
Germany, Federal Republic of	82.5	38.7	73.7	84.8	85.2	26.5	83.0	25.1
Poland	96.9	87.9	91.1	39.7	96.8	73.0	95.5	25.3
Former Yugoslavia(d)	96.7	59.8	86.5	152.1	97.6	57.1	94.4	22.4
Netherlands	82.8	32.5	76.7	64.5	81.7	36.5	80.5	23.2
New Zealand	42.8	23.3	30.9	271.0	62.4	32.4	53.7	17.3
China (excl. Taiwan Province)	96.1	33.8	43.3	92.5	96.9	67.0	80.1	15.7
India	92.4	50.1	66.6	67.2	89.5	58.5	81.8	9.8
Hungary	97.4	84.0	94.0	16.3	98.0	67.8	97.2	9.0
Malta	71.4	54.8	70.5	42.2	74.6	51.5	74.3	8.7
Viet Nam	98.8	85.2	88.3	143.0	96.6	92.3	92.9	7.4
<b>All birthplaces</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>66.2</b>	<b>3 252.2</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>76.4</b>	<b>618.0</b>

(a) Excludes persons who reported that they would be in Australia for less than 12 months.

(b) Includes persons for whom year of arrival was 'not stated'.

(c) Includes persons for whom citizenship was 'not stated'.

(d) Comprises Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, and Former Yugoslavia (not further defined).

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

Australian residents who were born in countries where English was the main spoken language generally had lower citizenship rates than those born in other countries, regardless of their age or period of arrival. In particular New Zealand-born Australian residents were less likely to be Australian citizens than most other birthplace groups, irrespective of whether they arrived prior to 1981 or subsequently. Of older New Zealand-born people, 54% were citizens compared with 31% of New Zealanders aged 0–64 years.

Greek-born people of all ages were very likely to become Australian citizens. Of older Greek-born Australian residents, 97% were citizens, as were 96% of those aged 0–64 years. Other birthplace groups with high citizenship rates among older people included Hungary (97%), Poland (96%) and the countries of the Former Yugoslavia (94%).

## Language

For persons born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries, maintenance of a language is an indicator of the strength of cultural ties. In 1996, older people born in these countries were slightly more likely overall to speak a language other than English in the home than their younger counterparts (79% compared with 76% of those who reported a language other than English), but this varied markedly by language group (see table 1.25). For older people, the most commonly spoken overseas language was Italian (by 26% of those who reported a language other than English). This reflects both the high proportion of Italian-born people in the overseas-born population and a low propensity for Italian-born older people to adopt English as their primary language (relative to many other birthplace groups).

Most older people who were born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries arrived in Australia prior to 1981. Not surprisingly, the propensity of older people to speak English generally increased with the length of time since their arrival, with long-term residents more likely than more recent immigrants to speak English at home (22% compared with 10%). However, the overall likelihood of speaking English at home varied markedly between different birthplace groups. For example, less than 10% of older people who were born in Viet Nam, China, Greece or Italy spoke English at home, compared with over 30% of older people from Germany, the Netherlands or India.

#### 1.19 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER BORN IN OTHER THAN PREDOMINANTLY ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES(a), Proportion Who Spoke English at Home—1996

Selected birthplaces	ARRIVED PRIOR TO 1981.....		ARRIVED 1981 OR SUBSEQUENTLY....		TOTAL(b).....	
	<i>Proportion who spoke English at home</i>	<i>Number in birthplace group</i>	<i>Proportion who spoke English at home</i>	<i>Number in birthplace group</i>	<i>Proportion who spoke English at home</i>	<i>Number in birthplace group</i>
	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000
Italy	6.4	70.9	9.0	0.8	6.6	74.4
Greece	3.4	22.5	3.5	0.5	3.5	23.9
Germany, Federal Republic of	32.7	23.5	22.2	1.0	32.2	25.1
Poland	23.9	22.8	11.3	1.3	23.2	25.3
Former Yugoslavia(c)	12.8	20.0	2.1	1.7	12.1	22.4
Netherlands	41.7	22.0	32.1	0.6	41.5	23.2
China (excl. Taiwan Province)	15.0	6.8	0.8	8.5	7.1	15.7
India	92.0	7.2	57.0	2.4	83.0	9.8
Hungary	24.3	8.5	11.3	0.2	24.0	9.0
Malta	19.5	8.2	22.0	0.1	19.5	8.7
Viet Nam	3.1	1.2	1.1	6.0	1.5	7.4
<b>All birthplaces</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>292.8</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>350.6</b>

(a) Excludes persons who reported that they would be in Australia for less than 12 months.

(b) Includes persons for whom year of arrival was 'not stated'.

(c) Comprises Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, and Former Yugoslavia (not further defined).

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

Language *continued*

Importantly, however, many overseas-born people have been able to maintain their own language within the home while also using English to communicate with other Australians. In addition to those older people born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries who spoke English at home, a further 46% reported that they spoke English well. This included 40% of older Greek-born and 48% of older Italian-born people, which gives a more accurate indication of overall English proficiency among people from these countries.

The ability of older people to speak English varied among birthplace groups. In general, older people from more recently arrived birthplace groups had greater difficulty in speaking English than those from post-war immigrant groups. In 1996, 89% of Vietnamese-born and 76% of Chinese-born immigrants were unable to speak English well, compared with 56% of Greek-born and 44% of Italian-born immigrants.

**1.20 PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH(a)—1996**

Selected birthplaces	SPOKE ONLY ENGLISH.....		SPOKE ENGLISH WELL(b).....		DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH WELL(c)		TOTAL.....	
	Aged 0-64	Aged 65 and over	Aged 0-64	Aged 65 and over	Aged 0-64	Aged 65 and over	Aged 0-64	Aged 65 and over
	%(d)	%(d)	%(d)	%(d)	%(d)	%(d)	'000(e)	'000(e)
Italy	18.5	6.6	66.4	48.2	14.1	44.3	163.6	74.4
Greece	7.1	3.5	65.8	39.9	26.0	55.8	102.5	23.9
Germany, Federal Republic of	53.8	32.2	44.9	62.5	1.0	4.8	84.8	25.1
Poland	17.9	23.2	70.4	58.1	10.7	18.0	39.7	25.3
Former Yugoslavia(f)	12.4	12.1	67.1	46.5	19.2	40.2	152.1	22.4
Netherlands	70.5	41.5	28.9	55.1	0.4	2.9	64.5	23.2
China (excl. Taiwan Province)	4.5	7.1	57.0	16.6	37.8	75.5	92.5	15.7
India	53.1	83.0	43.7	11.2	2.7	5.5	67.2	9.8
Hungary	36.6	24.0	57.1	61.6	5.6	13.6	16.3	9.0
Malta	40.5	19.5	54.1	59.1	4.6	20.4	42.2	8.7
Viet Nam	2.8	1.5	54.8	8.5	40.9	88.5	143.0	7.4
<b>All birthplaces(a)</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>1 983.8</b>	<b>350.6</b>

(a) Comprises persons born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries, excluding those who reported that they would be in Australia for less than 12 months.

(b) Comprises persons who spoke a language other than English at home and who reported that they spoke English 'very well' or 'well'.

(c) Comprises persons who spoke a language other than English at home reported that they spoke English 'not well' or 'not at all'.

(d) As a proportion of all persons who specified the language they spoke at home.

(e) Includes persons for whom language spoken at home was 'not stated'.

(f) Comprises Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, and Former Yugoslavia (not further defined).

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## Religion

Religious affiliation is closely related to birthplace group, and is also a signal of cultural background. In the 1996 census, more older people (85%) than younger people (73%) specified a religious affiliation. Both older and younger people were most likely to be affiliated with Christian religions, although this tendency was greater among those aged 65 and over.

Religion *continued*

Between 1976 and 1996 the proportion of older Australians affiliating with a Christian denomination fell only slightly (by one percentage point). In comparison, the proportion of younger Australians affiliating with a Christian denomination fell by nine percentage points. Because migrants have a much younger age structure than the general population (see *Migration, Australia, 1997–98* (ABS 1999a)), increased migration from countries with non-Christian religions over the last 20 years is reflected more strongly in the religious affiliation of those in the younger age groups. Further, younger people have shown a greater tendency not to state a religion, or to declare that they have no religion, compared to older people.

**1.21 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION, By Religious Affiliation—1976 and 1996**

Selected religious affiliations	1976.....			1996.....		
	Aged 0–64	Aged 65 and over	All persons	Aged 0–64	Aged 65 and over	All persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Christian religions</b>						
Anglican	27.1	34.2	27.7	20.7	31.1	22.0
Baptist	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.8	1.7
Catholic	26.3	19.7	25.7	27.4	24.3	27.0
Lutheran	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.4
Orthodox(a)	2.9	1.3	2.7	2.9	2.3	2.8
Pentecostal	0.3	0.2	0.3	1.1	0.4	1.0
Uniting Church(b)	..	..	..	7.0	11.0	7.5
Methodist(b)	7.0	9.6	7.3	..	..	..
Congregational(b)	0.4	0.7	0.4	..	..	..
Presbyterian(b)(c)	6.4	9.1	6.6	3.4	7.1	3.8
<b>Total(d)</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>84.6</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>70.9</b>
<b>Other religions</b>						
Islam	0.4	—	0.3	1.3	0.2	1.1
Buddhism	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.2	0.5	1.1
Judaism	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.4
<b>Total(e)</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>
No religion	8.7	4.2	8.3	18.0	6.5	16.6
Not stated	11.9	10.0	11.8	8.8	8.5	8.7
<b>All persons</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>All persons</b>	<b>12 339.5</b>	<b>1 209.0</b>	<b>13 548.4</b>	<b>15 601.9</b>	<b>2 150.9</b>	<b>17 752.8</b>

(a) Only Greek Orthodox was identified in the 1976 Census.

(b) In 1978 three Christian denominations (Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational) joined to become the Uniting Church. While Methodist and Congregational Churches all united (or formed separate non-aligned Churches) the Presbyterians were able to choose to join the Uniting Church or remain Presbyterian.

(c) Includes Reformed.

(d) Includes all other Christian religions.

(e) Includes all other religions.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1976 and 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

**1.22 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER, By Age Group**

Year	Aged 65–74.....		Aged 75–84.....		Aged 85 and over....		Total.....	
	'000	% of all persons	'000	% of all persons	'000	% of all persons	'000	% of all persons
1901	113.2	3.0	33.4	0.9	4.2	0.1	150.8	4.0
1911	131.8	3.0	51.8	1.2	7.0	0.2	190.6	4.3
1921	172.9	3.2	60.3	1.1	10.2	0.2	243.4	4.5
1931	297.1	4.6	88.8	1.4	12.3	0.2	398.2	6.1
1941	359.5	5.1	150.6	2.1	18.0	0.3	528.1	7.4
1951	467.4	5.5	183.6	2.2	32.7	0.4	683.7	8.1
1961	599.4	5.7	251.5	2.4	43.7	0.4	894.6	8.5
1971	698.0	5.3	325.4	2.5	66.9	0.5	1 090.4	8.3
1981	937.7	6.3	414.7	2.8	102.6	0.7	1 455.0	9.7
1991	1 182.1	6.8	614.3	3.6	154.2	0.9	1 950.7	11.3
1998	1 298.9	6.9	758.5	4.0	224.3	1.2	2 281.7	12.2

Source: ABS 1908; ABS 1913; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

**1.23 AUSTRALIAN POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER, By Sex**

Year	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....	
	'000	% of population	'000	% of population	'000	% of population
1861	n.a.	1.2	n.a.	0.8	n.a.	1.0
1871	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	1.7
1881	n.a.	2.8	n.a.	2.1	n.a.	2.5
1891	n.a.	3.2	n.a.	2.5	n.a.	2.9
1901	85.2	4.3	65.6	3.7	150.8	4.0
1911	100.4	4.3	90.2	4.2	190.6	4.3
1921	124.9	4.5	118.5	4.4	243.4	4.5
1931	201.8	6.1	196.4	6.1	398.2	6.1
1941	251.5	7.0	276.6	7.8	528.1	7.4
1951	310.9	7.3	372.8	8.9	683.7	8.1
1961	384.4	7.2	510.2	9.8	894.6	8.5
1971	459.4	7.0	631.0	9.7	1 090.4	8.3
1981	612.2	8.2	842.8	11.3	1 455.0	9.7
1991	836.3	9.7	1 114.5	12.9	1 950.7	11.3
1998	999.2	10.7	1 282.5	13.6	2 281.7	12.2

Source: ABS 1968; ABS, unpublished data, Estimated Resident Population.

**1.24 OLDER PEOPLE, International Comparisons**

Selected countries	Year	Aged 65 and over.....			Aged 85 and over.....		
		'000	%(a)	% female	'000	%(a)	% female
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2 154.3</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>190.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>70.2</b>
Canada	1995	3 558.5	12.0	57.8	344.1	1.2	69.6
China	1990	62 993.4	5.6	54.5	2 323.7	5.6	69.2
France	1993	8 360.4	14.5	60.3	990.9	1.7	73.2
Greece	1995	1 629.0	15.6	55.6	153.7	1.5	58.4
Hong Kong	1996	631.7	10.0	55.0	42.9	0.7	70.9
India	1993	37 392.0	4.2	49.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Indonesia	1995	8 116.1	4.2	52.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Italy	1995	9 522.8	16.6	59.0	939.5	1.6	69.7
Japan	1995	18 260.8	14.5	58.9	1 579.7	1.3	69.7
Malaysia	1995	755.6	3.7	54.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Netherlands	1995	2 047.2	13.2	59.9	205.3	1.3	74.0
New Zealand	1994	411.0	11.7	57.0	37.4	1.1	70.6
Papua New Guinea	1990	91.2	2.4	48.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sweden	1995	1 543.3	17.5	57.7	181.4	2.1	69.4
United Kingdom	1995	9 224.9	15.7	59.5	1 044.1	1.8	74.8
United States	1996	33 860.9	12.8	59.0	3 761.6	1.4	71.6
Viet Nam	1992	3 490.6	5.0	58.5	191.0	0.3	63.6

(a) Proportion of the total population in that age group.

Source: United Nations, 1998.

**1.25 ALL PERSONS BORN IN OTHER THAN PREDOMINANTLY ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES, Language Spoken at Home—1996**

Selected languages	AGE GROUP (YEARS)...		
	0-64	65 and over	Total
	'000	'000	'000
Italian	140.0	72.6	212.6
Greek	107.7	27.2	135.0
German	47.6	27.2	74.8
Polish	34.0	16.3	50.2
Dutch	19.9	14.3	34.2
Cantonese	147.9	13.0	161.0
Hungarian	14.1	7.2	21.3
Arabic (including Lebanese)	91.9	7.0	99.0
Maltese	24.6	7.0	31.6
Russian	19.3	6.4	25.7
English only	462.2	71.1	533.3
Other spoken language	850.2	74.8	924.9
Language not stated	19.3	5.5	24.8
<b>All persons(a)</b>	<b>1 983.8</b>	<b>350.6</b>	<b>2 334.4</b>

(a) Includes persons who used invented or sign languages, 'non-verbal so described' and 'inadequately described' responses.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## INTRODUCTION

Changing living arrangements over the lifespan are often associated with various life transitions, such as changes in levels of physical and economic dependence, the formation and dissolution of relationships, changing family responsibilities and individual preferences for companionship. As with people of all ages, the living arrangements of older people reflect the diversity of their personal circumstances. For example, while most older people still live independently in the community, there are differences in the range of people with whom they share their homes.

As people age, they may experience a loss or change in close relationships—including those with partners, other relatives and friends—which may prompt a shift in where and how they live. Similarly, their living arrangements may also be influenced by their levels of independence, desire for social interaction, choice of activities and need for care. This chapter examines the household relationships and living arrangements of older people and the impact of ageing and disability on these arrangements. In addition to looking at those older people who require care or assistance with various activities, the chapter also examines the important role that older people themselves play as carers.

## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE OLDER POPULATION

Most older people live with other family members. In 1996, around half (53%) of those aged 65 and over were living with their partner and, in total, 63% were living with at least one relative. A further 28% were living alone and 6% lived in cared accommodation such as nursing homes and cared homes for the aged (see chapter 5, Physical Environment).

There were significant differences in living arrangements between those aged 65–84 and those aged 85 and over, largely reflecting the impact of widowhood and the increasing incidence of illness and disability, each of which are more common in the later years. Those aged 85 and over were less likely to be living with their partner (17%) or with at least one relative (31%) than those aged 65–84 (57% and 66% respectively), and more likely to be living alone (33% compared with 27%). Although they were also far more likely to live in cared accommodation than those aged 65–84 (32% compared with 4%), around two-thirds (66%) were still living in private dwellings.

## 2.1 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS, Persons Aged 15 and Over(a)—1996

Relationship in dwelling	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....				
	15-64	65-84	85 and over	Total aged 65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>In private dwellings</b>					
<b>With relatives</b>					
Partner	58.9	56.7	16.7	53.0	58.0
Lone parent	5.2	4.2	5.9	4.3	5.1
Child	16.7	0.2	0.0	0.1	14.2
Other relative	2.3	4.6	8.6	5.0	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>80.0</b>
Unrelated individual in family household	1.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	1.0
Group household member	5.2	1.6	0.9	1.5	4.6
Lone person	7.9	27.0	32.6	27.5	10.9
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>98.7</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>92.8</b>	<b>97.8</b>
<b>In non-private dwellings</b>					
Resident of cared accommodation	0.2	3.8	32.4	6.4	1.1
Resident of other non-private dwelling	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7
<b>Total(c)</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 166.2</b>	<b>1 817.4</b>	<b>187.5</b>	<b>2 004.9</b>	<b>13 171.1</b>

(a) Excludes visitors and persons in migratory and off-shore collection districts.

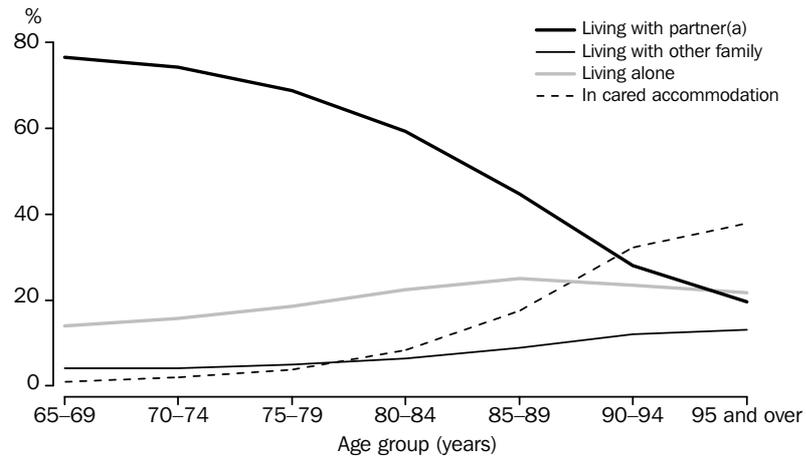
(b) Includes persons in 'not classifiable' households.

(c) Includes persons who were staff/family of staff and those who did not specify their relationship in the non-private dwelling.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

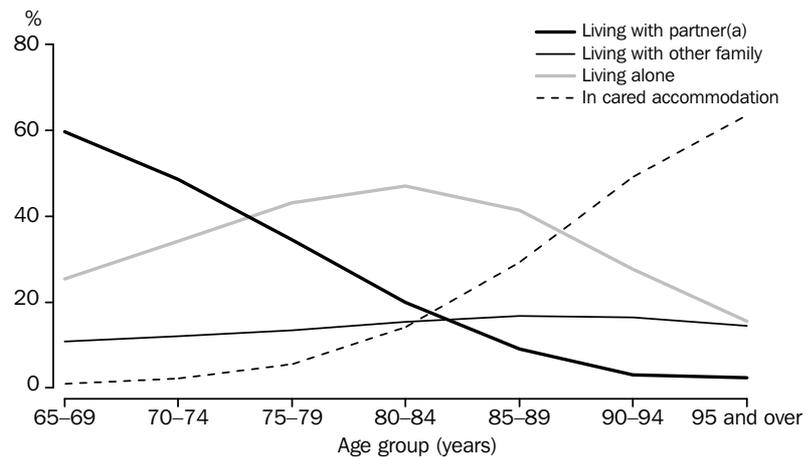
## Differences by gender

Because of their greater life expectancy and tendency to be younger than their male partners, many older women outlive their partners (see chapter 1, Population and Cultural Diversity). As a consequence, men are more likely to live in family situations—particularly with their partners—to later ages than women. In 1996, three-quarters (75%) of all men aged 65 and over lived with family members, compared with around half (53%) of all women of the same age. Among people aged 75–79, the proportion of men living with their partners (69%) was almost twice that of women (35%); for those aged 80–84, the disparity was even greater (59% of men compared with 20% of women) (see table 2.20).

**2.2 MALES AGED 65 AND OVER, Selected Living Arrangements by Age—1996**

(a) Includes persons who live with both their partner and other family members.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

**2.3 FEMALES AGED 65 AND OVER, Selected Living Arrangements by Age—1996**

(a) Includes persons who live with both their partner and other family members.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

More women than men live in cared accommodation, particularly among the very old (those aged 85 and over). Of women aged 85–89 in 1996, 29% lived in cared accommodation. Men in this age group were more likely to live with their partner (45%) or alone (25%) than in cared accommodation (18%). Even among men aged 95 and over, less than half (38%) lived in cared accommodation, compared with 63% of women aged 95 and over. The difference in the levels of institutionalisation of very old women and men not only reflects the fact that fewer women in these age groups remain partnered, but also that very old women have higher rates of disability with a severe or profound restriction (see *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998* (ABS 1999b)).

## EXTENDED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

As people age, many experience the initial transition from living with their partner and children to living only with their partner. In later life, however, the mutual care and interdependence between older and younger family members may again be reflected in changed living arrangements. Some older people who have lost a partner, or are suffering from ill-health, find family members a valuable source of care and companionship. Older people may in turn be able to provide child care to their grandchildren or other forms of support to their adult children or other family members.

In 1996, the majority (77%) of older people who lived in private dwellings lived with their partners only or on their own. The remainder were mostly living in family households with their children (12%), their children's family (5%), or with relatives other than their children (3%). A very small proportion lived with unrelated people only (2%).

## 2.4 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996

Household composition(a)	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
<b>Living with partner</b>						
With partner only	491.5	59.6	387.1	37.3	878.7	47.2
With partner and children	88.1	10.7	48.2	4.7	136.4	7.3
With partner and children's family	15.9	1.9	11.1	1.1	27.0	1.5
With partner and other relatives	9.8	1.2	6.9	0.7	16.7	0.9
With partner and non-relatives only	2.2	0.3	1.6	0.2	3.8	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>607.6</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>455.0</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>1 062.6</b>	<b>57.1</b>
<b>Living with children, but not partner</b>						
With children only	14.6	1.8	64.7	6.2	79.3	4.3
With children's family	12.5	1.5	51.1	4.9	63.6	3.4
With children and other relatives	0.5	0.1	2.6	0.2	3.1	0.2
With children and non-relatives only	0.8	0.1	1.9	0.2	2.7	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>120.3</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>148.7</b>	<b>8.0</b>
<b>Other living arrangements</b>						
With grandchildren	1.3	0.2	7.7	0.7	8.9	0.5
With parents	1.2	0.2	1.6	0.2	2.8	0.2
With other relatives	11.4	1.4	17.9	1.7	29.3	1.6
With unrelated people only	18.0	2.2	17.1	1.7	35.2	1.9
Alone	146.7	17.8	404.6	39.0	551.3	29.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>178.6</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>448.9</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>627.6</b>	<b>33.7</b>
<b>Total in private dwellings(b)</b>	<b>824.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 036.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 861.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Total in one-family households</i>	634.4	76.9	588.8	56.8	1 223.1	65.7
<i>Total in multifamily households</i>	18.6	2.3	15.7	1.5	34.3	1.8

(a) Non-relatives may also be present in all households except those specified as 'With partner only' and 'With children only'.

(b) Includes persons in 'not classifiable' households.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

### Living Arrangements of Indigenous people

The Indigenous population has a younger age structure than the total Australian population, reflecting both their higher fertility rate and lower life expectancy (see chapter 1, Population and Cultural Diversity). In 1996, only 8,000 people identifying as Indigenous were aged 65 and over, representing less than one per cent of all older Australians.

Considerably fewer older Indigenous people were living with their partner only (19% compared with 47% of all older Australians). Conversely, they were more likely to be living with their children (22%), their children's family (18%), or with relatives other than their children (15%). Whereas less than 2% of all older Australians were living in multifamily households, this was the case for 16% of Indigenous older people.

#### 2.5 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, Indigenous Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996

Household composition(a)	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
<b>Living with partner</b>						
With partner only	0.8	22.9	0.7	15.9	1.5	18.9
With partner and children	0.5	13.7	0.3	5.9	0.7	9.3
With partner and children's family	0.3	7.6	0.1	3.2	0.4	5.1
With partner and other relatives/non-relatives	0.1	4.2	0.1	2.2	0.2	3.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>48.4</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>27.3</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>36.4</i>
<b>Living with children, but not partner</b>						
With children only	0.1	4.1	0.5	11.2	0.6	8.1
With children's family	0.3	8.3	0.7	15.5	1.0	12.4
With children and other relatives/non-relatives	0.1	2.4	0.3	6.6	0.4	4.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>14.8</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>33.3</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>25.4</i>
<b>Other living arrangements</b>						
With relatives	0.4	10.9	0.6	13.1	1.0	12.2
With unrelated people only	0.2	5.8	0.2	3.4	0.4	4.4
Alone	0.6	18.6	1.0	22.1	1.6	20.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>35.3</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>38.6</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>37.2</i>
<b>Total in private dwellings(b)</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Total in one-family households</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>60.5</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>58.9</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>59.6</i>
<i>Total in multifamily households</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>16.0</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>16.0</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>16.0</i>

(a) Non-relatives may also be present in all households except those specified as 'With partner only' and 'With children only'.

(b) Includes persons in 'not classifiable' households.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

### People born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries

Older people born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries were more likely than Australians overall to live in extended family contexts and less likely to live alone. In 1996, around one-third of those living in private dwellings were living in family households with their children (18%), their children's family (12%), or with relatives other than their children (4%). Similarly, whereas only 2% of all older Australians lived in multifamily households, 5% of those born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries did so.

Consistent with the pattern in the total Australian population, older women born in other than predominantly English-speaking countries were more than twice as likely to be living alone than their male counterparts (28% compared with 13%). They were, however, less likely to be living alone than older Australian women overall (39%).

### 2.6 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, Persons Aged 65 and Over Born in Other than Predominantly English-speaking Countries—1996

<i>Household composition(a)</i>	<i>Males.....</i>		<i>Females.....</i>		<i>Persons.....</i>	
	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Living with partner</i>						
With partner only	84.3	52.6	57.0	34.3	141.3	43.3
With partner and children	29.9	18.6	12.6	7.6	42.4	13.0
With partner and children's family	8.9	5.5	5.8	3.5	14.7	4.5
With partner and other relatives/non-relatives	3.2	2.0	2.1	1.2	5.3	1.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>126.2</i>	<i>78.8</i>	<i>77.4</i>	<i>46.6</i>	<i>203.6</i>	<i>62.4</i>
<i>Living with children, but not partner</i>						
With children only	3.2	2.0	12.8	7.7	16.0	4.9
With children's family	4.1	2.5	20.7	12.5	24.8	7.6
With children and other relatives/non-relatives	0.3	0.2	1.1	0.7	1.4	0.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>7.6</i>	<i>4.7</i>	<i>34.6</i>	<i>20.8</i>	<i>42.2</i>	<i>12.9</i>
<i>Other living arrangements</i>						
With relatives	2.0	1.3	4.6	2.8	6.7	2.0
With unrelated people only	3.4	2.1	2.9	1.7	6.3	1.9
Alone	21.0	13.1	46.4	28.0	67.4	20.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>26.4</i>	<i>16.5</i>	<i>54.0</i>	<i>32.5</i>	<i>80.3</i>	<i>24.6</i>
<b>Total in private dwellings(b)</b>	<b>160.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>166.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>326.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Total in one-family households</i>	<i>126.6</i>	<i>79.0</i>	<i>109.6</i>	<i>66.0</i>	<i>236.1</i>	<i>72.4</i>
<i>Total in multifamily households</i>	<i>9.9</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>17.6</i>	<i>5.4</i>

(a) Non-relatives may also be present in all households except those specified as 'With partner only' and 'With children only'.

(b) Includes persons in 'not classifiable' households.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## COUPLE FAMILIES

## Marital status

In 1997, most older couples (99% of those where the female partner was aged 65 and over) lived in registered marriages, a distribution which had changed little over the preceding 15 years. Whereas for many younger people de facto partnering appears to either precede, or offer an alternative to, first marriage, the modest increase in de facto partnering in the middle and older age groups (from 45 onwards) may indicate a growing acceptance of this as an alternative to remarriage following separation or divorce.

### 2.7 COUPLE FAMILIES, Type of Marriage by Age of Female Partner—1982 and 1997

Type of marriage	AGE GROUP OF FEMALE PARTNER (YEARS).....						Total
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65 and over	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>1982</b>							
Registered	78.9	94.7	96.8	98.1	99.3	99.4	95.3
De facto	21.1	5.3	3.2	—	—	—	4.7
<i>Total</i>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>1997</b>							
Registered	56.0	83.8	92.7	95.0	98.1	99.1	90.9
De facto	44.0	16.2	7.3	5.0	1.9	0.9	9.1
<i>Total</i>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total 1982</b>	<b>351.9</b>	<b>980.5</b>	<b>812.8</b>	<b>627.8</b>	<b>499.9</b>	<b>298.7</b>	<b>3 571.7</b>
<b>Total 1997</b>	<b>199.7</b>	<b>938.0</b>	<b>1 090.7</b>	<b>885.8</b>	<b>557.6</b>	<b>500.8</b>	<b>4 172.7</b>

Source: ABS 1984; ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Family Characteristics Survey.

## Couples without children

The 15 years between 1982 and 1997 produced an overall increase in both the number and proportion of couples who did not have children resident in the household. In 1997, couples without children comprised 42% of all couple families, up from 37% in 1982. The most marked increase in childless couples occurred in families where the female partner was aged 25–34, rising from 19% in 1982 to 31% in 1997. This reflects an increasing tendency for women to delay both partnering and childbirth.

In contrast, the proportion of older couples without children living with them remained fairly stable over the same 15-year period, rising by only one percentage point. While women on average still live longer than men, both sexes can be expected to live longer than they did in the past. Therefore any growth in older couple-only families is likely to be at least partly attributable to the heightened joint survival chances of partners in a marriage (McDonald, P and Kippen, R 1998). However, because many older couples without children are 'empty nest' families formed when their adult children leave home, the long-term impact of delayed childbirth in younger couples may be a future increase in the number of middle-aged and older couples who still have resident children.

## 2.8 COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN(a), By Age of Female Partner—1982 and 1997

Age of female partner	1982.....			1997.....		
	'000	%	% of all couple families(b)	'000	%	% of all couple families(b)
15-64						
15-24	210.4	16.0	59.8	124.3	7.0	62.2
25-34	187.7	14.3	19.1	287.8	16.3	30.7
35-44	67.9	5.2	8.4	137.9	7.8	12.6
45-54	208.6	15.8	33.2	340.7	19.3	38.5
55-64	369.4	28.0	73.9	417.0	23.6	74.8
Total	1 044.0	79.3	31.9	1 307.7	73.9	35.6
65 and over	273.1	20.7	91.4	461.5	26.1	92.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 317.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>1 769.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>42.4</b>

(a) Includes couple families in which other relatives were present.

(b) As a proportion of all couple families where the female partner was in each specified age group.

Source: ABS 1984; ABS 1998f.

## PEOPLE LIVING ALONE

As people age, there is an increased likelihood of living alone through the death of a partner or separation due to illness or disability. In 1996, over a quarter (28%) of all older people lived alone compared with 8% of 15-64 year-olds. This proportion was even higher for older women (36%) (see table 2.20).

Between 1986 and 1996, there was a small overall increase in the proportion of the population who lived alone. The growth of lone persons who were very old (that is, aged 85 and over) far exceeded that of all other age groups, rising from 25% of all persons in this age group in 1986 to 33% in 1996. In addition to increasing life expectancy, this is likely to reflect an increased government emphasis on home-based care and the provision of wide-ranging community based assistance programs, which may be helping people to live independently to later ages (see section on Older People with Disabilities).

## 2.9 LONE PERSONS AGED 15 AND OVER, By Age Group

Age group (years)	1986(a).....		1991.....		1996.....	
	'000	%(b)	'000	%(b)	'000	%(b)
15-64	579.7	5.9	671.1	6.3	881.5	7.9
65 and over						
65-84	358.1	25.2	419.6	25.9	490.2	27.0
85 and over	29.8	24.9	39.7	27.9	61.0	32.5
Total	387.9	25.2	459.2	26.0	551.3	27.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>967.6</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>1 130.4</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>1 432.8</b>	<b>10.9</b>

(a) Excludes visitors.

(b) Proportion of all persons in each age group.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1986, 1991 and 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

PEOPLE LIVING ALONE *continued*

In 1997, 685,400 people aged 65 and over were living alone. Lone women were disproportionately represented, comprising 71% of all older lone persons compared with 55% of older persons overall.

Most older women who lived alone were widowed (81%), compared with just over half (53%) of older lone men. This largely reflects the fact that, both numerically and proportionally, there were more older widowed women than men. Of all older people who were widowed, similarly high proportions of men and women lived alone (78% and 75% respectively).

**2.10 MARITAL STATUS AND RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD, Persons Aged 65 and Over**

Registered marital status	1992.....		1997.....		1992.....		1997.....	
	Lone persons....	All persons.....						
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
MALES								
Never married	32.3	21.2	42.5	5.2	42.6	21.2	53.5	5.8
Separated/divorced	39.0	25.6	50.5	6.2	40.9	20.3	58.4	6.3
Widowed	77.1	50.7	105.6	13.0	106.7	53.0	136.4	14.7
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>152.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>812.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>201.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>928.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES								
Never married	27.6	6.8	40.7	4.0	38.7	8.0	52.0	4.5
Separated/divorced	41.3	10.2	55.4	5.4	44.1	9.1	65.1	5.7
Widowed	332.0	81.6	458.6	45.0	393.5	81.3	522.5	45.6
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>407.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 018.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>484.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 144.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
PERSONS								
Never married	59.9	10.7	83.2	4.5	81.4	11.9	105.5	5.1
Separated/divorced	80.3	14.4	105.9	5.8	85.0	12.4	123.4	6.0
Widowed	409.1	73.2	564.3	30.8	500.2	73.0	658.9	31.8
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>559.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 830.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>685.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2 073.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Includes persons who were 'currently married'.

Source: ABS 1998e; ABS, unpublished data, 1992 Family Survey; ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Family Characteristics Survey.

## OLDER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

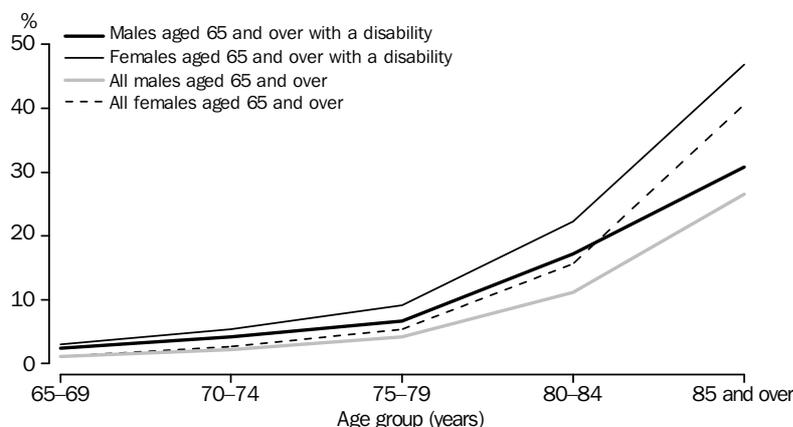
## Living arrangements

The likelihood of disability—especially that associated with a profound or severe restriction (see Glossary)—increases with age. Overall, just over half (54%) of all people aged 65 and over in 1998 had a disability, although only 46% of this age group reported that they required any form of assistance (ABS 1999b).

Living arrangements *continued*

While most older people live self-sufficiently at home, the living arrangements of people with a disability are influenced by their requirement for help or supervision to care for themselves, move around or communicate. In 1998, 43% of older people with a profound restriction in core activities (comprising self care, mobility and communication) lived in cared accommodation, most commonly in nursing homes. Overall, however, only 13% of older people with a disability—and 7% of older people in total—lived in cared accommodation (see table 2.21). The likelihood of living in cared accommodation increased markedly with age and, with the exception of those aged 65–69, a greater proportion of women than men of all ages were living in such facilities (see table 2.22).

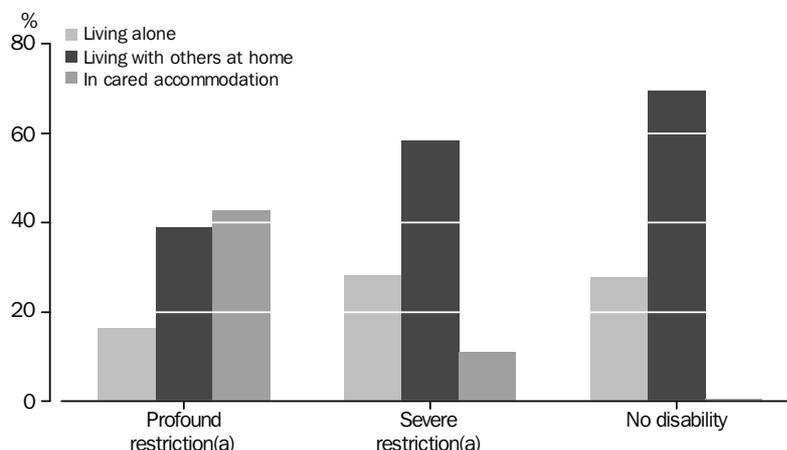
**2.11 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER IN CARED ACCOMMODATION, By Age—1998**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

About a quarter (27%) of all older people with a disability were living alone, almost the same proportion as those with no disability (28%). While people with a profound restriction in core activities were less likely than other older people to live on their own, a relatively high proportion did so (16%). Most of these people would receive help from a family member or other person outside the household (see section on Older people using community-based care).

**2.12 SELECTED LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY DISABILITY STATUS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1998**



(a) A restriction in core activities, comprising communication, mobility and self care.

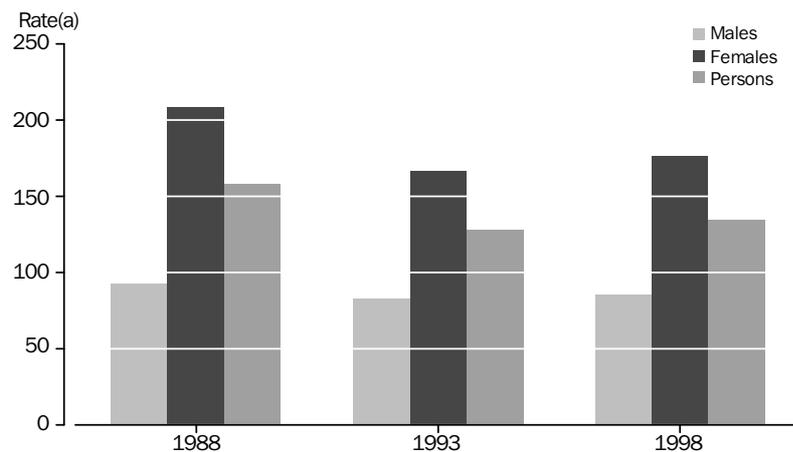
Source: ABS 1999b.

### Changes to living arrangements over time

In recent times, governments have recognised the increasing costs of cared accommodation for people requiring more intensive forms of care. At the same time, the importance of community-based care has been acknowledged and supported through increased funding. As a result, there has been a move away from an emphasis on large-scale residential care to provision of a range of support services to people in their homes or in smaller centres.

The pattern of living arrangements among older people with disabilities has not changed dramatically since the Home and Community Care Act was implemented in 1985. However, although there has been little shift in the proportion of persons aged 65 and over who live in cared accommodation (declining from 7.6% in 1988 to 6.8% in 1993, before rising to 7.3% in 1998) (see table 2.23), there has been a small increase in both the number of older people with a disability, and the disability rate, over this period. Effectively, this suggests that fewer older people with a disability are turning to cared accommodation and, as a result, there is likely to be a corresponding increase in the reliance on community-based care. Whereas in 1988 there were 158 older people with a disability living in cared accommodation for every 1,000 older people with a disability, this decreased to 135 per 1,000 in 1998.

#### 2.13 PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY AGED 65 AND OVER IN CARED ACCOMMODATION



(a) Rate per 1,000 persons with a disability. Based on adjusted (comparable over time) disability figures—see *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998* (ABS 1999b).

Source: ABS 1999b; ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## Older people using community-based care

In addition to those older people living in cared accommodation in 1998, more than 853,000 people aged 65 and over living in their own homes received some form of care. A further 35,000 older people reported that they needed help, but did not receive it (see *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998* (ABS 1999b)).

Around 507,000 older people accessed community-based assistance from formal care providers. These providers included organisations (whether profit making or non-profit making, government or private), individuals representing such organisations, and any other individuals who provided regular assistance on a paid basis. For some older people, formal care was their only form of assistance; for many others, however, it supplemented the care provided by family members, friends and other informal care providers. Overall, 83% of older people who received care had at least part of their care provided informally. (More information on the types of assistance required by older people is presented in chapter 3, Health and Disability.)

## 2.14 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER RECEIVING CARE—1998

Source of assistance	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%
Informal care			
From spouse	48.4	27.3	34.5
From son/daughter	35.7	45.4	42.1
From other relative	17.9	24.0	21.9
From friends	15.9	13.6	14.4
Total(a)	83.9	83.0	83.3
Formal care			
Government organised	26.4	28.6	27.8
Private and non-profit	9.1	8.6	8.7
Private for profit	39.2	42.0	41.0
Total(a)	57.6	60.3	59.4
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total receiving assistance</b>	<b>292.9</b>	<b>560.4</b>	<b>853.3</b>

(a) Components do not add to totals as it was possible to access more than one form of care.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## OLDER PEOPLE AS CARERS

With the increase in levels of community-based caring, care from largely unpaid sources such as family and friends is an important source of support for people with a disability. Most informal care is provided by close family members, although the activities for which carers provide help may vary in both intensity and frequency.

Informal carers

Informal carers are people of any age who provide ongoing support in areas including mobility, self-care, communication, health care, housework, property maintenance and transport; they exclude representatives of organisations providing care on a commercial basis. In 1998, over 2.3 million people (13% of the total population) were providing help as informal carers to people with disabilities or those who needed assistance as a result of ageing.

**2.15 PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLDS, Proportion Who Were Carers by Age Group—1998**

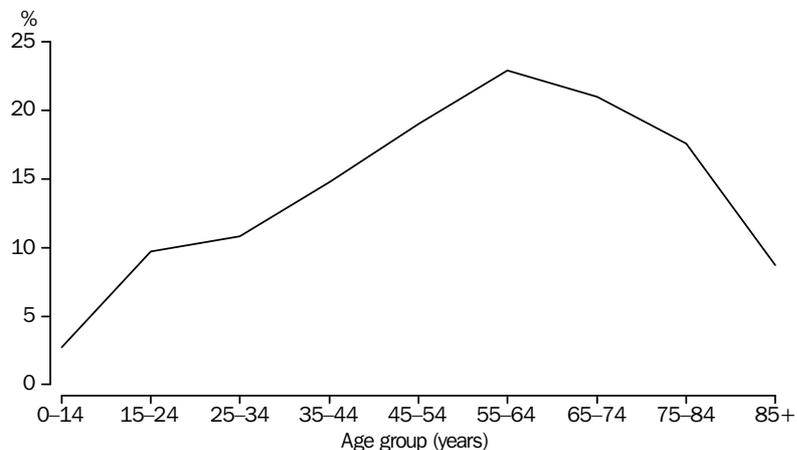
Age group (years)	All persons in households	Primary carers.....		All carers.....	
	'000	'000	%(a)	'000	%(a)
0-14	3 911.4	*2.9	*0.1	105.5	2.7
15-24	2 667.9	13.4	0.5	258.1	9.7
25-34	2 873.9	48.3	1.7	309.6	10.8
35-44	2 878.7	96.0	3.3	425.4	14.8
45-54	2 437.8	114.0	4.7	462.4	19.0
55-64	1 596.7	79.5	5.0	365.9	22.9
65 and over					
65-74	1 272.4	63.2	5.0	267.7	21.0
75-84	688.0	31.0	4.5	120.8	17.6
85 and over	144.0	**2.5	**1.8	12.5	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 104.4</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>401.0</b>	<b>19.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18 470.8</b>	<b>450.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2 327.9</b>	<b>12.6</b>

(a) Proportion of all persons in each age group.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

While it is widely recognised that older people are more likely than younger people to require ongoing care, it is also important to acknowledge the considerable role that older people play in providing care for others. Overall, around one in six carers (17%) was aged 65 and over. Although involvement in caring activities peaked for those aged 55-64 (23% of people in this age group), a relatively high level of involvement was also evident for those aged 65-74 (21%) and 75-84 (18%).

**2.16 PROPORTION OF PERSONS IN EACH AGE GROUP ENGAGED IN CARING—1998**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Informal carers *continued*

In each age group, the majority of carers were looking after people within their own household; this was particularly likely for older carers. Around 80% of carers aged 65 and over were caring only for people with whom they were living, most often their partner (see also table 2.24). However, one in five carers aged 65 and over (20%) was providing help for at least one person living in a different household.

**2.17 ALL CARERS, Location of Care Recipients—1998**

Who care provided for	AGE GROUP OF CARER (YEARS).....				Total
	0-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
	%	%	%	%	%
Provide care only for people within own household	72.1	61.4	67.9	79.9	70.7
Provide care only for people outside own household	24.1	31.9	27.7	16.7	24.9
Provide care for people within and outside own household	3.8	6.7	4.5	3.4	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 098.6</b>	<b>462.4</b>	<b>365.9</b>	<b>401.0</b>	<b>2 327.9</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## Primary carers

Many people who require care have a number of different care providers. For each care recipient, their primary carer is the person who provides them with the most informal assistance on an ongoing basis. Although primary carers comprised less than one-fifth (19%) of all informal carers (see table 2.15), they carry the heaviest responsibility for people with disabilities. In 1998 there were around 451,000 primary carers. Almost 97,000 primary carers were aged 65 and over, and most of these (62%) were women.

Older men fulfilling a primary carer role were caring almost exclusively for their partners (96%). Although older women were also most likely to be caring for their partners, more than one-third (37%) were caring for someone else, most often one of their parents (15%). This is indicative of the fact that older people are very often dependent on other older people to meet their needs for care. Overall, 19% of older care recipients had a primary carer in the age range 55-64, and a further 39% had a primary carer who was aged 65 and over (see table 2.25).

**2.18 PRIMARY CARERS AGED 65 AND OVER, Relationship to Main Recipient of Care—1998**

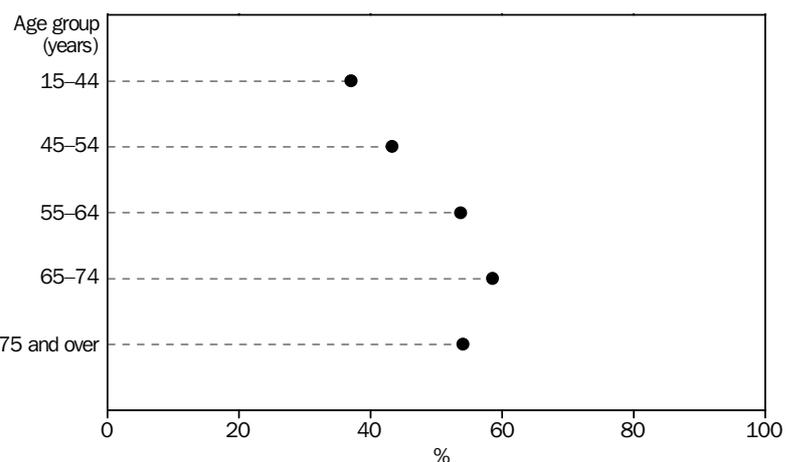
Relationship to care recipient	Males	Females	Total
	%	%	%
Partner	95.8	63.3	75.5
Parent	**2.5	*14.6	10.1
Child	—	*5.8	*3.6
Other	**1.7	16.4	10.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>60.4</b>	<b>96.7</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Time spent caring

Because older primary carers are mainly caring for their partners, they may not be in a caring role for as many years as other carers such as those looking after children with disabilities. However, older carers are often required to care for extended periods of time each week, in many cases involving a full-time workload. In 1998, the proportion of primary carers aged 65–74 who averaged 40 hours or more per week on caring activities for people in the same household (59%) was greater than for any other age group. Similarly, more than half (54%) of all carers aged 75 and over averaged at least 40 hours per week on caring tasks (see table 2.26).

**2.19 PRIMARY CARERS, Proportion Caring for 40 Hours or More per Week(a)—1998**



(a) Primary carers aged 15 and over, with main recipient of care living in the same household, who averaged 40 hours or more per week on caring.

Source: ABS 1999b.

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

**2.20 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF OLDER PERSONS, By Age and Sex(a)—1996**

Relationship in dwelling	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....							Total
	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95 and over	
<b>MALES</b>								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In private dwellings								
With relatives								
Partner	76.5	74.2	68.9	59.4	44.8	28.1	19.6	70.2
Lone parent	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.4	3.1	4.2	5.0	1.9
Child	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Other relative	2.1	2.4	3.0	4.0	5.8	7.8	8.1	2.9
Total	80.6	78.4	73.8	65.8	53.7	40.1	32.8	75.1
Unrelated individual in family household	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.3
Group household member	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.3	1.7
Lone person	14.0	15.7	18.5	22.3	25.0	23.4	21.7	16.9
Total(b)	98.3	97.4	95.4	90.8	81.1	65.6	58.4	95.3
In non-private dwellings								
Resident of cared accommodation	1.1	2.0	3.9	8.4	17.5	32.4	37.8	4.0
Resident of other non-private dwelling	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.4
Total(c)	1.7	2.6	4.6	9.2	18.9	34.4	41.6	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>FEMALES</b>								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In private dwellings								
With relatives								
Partner	59.7	48.5	34.6	20.0	9.0	3.0	2.3	39.9
Lone parent	5.9	6.0	6.2	6.6	7.0	6.9	6.7	6.2
Child	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Other relative	4.5	5.9	7.2	8.8	9.8	9.4	7.7	6.6
Total	70.4	60.4	48.1	35.4	25.8	19.4	16.8	52.9
Unrelated individual in family household	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Group household member	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.1	0.8	0.6	0.7	1.3
Lone person	25.3	34.2	43.1	47.1	41.4	27.7	15.6	35.5
Total(b)	98.7	97.4	93.8	84.7	68.9	48.4	33.8	91.0
In non-private dwellings								
Resident of cared accommodation	1.0	2.2	5.5	14.2	29.3	49.1	63.3	8.3
Resident of other non-private dwelling	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.2
Total(c)	1.3	2.6	6.2	15.3	31.1	51.6	66.2	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>All males aged 65 and over</b>	<b>301.0</b>	<b>248.9</b>	<b>163.9</b>	<b>96.9</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>865.9</b>
<b>All females aged 65 and over</b>	<b>319.7</b>	<b>297.1</b>	<b>225.5</b>	<b>164.3</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>1138.9</b>

(a) Excludes visitors and persons in migratory and off-shore collection districts.

(b) Includes persons in 'not classifiable' households.

(c) Includes persons who were staff/family of staff and those who did not specify their relationship in the non-private dwelling.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## 2.21 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER, By Disability Status—1998

### PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY.....

Living arrangements	Profound	Severe	All with	All with	No	Total
	core activity restriction	core activity restriction	core activity restrictions(a)	disability(b)	disability	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
.....						
Lives in a private dwelling						
Alone	16.4	28.2	27.9	27.4	27.8	27.6
With at least one other person	39.1	58.2	55.3	57.3	69.6	63.0
Total	55.5	86.3	83.2	84.6	97.4	90.5
Lives in a non-private dwelling						
Cared accommodation						
Hospital	7.6	1.6	2.5	2.3	—	1.2
Nursing home	34.1	8.8	11.6	10.6	0.4	5.9
Other(c)	1.1	0.6	0.4	0.4	—	0.2
Total	42.8	11.0	14.5	13.2	0.5	7.3
Other non-private dwelling	1.7	2.6	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1
Total	44.5	13.7	16.8	15.4	2.6	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
.....						
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>319.6</b>	<b>161.6</b>	<b>1 107.2</b>	<b>1 225.2</b>	<b>1 046.0</b>	<b>2 271.2</b>

(a) Includes persons with a moderate or mild core activity restriction—see Glossary. Source: ABS 1999b.

(b) Includes persons who did not have a core activity restriction.

(c) Includes hostels for people with disabilities, children's homes, drug rehabilitation facilities and some care components of retirement villages.

## 2.22 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER IN CARED ACCOMMODATION—1998

### AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Disability status	65–69	70–74	75–79	80–84	85 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	
.....						
Males						
With profound/severe restriction(a)	12.3	17.9	20.4	41.7	43.9	27.6
All with disability	2.4	4.2	6.7	17.2	30.8	8.8
All aged 65 and over	1.1	2.2	4.2	11.1	26.5	4.9
Females						
With profound/severe restriction(a)	11.6	16.5	19.5	38.9	55.9	34.5
All with disability	3.0	5.4	9.2	22.3	46.8	16.6
All aged 65 and over	1.1	2.6	5.4	15.6	40.6	9.3
Persons						
With profound/severe restriction(a)	11.9	17.1	19.8	39.7	52.8	32.2
All with disability	2.7	4.8	8.1	20.4	41.9	13.2
All aged 65 and over	1.1	2.4	4.9	13.9	36.3	7.3

(a) Severe or profound restriction in core activities, comprising communication, mobility and self-care.

Source: ABS 1999b.

## 2.23 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OVER TIME, Persons Aged 65 and Over

Living arrangements	1988.....			1993.....			1998.....		
	Aged 65-74	Aged 75 and over	Total	Aged 65-74	Aged 75 and over	Total	Aged 65-74	Aged 75 and over	Total
MALES									
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In households(a)									
Living alone	13.4	16.3	14.4	15.0	20.5	16.9	15.3	26.1	19.4
Living with others	84.4	74.4	80.9	83.1	69.7	78.5	83.1	63.6	75.7
Total	97.8	90.8	95.3	98.1	90.2	95.4	98.4	89.7	95.1
In cared accommodation	2.2	9.2	4.7	1.9	9.8	4.6	1.6	10.3	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>513.2</b>	<b>279.7</b>	<b>793.0</b>	<b>576.7</b>	<b>306.1</b>	<b>882.8</b>	<b>617.1</b>	<b>376.2</b>	<b>993.3</b>
FEMALES									
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In households(a)									
Living alone	29.4	34.0	31.5	32.0	43.6	37.1	30.1	42.9	36.1
Living with others	67.9	48.4	58.9	65.8	40.0	54.5	68.0	39.5	54.6
Total	97.3	82.4	90.4	97.8	83.5	91.6	98.1	82.4	90.8
In cared accommodation	2.7	17.6	9.6	2.2	16.5	8.4	1.9	17.6	9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>608.7</b>	<b>525.1</b>	<b>1 133.7</b>	<b>655.8</b>	<b>508.1</b>	<b>1 163.9</b>	<b>677.7</b>	<b>600.3</b>	<b>1 277.9</b>
PERSONS									
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In households(a)									
Living alone	22.1	27.8	24.5	24.1	34.9	28.4	23.1	36.4	28.8
Living with others	75.5	57.5	67.9	73.9	51.2	64.8	75.2	48.8	63.8
Total	97.5	85.3	92.4	97.9	86.1	93.2	98.3	85.2	92.7
In cared accommodation	2.5	14.7	7.6	2.1	13.9	6.8	1.7	14.8	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 121.9</b>	<b>804.8</b>	<b>1 926.7</b>	<b>1 232.5</b>	<b>814.2</b>	<b>2 046.7</b>	<b>1 294.8</b>	<b>976.4</b>	<b>2 271.2</b>

(a) Comprises both private and non-private dwellings, except those non-private dwellings classified as 'cared accommodation'.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1988 Survey of Disabled and Aged Persons, and 1993 and 1998 Surveys of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## 2.24 ALL CARERS, Age and Relationship to Care Recipient—1998

AGE GROUP OF CARER (YEARS).....							
	0-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total
Relationship of carer to care recipient	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
.....							
In same household							
Partner	206.4	188.5	193.6	177.6	100.1	277.7	866.1
Parent	220.1	79.0	27.3	19.2	9.4	28.6	354.9
Child(a)	336.7	54.5	42.2	8.6	2.8	11.4	444.7
Other	135.7	17.3	11.6	11.5	7.0	18.5	183.2
Total	898.9	339.3	274.7	216.9	119.3	336.2	1 848.9
In different household	306.0	178.4	117.6	65.1	15.7	80.8	682.7
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>1 098.6</b>	<b>462.4</b>	<b>365.9</b>	<b>267.7</b>	<b>133.3</b>	<b>401.0</b>	<b>2 327.9</b>

(a) May include in-law relationships.

(b) Components may exceed total because it is possible for carers to be providing assistance to more than one recipient.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## 2.25 AGE GROUP OF PRIMARY CARERS, By Age Group of Main Care Recipient—1998

AGE GROUP OF PRIMARY CARER (YEARS)...							
	15-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	Total.....	
Age group of main care recipient (years)	%	%	%	%	%	%	'000
.....							
0-14	82.0	*13.8	**2.7	**1.4	—	100.0	63.1
15-44	57.9	25.0	*9.3	*5.9	**1.9	100.0	82.7
45-54	24.3	52.5	*14.6	**4.6	**4.1	100.0	50.9
55-64	19.2	21.7	47.3	*11.7	—	100.0	50.3
65 and over							
65-74	24.0	*13.8	*13.7	43.2	*5.3	100.0	61.9
75 and over	15.2	27.6	21.8	16.1	19.2	100.0	139.1
Total	17.9	23.4	19.3	24.5	14.9	100.0	201.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>447.9</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## 2.26 PRIMARY CARERS(a), Time Caring by Disability Status of Care Recipient—1998

AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS...					
Age group of carer (years)	Less than 20	20-39	40 or more	Total.....	'000(b)
	%	%	%	%	
.....					
PROFOUND OR SEVERE CORE ACTIVITY RESTRICTION					
15-44	40.2	20.1	39.7	100.0	111.9
45-54	35.6	18.2	46.2	100.0	75.2
55-64	29.1	17.2	53.7	100.0	61.5
65 and over					
65-74	29.0	10.6	60.3	100.0	48.8
75 and over	23.9	21.1	55.0	100.0	32.1
Total	26.9	14.9	58.2	100.0	80.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>48.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>329.6</b>
.....					
ALL WITH DISABILITY(c)					
15-44	43.2	19.7	37.1	100.0	120.8
45-54	38.7	18.0	43.3	100.0	80.9
55-64	29.5	16.8	53.7	100.0	63.0
65 and over					
65-74	29.1	12.4	58.5	100.0	53.9
75 and over	23.4	22.6	54.0	100.0	33.5
Total	26.9	16.3	56.8	100.0	87.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>352.2</b>

(a) Aged 15 and over, with main care recipient living in the same household.

(b) Includes carers who did not state the amount of time spent caring.

(c) Includes main care recipients who had a moderate or mild core activity restriction, an employment or education restriction, and those with no specific restriction.

Source: ABS 1999b.

# CHAPTER 3

## HEALTH AND DISABILITY .....

### INTRODUCTION

Vulnerability to poorer health and disability are factors associated with ageing. While prevalence of these factors is higher among older people, many Australians live healthy, productive lives well past 65 years. Increased awareness of health risks, improved diets and changes in lifestyle, often as a result of early warnings of health problems, are contributing to longer life expectancy and better quality of life in later years.

This chapter describes the health status of older people, risk factors faced in later life and preventative measures being adopted to foster healthy ageing. Finally it presents information on causes of death of older people and changes in their mortality.

### HEALTH STATUS

#### Recent illness and health related actions

According to the 1995 National Health Survey a majority (73%) of people aged 15 and over experienced one or more illnesses in the two weeks preceding the survey (see table 3.24). This proportion increased with age to 90% of people aged 65 and over.

#### 3.1 RECENT ILLNESSES(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995

Selected recent illnesses	65–74 YEARS.....			75 YEARS & OVER....			TOTAL.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Persons with a recent illness									
Hypertension	31.4	38.9	35.5	31.9	40.7	37.3	31.6	39.6	36.1
Heart disease	11.6	6.1	8.6	16.1	13.3	14.4	13.2	9.0	10.8
Osteoarthritis	7.2	11.5	9.6	5.0	14.5	10.8	6.5	12.7	10.0
Fluid problems	3.1	7.2	5.3	7.7	12.3	10.5	4.6	9.2	7.2
Arthritis—other(b)	3.3	7.6	5.6	6.5	8.8	7.9	4.4	8.1	6.5
High cholesterol	6.8	8.8	7.9	2.6	3.6	3.2	5.4	6.7	6.1
Asthma	5.2	7.1	6.2	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.1	6.3	5.8
Insomnia	3.1	5.7	4.5	6.1	8.7	7.7	4.1	6.9	5.7
Headache	5.4	7.5	6.5	3.2	4.9	4.2	4.7	6.4	5.7
Ulcer	5.1	3.9	4.5	6.6	3.8	4.9	5.6	3.9	4.6
Dental problems	5.3	4.7	5.0	3.7	4.2	4.0	4.8	4.5	4.6
Gout	5.9	1.9	3.7	6.2	1.2	3.2	6.0	1.6	3.5
All persons with recent illness(c)	87.0	90.6	88.9	89.9	91.6	90.9	88.0	91.0	89.7
Persons without a recent illness	13.0	9.4	11.1	10.1	8.4	9.1	12.0	9.0	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>620.8</b>	<b>727.1</b>	<b>1 348.0</b>	<b>315.9</b>	<b>491.1</b>	<b>807.0</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>

(a) Illness or injury experienced in the two weeks prior to interview.

(b) Includes forms of arthritis other than rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, as well as arthritis which could not be categorised.

(c) Components do not add to total as people could report more than one recent illness and only selected conditions are shown.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Recent illness and health related actions *continued*

Hypertension, heart disease and osteoarthritis were the most commonly reported recent illnesses affecting older people. The prevalence of these illnesses increased slightly from age 65–74 to age 75 and over. Osteoarthritis was more commonly reported by older women, while heart disease was more prevalent among older men.

The 1995 National Health Survey showed that in the two weeks preceding the survey most adults (79%) had undertaken a health related action, such as visiting a doctor or taking medication. Again these actions were more prevalent among older people, with a slightly higher participation rate among older women (94%) than men (91%).

The most commonly reported health related actions taken by older people were medication use (91%) and consulting a doctor (39%). Women aged 65–74 were more likely to consult a doctor or take medication than men of the same age. However among people aged 75 years and over, men were more likely than women to consult a doctor.

**3.2 HEALTH RELATED ACTIONS TAKEN, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995**

Type of health related action	65–74 YEARS.....			75 YEARS & OVER....			TOTAL.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Persons taking actions									
Hospitalisation	1.4	1.6	1.5	2.5	2.2	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.8
Casualty/emergency/outpatient visit	4.1	4.2	4.2	6.7	3.2	4.6	5.0	3.8	4.3
Day clinic visit	2.0	2.3	2.1	1.6	2.0	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.0
Doctor consultation	35.3	37.2	36.3	45.0	40.2	42.1	38.6	38.4	38.5
Dental consultation	6.0	5.6	5.8	4.9	4.8	4.8	5.6	5.3	5.4
Consultation with other health professional	8.8	12.1	10.6	11.9	13.6	12.9	9.8	12.7	11.5
Medication use	87.5	92.3	90.1	91.0	92.1	91.6	88.7	92.2	90.7
Days off work/school	*0.3	0.5	0.4	**0.1	*0.2	*0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
Days of reduced activity	9.0	11.0	10.1	10.0	12.4	11.5	9.3	11.6	10.6
Other actions	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.6	4.1	3.5	2.8	3.3	3.1
All persons who took action(a)	90.2	94.2	92.3	92.6	94.2	93.5	91.0	94.2	92.8
All persons who took no action	9.9	5.8	7.7	7.4	5.8	6.5	9.0	5.8	7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>620.8</b>	<b>727.1</b>	<b>1 348.0</b>	<b>315.9</b>	<b>491.1</b>	<b>807.0</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>

(a) Components do not add to total as people could report taking more than one action.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Recent illness and health related actions *continued*

The types of medications which people used also varied according to age. For people aged 15–64, vitamins (29%) and pain relievers (28%) were the most commonly used preparations. For older people the most commonly used medications were for the treatment of heart problems/blood pressure, with 49% of people aged 65–74 and 57% of people aged 75 and over taking these medications in the two weeks prior to interview.

**3.3 MEDICATIONS USED(a), Persons Aged 15 and Over—1995**

Type of medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....				
	15–64	65–74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Persons who used medications					
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	7.5	48.7	56.9	51.8	14.2
Vitamins/minerals	28.8	26.4	25.7	26.1	28.4
Pain relievers	27.5	19.5	19.3	19.4	26.3
Medications for arthritis	2.6	14.2	14.6	14.4	4.4
Stomach medications/laxatives	4.0	13.0	14.2	13.5	5.5
Fluid tablets/diuretics	1.0	9.7	17.2	12.5	2.8
Herbal/natural medicines	10.7	12.6	11.3	12.1	10.9
Skin ointments/creams	10.8	7.6	6.4	7.2	10.2
Asthma medications	6.1	7.0	5.9	6.5	6.2
Medications to lower cholesterol	1.4	8.1	3.4	6.3	2.2
Medications for diabetes	1.1	6.0	5.5	5.8	1.8
Sleeping medications	1.2	4.3	7.6	5.6	1.8
Medications for anxiety/nervous tension/depression	2.4	4.8	4.6	4.7	2.8
Medications for coughs/colds	6.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	5.9
Medications for allergies	3.8	2.8	1.4	2.3	3.5
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.5
Other	17.4	34.1	37.7	35.5	20.1
<i>All persons who used medications(b)</i>	70.7	90.1	91.6	90.7	73.7
All persons who did not use medications	29.3	9.9	8.4	9.3	26.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 033.5</b>	<b>1 348.0</b>	<b>807.0</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>14 188.5</b>

(a) Medications used in the two weeks prior to interview.

(b) Components do not add to total as people could report using more than one medication.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## Long-term conditions

The prevalence of long-term conditions is also age related. In 1995, four in five adults (83%) suffered from at least one long-term condition which had lasted, or was expected to last, six months or more (see table 3.25). Almost all older people (99%) reported at least one such condition.

The most commonly reported long-term health conditions of people aged 65 and over were related to the sensory organs. Short- and far- sightedness (usually corrected by glasses) and presbyopia (an age related sight condition) affected 31%, 46% and 36% respectively, of people aged 65 and over. While these conditions were similarly reported by both men and women, more older women (14%) had their vision affected by cataracts than older men (8%). In contrast, older men were more likely to report partial or complete deafness than older women (38% compared with 23%).

## 3.4 LONG-TERM CONDITIONS(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995

Selected conditions	65–74 YEARS.....			75 YEARS & OVER.....			TOTAL.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Long-term conditions</b>									
Hypermetropia/far-sightedness	48.1	49.6	48.9	40.6	39.4	39.9	45.5	45.5	45.5
Hypertension	34.6	40.1	37.6	34.9	42.3	39.4	34.7	41.0	38.2
Presbyopia	31.1	32.7	31.9	40.7	42.2	41.6	34.3	36.5	35.6
Myopia/short-sightedness	29.9	34.0	32.1	27.9	28.1	28.0	29.2	31.6	30.6
Deafness (complete/partial)	36.2	17.5	26.1	41.9	32.0	35.9	38.1	23.3	29.8
Osteoarthritis	17.4	28.5	23.4	18.5	30.3	25.7	17.8	29.2	24.3
Arthritis—other(b)	15.0	19.4	17.4	18.0	20.5	19.6	16.0	19.8	18.2
Varicose veins	8.9	17.2	13.4	6.8	15.2	11.9	8.2	16.4	12.8
Heart disease	14.8	8.6	11.4	15.4	13.9	14.5	15.0	10.8	12.6
Hayfever	11.2	12.1	11.7	9.0	12.2	11.0	10.4	12.2	11.4
Cataracts	4.9	10.0	7.7	14.0	19.8	17.5	8.0	14.0	11.4
High cholesterol	11.3	15.5	13.5	5.8	8.8	7.6	9.4	12.8	11.3
Sinusitis	8.9	12.9	11.0	7.6	9.7	8.9	8.5	11.6	10.2
Bronchitis/emphysema	10.3	7.1	8.6	15.2	6.8	10.1	12.0	6.9	9.1
Hernia	9.5	7.5	8.4	11.5	9.0	10.0	10.2	8.1	9.0
Rheumatoid arthritis	7.5	8.5	8.0	6.8	9.8	8.6	7.3	9.0	8.2
Asthma	7.7	9.1	8.5	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.6	8.4	8.0
Osteoporosis	1.2	10.6	6.3	1.6	12.3	8.1	1.3	11.2	6.9
<i>All persons with a long-term condition(c)</i>	99.1	99.4	99.3	99.3	99.5	99.4	99.2	99.5	99.3
<b>Total(d)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>620.8</b>	<b>727.1</b>	<b>1 348.0</b>	<b>315.9</b>	<b>491.1</b>	<b>807.0</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>

(a) Includes conditions lasting, or expected to last, longer than six months.

(b) Includes forms of arthritis other than rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, as well as arthritis which could not be categorised.

(c) Components do not add to total as people could report more than one condition and only selected conditions are shown.

(d) Includes small proportion of persons without a long-term condition.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Long-term conditions *continued*

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, was also commonly reported by older people. Women aged 65 and over were more likely to report this condition than men in the same age group (41% compared with 35%).

Most other illnesses were suffered in similar proportions by both older men and women. However, older men more often reported heart disease and bronchitis/emphysema, while older women were more likely than men to suffer from varicose veins and osteoporosis.

## Mental illness

Mental health is an important contributor to overall health and wellbeing and, in particular, can make a substantial difference to an individual's ability to function within their family or community. The 1997 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing of Adults provided a measure of the extent of mental illness among adults. This survey could not identify disorders (such as dementia) with relatively low prevalence, but focused on the following major mental illnesses:

- anxiety disorders (such as panic disorders, agoraphobia and obsessive-compulsive disorders);
- affective disorders (such as depression, mania and bipolar affective disorder); and
- substance abuse disorders (such as dependence on or harmful use of alcohol or other drugs).

The prevalence of mental illnesses was markedly lower among older people (6%) than the adult population aged 18–64 (20%). Older women were more likely than older men to suffer from anxiety or affective disorders, while older men had a higher prevalence of substance abuse.

**3.5 MENTAL DISORDERS, Persons Aged 18 and Over—1997**

Type of mental disorder	18–64 YEARS.....			65 YEARS AND OVER...		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%
With a mental disorder						
Anxiety disorders	7.7	13.5	10.6	3.5	5.4	4.5
Affective disorders	4.7	8.4	6.5	*0.5	2.4	1.7
Substance use disorders	12.5	5.4	8.9	2.1	**0.2	1.1
Total(a)	19.3	20.3	19.8	5.5	6.7	6.1
With no mental disorder	80.7	79.7	80.2	94.5	93.3	93.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 699.3</b>	<b>5 693.4</b>	<b>11 392.7</b>	<b>927.8</b>	<b>1 144.3</b>	<b>2 072.1</b>

(a) Components do not add to total as people could report more than one mental health disorder.

Source: ABS 1998g.

Mental illness *continued*

The 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers identified people who were restricted in their everyday activities because of an impairment or long-term condition. The survey found that 97,000 older people experienced limitations because of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. These conditions affected twice as many women as men, with most sufferers (86%) aged 75 and over. People with these conditions generally require high levels of assistance. As a result, the majority of older people affected by dementia or Alzheimer's disease (75%) were living in cared accommodation.

**3.6 OLDER PERSONS RESTRICTED BY DEMENTIA OR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE—1998**

Sex	65–74 years.....		75 years and over.....		Total.....		Living in cared accommodation(a)
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	%
Males	*8.1	*1.3	24.1	6.4	32.1	3.2	62.9
Females	*5.5	*0.8	59.1	9.8	64.5	5.0	80.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>74.6</b>

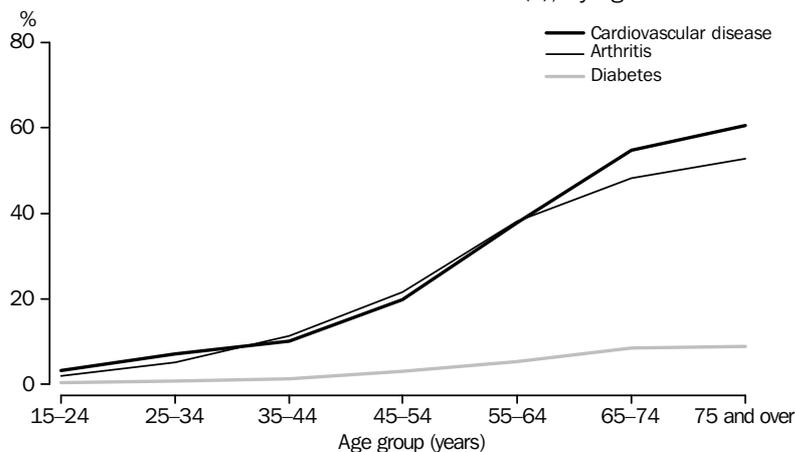
(a) As a proportion of all persons with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Cardiovascular disease, arthritis and diabetes

Three conditions of particular relevance to older people, either because of an increase in prevalence with age or a heightened susceptibility to other health problems, are cardiovascular disease, arthritis and diabetes. While the prevalence of diabetes is currently much lower than that of cardiovascular or arthritic conditions, a significant rise in the prevalence of diabetes and its complications was noted between the 1989–90 and 1995 National Health Surveys (ABS 1997c). Both diabetes and cardiovascular health are designated National Health Priority Areas (AIHW, 1998a).

**3.7 PERSONS REPORTING SELECTED CONDITIONS(a), By Age—1995**



(a) Comprises persons who reported the condition as a recent illness and/or long-term condition.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Cardiovascular disease, arthritis and diabetes *continued*

Cardiovascular conditions, which comprise all diseases of the heart and blood vessels, including coronary heart disease, stroke and peripheral vascular disease, are the leading cause of death for older people (see table 3.32). In 1995, 55% of people aged 65–74 reported suffering from a cardiovascular condition, either as a recent illness and/or long-term condition. For people aged 75 and over this proportion increased to 61%. Hypertension (or high blood pressure) was the most commonly reported form of cardiovascular disease, affecting 41% of those aged 65 and over.

**3.8 OLDER PERSONS REPORTING A CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITION(a)—1995**

Type of cardiovascular condition	65–74 years.....		75 years & over		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Hypertension	546.0	40.5	346.8	43.0	892.8	41.4
Heart disease	174.6	13.0	141.1	17.5	315.7	14.7
Stroke	48.7	3.6	36.8	4.6	85.5	4.0
Atherosclerosis	12.2	0.9	7.2	0.9	19.4	0.9
Other diseases of circulatory system	168.3	12.5	112.4	13.9	280.7	13.0
Ill-defined symptoms of heart conditions	102.5	7.6	95.0	11.8	197.5	9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>738.8</b>	<b>54.8</b>	<b>489.4</b>	<b>60.6</b>	<b>1 228.2</b>	<b>57.0</b>

(a) Comprises persons who reported the condition as a recent illness and/or long-term condition.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Arthritis refers to conditions of the joints or spine associated with inflammation or structural change in the cartilage and bone. In 1995, half of all persons aged 65 years and over reported suffering from some form of arthritis, recently and/or chronically. Most commonly older people reported osteoarthritis (24%) or a form which could not be classified (19%). The prevalence of all arthritic conditions increased with age; the proportion of people reporting at least one form of arthritis rose from 48% of people aged 65–74 to 53% of people aged 75 and over.

**3.9 OLDER PERSONS REPORTING ARTHRITIS(a)—1995**

Type of arthritis	65–74 years.....		75 years & over		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Rheumatoid arthritis	108.2	8.0	69.5	8.6	177.7	8.2
Osteoarthritis	315.9	23.4	207.8	25.7	523.7	24.3
Arthritis, n.e.c.	247.9	18.4	166.3	20.6	414.2	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>650.2</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>426.0</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>1 076.2</b>	<b>49.9</b>

(a) Comprises persons who reported the condition as a recent illness and/or long-term condition.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Cardiovascular disease, arthritis and diabetes *continued*

Diabetes is a chronic condition resulting from either insufficient production of insulin or inability to store or use the hormone effectively. In 1995, 9% of people aged 65 and over reported suffering from diabetes, almost all identifying it as a long-term condition. The most common type of diabetes reported by older people was the non-insulin dependent form (also known as Type II or mature onset diabetes), affecting 4% of people aged 65 and over.

**3.10 OLDER PERSONS REPORTING DIABETES MELLITUS(a)—1995**

Type of Diabetes Mellitus	65–74 years.....		75 years & over		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Diabetes—Type I	17.7	1.3	11.0	1.4	28.7	1.3
Diabetes—Type II	56.0	4.2	30.1	3.7	86.1	4.0
Diabetes—unspecified	41.9	3.1	31.2	3.9	73.1	3.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>114.9</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>187.1</b>	<b>8.7</b>

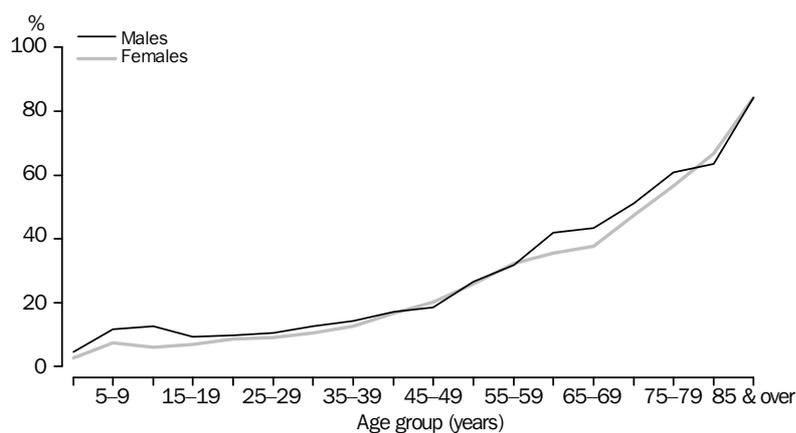
(a) Comprises persons who reported the condition as a recent illness and/or long-term condition.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Disability

The presence of a long-term condition may impact on a person's ability to perform a range of tasks relating to everyday living. According to the 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, about half (46%) of people with a long-term condition or impairment did not experience such restrictions. However, as people aged their likelihood of having a disabling condition increased.

**3.11 PROPORTION WITH A DISABILITY, All Persons—1998**



Source: ABS 1999b.

Disability *continued*

In 1998, the rate of disability ranged from 4% of children aged under 5 years to 84% of people aged 85 and over. Differences between males and females were evident during childhood/youth and after the age of 60. The prevalence of disability in these age groups was higher among males. However, in the very old age groups 80 and over, disability rates of women were either higher than, or on a par with rates for men.

The prevalence of a disability with a restriction in core activities (comprising self care, mobility and communication) increased with age from 38% of people aged 65–74 to 83% of people aged 85 and over. The proportion of people with a profound or severe level of restriction rose sharply to 65% of people aged 85 and over.

The presence and extent of a core activity restriction among older people differed for men and women. While a similar proportion of men and women aged 65 and over had some form of restriction (47% and 50% respectively), women were much more likely than men to have a profound or severe level of restriction (25% compared with 16%) (see table 3.27).

**3.12 DISABILITY STATUS, Persons aged 65 and Over—1998**

Disability status	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....			Total
	65–74 years	75–84 years	85 years and over	
	%	%	%	%
Disability				
Core activity restriction				
Profound/severe	10.9	25.8	64.9	21.2
Moderate	10.1	10.4	8.0	10.0
Mild	17.0	20.8	10.4	17.6
Total	38.0	56.9	83.2	48.7
No core activity restriction	6.5	4.2	1.0	5.2
Total	44.5	61.1	84.2	53.9
No disability	55.5	38.9	15.8	46.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 294.8</b>	<b>750.5</b>	<b>226.0</b>	<b>2 271.3</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## Needs of people with disabilities

People with disabilities may need assistance with various aspects of their personal lives. The 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers collected information on the assistance needs of people with a disability who were living in households and in cared accommodation. This survey found that 73% of all people aged 65 and over who had a disability needed assistance with at least one activity. This proportion increased to 97% of people aged 85 and over who had a disability.

### 3.13 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER WITH A DISABILITY, Severity of Core Activity Restriction(a) by Need for Assistance—1998

Activities for which assistance was needed	65 YEARS AND OVER.....			85 YEARS AND OVER.....		
	Profound/ severe restriction	Moderate/ mild restriction	All with disability(b)	Profound/ severe restriction	Moderate/ mild restriction	All with disability(b)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Persons needing assistance						
Self care	62.9	**0.1	24.7	70.3	**0.5	54.3
Mobility	85.2	**0.1	33.5	91.7	**0.7	70.9
Communication	27.7	**0.1	10.9	42.6	n.p.	32.9
Health care	76.5	24.9	43.3	87.7	34.3	75.2
Paperwork	46.9	4.3	20.8	63.2	*15.0	52.0
Total needing assistance(c)	99.7	59.6	72.6	99.9	87.9	97.3
Persons not needing assistance	—	40.4	27.4	—	10.9	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Persons with a disability</b>	<b>481.1</b>	<b>626.0</b>	<b>1 225.2</b>	<b>146.6</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>190.2</b>

(a) See Glossary.

(b) Includes people with a disability but with no core activity restriction.

(c) Total includes people who needed assistance with other activities such as housework and guidance (see *Disability, Ageing and Carers: User Guide, Australia, 1998* (ABS 1999c)). Components do not add to total as people could need assistance with more than one activity.

Source: ABS 1999b; ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

In 1998, the proportion of people who needed assistance, as well as the types of activities for which assistance was required, varied according to the level of restriction in core activities. Of people aged 65 and over with a severe or profound restriction in core activities, 85% needed help with mobility and 77% with health care. Due to the severity of the restrictions experienced by this group, a large proportion (32%) lived in cared accommodation.

The assistance needs of older people who had a moderate or mild restriction are best assessed by examining the needs of people living in households. For these individuals property maintenance was the activity for which assistance was most commonly needed (39%). One-quarter (25%), also required some form of health care assistance (see table 3.28).

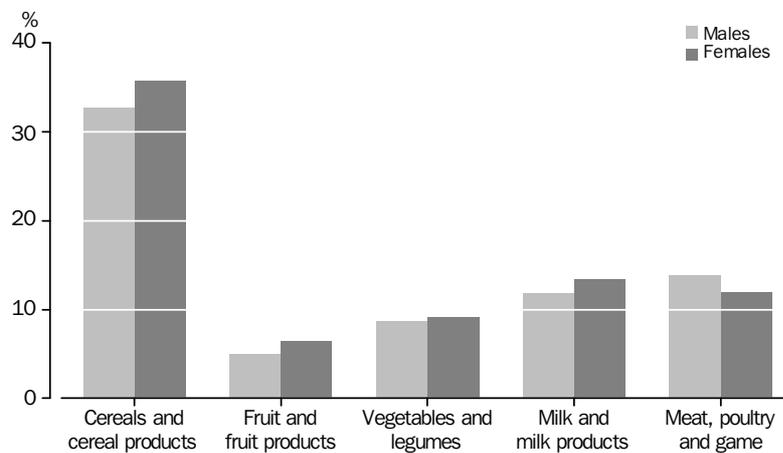
## HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

## Nutrition

Current knowledge of health issues places importance on appropriate levels of nutritional intake as part of a healthy lifestyle. The 1995 National Nutrition Survey collected dietary information, including the types of food people ate, as well as the nutrient, vitamin and mineral content of their daily intake (ABS 1997d).

Cereals and cereal based products were a major source of energy for people aged 65 and over, as they were for younger adults, contributing slightly more to the average energy intake of older women (36%) than older men (33%). Meat, poultry and game contributed slightly more to the energy intake of older men (14%) than older women (12%), with milk and milk products (12% for men and 13% for women) and vegetables and legumes (9%) also major contributors to energy intake.

### 3.14 CONTRIBUTION OF SELECTED FOOD GROUPS TO ENERGY INTAKE(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995



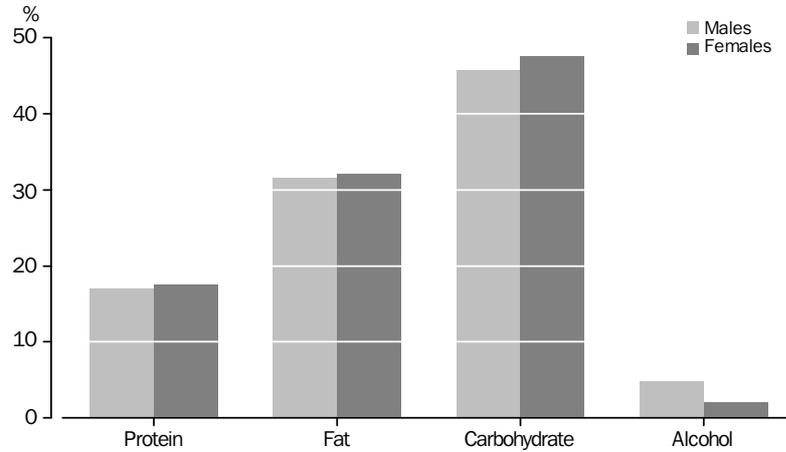
(a) The contribution that selected food groups made to the mean daily intake of energy.

Source: ABS 1997d.

Reflecting differences in the foods consumed by older men and women, carbohydrates contributed slightly more to the energy intake of older women (48%) than older men (46%). The contribution of fats and protein to energy intake was similar for older men and women.

Most older people received more than the recommended intake of vitamins through the food they ate. For example, while the recommended intake of Vitamin C is 40mg for men aged 65 and over and 30mg for women 65 and over, the actual average daily intake of Vitamin C for both men and women in this age group (124mg for older men and 111mg for older women) was more than three times the recommended levels.

**3.15 CONTRIBUTION OF NUTRIENTS TO ENERGY(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995**



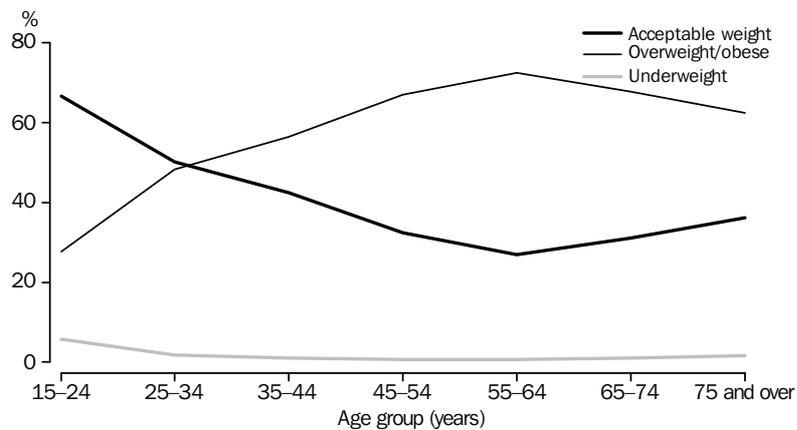
(a) The contribution that nutrients make to the mean daily intake of energy.  
Source: ABS 1997d.

In the case of some minerals, however, older people were not obtaining the recommended amount through their foods. In particular, older women were not obtaining the recommended intake of calcium. The average daily intake of calcium for women aged 65 and over (at 685mg) was well below the recommended amount of 1,000mg. Daily calcium intake for older men was at about the recommended level (800mg) (ABS 1997d).

Weight

In 1995, two-thirds (66%) of people aged 65 and over were considered to be overweight or obese. However, being overweight or obese peaked in the age group 55–64, and as people aged this prevalence declined and the proportions of people in the acceptable weight range increased. Very few older people were underweight.

**3.16 PERSONS AGED 15 AND OVER, Body Mass Index(a)—1995**



(a) See Glossary.  
Source: ABS 1997d; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Nutrition Survey.

## Special diets

The 1995 National Nutrition Survey asked people whether they were on special diets related to specific conditions (such as diabetes), weight reduction or personal preferences (such as vegetarian).

The survey showed that overall older people were more likely than younger people to be on a special diet. The most common diet of older people was a fat modified diet; 25% of people aged 65 and over were on such a diet. Older people were more likely than younger people to be following a diabetic diet, but less likely to be on a weight reduction or vegetarian diet.

### 3.17 PERSONS AGED 15 AND OVER, Type of Diet—1995

Type of diet	15–64 years	65 years and over	Total
	%	%	%
No special diet	67.4	57.7	66.0
Special diet			
Vegetarian	3.8	2.7	3.7
Weight reduction	5.4	2.7	5.0
Diabetic	1.3	5.8	1.9
Fat modified	11.4	24.7	13.3
Other	10.8	6.3	10.2
Total	32.6	42.3	34.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 052.9</b>	<b>2 026.2</b>	<b>14 079.1</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Nutrition Survey.

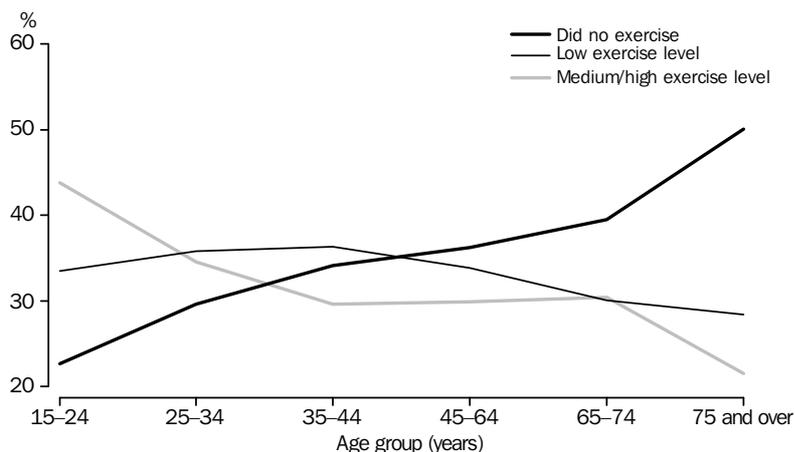
## Exercise

Exercise is now acknowledged as a vital ingredient in healthy ageing. As much as half of the functional decline associated with ageing is attributable to disuse rather than illness. Exercise can offset many of the physical changes which occur with age, offering benefits including greater aerobic capacity, increased muscle strength, increased bone density and greater joint and tissue flexibility (NHMRC, 1994).

In 1995, exercise was a common activity for many older people (57%), although participation rates were lower than for people aged 15–64 (69%). While participation continued to drop in later age, half of people aged 75 and over undertook some exercise, mostly at low levels. Interestingly, those aged 65–74 had similar exercise patterns to people in the 35–64 age groups, and were just as likely to undertake medium/high levels of exercise.

Older men were more likely to report some form of exercise than older women (62% compared with 53%). Men aged 65 and over were also more likely to engage in higher levels of exercise than women in the same age group (see table 3.29).

**3.18 PERSONS AGED 15 AND OVER, Distribution of Exercise Levels(a)—1995**



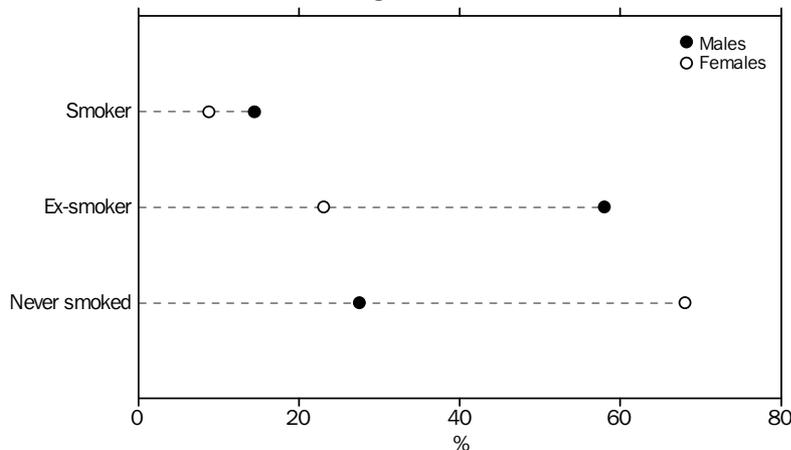
(a) Exercise level was derived from information about frequency, duration and intensity of exercise.

Source: ABS 1997b.

Smoking and alcohol consumption

In 1995, half of all older people had never smoked (see table 3.31). The proportion of people who had never smoked was much higher among older women (68%) than older men (28%). This trend is changing among younger generations, where the take-up rate for smoking is increasing among females and falling for males (see *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1995* (ABS 1997b)).

**3.19 SMOKER STATUS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1995**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

Alcohol consumption can have a significant effect on people's health. Excessive consumption can be harmful and result in a number of diseases including cirrhosis of the liver and cancer of the mouth or oesophagus. Alternatively, modest consumption of alcohol has been associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease (Letenneur, L. 1998).

In 1995, less than half (45%) of older people reported consuming a drink containing alcohol in the week prior to the survey. The majority of those who consumed alcohol (87%) did so at levels considered to be of low risk to their health. Older male drinkers were more likely to be drinking at high risk levels than older female drinkers (5% compared with 2%, respectively) (see table 3.30).

### Women's preventative health actions

The health behaviours and actions examined above are equally relevant to the health of older men and women. However, some preventative health measures are specific to women's health. A range of screening tests, including mammograms, breast examinations and pap smear tests have been found to be effective in the early detection of breast and gynaecological cancers (AIHW, 1998b). In addition, treatments such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT) are being increasingly prescribed as a preventative treatment for conditions such as osteoporosis and coronary heart disease (NHMRC, 1996).

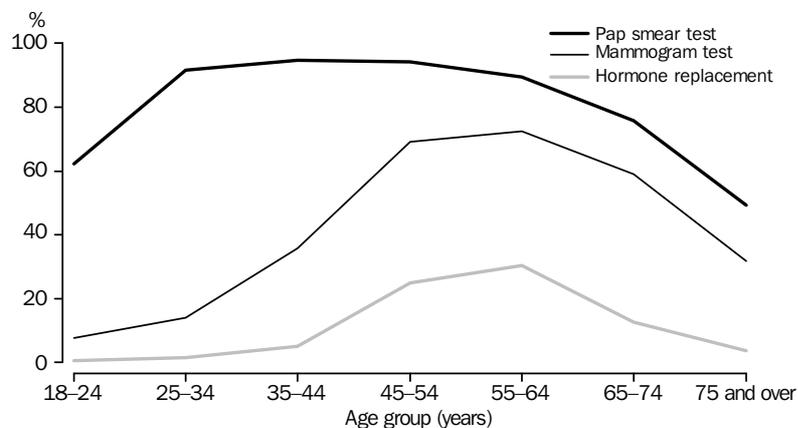
The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age, and its incidence peaks at 70–74 years. A screening mammogram (an examination procedure that detects small tumors before they are obvious) is considered to be the most effective method available for the early detection of breast cancer. The current national program recommends screening every two years for women aged 50–69 (AIHW, 1998b).

In 1995, women aged 55–64 were most likely to have had a mammogram at some stage in their life. Of those aged 65–74, 59% had had at least one mammogram, falling to 32% of women aged 75 and over (see *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1995* (ABS 1997b)).

The incidence of cervical cancer peaks at around age 65–69, with death rates due to cervical cancer highest for those aged 85 and over (AIHW, 1998b). Again early detection of cervical cancer, through the use of pap smear screening, can greatly improve chances of survival. In 1995, older women were less likely than younger women to have had a pap smear test; 24% of women aged 65–74 had never had a pap smear test, nor had 51% of women aged 75 and over (see *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1995* (ABS 1997b)).

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is commonly prescribed to peri- and post-menopausal women as a treatment for the symptoms of menopause and a preventative measure against osteoporosis and coronary heart disease (NHMRC, 1996). In 1995, 30% of women aged 55–64 reported using HRT. This proportion fell to 13% of those aged 65–74 and only 4% of those aged 75 and over.

### 3.20 SELECTED PREVENTATIVE HEALTH ACTIONS, Women Aged 18 and Over—1995



Source: ABS 1997b

## MORTALITY TRENDS

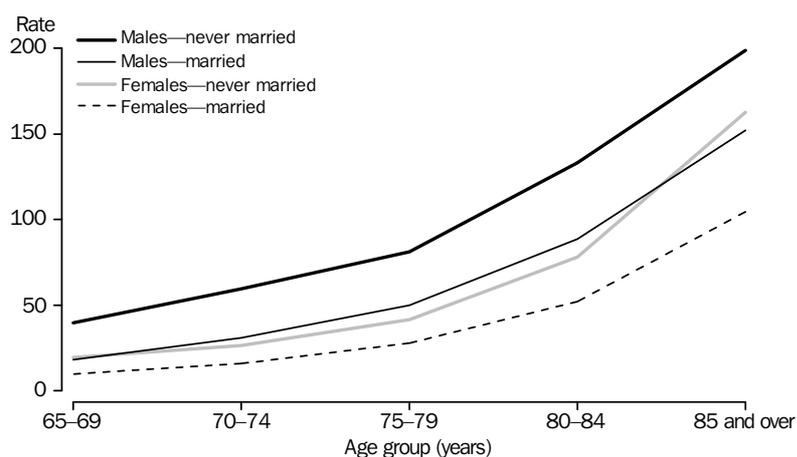
While death rates after infancy generally increase with age, rates differ for older men and women and according to marital status.

## Death rates

The ageing of the Australian population is associated with gains in life expectancy (see chapter 1, Population). These gains, in turn, are partly the result of declines in the death rates of older people. In 1977, there were 65 deaths per 1,000 men aged 65 and over, compared with 50 per 1,000 in 1997. Over the same period, death rates for women in this age group fell from 47 to 41 per 1,000 (ABS 1998a).

At all ages, married people tend to have lower death rates than those who have never married or who are widowed or divorced. In 1997, older men who were married had a death rate of 40 per 1,000 compared with 71 per 1,000 older men who had never married. For older women the difference was even greater, with a death rate of 21 per 1,000 married women compared with 61 per 1,000 never married women. Death rates among older widowed men and women were also high (88 per 1,000 men and 57 per 1,000 women) (ABS 1998a).

### 3.21 AGE-SPECIFIC DEATH RATES(a) BY SELECTED MARITAL STATUS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997



(a) Deaths per 1,000 of the population.

Source: ABS 1998a.

Age-specific death rates in Australia compare favourably with those in many other countries. For example, for both men and women aged 85 and over, Australia had lower death rates than the United Kingdom and most other European countries. For men in particular, Australia had lower death rates at almost any age after 65 than most similarly developed countries. For women the pattern was similar. Australian women aged 65 and over generally had lower death rates than women in other countries, with the exception of Canada and Japan.

## 3.22 INTERNATIONAL AGE-SPECIFIC DEATH RATES, People Aged 65 and Over

		AGE GROUP (YEARS).....					
		65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85 & over	Total
Selected countries	Reference period	rate(a)	rate(a)	rate(a)	rate(a)	rate(a)	rate(a)
MALES							
Australia	1995	22.4	36.7	58.2	98.4	178.8	50.8
Canada	1994	23.7	37.2	60.1	96.4	173.3	52.4
France	1993	24.0	38.5	53.2	99.5	207.3	57.2
Germany	1995	28.3	44.4	69.3	115.6	203.3	62.1
Greece	1995	22.9	35.5	58.7	103.1	170.0	54.6
Italy	1991	26.9	42.3	66.8	114.6	203.5	59.9
Japan	1995	20.0	31.4	54.3	94.5	183.2	47.3
Korea, Republic of	1995	33.7	54.6	91.0	(b)89.6	n.a.	61.5
New Zealand	1992	28.6	43.4	69.1	113.8	197.5	59.4
Philippines	1991	28.6	42.2	65.4	123.4	313.2	56.4
Singapore	1996	29.8	44.1	68.2	(b)106.0	n.a.	53.0
United Kingdom	1995	28.0	46.3	72.6	115.3	196.1	64.0
USA	1994	27.1	40.7	60.8	97.7	179.7	56.8
FEMALES							
Australia	1995	11.8	19.8	34.9	63.1	145.9	40.2
Canada	1994	12.8	20.5	34.5	59.2	136.5	39.3
France	1993	9.5	16.7	27.1	57.8	160.2	43.8
Germany	1995	13.4	23.3	40.7	76.5	166.3	50.8
Greece	1995	11.7	20.3	44.2	84.9	173.7	45.5
Italy	1991	11.9	21.3	38.1	75.2	168.7	44.5
Japan	1995	8.6	15.1	28.1	54.1	128.6	32.5
Korea, Republic of	1995	15.5	28.8	54.2	(b)143.4	n.a.	43.9
New Zealand	1992	15.0	24.6	41.5	71.2	150.8	44.7
Philippines	1991	16.3	27.4	48.5	105.0	305.4	43.6
Singapore	1996	17.3	30.0	47.1	(b)88.5	n.a.	41.6
United Kingdom	1995	16.2	27.3	43.6	74.4	153.7	52.9
USA	1994	15.8	24.4	38.0	63.7	142.7	45.6

(a) Rates are deaths per 1,000 of the population.

(b) Rates for age 80 years and over.

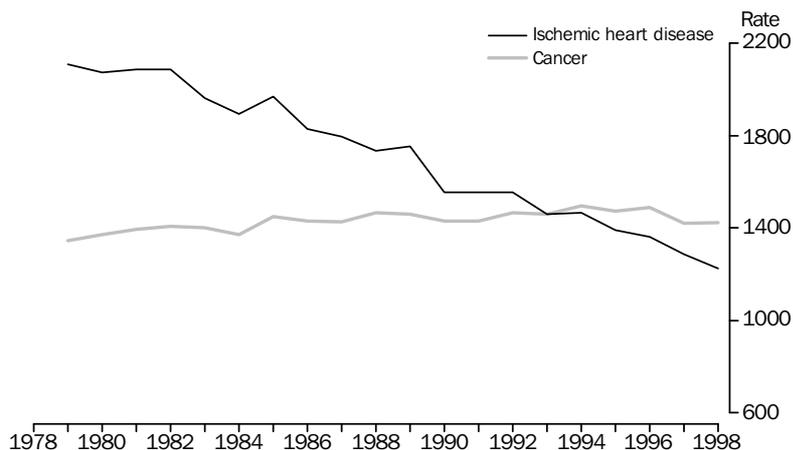
Source: ABS 1997e; United Nations, 1998.

## Causes of death

Over the last two decades, death rates from ischemic heart disease (sometimes referred to as coronary heart disease) declined while death rates from cancer generally rose. In 1998, death rates from these two leading causes of death among older people almost converged, at around 1,100 deaths per 100,000 persons. Among older men, cancer has replaced ischemic heart disease as the leading cause of death. However, for older women, ischemic heart disease remains the leading cause of death.

In 1998, there were 49,000 deaths of men and 50,000 deaths of women aged 65 and over. While the number of female deaths generally exceeds the number of male deaths among older people, the death rate for older women (female deaths per 100,000 women) is lower than the corresponding rate for older men. This occurs because the population of older women is greater than the population of older men (around 1,280,000 and 1,000,000, respectively in 1998).

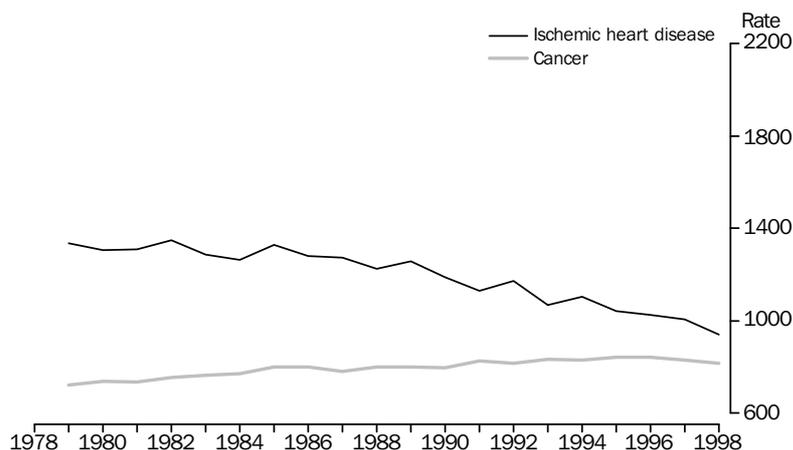
**3.23 MALES AGED 65 AND OVER, Death Rates(a) by Selected Underlying Causes**



(a) Deaths per 100,000 of the population aged 65 and over.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Causes of Death.

**3.24 FEMALES AGED 65 AND OVER, Death Rates(a) by Selected Underlying Causes**



(a) Deaths per 100,000 of the population aged 65 and over.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Causes of Death.

Death rates for older men and women have generally fallen in recent decades, with greater improvements for men. For example, men have experienced greater falls in death rates from circulatory diseases than women. In addition, death rates from respiratory diseases have fallen slightly for men while rising for women. As a result of these changes, while death rates from most causes still remain higher for older men, the gap between male and female rates has closed considerably. Between 1988 and 1998, the male death rate from all causes fell from around 5,700 to 4,900 per 100,000 men while the female death rate fell from around 4,200 to 3,900 per 100,000 women (see table 3.32).

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

**3.24 RECENT ILLNESSES(a), Persons Aged 15 and Over—1995**

Selected recent illnesses	15–64 YEARS.....			65 YEARS AND OVER....			TOTAL.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Persons with a recent illness									
Hypertension	349.7	363.2	712.7	296.1	482.9	779.0	645.8	846.0	1 491.8
Heart disease	73.7	32.4	106.1	123.2	109.2	232.4	197.0	141.4	338.4
Osteoarthritis	74.4	135.0	209.6	60.8	155.1	215.7	135.2	290.0	425.2
Fluid problems	16.5	66.0	82.6	43.5	112.2	155.8	60.0	178.2	238.2
Arthritis—other(b)	75.6	82.8	158.4	41.0	98.5	139.5	116.6	181.3	297.9
High cholesterol	119.5	64.8	184.2	50.6	81.9	132.5	170.0	146.7	316.8
Asthma	320.5	398.5	718.9	47.9	76.6	124.5	368.5	475.1	843.4
Insomnia	49.2	86.6	135.7	38.5	84.5	123.1	87.6	171.2	258.9
Headache	849.9	1 222.1	2 072.0	43.8	78.5	122.3	893.8	1 300.4	2 194.2
Ulcer	87.7	52.2	139.9	52.7	47.4	100.1	140.4	99.6	239.9
Dental problems	264.0	286.0	550.1	44.6	54.8	99.4	308.6	340.8	649.4
Gout	107.0	13.1	120.1	56.0	19.6	75.6	163.0	32.7	195.7
<i>Total(c)</i>	3 926.3	4 492.6	8 419.0	824.1	1 108.2	1 932.4	4 750.4	5 600.9	10 351.3
Persons without a recent illness	2 144.3	1 470.2	3 614.5	112.6	110.0	222.6	2 257.0	1 580.1	3 837.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 070.6</b>	<b>5 962.8</b>	<b>12 033.5</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>7 007.4</b>	<b>7 181.0</b>	<b>14 188.4</b>

(a) Illness or injury experienced in the two weeks prior to the survey.

(b) Includes forms of arthritis other than rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, as well as arthritis which could not be categorised.

(c) Conditions will not add to total as people could report more than one recent illness.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## 3.25 SELECTED LONG-TERM CONDITIONS(a), Persons Aged 15 and Over—1995

Selected conditions	15–64 YEARS.....			65 YEARS AND OVER....			TOTAL.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Long-term conditions									
Hypermetropia/far-sighted	1 187.4	1 454.2	2 641.8	426.6	554.5	981.0	1 614.0	2 008.7	3 622.8
Hypertension	526.8	487.1	1 013.8	325.1	499.1	824.1	851.8	986.2	1 837.9
Presbyopia	349.9	358.3	708.2	321.4	444.8	766.2	671.3	803.1	1 474.5
Myopia/short-sighted	1 279.2	1 611.7	2 891.0	273.6	385.2	658.9	1 552.8	1 997.0	3 549.8
Deafness (complete/partial)	700.8	323.1	1 024.0	357.2	284.3	641.5	1 058.1	607.4	1 665.4
Osteoarthritis	247.7	387.2	634.9	166.6	356.3	523.0	414.3	743.6	1 157.9
Arthritis—other(b)	315.1	337.8	652.8	150.2	241.8	391.9	465.3	579.5	1 044.8
Varicose veins	155.0	551.4	706.4	76.7	199.8	276.5	231.7	751.2	982.9
Heart disease	111.8	55.8	167.6	140.3	131.0	271.3	252.1	186.8	438.9
Hayfever	920.4	1 053.7	1 974.1	97.7	148.4	246.0	1 018.0	1 202.0	2 220.1
Cataracts	25.8	36.6	62.3	75.0	170.1	245.0	100.7	206.7	307.4
High cholesterol	365.3	269.0	634.3	88.2	155.6	243.8	453.5	424.6	878.1
Sinusitis	566.5	876.4	1 443.0	79.3	141.4	220.7	645.9	1 017.8	1 663.7
Bronchitis/emphysema	195.5	242.7	438.2	112.3	84.6	196.9	307.8	327.3	635.1
Hernia	163.3	93.7	257.0	95.5	98.5	194.2	258.9	192.3	451.2
Rheumatoid arthritis	101.7	194.4	296.1	68.2	109.6	177.7	169.9	304.0	473.9
Asthma	535.7	670.0	1 205.7	70.8	101.9	172.8	606.6	772.0	1 378.5
Osteoporosis	16.4	82.5	98.9	12.4	136.5	148.7	28.7	219.0	247.7
All persons with a long-term condition(c)	4 718.6	4 920.5	9 639.1	929.0	1 211.9	2 140.9	5 647.6	6 132.4	11 780.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 070.6</b>	<b>5 962.8</b>	<b>12 033.5</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>7 007.4</b>	<b>7 181.0</b>	<b>14 188.4</b>

(a) Conditions lasting, or expected to last, longer than six months.

(b) Includes forms of arthritis other than rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, as well as arthritis which could not be categorised.

(c) Components do not add to total as people may report more than one condition and only selected conditions are shown.

Source: ABS 1997b; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## 3.26 OLDER PERSONS WITH SELECTED CONDITIONS—1995

<i>Type of condition</i>	<i>Recent only(a)</i> %	<i>Long-term only(b)</i> %	<i>Recent and long-term</i> %	<i>Total.....</i>	
				%	'000
<b>Persons with a cardiovascular condition</b>					
Hypertension	3.2	5.3	33.0	41.4	892.8
Heart Disease	2.1	3.9	8.7	14.6	315.7
Stroke	0.3	2.6	1.1	4.0	85.5
Atherosclerosis	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.9	19.4
Other diseases of the circulatory system	8.6	2.4	2.0	13.0	280.7
Ill-defined signs and symptoms of heart conditions	4.6	1.1	3.4	9.2	197.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>16.7</i>	<i>14.5</i>	<i>43.1</i>	<i>57.0</i>	<i>1 228.2</i>
<b>Persons with arthritis</b>					
Rheumatoid arthritis	—	5.2	3.0	8.2	177.7
Osteoarthritis	—	14.3	10.0	24.3	523.7
Arthritis, n.e.c.	1.0	12.7	5.4	19.2	414.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>31.4</i>	<i>18.4</i>	<i>49.9</i>	<i>1 076.2</i>
<b>Persons with diabetes</b>					
Diabetes—Type 1	—	0.2	1.2	1.3	28.7
Diabetes—Type 2	—	1.2	2.7	4.0	86.1
Diabetes, unspecified	*0.1	1.4	1.9	3.4	73.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>8.7</i>	<i>187.1</i>

(a) Illness experienced in the two weeks prior to the survey.

(b) Condition lasting, or expected to last, six months or longer.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## 3.27 PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY AND CORE ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS(a), All Persons—1998

	0–64 YEARS.....			65 YEARS AND OVER.....						All persons
	0–14	15–64	Total	65–69	70–74	75–79	80–84	85 & over	Total	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
MALES										
Disability										
Core activity restriction										
Profound/severe	4.9	3.9	4.1	7.8	11.8	18.9	24.3	55.9	16.3	5.4
Moderate	0.7	3.4	2.7	10.8	10.3	15.3	7.9	10.4	11.2	3.6
Mild	1.5	4.9	4.1	16.0	21.6	20.3	24.8	16.8	19.5	5.8
Total	7.0	12.3	11.0	34.6	43.7	54.6	57.0	83.2	47.0	14.8
No core activity restriction	2.6	5.1	4.5	8.8	7.4	6.3	*6.4	**1.2	7.1	4.8
Total	9.6	17.4	15.5	43.4	51.1	60.9	63.4	84.3	54.1	19.6
No disability	90.4	82.6	84.5	56.6	48.9	39.2	36.6	15.8	45.9	80.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES										
Disability										
Core activity restriction										
Profound/severe	2.5	4.3	3.8	9.1	15.0	24.9	35.6	68.8	25.0	6.7
Moderate	*0.3	3.2	2.5	8.9	10.4	10.2	6.9	6.9	9.0	3.4
Mild	0.6	4.5	3.6	14.7	16.4	18.3	22.5	7.5	16.1	5.3
Total	3.4	12.0	10.0	32.8	41.9	53.3	65.0	83.2	50.1	15.5
No core activity restriction	2.0	4.1	3.6	4.8	5.3	3.3	*1.8	**1.0	3.7	3.6
Total	5.4	16.1	13.6	37.6	47.3	56.6	66.8	84.2	53.8	19.1
No disability	94.6	83.9	86.4	62.4	52.7	43.4	33.1	15.9	46.2	80.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
PERSONS										
Disability										
Core activity restriction										
Profound/severe	3.7	4.1	4.0	8.5	13.5	22.3	31.3	64.9	21.2	6.1
Moderate	0.5	3.3	2.6	9.8	10.4	12.4	7.3	8.0	10.0	3.5
Mild	1.1	4.7	3.9	15.4	18.8	19.1	23.4	10.4	17.6	5.5
Total	5.3	12.1	10.5	33.7	42.7	53.8	61.9	83.2	48.7	15.2
No core activity restriction	2.3	4.6	4.1	6.7	6.3	4.6	3.6	**1.0	5.2	4.2
Total	7.6	16.7	14.6	40.4	49.0	58.4	65.5	84.2	53.9	19.3
No disability	92.4	83.3	85.4	59.6	51.0	41.6	34.5	15.8	46.0	80.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) See Glossary.

Source: ABS 1999b; ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

### 3.28 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER WITH A DISABILITY LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS, Severity of Core Activity Restriction(a) by Need for Assistance—1998

Activities for which assistance was needed	65 YEARS AND OVER.....			85 YEARS AND OVER.....		
	<i>Profound/ severe restriction</i>	<i>Moderate/ mild restriction</i>	<i>All with disability(b)</i>	<i>Profound/ severe restriction</i>	<i>Moderate/ mild restriction</i>	<i>All with disability(b)</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Persons needing assistance						
Self care	47.5	—	14.6	41.9	—	26.3
Mobility	84.2	—	25.9	94.2	—	59.1
Communication	8.7	—	2.7	14.5	—	9.1
Health care	66.6	24.6	35.4	76.4	32.8	59.6
Transport(c)	71.0	22.2	35.8	81.9	51.1	70.5
Paperwork	34.1	4.0	13.0	50.0	*13.6	36.2
Housework(c)	69.4	22.4	34.7	79.6	36.2	62.8
Property maintenance(c)	76.9	39.3	48.4	77.3	53.9	68.5
Meal preparation(c)	36.7	2.6	12.9	50.8	*9.4	35.2
<i>Total needing assistance(d)</i>	99.7	59.5	68.7	100.0	88.6	95.9
Persons not needing assistance	—	40.5	31.3	—	11.4	*4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Persons with a disability</b>	<b>326.4</b>	<b>620.1</b>	<b>1 063.3</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>110.5</b>

(a) See Glossary.

(b) Includes people with a disability but with no core activity restriction.

(c) Collected for persons with a disability living in households only.

(d) Components do not add to total as people can need assistance with more than one activity.

Source: ABS 1999b; ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## 3.29 EXERCISE LEVEL(a), Persons Aged 15 and Over—1995

Exercise level	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
AGED 15–64						
Did some exercise						
High/medium level exercise	2 345.1	38.6	1 757.6	29.5	4 102.6	34.1
Low level exercise	1 808.0	29.8	2 377.7	39.9	4 185.8	34.8
Total	4 153.1	68.4	4 135.3	69.4	8 288.4	68.9
Did no exercise	1 917.7	31.6	1 827.5	30.6	3 745.0	31.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 070.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5 962.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12 033.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>
AGED 65 AND OVER						
Did some exercise						
High/medium level exercise	311.9	33.3	271.0	22.2	582.9	27.0
Low level exercise	266.3	28.4	368.8	30.3	635.1	29.5
Total	578.2	61.7	639.8	52.5	1 218.0	56.5
Did no exercise	358.5	38.3	578.3	47.5	936.9	43.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Exercise level was derived from information about frequency, duration and intensity of exercise.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## 3.30 PERSONS AGED 18 AND OVER, Alcohol Consumption—1995

Alcohol consumption risk level(a)	Males.....		Females.....		Persons.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
AGED 18–64						
Did not consume	1 875.4	33.2	2 913.7	52.2	4 789.1	42.6
Did consume						
Low	3 142.6	55.6	2 313.8	41.5	5 456.3	48.6
Moderate	330.8	5.9	274.2	4.9	605.0	5.4
High	305.3	5.4	79.3	1.4	384.6	3.4
Total	3 778.7	66.8	2 667.3	47.8	6 445.9	57.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 654.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5 581.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11 235.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
AGED 65 AND OVER						
Did not consume	379.0	40.5	796.1	65.4	1 175.1	54.5
Did consume						
Low	496.7	53.0	358.9	29.5	855.7	39.7
Moderate	33.2	3.5	55.3	4.5	88.5	4.1
High	27.7	3.0	7.9	0.6	35.6	1.7
Total	557.6	59.5	422.1	34.6	979.8	45.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>936.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 218.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) See Glossary.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

**3.31 SMOKER STATUS—1989–90 and 1995, Persons Aged 18 and Over**

Smoker status	1989–90				1995			
	65–74 years	75 years and over	Total 65 years and over	All persons 18 years and over	65–74 years	75 years and over	Total 65 years and over	All persons 18 years and over
MALES								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoker	19.7	11.1	16.9	32.1	16.6	10.3	14.5	27.3
Ex-smoker	53.7	55.4	54.2	28.8	57.3	59.4	58.0	32.4
Never smoked	26.6	33.5	28.8	39.1	26.1	30.4	27.5	40.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoker	13.8	6.3	10.9	24.7	10.6	6.1	8.8	20.3
Ex-smoker	21.4	16.6	19.5	17.8	25.5	19.6	23.1	22.5
Never smoked	64.8	77.0	69.7	57.4	63.9	74.3	68.1	57.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
PERSONS								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoker	16.5	8.1	13.4	28.4	13.4	7.7	11.3	23.8
Ex-smoker	36.0	31.2	34.3	23.2	40.2	35.2	38.3	27.4
Never smoked	47.5	60.7	52.3	48.4	46.5	57.1	50.4	48.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 209.0</b>	<b>688.1</b>	<b>1 897.0</b>	<b>12 444.2</b>	<b>1 348.0</b>	<b>807.0</b>	<b>2 155.0</b>	<b>13 389.9</b>

Source: ABS 1992; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 National Health Survey.

## 3.32 PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER, Selected Underlying Cause of Death—1988 and 1998

Selected causes	1988.....			1998.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
NUMBER OF DEATHS (no.)						
Cancer	11 129	8 275	19 404	14 236	10 480	24 716
Diseases of the circulatory system						
Ischaemic heart disease	13 169	12 628	25 797	12 248	12 066	24 314
Cerebrovascular disease	4 340	6 847	11 187	4 283	6 791	11 074
Total(a)	21 479	25 016	46 495	20 682	24 489	45 171
Diseases of the respiratory system						
Chronic obstruction pulmonary disease	3 546	1 612	5 158	3 210	2 131	5 341
Total(a)	4 620	2 791	7 411	5 897	5 282	11 179
Diseases of the digestive system						
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	332	403	735	191	239	430
Total(a)	1 333	1 618	2 951	1 308	1 666	2 974
Accidents, poisoning and violence						
Accidents	740	810	1 550	795	894	1 689
Suicide	242	88	330	233	80	313
Total(a)	1 016	933	1 949	1 047	1 001	2 048
<b>All causes</b>	<b>43 210</b>	<b>43 475</b>	<b>86 685</b>	<b>48 663</b>	<b>50 074</b>	<b>98 737</b>
DEATH RATE (b)						
Cancer	1 464.7	802.2	1 083.2	1 424.6	816.2	1 082.4
Diseases of the circulatory system						
Ischaemic heart disease	1 733.2	1 224.2	1 440.1	1 225.6	939.7	1 064.8
Cerebrovascular disease	571.2	663.7	624.5	428.6	528.9	485.0
Total(a)	2 826.9	2 425.0	2 595.5	2 069.6	1 907.2	1 978.3
Diseases of the respiratory system						
Chronic obstruction pulmonary disease	466.7	156.3	287.9	321.2	166.0	233.9
Total(a)	608.0	270.6	413.7	590.1	411.4	489.6
Diseases of the digestive system						
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	43.7	39.1	41.0	19.1	18.6	18.8
Total(a)	175.4	156.8	164.7	130.9	129.7	130.2
Accidents, poisoning and violence						
Accidents	97.4	78.5	86.5	79.6	69.6	74.0
Suicide	31.9	8.5	18.4	23.3	6.2	13.7
Total(a)	133.7	90.4	108.8	104.8	78.0	89.7
<b>All causes</b>	<b>5 686.9</b>	<b>4 214.4</b>	<b>4 839.0</b>	<b>4 869.6</b>	<b>3 899.7</b>	<b>4 324.2</b>

(a) Components do not add to total as only selected causes are shown.

(b) Rates are deaths per 100,000 of the population.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Causes of Death.

INTRODUCTION

As people move into later stages of their lives, important changes occur within their economic environment. Changes in household composition, home occupancy and lifestyle may lead to a reduction in some forms of expenditure. Nevertheless, for older people, as for most members of the community, economic wellbeing remains closely linked to regular income.

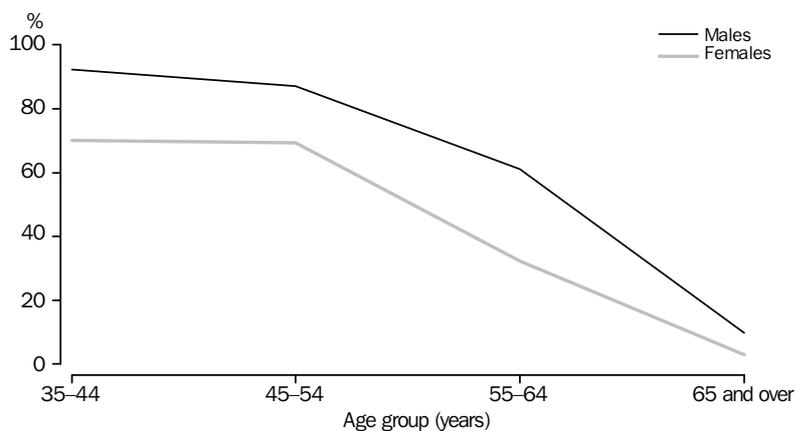
The sources of income for older people change markedly as they move into retirement. Traditionally, there has been a tendency for most retired people to move from private income sources to government pensions and benefits. Recent government initiatives have been designed to encourage people to be more self-supporting in their retirement. An important step towards this was the *Superannuation Guarantee Act 1992*, which will lead to the majority of the Australian labour force having superannuation coverage at retirement. While today's older people remain largely reliant on government income support, it is expected this dependence will decrease over the coming decades.

This chapter examines various characteristics of the economic environment of older individuals, including their labour market participation and their levels and sources of income.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

In general, labour force participation decreases with age, with significant changes occurring after the age of 55 years. In 1998, 78% of people aged 45–54 were either employed or actively looking for work (i.e. participating in the labour force). This proportion fell to 59% for those aged 55–59, and was a low 6% for those aged 65 and over (see also tables 4.2 and 4.15).

4.1 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, Persons Aged 35 and Over—1998(a)



(a) Annual average calculated using monthly data.  
 Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Labour Force Survey.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION *continued*

The labour force participation rate of older Australians has undergone little change in the last decade. In 1988, 5% (some 97,000 persons) of those aged 65 and over, were either in paid employment or unemployed. By 1998 this number had increased to over 136,000, representing 6% of this age group.

However, some changes can be seen in the participation of those aged 60–64. Between 1988 and 1998 there was a modest increase in the participation rate for men and women combined, from 31% to 33%. While the participation rate of men aged 60–64 actually decreased slightly during the ten-year period (from 49% to 46%), the participation rate of women in this age group rose from 14% in 1988 to 19% in 1998. This pattern reflects changes in the composition of the Australian labour force associated with increasing female participation.

**4.2 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, By Age—1988 and 1998(a)**

Age group (years)	1988.....			1998.....		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
15–44	87.6	66.0	76.9	86.0	69.1	77.6
45 and over						
45–54	88.6	57.0	73.2	87.1	69.3	78.3
55–59	74.3	31.9	53.4	73.5	43.4	58.7
60–64	48.5	13.8	31.0	45.8	19.4	32.6
65 and over	9.2	2.6	5.4	9.8	3.0	6.0
<i>Total</i>	54.4	25.5	39.3	54.9	34.6	44.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.2</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>62.4</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>63.3</b>

(a) Annual averages calculated using monthly data.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1988 and 1998 Labour Force Surveys.

## PAID WORK

As is to be expected, older people remain much less likely than those in younger age groups to be in paid employment. In 1998, 71% of people aged 15–44 years were in some form of employment. For people aged 55–59 this proportion fell to 55%, while 31% of those aged 60–64 years were employed. Of those aged 65 years and over the proportion in paid employment was just 6%.

### 4.3 EMPLOYED PERSONS, By Age—1998(a)

Age group (years)	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	%(b)	%(b)	%(b)
FULL-TIME						
15–44	2 869.6	1 513.6	4 383.2	68.2	36.1	52.1
45–54	956.1	464.8	1 420.9	76.8	38.1	57.6
55–59	269.8	95.7	365.6	60.3	22.1	41.5
60–64	123.9	26.3	150.2	33.6	7.1	20.3
65 and over	54.4	12.7	67.1	5.4	1.0	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 273.7</b>	<b>2 113.2</b>	<b>6 386.9</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>43.2</b>
PART-TIME						
15–44	415.9	1 127.3	1 543.1	9.9	26.9	18.4
45–54	65.8	340.4	406.2	5.3	27.9	16.5
55–59	33.6	82.2	115.8	7.5	19.0	13.2
60–64	34.1	43.0	77.1	9.2	11.6	10.4
65 and over	41.8	25.5	67.3	4.2	2.0	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>591.1</b>	<b>1 618.4</b>	<b>2 209.5</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>15.0</b>
TOTAL EMPLOYED						
15–44	3 285.4	2 640.9	5 926.3	78.0	62.9	70.5
45–54	1 021.9	805.2	1 827.1	82.1	65.9	74.1
55–59	303.4	177.9	481.4	67.8	41.1	54.7
60–64	158.0	69.3	227.3	42.8	18.7	30.7
65 and over	96.2	38.2	134.4	9.6	3.0	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 864.8</b>	<b>3 731.6</b>	<b>8 596.4</b>	<b>66.9</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>58.2</b>

(a) Annual average calculated using monthly data.

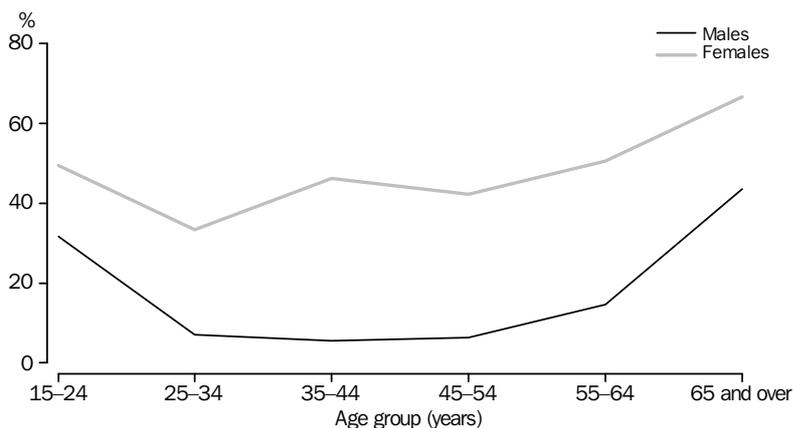
(b) Proportion of total persons in age group.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Labour Force Survey.

Part-time work

Half of those aged 65 and over who continue to work do so on a part-time basis. Aside from the 15–19 age group, employed men and women aged 65 and over are more likely than any other adult group to work part-time. The proportion of employed women who work part-time is relatively high across all age groups, increasing to 67% for those aged 65 and over. For older men who continue in the labour force the shift towards part-time work is quite dramatic, from 15% of those aged 55–64 to almost 44% of those aged 65 and over.

**4.4 PROPORTION EMPLOYED PART-TIME, Persons Aged 15 and Over—1998(a)**



(a) Annual average calculated using monthly data.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Labour Force Survey.

Unemployment

A concern shared by workers of all ages is unemployment. Those aged 45 and over experienced a 1% increase in unemployment between 1988 and 1998, about the same as experienced in the whole population of working age (15 years and older). For men aged 60 and over, however, the unemployment rate decreased almost two percentage points from 1988 to 1998. Over the same period, there was a slight increase in the unemployment rate of women aged 60 and over (around one percentage point).

Unemployment is often a long-term experience for older workers. In 1998, unemployed workers aged 55 and over had the highest incidence of long-term unemployment. Of these older unemployed, 49% were long-term unemployed compared with 32% of all unemployed workers. In addition, 36% of unemployed workers aged 55 and over had been so for longer than two years (see table 4.16).

#### 4.5 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, By Age—1988 and 1998(a)

Selected age groups (years)	1988.....			1998.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%
15-44	7.4	8.9	8.0	9.2	8.9	9.1
45 and over						
45-54	4.2	4.5	4.3	5.8	4.9	5.4
55-59	6.0	4.0	5.5	7.8	5.3	6.9
60 and over	6.2	*1.5	5.0	4.6	2.9	4.1
<i>Total</i>	5.0	4.0	4.7	6.0	4.7	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.0</b>

(a) Annual averages calculated using monthly data.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1988 and 1998 Labour Force Survey.

The Successful and Unsuccessful Job Search Experience Survey (1998) provides some explanations of the source of the long-term unemployment of older workers. This survey collected information regarding the main difficulties experienced in finding work. In 1998 almost two-thirds of unemployed people aged 55 and over identified their age as the main reason they were unsuccessful in gaining employment. In addition to the 15,500 people aged 60 and over who were classified as unemployed, a further 17,000 people aged 60-64 and 14,000 aged 65-69 wanted to work but had ceased their job search efforts (ABS 1999d).

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Income is an important determinant and indicator of the economic wellbeing of individuals and families. This section examines the levels and sources of income available to older people and how they provide for their retirement.

### Level of income

As a consequence of lower labour force participation associated with advancing age, older people typically experience reduced income. The 1996-97 Survey of Income and Housing Costs examined the income of people of various ages and life stages. The basic unit of analysis was the income unit, defined as a single person, or as a group of people within a household whose command of income is assumed to be shared, in particular couples and their dependent children.

Level of income *continued*

Not surprisingly, there were differences in gross weekly income between units where the reference person was aged 15–64 and units where the reference person was 65 years and over. The median weekly income of one person income units aged 65 and over living alone was \$194, compared with \$390 for those aged 15–64. For couple units without dependants a similar pattern existed; units with the reference person aged 65 and over had a median weekly income of \$348 compared with \$830 for couple units with the reference person aged 15–64.

**4.6 GROSS WEEKLY INCOME, Income Units(a) Without Dependants—1996–97**

Gross weekly income	INCOME UNITS WITH REFERENCE PERSON AGED 15–64 YEARS.....			INCOME UNITS WITH REFERENCE PERSON AGED 65 YEARS AND OVER.....		
	Couple units	One person units	Total(b)	Couple units	One person units	All income units(b)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than \$150	3.4	13.7	7.8	*2.5	6.0	4.4
\$150–\$224	1.6	20.0	10.3	3.3	60.5	35.0
\$225–\$299	8.4	6.6	7.1	24.6	18.4	21.1
\$300–\$374	7.1	7.6	7.2	27.3	6.7	15.7
\$375–\$449	4.5	9.5	7.5	13.5	*1.7	6.9
\$450 and over	74.9	42.6	60.2	28.9	6.8	16.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 513.9</b>	<b>3 517.0</b>	<b>7 521.5</b>	<b>685.3</b>	<b>867.1</b>	<b>1 561.9</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Median income	830	390	545	348	194	276

(a) Income units are defined as a single person, or as a group of people within a household whose command over income is assumed to be shared.

(b) Includes couples with dependants and lone parent income units.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996–97 Survey of Income and Housing Costs.

Not only does the older age group have lower median income, but the distribution of incomes within this group is much more constrained. Of one person income units aged 65 and over, 67% had an average gross weekly income of less than \$225. Of couple income units 71% had incomes of less than \$375. These distributions are explained by the dependence of many older people on aged and service pensions as their primary source of income.

## Sources of retirement income

Government pensions and benefits remain the principal source of income for older people despite initiatives such as the *Superannuation Guarantee Act 1992*. In 1996–97 government pensions were the principal source of income for almost three-quarters (74%) of income units where the reference person was aged 65 and over. The remaining income units were principally self-funding, through such private sources as property investments (11% of income units), superannuation (9%) and wages or salaries (3%).

#### 4.7 PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INCOME, Income Units With Reference Person Aged 65 and Over—1996–97

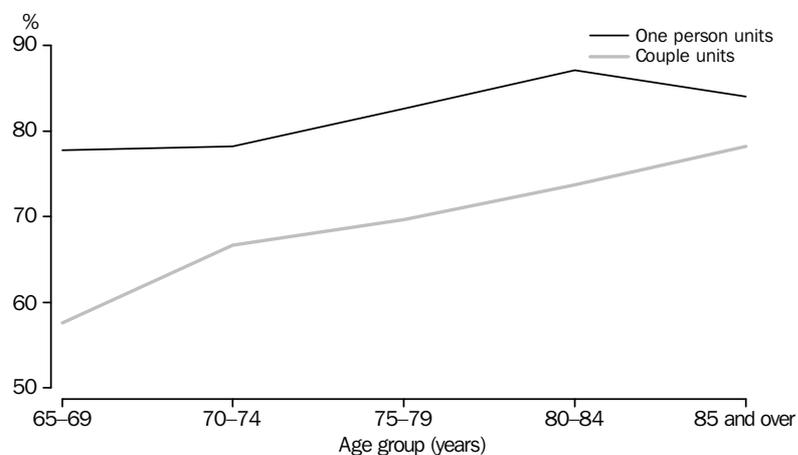
Sources of income	Couple units	One person units	All income units
	%	%	%
Government pensions and allowances	64.9	81.3	74.1
Property	14.3	8.6	11.1
Superannuation	11.6	6.6	8.8
Wage or salary	5.0	**0.4	2.5
Own business or partnership income	3.1	*1.5	2.2
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>691.6</b>	<b>870.3</b>	<b>1 561.9</b>

(a) Includes other sources of income.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996–97 Survey of Income and Housing Costs.

Among people aged 65 and over in 1996–97, the reliance on government sources of income increased with age. This increase was especially marked for couples, where the proportion with a government benefit as their principal source of income rose from 58% for couple income units with the reference person aged 65–69 to 78% of those with the reference person aged 85 and over.

#### 4.8 PROPORTION RECEIVING GOVERNMENT PENSION AS PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INCOME, Income Units With Reference Person Aged 65 and Over—1996–97



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996–97 Survey of Income and Housing Costs.

## Government sources of income support

While there is a general increase in receipt of government sources of income with age, the principal form of this income support varies among older age groups. The main form of government income support currently available to older Australians is the age pension, administered by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS) and paid through Centrelink. In addition, various war service pensions are administered and paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). In 1998, a much greater number of older people received the age pension than received war service pensions (1.5 million compared with 375,000). Due to the age profile of those who served in World War II and their spouses, the highest numbers in receipt of war service pensions in 1998 occurred among people aged 75–79.

## 4.9 TYPE OF PENSION RECEIVED, Persons Aged 65 and Over(a)—1998

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
<i>Selected age groups (years)</i>	'000	'000	'000
AGE PENSIONERS			
65–69	234.6	245.3	479.9
70–74	182.0	206.5	388.5
75–79	89.0	169.8	258.8
80–84	62.1	134.3	196.4
85–89	34.0	84.5	118.5
90 and over	11.9	41.4	53.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>613.6</b>	<b>881.8</b>	<b>1 495.4</b>
WAR SERVICE PENSIONERS			
65–69	7.1	26.0	33.2
70–74	32.6	68.7	101.3
75–79	75.8	71.3	147.1
80–84	32.9	33.4	66.3
85–89	8.7	12.6	21.4
90 and over	1.7	4.3	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>158.9</b>	<b>216.5</b>	<b>375.3</b>

(a) Includes pension recipients not resident in Australia.

Source: Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services, 1998; Department of Veterans' Affairs, unpublished data, 1997–98.

## Superannuation

Since the mid 1980s there has been a steady increase in the proportion of individuals who have held superannuation membership at the time of retirement. It is therefore anticipated that over the coming decades the contribution of superannuation to retirement incomes will increase, with a corresponding decrease in reliance on government pensions.

The Survey of Retirement and Retirement Intentions collects information relating to people aged 45 and over who have had full-time paid employment in the past and who have ceased full-time work. In 1986, this survey found that 35% of retiring people had superannuation cover; by 1997 this number had increased to 58%.

#### 4.10 RETIREMENT SCHEME MEMBERSHIP(a), Retired Persons Aged 45 and Over

	November 1986	November 1989	October 1992	November 1994	November 1997
<i>Membership at retirement</i>	%	%	%	%	%
.....					
Belonged to a retirement scheme					
Had superannuation cover	35.0	38.1	43.3	49.9	57.5
Total(b)	39.0	41.8	47.1	52.6	60.4
Did not belong to a retirement scheme	61.0	58.2	52.9	47.4	39.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Includes superannuation schemes, life assurance policies or similar schemes that provide financial benefit when a person leaves work.

(b) Includes life assurance or other schemes.

Source: ABS 1998h; ABS, unpublished data, 1986 and 1989 Surveys of Retirement and Retirement Intentions.

## Private and final income

Because of the reliance of older people on direct government benefits such as pensions, as well as indirect benefits such as health care, measures of income based on gross cash income may provide an incomplete view of their economic circumstances. For this reason, making a distinction between the private and final income of older people allows for an examination of the effect of government taxes and benefits on their economic wellbeing. Private income is defined as income from sources other than government, including wages and salaries, investment income and superannuation and annuity income. In contrast, final income refers to income available after the deduction of direct and indirect taxes, and addition of direct and indirect government benefits. Through the administration of benefits and taxes, government policy can play an important role in reducing the differences in final income between different types of households.

Private and final income *continued*

Due to their lower incomes and expenditures, households containing older people pay the least direct and indirect taxes of all life cycle groups. On the other hand, older people receive the highest levels of direct benefits, mainly in the form of age and veterans' pensions. While older people benefit from government health services, they make less use of other indirect benefits such as education (see *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: the Effects of Government Benefits and Taxes on Household Income, 1993–94* (ABS 1996b)).

In general, the reduced taxes and increased benefits applied to older people greatly affect their final incomes, making them more comparable to those of people in younger life cycle stages. For example, in 1993–94 the private income of a lone person aged 65 or over was 15% that of a lone person aged 15–35 years. After adjusting for differences in taxes paid and benefits received, the final income of a lone older person was 78% that of a lone younger person.

#### 4.11 AVERAGE WEEKLY INCOME, TAXES AND BENEFITS, Selected Life Cycle Groups—1993–94

Selected life cycle groups	Private income(a)	Direct taxes	Indirect taxes	Direct benefits	Indirect benefits	Final income
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Lone person aged under 35	443	102	40	33	36	370
Couple with dependent children only						
Eldest child aged 0–4	736	170	67	55	94	648
Eldest child aged 5–14	765	174	74	78	228	823
Eldest child aged 15–20	958	222	76	64	269	993
Couple only						
Reference person aged under 35	951	203	74	13	53	741
Reference person aged 55–64	455	92	56	90	88	485
Reference person aged 65 and over	186	31	38	204	171	493
Lone person aged 65 and over	65	14	15	148	107	290

(a) Private income is income from private sources such as wages, salaries, self-employment, investments and superannuation.

Source: ABS 1996b.

## Use of medical services and private health insurance

Medical care is a government benefit of considerable importance to older Australians. Around 65% of the indirect benefits applied to older people are in the form of health benefits such as hospital care and pharmaceutical subsidies (see *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: the Effects of Government Benefits and Taxes on Household Income, 1993–94* (ABS 1996b)).

Medicare statistics published by the Health Insurance Commission provide information on the number and cost of services processed in 1997–98 for people in various age groups. Both the average number and cost of services varied according to age and sex. Medicare use increased with age, with people aged 75 and over averaging 23 Medicare service claims during 1997–98 compared to an average of 11 service claims across all ages. Those aged 65–74 made almost as much use of Medicare as those aged 75 and over, with an average of 21 service claims in 1997–98. Likewise, while the average cost of each service was similar across all ages, the average total cost of services increased with age, with the group aged 75 years and over claiming an average of \$733 in services during the year compared to an average of \$338 for people of all ages. Across all ages after childhood, women made more claims with an average of 13 claims compared with 9 by men.

**4.12 MEDICARE SERVICES PROVIDED, By Age—1997–98**

Age groups	SERVICES PER PERSON(a)			TOTAL SERVICES.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
NUMBER OF SERVICES						
	no.	no.	no.	million	million	million
0–14	6.4	6.2	6.3	12.9	11.8	24.6
15–24	4.9	9.8	7.3	6.7	12.8	19.6
25–34	5.8	13.3	9.6	8.4	19.2	27.7
35–44	7.0	12.0	9.5	10.1	17.5	27.6
45–54	9.4	13.8	11.6	11.7	16.8	28.5
55–64	14.4	17.0	15.7	11.7	13.6	25.3
65–74	20.1	21.0	20.6	12.4	14.2	26.7
75 and over	20.1	24.1	22.5	7.6	14.6	22.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>120.6</b>	<b>202.2</b>
COST OF SERVICES						
	\$	\$	\$	\$m	\$m	\$m
0–14	172.1	159.7	166.1	346.2	305.2	651.4
15–24	144.7	267.6	204.7	198.1	350.1	548.1
25–34	175.2	403.9	289.6	252.9	582.7	835.7
35–44	219.7	392.9	306.5	317.5	570.8	888.4
45–54	310.0	457.6	383.0	386.5	558.5	945.0
55–64	490.6	556.8	523.4	399.8	446.3	846.0
65–74	692.8	688.9	690.8	428.9	467.0	895.9
75 and over	670.6	772.2	733.0	255.0	468.1	723.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>277.1</b>	<b>397.9</b>	<b>337.8</b>	<b>2 584.9</b>	<b>3 748.7</b>	<b>6 333.5</b>

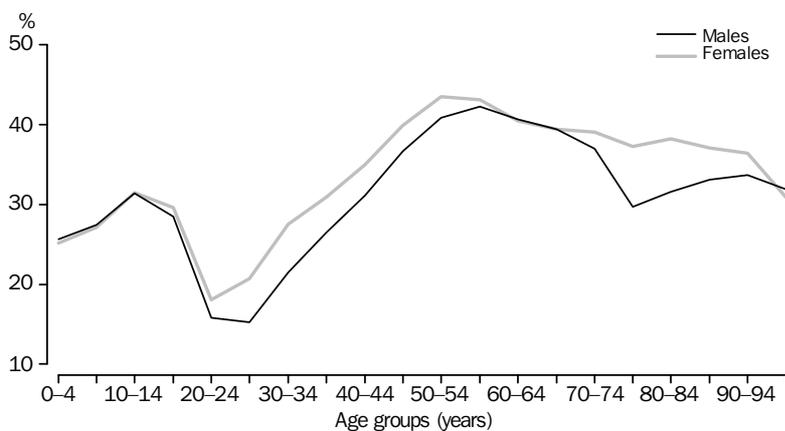
(a) Mean average.

Source: Health Insurance Commission 1998.

Use of medical services and private health insurance *continued*

While older age appeared to lead to greater use of medical services this was not associated with increased private health insurance coverage. During childhood, coverage for males and females was similar, averaging 28% of children aged 14 and under in 1998. With the financial independence of early adulthood came a sharp decline in coverage, at which time men began to lag behind women in contributing to private health insurance. Coverage steadily increased through middle adulthood, peaking for women at 44% in the age group 50–54 and for men at 42% in the age group 55–59. In later years private health insurance coverage decreased as older men and women relied more on government health benefits provided in association with government pensions.

**4.13 PERSONS COVERED BY PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE, By Age—June 1998**



Source: Private Health Insurance Administration Council 1998.

One form of government health benefit that affects the decision to contribute to private health insurance is the health concession card provided by the DFaCS and the DVA. In 1998, 85% of older people had a health care card and 40% were covered by private health insurance. People aged 65 and over who did not have a health care card were more likely than those who did hold a card to be covered by private health insurance (78% and 33%, respectively).

## 4.14 PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE, Persons Aged 55 and Over—1998

Whether covered by private health insurance	55-64 years.....		65 and over.....		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
HOLD HEALTH CARE CARD						
With Private Health Insurance	173.1	24.6	595.1	33.0	768.2	30.7
Without Private Health Insurance	529.9	75.4	1 207.0	67.0	1 736.9	69.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>703.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 802.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2 505.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>
DO NOT HOLD HEALTH CARE CARD						
With Private Health Insurance	541.7	61.1	244.9	77.7	786.6	65.4
Without Private Health Insurance	345.4	38.9	70.2	22.3	415.6	34.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>887.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>315.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1 202.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
TOTAL(a)						
With Private Health Insurance	719.0	44.9	849.0	39.9	1 568.0	42.0
Without Private Health Insurance	880.9	55.1	1 281.2	60.1	2 162.1	58.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 599.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2 130.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3 730.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Includes not stated whether covered by card.

Source: ABS 1999e.

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

## 4.15 LABOUR FORCE STATUS, Persons Aged 15 and Over—1998(a)

IN LABOUR FORCE.....

Age group (years)	Employed	Employed	Total	Unemployed	Total	Not in labour force	Total
	part-time	full-time	employed				
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
MALES							
15–44	415.9	2 869.6	3 285.4	334.2	3 619.6	590.0	4 209.6
45–49	32.5	520.1	552.6	33.9	586.5	67.5	654.0
50–54	33.3	436.0	469.3	28.5	497.7	92.4	590.2
55–59	33.6	269.8	303.4	25.7	329.1	118.6	447.7
60–64	34.1	123.9	158.0	11.0	169.0	200.1	369.1
65 and over	41.8	54.4	96.2	*1.3	97.4	900.7	998.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>591.1</b>	<b>4 273.7</b>	<b>4 864.8</b>	<b>434.5</b>	<b>5 299.3</b>	<b>1 969.3</b>	<b>7 268.7</b>
FEMALES							
15–44	1 127.3	1 513.6	2 640.9	257.8	2 898.7	1 296.9	4 195.6
45–49	186.0	265.1	451.1	24.5	475.6	175.2	650.7
50–54	154.4	199.7	354.1	16.6	370.8	199.5	570.2
55–59	82.2	95.7	178.0	9.9	187.9	245.1	432.9
60–64	43.0	26.3	69.3	2.6	71.9	298.7	370.6
65 and over	25.5	12.7	38.2	*0.6	38.8	1 243.7	1 282.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 618.4</b>	<b>2 113.2</b>	<b>3 731.6</b>	<b>312.0</b>	<b>4 043.6</b>	<b>3 458.9</b>	<b>7 502.5</b>
PERSONS							
15–44	1 543.1	4 383.2	5 926.3	592.0	6 518.3	1 886.9	8 405.2
45–49	218.5	785.2	1 003.7	58.4	1 062.1	242.7	1 304.7
50–54	187.7	635.8	823.4	45.1	868.5	291.9	1 160.4
55–59	115.8	365.6	481.4	35.6	517.0	363.6	880.6
60–64	77.1	150.2	227.3	13.6	240.9	498.8	739.7
65 and over	67.3	67.1	134.4	1.9	136.2	2 144.4	2 280.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 209.4</b>	<b>6 386.9</b>	<b>8 596.4</b>	<b>746.5</b>	<b>9 342.9</b>	<b>5 428.3</b>	<b>14 771.2</b>

(a) Annual averages calculated using monthly data.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Labour Force Survey.

#### 4.16 DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT, Unemployed Persons by Age—1998(a)

##### LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED(b)...

Age group (years)	Under 52 weeks	52 to less than 104 weeks	104 weeks and over	Total long-term unemployed	Total unemployed	
	%	%	%	%	%	'000
15–24	79.1	12.1	8.8	20.9	100.0	282.9
25–34	68.3	14.1	17.6	31.7	100.0	167.5
35–44	61.9	16.0	22.1	38.1	100.0	141.6
45–54	54.1	16.9	29.0	45.9	100.0	103.5
55 and over	51.1	13.0	35.9	48.9	100.0	51.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>68.0</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>746.5</b>

(a) Annual averages calculated using monthly data.

(b) Long-term unemployment defined as seeking work for 52 weeks or longer.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Labour Force Survey.

#### 4.17 GOVERNMENT PENSION AS PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INCOME, Income Units With Reference Person Aged 65 and Over—1996–97

Age group of reference person (years)	Couple units	One person units	Couple units	One person units
	'000	'000	%(a)	%(a)
65–69	152.8	146.7	57.6	77.8
70–74	132.9	187.6	66.7	78.2
75–79	93.4	156.7	69.7	82.6
80–84	46.6	143.8	73.7	87.1
85 and over	23.3	73.1	78.2	84.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>448.8</b>	<b>707.6</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>81.3</b>

(a) Proportion of income units with government pension as main source of income.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996–97 Survey of Income and Housing Costs.

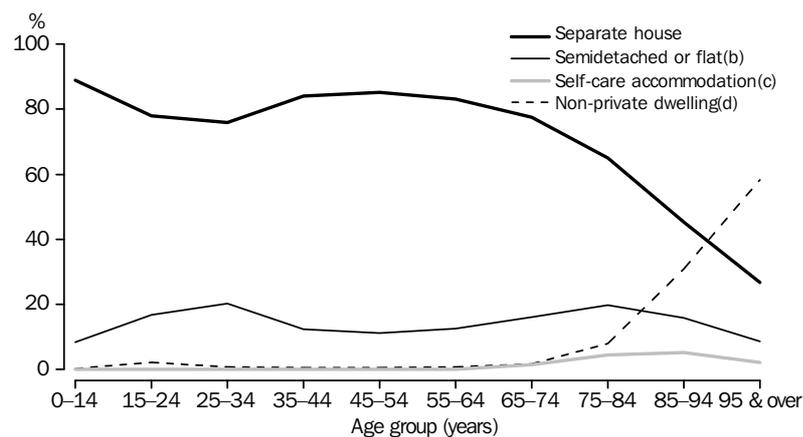
INTRODUCTION

The environment in which older people live is linked to many aspects of their lives, including their health and economic circumstances. Most older people own their homes, and this has a substantial impact on their economic and social wellbeing. However, the positive aspects of outright home ownership may be offset by a number of other factors. Older people may be unable to maintain their house or garden because of changes in their health or family circumstances, but may also be restricted in options for alternative accommodation in their local community. This chapter examines the types and costs of housing in which older people live, their housing needs and whether their housing is adequate and their surroundings are safe.

Housing across the lifespan

The type of accommodation in which people live varies as they age. In 1996, the proportion of people living in separate houses remained relatively stable at around 80% to age 65–74, then declined rapidly to 45% of those aged 85–94 and 27% of those aged 95 and over. The proportion of people living in semidetached dwellings, flats, units and apartments rose from just over 10% of people aged 45–54 to 20% of those aged 75–84, the same as among people aged 25–34. The proportion of people in self-care accommodation in retirement villages rose from negligible levels among people aged 55–64 to 5% of those aged 85–94. While only a very small proportion of people up to age 65–74 lived in non-private dwellings (such as nursing homes or other forms of cared accommodation), this increased to 31% of those 85–94 and to 58% of those aged 95 and over (see also tables 5.14 and 5.15).

5.1 SELECTED TYPES OF DWELLING, All Persons(a)—1996



(a) Excludes visitors.

(b) Includes semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse, flat, unit, and apartment.

(c) Includes accommodation with people living independently in retirement villages; see Glossary.

(d) Includes residents of accommodation for the retired/aged, nursing homes; excludes staff and their families.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## PRIVATE DWELLINGS

The following section refers to the housing characteristics of people in private dwellings, excluding self-care accommodation in retirement villages.

## Structure

In 1996, 79% of people aged 65 and over lived in separate houses, 8% in semidetached dwellings and 11% in flats. Over half of the 201,100 older people living in flats were living alone and, of these, three in four (84,300) were women (see also table 5.16).

People may live in caravans or improvised dwellings out of lifestyle choices or because of financial constraints. However, few older people live in these forms of housing. In 1996, just 1% of people aged 65 and over (16,200) were usual residents of caravans, cabins or houseboats; there was a higher rate (4%) among older men living alone.

## 5.2 DWELLING STRUCTURE AND TENURE TYPE, All Persons(a)—1996

AGED 65 AND OVER.....							
Dwelling structure and tenure type	Lone males	Lone females	Total lone persons	In couple only house-holds	In other house-holds	Total	Total persons in all households
							%
Dwelling structure							
Separate house	65.4	62.7	63.4	85.2	86.8	79.3	84.6
Semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse	9.5	13.8	12.6	6.9	5.6	8.2	6.1
Flat/unit/apartment	20.8	22.6	22.2	6.9	6.9	11.3	8.2
Caravan, cabin, houseboat	3.6	0.7	1.5	0.8	0.4	0.9	0.6
Other(b)	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Tenure type							
Owner							
Without mortgage	70.8	74.5	73.5	86.9	73.7	80.0	39.6
With mortgage	2.8	2.8	2.8	3.9	11.8	5.4	32.2
Renter							
State/Territory Housing Authority	10.0	10.8	10.6	3.5	4.5	5.7	5.0
Private	10.0	5.5	6.7	3.3	7.1	5.1	18.4
<i>Total renters(c)</i>	<i>22.4</i>	<i>18.9</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>12.9</i>	<i>12.3</i>	<i>26.1</i>
Other(d)	4.0	3.8	3.9	1.6	1.6	2.3	2.0
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>142.0</b>	<b>377.4</b>	<b>519.4</b>	<b>857.8</b>	<b>430.2</b>	<b>1 807.4</b>	<b>16 559.9</b>

(a) Living in private dwellings excluding self-care accommodation for the retired or elderly; also excludes visitors.

(b) Includes improvised home, house/flat attached to shop.

(c) Includes other renter and landlord not stated.

(d) Includes being occupied rent free or under a life tenure scheme.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## Tenure

The tenure that people have over their homes can make a significant difference to housing costs and to their ability to modify homes to meet various needs. In general, older people are more likely to own their own home than to pay mortgages or rent.

In 1996, 80% of older people lived in homes that were fully owned. A further 5% of people aged 65 and over (4% of those aged 85 and over) lived in homes that were being purchased. Older people in couple only households were more likely than those living alone to occupy homes that were owned outright.

Given their high rate of home ownership, older people were less likely to rent. Of people aged 65 and over, 12% were in rented accommodation. There was little difference between the proportion of older people renting from private landlords (5%) and from a government housing authority (6%). This contrasts with the population overall where people who rent are much more likely to be in the private rental market (18% compared with 5%) (see also table 5.16).

## Housing costs and affordability

With the high rates of home ownership among older people, many do not pay mortgages or rent which contribute significantly to the housing costs of other households. In 1997–98, housing costs for households with the reference person aged 65 and over were lower than the costs for all households for all types of tenure. The mean weekly housing cost (\$27) for older households was one-quarter of that for all households (\$110). Older households renting from a State or Territory Housing Authority paid, on average, two to three times less than older households renting from private landlords.

Housing costs may absorb a substantial proportion of income for many people, especially those on low incomes. While there is no single measure of housing affordability, one used in housing research is the ratio of housing costs to income. Under this measure, households are considered to have affordability problems if their income is relatively low and they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

While housing costs of older households may be lower than those for younger households, incomes are also lower and for some older people housing costs represent a high proportion of their income. Overall, older households paid only 6% of their income on housing. However, this varied greatly depending on tenure and living arrangements. In particular, older people who were renting privately paid, on average, 31% of their income on housing costs, while those living alone and renting privately paid 49%.

### 5.3 HOUSING COSTS BY TENURE TYPE, Households(a)—1997–98

HOUSEHOLDS WITH REFERENCE PERSON AGED 65 AND OVER.....							
Tenure	Lone males	Lone females	Total lone persons	Couple only	Other households	Total	All households
MEAN WEEKLY HOUSING COSTS (\$)							
Owner							
Without mortgage	15	15	15	18	18	17	21
With mortgage	n.p.	*53	*84	68	*117	86	206
Renter							
State/Territory Housing Authority	44	37	39	57	*98	46	63
Private	107	*115	111	125	*142	121	157
Total(b)	70	52	58	94	121	72	132
<b>All tenure types</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>110</b>
MEAN HOUSING COSTS AS A PROPORTION OF INCOME (%)							
Owner							
Without mortgage	5	6	6	4	2	4	3
With mortgage	n.p.	*24	*38	11	*15	17	18
Renter							
State/Territory Housing Authority	21	21	21	21	*17	20	17
Private	46	*52	49	30	*18	31	20
Total(b)	31	27	29	26	17	25	19
<b>All tenure types</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>

(a) Excludes households who are in rent free accommodation.

(b) Includes other renters and landlord not stated.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997–98 Survey of Income and Housing Costs.

#### OTHER TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION

##### Self-care accommodation in retirement villages

In 1996, about 5% of older people (54,000) lived in private dwellings located within retirement villages. This form of self-care accommodation allows people to live independently while often having easy access to a range of social, recreational and medical facilities.

The vast majority (92%) of people in self-care accommodation lived in semidetached dwellings or flats. Of these, people living alone were more likely to live in flats while people in couple only and other types of households were more likely to occupy semidetached dwellings.

Home ownership rates for older people in self-care accommodation were about half those of older people living in other private dwellings (41% and 85%, respectively). However, in addition to those who owned their home outright, a further 28% of older people in self-care accommodation occupied their dwellings under life tenure schemes, which may closely resemble ownership.

## 5.4 SELF-CARE ACCOMMODATION, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996

Housing characteristics	Lone	Lone	Total lone	In couple	In other	Total
	males	females	persons	only	households	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Dwelling structure</b>						
Separate house	7.8	7.2	7.3	8.7	12.7	8.0
Semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse	41.3	43.0	42.7	50.6	44.3	45.9
Flat/unit/apartment	50.3	49.5	49.6	40.0	41.9	45.7
Other(a)	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.6	1.2	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Tenure type</b>						
<b>Owner</b>						
Without mortgage	32.4	38.8	37.9	43.0	52.8	40.2
With mortgage	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.5
<b>Renter</b>						
State/Territory Housing Authority	1.7	1.1	1.2	0.5	0.7	0.9
Community or cooperative housing group	13.0	8.7	9.3	4.9	2.7	7.4
Private	3.4	2.7	2.8	1.6	3.6	2.3
Other	16.8	16.7	16.7	10.4	8.8	14.0
<i>Total</i>	34.8	29.2	30.1	17.4	15.8	24.7
Life tenure scheme	27.2	25.5	25.8	31.5	24.1	28.0
Other(b)	5.0	5.9	5.8	7.5	6.3	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>54.0</b>

(a) Includes caravan, improvised home, house/flat attached to shop.

(b) Includes being occupied rent free.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## Non-private dwellings

While policies have been developed to assist older people to remain in their own homes, a considerable number of older people, through choice or necessity, particularly at very old ages, live in establishments or institutions where care is provided for them.

In 1996, 8% of older people (143,500) were residents of non-private dwellings, of whom the vast majority (136,000) were in cared accommodation where meals were provided. Most usual residents of non-private dwellings were in accommodation for the aged or nursing homes.

Older women in non-private dwellings outnumbered older men by about two to one. While there were generally more women than men in each type of cared accommodation, there were more men than women usually resident in hotels, motels and boarding houses (see also table 5.19).

## 5.5 NON-PRIVATE DWELLINGS, Persons Aged 65 and Over(a)—1996

Type of non-private dwelling	AGED 65 AND OVER...			AGED 85 AND OVER...		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Residents						
Cared accommodation						
Aged care						
Accommodation for retired/aged	36.0	43.8	41.6	44.1	44.5	44.4
Nursing home	46.1	48.1	47.5	48.4	50.6	50.2
Hospital	5.6	3.2	3.9	4.0	2.5	2.8
Total	87.7	95.0	93.0	96.5	97.6	97.4
Other cared accommodation(b)	3.0	1.4	1.8	1.2	0.9	0.9
Total	90.7	96.4	94.8	97.7	98.5	98.3
Other(c)	8.1	2.8	4.3	1.6	1.0	1.1
Total	98.8	99.2	99.1	99.3	99.4	99.4
Staff(d)	1.2	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>102.4</b>	<b>143.5</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>64.3</b>

(a) Excludes visitors.

(b) Hostel for the disabled, child care institution, other welfare institution.

(c) Includes hotel/motel, boarding house/private hotel, hostel for homeless/refuge, convent/monastery, etc.

(d) Includes owner, proprietor, staff and family.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## HOUSING OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Consistent with the pattern for the total population in 1996, most older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) people (78%) lived in separate houses, 6% in semidetached dwellings and 9% in flats, units or apartments. A higher proportion of Indigenous older people in urban than in rural areas were living in semidetached dwellings and flats. This may reflect the available housing stock in each location rather than preferences or needs for types of accommodation. In rural areas, 14% of Indigenous people aged 65 and over (376) were classified as living in improvised dwellings, tents or as sleepers out.

Overall, older Indigenous people were more likely to live in homes that were rented rather than owned outright or being purchased (58% compared with 36%). Older Indigenous people living in large cities were twice as likely as those living in rural areas to occupy a house which was owned or being purchased (50% compared with 25%). In urban areas, most people rented through their State or Territory Housing Authority, while in rural areas the largest providers of rental accommodation were community or cooperative housing groups.

## 5.6 DWELLING STRUCTURE AND TENURE TYPE, All Indigenous Persons(a)—1996

AGED 65 AND OVER.....					
Structure and tenure	Major urban	Other urban	Rural	Total	Total persons in all households
	%	%	%	%	%
Dwelling structure					
Separate house	70.2	80.9	81.8	78.3	84.5
Semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse	12.3	6.5	1.3	6.3	5.6
Flat/unit/apartment	16.2	10.4	1.4	8.9	5.9
Improvised home/tent/sleepers out	—	0.9	14.4	5.3	2.8
Other(b)	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Tenure type					
Owner					
Without mortgage	42.9	29.4	23.0	31.3	10.1
With mortgage	7.8	5.6	2.0	5.1	16.2
Renter					
State/Territory Housing Authority	31.5	35.0	9.0	25.8	26.8
Community or cooperative housing group	2.3	15.3	44.1	20.6	16.6
Private	9.9	8.2	2.8	7.0	21.3
Total renters(c)	46.1	63.0	62.1	57.9	70.0
Other(d)	3.1	2.1	12.9	5.8	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>321.6</b>

(a) In private dwellings including self-care accommodation for the retired or aged; excludes visitors.

(b) Includes caravan and house attached to shop/office.

(c) Includes other renter.

(d) Includes being occupied rent free or under a life tenure scheme.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## ADEQUACY OF HOUSING

The adequacy of the homes of older people can impact on their health and levels of social interaction. Because of disability or frailty associated with ageing, older people may need to modify their homes.

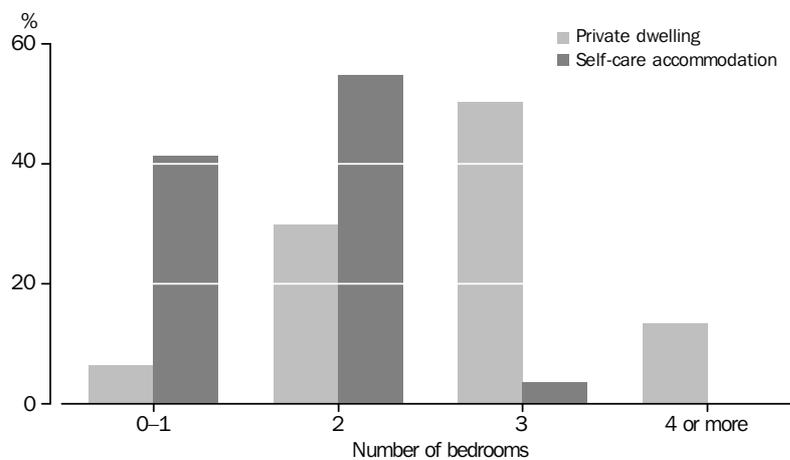
## Number of bedrooms

Older people tend to live in homes which are larger than their household size may appear to need. Many factors contribute to this pattern, including the emotional significance of the family home to older people, the need to have the space when their family visits, attachment to their neighbourhood, and the costs and difficulties associated with moving.

Number of bedrooms *continued*

Of people aged 65 and over in private dwellings outside retirement villages in 1996, nearly two-thirds (64%) lived in accommodation with three or more bedrooms, while 30% were in dwellings with two bedrooms and only 6% were in dwellings with less than two bedrooms. Even among those aged 85 and over, 34% of people living alone and 51% of those in couple only households lived in dwellings with three or more bedrooms.

In contrast, older people in self-care accommodation were much more likely to live in smaller dwellings. Only 4% of people in self-care accommodation lived in dwellings with three or more bedrooms, 55% in dwellings with two bedrooms and the remaining 41% in dwellings with less than two bedrooms (see table 5.17).

**5.7 NUMBER OF BEDROOMS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996**

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## Modifying accommodation and moving house

In order to retain their independence, older people may modify their existing accommodation or move to more suitable accommodation, such as a smaller house or one without large grounds.

**5.8 CHANGES MADE TO THEIR DWELLING, Persons Aged 65 and Over with a Disability—1998**

Type of modification	Aged 65 and over....		Aged 85 and over....	
	'000	%(a)	'000	%(a)
Toilet/bath/laundry modification	89.5	8.6	16.8	8.8
Handgrab rails	128.0	12.4	26.6	14.0
Ramp	23.7	2.3	*3.8	*2.0
Other(b)	47.3	4.6	10.1	5.3
<b>Persons who live in a dwelling with at least one modification</b>	<b>180.3</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>18.1</b>
<b>All persons with a disability</b>	<b>1 035.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>190.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Proportion of persons with a disability.

(b) Includes structural changes, door widened, remote controls, new/changed heating or air-conditioning, home automation system, and telemonitoring system.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Modifying accommodation and moving house *continued*

For older people with a disability, structural alterations to aid mobility and modifications to bathroom and laundry facilities can improve the quality of life in their own home. In 1998, 17% of people aged 65 and over with a disability lived in dwellings which had at least one modification; 12% were in houses in which handgrab rails were installed and 9% were in houses with alterations to toilet, bath or laundry facilities.

In 1998, only 4% of people aged 65 and over reported that they had had to move house because of frailty or disability in the preceding five years. However, this proportion increased to 8% of older people with a mild or moderate restriction in performing daily tasks as a result of disability, and to 10% of those with a severe or profound restriction. The likelihood of having had to move house was even higher among people aged 85 and over.

**5.9 WHETHER NEEDED TO MOVE HOUSE, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1998**

PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY...					
	Severe/ profound restriction	Mild/ moderate restriction	Total with disability	No disability	Total
Whether needed to move house	%	%	%	%	%
Has had to move house					
Moved in the last 5 years	10.2	8.0	6.2	2.0	4.1
Moved 5 or more years ago	7.3	4.5	4.4	1.2	2.8
Total	17.5	8.0	10.6	3.2	6.9
Has not had to move house	82.5	92.0	89.4	96.8	93.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>326.4</b>	<b>620.1</b>	<b>1 063.3</b>	<b>1 041.1</b>	<b>2 104.4</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

## APPLIANCES AND SAFETY DEVICES IN THE HOME

## Household appliances

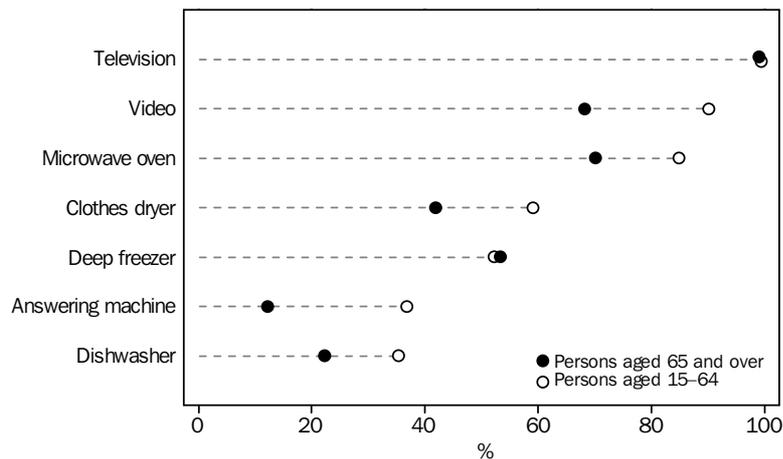
Access to modern domestic appliances can make household chores easier. These appliances may reduce the amount of bending, lifting, standing and walking otherwise necessary for food preparation and laundry tasks.

In 1997, people aged 65 and over were less likely than people aged 15–64 to have access to some common household appliances such as microwave ovens (70% compared with 85%) and dishwashers (22% compared with 35%). In contrast, similar proportions of older and younger people lived in households which had a deep freezer (53% and 52%, respectively).

Household appliances *continued*

Television is an important source of information and entertainment for most people. Almost all older people (99%) had one or more televisions in their home. Older people were less likely than younger people to live in a household with a video (68% compared with 90%) (see also table 5.18).

### 5.10 PERSONS AGED 15 AND OVER WITH SELECTED HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES—1997



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## Fire safety

In 1998, most Australian homes (89%) had in place at least one fire safety measure such as a smoke detector or fire extinguisher. Households with the reference person aged 65 and over were as likely as younger households to have at least one fire safety measure.

The most common fire safety measure was an operational smoke alarm or smoke detector. Smoke detectors, which were installed in 71% of all households, are now mandatory in new homes for most States and Territories. The proportion of older households with a smoke detector was slightly greater than for households overall; the rate was even higher among those households where the reference person was aged 75 and over.

## 5.11 HOUSEHOLDS, Selected Fire Safety Devices in the Home—1998

Fire safety measure	AGE GROUP OF REFERENCE PERSON (YEARS).....				
	18-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	All households
	%	%	%	%	%
Has at least one fire safety measure					
Operational smoke alarms/detectors	69.6	70.2	80.4	74.4	70.5
Safety switch or circuit breaker	55.2	41.4	36.3	39.4	52.4
Fire extinguisher	25.7	17.2	15.8	16.7	24.1
Fire evacuation plan	16.1	11.3	6.7	9.4	14.9
Total(a)	89.1	89.4	90.8	90.0	89.2
No fire safety measures	10.9	10.6	9.2	10.0	10.8
<b>All households</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>All households</b>	<b>5 741.0</b>	<b>730.8</b>	<b>499.1</b>	<b>1 230.0</b>	<b>6 970.9</b>

(a) Components do not add to totals as households could have more than one fire safety measure.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Population Survey Monitor.

## SAFETY OF OLDER PEOPLE

Older people are generally safer from crime than younger people, both in their homes and in the wider community. However, they do not always feel as safe. While this fear may seem unfounded in terms of the level of crime experienced, it nevertheless impacts on older people. Fear of crime can affect their lifestyles by restricting activities and reducing confidence. Further, due to increased frailty, older victims of crime are more vulnerable to serious injury, even from minor violence, than younger people (Pinkerton James 1992).

## Perceptions of safety

Older people are more likely to be concerned about their personal safety than younger people, with older women being more likely than older men to have personal safety concerns.

In 1997-98, most older people felt relatively safe during the day at home alone and in public places while walking, jogging or using public transport. In line with the safety perceptions of younger people, older people were more likely to be concerned about their safety in these situations after dark.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of older women reported feeling unsafe when at home by themselves after dark. Over half (53%) of older men and four-fifths (81%) of older women felt unsafe when using public transport at night. These perceptions of safety were similar to those reported for walking or jogging at night.

### 5.12 PERSONS AGED 18 AND OVER WHO FELT UNSAFE(a), By Age Group and Sex—1997–98

Activity	MALES.....		FEMALES.....		PERSONS.....	
	18–64 years	65 years and over	18–64 years	65 years and over	18–64 years	65 years and over
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Home alone						
During day	1.7	5.7	3.9	8.5	2.8	7.2
After dark	4.6	11.1	17.3	23.0	10.9	17.6
Walking or jogging						
During day	2.4	6.4	5.9	12.8	4.2	9.8
After dark	22.9	46.1	63.0	79.2	42.6	63.1
Public transport						
During day	4.4	8.0	6.6	11.7	5.5	10.0
After dark	37.0	53.2	69.3	81.1	53.3	67.9

(a) Includes persons who felt 'very unsafe' or 'unsafe'. Persons may appear in more than one category.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997–98 Population Survey Monitor.

#### Victims of crime

A perception of being at risk of crime may not directly relate to actual levels of risk. In general, older people are less likely to be victims of crime than any other age group. In 1998, their rates of victimisation for personal crimes were generally much lower than those of the total population.

In 1998, the most common crime committed against all people was assault. While the rate of assault in the total population was 709 per 100,000 persons, the rate for people aged 65 and over was 73 per 100,000.

On average, men were more likely to be victims of almost every personal crime than women. However, this was not always true for older men and women. Older men had higher victimisation rates for attempted murder, assault and armed robbery. Older women had higher victimisation rates for murder, sexual assault and unarmed robbery.

## 5.13 RATE OF VICTIMISATION(a), By Age and Sex—1998

Age group (years)	Murder rate	Attempted murder rate	Driving causing death rate	Assault rate	Sexual assault rate	Armed robbery rate	Unarmed robbery rate
MALES							
0–14	0.8	0.3	0.7	319	67.1	9.4	35.9
15–24	1.0	3.5	4.5	1 622	39.7	106.0	214.9
25–34	3.2	6.0	2.1	1 475	24.3	61.9	93.8
35–44	3.0	3.5	1.0	887	8.8	44.2	54.6
45–54	2.5	2.1	1.1	555	3.2	36.5	38.9
55–64	1.2	0.9	1.5	308	0.6	32.5	34.9
65 and over	0.8	0.4	1.4	106	0.7	10.5	20.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>44.3</b>	<b>74.5</b>
FEMALES							
0–14	0.6	0.3	0.5	207	222.7	1.3	6.2
15–24	1.1	1.6	2.0	1 264	304.3	38.9	78.9
25–34	1.6	1.9	1.0	1 057	117.6	31.5	60.7
35–44	1.2	2.5	0.5	657	62.9	27.1	51.4
45–54	1.2	1.3	0.3	328	25.4	24.7	57.2
55–64	0.6	0.4	1.4	144	11.0	14.7	55.3
65 and over	1.2	0.3	1.6	47	5.4	5.5	49.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>123.6</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>49.7</b>
PERSONS							
0–14	0.7	0.3	0.6	265	143.0	5.5	21.6
15–24	1.1	2.6	3.3	1 452	169.6	73.4	148.6
25–34	2.4	3.9	1.6	1 270	71.3	46.9	77.4
35–44	2.1	3.0	0.8	774	36.0	35.8	53.0
45–54	1.9	1.7	0.7	444	14.3	30.8	48.2
55–64	0.9	0.6	1.4	228	5.8	23.7	45.0
65 and over	1.0	0.4	1.5	73	3.3	7.7	37.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>62.9</b>

(a) Rate per 100,000 in each age group.

Source: ABS 1999f.

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

**5.14 SELECTED TYPES OF DWELLINGS, All Persons—1996**

Type of dwelling	AGE GROUP.....										Total
	0-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85-94	95 and over	
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Private dwellings</b>											
Separate house	3 326.9	1 879.6	1 968.3	2 207.5	1 824.4	1 156.8	905.8	423.7	79.0	3.4	13 775.4
Semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse	162.1	163.1	204.8	137.4	107.6	76.3	82.1	53.2	10.5	0.4	997.5
Flat/unit/apartment	156.6	240.0	318.9	189.1	130.5	98.1	106.9	76.1	17.3	0.7	1 334.3
Other	28.5	24.8	28.0	27.8	28.1	22.3	14.9	5.4	0.7	0.1	180.5
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>3 733.4</b>	<b>2 347.0</b>	<b>2 565.3</b>	<b>2 604.9</b>	<b>2 126.3</b>	<b>1 375.8</b>	<b>1 126.8</b>	<b>566.7</b>	<b>109.2</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>16 559.9</b>
Self-care accommodation	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	2.5	16.4	28.3	9.0	0.3	57.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 733.5</b>	<b>2 347.1</b>	<b>2 565.4</b>	<b>2 605.0</b>	<b>2 126.7</b>	<b>1 378.3</b>	<b>1 143.2</b>	<b>595.0</b>	<b>118.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>16 617.3</b>
<b>Non-private dwellings</b>											
Resident(b)	11.1	52.5	18.1	13.5	11.4	10.7	21.2	52.2	54.0	7.4	251.9
Staff(c)	0.5	7.5	4.7	2.3	1.8	1.0	0.4	0.4	0.3	—	18.9
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>67.2</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>299.9</b>
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>3 746.1</b>	<b>2 414.3</b>	<b>2 593.5</b>	<b>2 624.3</b>	<b>2 142.3</b>	<b>1 391.8</b>	<b>1 166.8</b>	<b>650.6</b>	<b>174.8</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>16 917.2</b>

(a) Includes a small number of 'not stated' responses.

(c) Includes owner, proprietor, staff and family.

(b) Includes guest, patient, inmate, other resident.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

**5.15 SELECTED TYPES OF DWELLINGS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996**

Type of dwelling	AGED 65 AND OVER.....			AGED 85 AND OVER.....		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Private dwellings</b>						
Separate house	658.4	753.5	1 411.8	30.6	51.7	82.4
Semidetached/row or terrace house/townhouse	53.9	92.3	146.2	3.3	7.6	10.9
Flat/unit/apartment	72.1	129.0	201.1	4.9	13.1	18.0
Other	12.4	8.6	21.1	0.4	0.4	0.8
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>809.2</b>	<b>998.2</b>	<b>1 807.4</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>113.8</b>
Self-care accommodation	15.7	38.3	54.0	2.5	6.8	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>824.9</b>	<b>1 036.5</b>	<b>1 861.4</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>123.1</b>
<b>Non-private dwellings</b>						
Resident(b)	37.8	96.9	134.8	12.1	49.3	61.4
Staff(c)	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.1	0.3	0.4
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>102.4</b>	<b>143.5</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>64.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>865.9</b>	<b>1 138.9</b>	<b>2 004.9</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>132.3</b>	<b>187.5</b>

(a) Total includes a small number of 'not stated' responses.

(c) Includes owner, proprietor, staff and family.

(b) Includes guest, patient, inmate, other resident.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

### 5.16 DWELLING STRUCTURE AND TENURE TYPE, Persons Aged 85 and Over(a)—1996

Dwelling structure and tenure type	Lone males	Lone females	Total lone persons	In couple only households	In other households	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Dwelling structure</b>						
Separate house	71.0	60.7	63.0	77.5	87.1	73.5
Semidetached/row or terrace house/ townhouse	9.6	13.2	12.4	9.5	5.7	9.7
Flat/unit/apartment	17.8	25.6	23.8	12.4	6.6	16.1
Caravan	1.3	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.4
Other(b)	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Tenure type</b>						
<b>Owner</b>						
Without mortgage	79.4	76.3	77.0	86.7	78.0	79.5
With mortgage	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.3	10.1	3.8
<b>Renter</b>						
State/Territory Housing Authority	6.7	8.5	8.1	3.9	3.4	5.7
Private	4.8	4.7	4.7	3.3	5.4	4.6
<i>Total renters(c)</i>	<i>14.2</i>	<i>17.0</i>	<i>16.3</i>	<i>8.6</i>	<i>10.1</i>	<i>12.7</i>
Other(d)	5.4	5.8	5.7	3.4	1.9	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>113.8</b>

(a) Living in private dwellings excluding self-care accommodation for the retired or elderly; also excludes visitors.

(b) Includes improvised home, house/flat attached to shop.

(c) Includes other renters and landlord not stated.

(d) Includes being occupied rent free or under a life tenure scheme.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## 5.17 NUMBER OF BEDROOMS IN PRIVATE DWELLINGS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1996

Number of bedrooms	LIVING ALONE...		COUPLE ONLY....		ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS.....		TOTAL.....	
	Private dwelling	Self care	Private dwelling	Self care	Private dwelling	Self care	Private dwelling	Self care
65 YEARS AND OVER								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
One or no bedrooms	16.8	55.4	3.1	22.5	0.7	10.3	6.4	41.4
Two bedrooms	40.9	42.9	28.7	71.2	18.1	76.5	29.8	54.9
Three bedrooms	37.6	1.4	56.5	6.3	52.9	12.6	50.3	3.6
Four or more bedrooms	4.7	0.2	11.8	—	28.3	0.6	13.5	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
85 YEARS AND OVER								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
One or no bedrooms	17.7	62.5	6.1	32.4	0.9	10.8	10.0	54.3
Two bedrooms	47.9	36.3	43.0	64.2	21.2	74.1	38.7	43.7
Three bedrooms	31.2	0.9	45.2	3.3	47.8	14.6	39.4	1.8
Four or more bedrooms	3.2	0.3	5.6	0.1	30.2	0.5	11.9	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
TOTAL								
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
65 years and over	519.4	31.9	857.8	20.8	430.2	1.3	1 807.4	54.0
85 years and over	54.1	6.9	25.2	2.1	34.4	0.3	113.8	9.3

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

### 5.18 PROPORTION WITH SELECTED APPLIANCES(a), Persons Aged 15 and Over—1997

Selected household appliances	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....				
	15-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total 15 and over
	%	%	%	%	%
Microwave oven	85.0	74.0	63.1	70.2	83.1
Deep freezer	52.2	53.9	52.3	53.4	52.4
Dishwasher	35.3	26.1	15.3	22.3	33.6
Clothes dryer	59.1	45.4	35.5	41.9	56.8
Television	99.5	98.7	99.4	99.0	99.4
Video	90.2	76.9	52.2	68.3	87.3
Answering machine	36.8	15.7	5.7	12.2	33.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 179.3</b>	<b>1 220.3</b>	<b>653.8</b>	<b>1 874.0</b>	<b>14 053.4</b>

(a) The selected domestic appliances were available in the households they lived in.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

### 5.19 NON-PRIVATE DWELLINGS, Persons Aged 65 and Over(a)(b)—1996

Type of non-private dwelling	AGED 65 AND OVER.....			AGED 85 AND OVER...		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
Cared accommodation						
Aged care						
Accommodation for retired/aged	15 367	46 830	62 197	5 946	23 903	29 849
Nursing home	18 838	49 477	68 315	6 245	26 265	32 510
Hospital	13 257	17 071	30 328	2 201	4 660	6 861
Total	47 462	113 378	160 840	14 392	54 828	69 220
Other(c)	1 240	1 490	2 730	149	480	629
Total	48 702	114 868	163 570	14 541	55 308	69 849
Hotel/motel	10 736	9 897	20 633	276	349	625
Boarding house/private hotel	2 161	838	2 999	105	85	190
Hostel for homeless/refuge	390	120	510	19	25	44
Convent/monastery	525	1 896	2 421	27	197	224
Other	1 154	947	2 101	115	209	324
<b>Total(d)</b>	<b>63 708</b>	<b>128 595</b>	<b>192 303</b>	<b>15 103</b>	<b>56 180</b>	<b>71 283</b>

(a) Usual residents and visitors.

(b) Includes guest, patient, inmate, other resident, owner, proprietor, staff and family.

(c) Hostel for the disabled, child care institution, other welfare institution.

(d) Includes type of non-private dwelling not stated.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

# CHAPTER 6

## ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLES .....

### INTRODUCTION

Older people, like people of all ages, are engaged in a wide range of activities. This chapter canvasses the similarities and differences in lifestyles and activities between older people and the population as a whole.

### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

#### Waking hours

Most Australians, including people aged 65 and over, are awake for 14–16 hours each day. As expected, the greatest difference in the way people spend their waking hours, between older people and the population in general, is in the proportion of time spent on employment-related activities (2% and 21% respectively in 1997).

Older people spent proportionally more of their time than younger people on most aspects of unpaid work. In 1997, older people spent around 30% of their time on unpaid child care, shopping, voluntary work and domestic activities.

#### 6.1 TIME SPENT ON MAIN ACTIVITIES(a), By Age—1997

Purpose of activity	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....						65 and over	Total
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Personal care	14.6	14.5	14.5	16.4	18.8	21.5	16.3	
Employment-related activities	19.6	28.6	27.5	26.7	14.0	1.6	21.2	
Education-related activities	12.5	1.5	0.8	0.5	*0.1	*—	2.8	
Unpaid work								
Domestic activities	6.3	12.6	15.7	16.5	19.1	20.8	14.7	
Child care	1.3	7.2	6.3	1.4	0.9	0.4	3.3	
Purchasing	4.0	4.5	4.7	5.4	5.3	5.3	4.9	
Voluntary work/care	1.5	1.6	2.4	2.4	3.5	3.1	2.4	
Total	12.9	26.1	29.1	25.8	28.8	29.7	25.2	
Social participation	6.3	4.5	4.2	4.5	5.3	4.5	4.9	
Recreation/leisure	33.6	24.0	23.4	25.7	32.5	41.8	29.3	
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	
<b>Total waking hours per day</b>	<b>14:39</b>	<b>15:28</b>	<b>15:43</b>	<b>15:47</b>	<b>15:38</b>	<b>15:26</b>	<b>15:26</b>	

(a) Average time per day. Excludes time spent sleeping. For definition of 'Main activity' see Glossary.

(b) Includes time where purpose of activity was not recorded.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

Waking hours *continued*

Other differences in the time use patterns of older and younger people include the time spent on personal care activities, such as washing, dressing and health care. Time spent on these activities increases with age. In 1997, persons aged 65 and over spent about 22% of their time on personal care.

People aged 65 and over also spent considerably more time on recreation and leisure than people in younger age groups. These activities are discussed in greater detail in the section on Free time activities.

**6.2 TIME SPENT ON MAIN ACTIVITIES(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997**

Purpose of activities	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	%	%	%
Personal care	23:06	23:20	23:13	21.5	21.5	21.5
Paid work	3:16	*0:35	1:45	3.0	*0.5	1.6
Education	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unpaid work						
Domestic activities	19:15	24:58	22:31	17.9	23.0	20.8
Child care	0:21	0:35	0:28	0.3	0.5	0.4
Purchasing	5:43	5:36	5:43	5.3	5.2	5.3
Voluntary work/care	3:30	3:16	3:23	3.3	3.0	3.1
Total	28:56	34:32	32:05	26.9	31.9	29.7
Social participation	4:47	5:01	4:54	4.4	4.6	4.5
Recreation/leisure	46:40	43:59	45:09	43.3	40.6	41.8
<b>Total hours per week(b)</b>	<b>107:41</b>	<b>108:23</b>	<b>108:02</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Average time per week, excluding time spent sleeping. For definition of 'Main activity' see Glossary.

(b) Includes time where purpose of activity was not recorded.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

Sleeping hours

Sleep is essential for personal health and wellbeing, and a large part of the day (between 8 and 9 hours on average) is spent sleeping. In 1997, people aged 75 and over slept on average 8 hours 35 minutes per night, which was slightly longer than for all other age groups, except for young people aged 15–24 who slept for 9 hours 21 minutes per night on average.

**6.3 AVERAGE TIME PER DAY SPENT SLEEPING, By Age and Sex—1997**

Sex	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....								
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total 15 and over
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min
Males	9:27	8:31	8:16	8:09	8:21	8:34	8:42	8:37	8:34
Females	9:15	8:34	8:18	8:17	8:22	8:32	8:30	8:31	8:34
<b>Persons</b>	<b>9:21</b>	<b>8:32</b>	<b>8:17</b>	<b>8:13</b>	<b>8:22</b>	<b>8:33</b>	<b>8:35</b>	<b>8:34</b>	<b>8:34</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Disability may preclude some older people from undertaking certain activities, especially when the disability has developed in later life. In 1998, 54% of people aged 65 and over had a disability and 31% had a moderate, severe or profound restriction as a result of their disability (see chapter 3, Health and Disability).

As expected, older people with a severe or profound restriction spent less time each week than other older people on domestic activities, shopping, social participation, caring activities and voluntary work, and more time on personal care and passive leisure activities such as reading, watching television and general relaxation.

#### 6.4 TIME SPENT ON MAIN ACTIVITIES(a) BY DISABILITY STATUS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997

PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY.....						
	Mild/no restriction	Moderate restriction	Severe/ profound restriction(b)	Total with disability	Persons with no disability	Total 65 years and over
Purpose of activity	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min
.....						
Personal care						
Sleeping	59:30	57:52	64:03	59:51	60:05	59:58
Other	23:13	24:16	29:31	24:09	21:49	23:13
Total	82:43	82:08	93:27	84:00	81:54	83:11
Employment	1:24	—	n.p.	1:03	2:55	1:45
Education	n.p.	n.p.	—	**—	**—	*—
Unpaid work						
Domestic activities	22:38	22:24	15:03	21:42	23:48	22:31
Child care	0:21	**0:07	**0:21	0:21	0:49	0:28
Purchasing	6:11	4:40	3:51	5:43	5:43	5:43
Voluntary work/care	3:23	*1:24	*1:24	2:55	4:12	3:23
Total	32:33	28:42	20:32	30:41	34:32	32:05
Social participation	5:01	4:33	3:37	4:47	5:15	4:54
Recreation/leisure						
Reading	6:25	7:21	6:32	6:32	6:25	6:32
Reading a book	1:31	*1:59	*2:20	1:38	1:31	1:38
Sport and outdoor activities	3:23	1:45	2:41	3:02	3:51	3:23
Games/arts/ hobbies/crafts	3:02	3:16	1:45	2:55	3:16	3:02
Audio-visual media	22:38	28:49	27:11	23:55	20:39	22:45
Watching TV	20:18	25:40	22:31	21:14	18:33	20:11
Resting/relaxing	3:37	3:02	5:36	3:44	2:27	3:16
Other	6:18	7:07	6:04	6:18	6:11	6:18
Total	45:16	51:20	49:42	46:33	42:56	45:09
<b>Total hours per week(c)</b>	<b>168:00</b>	<b>168:00</b>	<b>168:00</b>	<b>168:00</b>	<b>168:00</b>	<b>168:00</b>

(a) Average time per week. For definition of 'Main activity' see Glossary.

(b) A moderate, severe or profound restriction in personal activity.

(c) Includes time spent where purpose of activity was not recorded.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

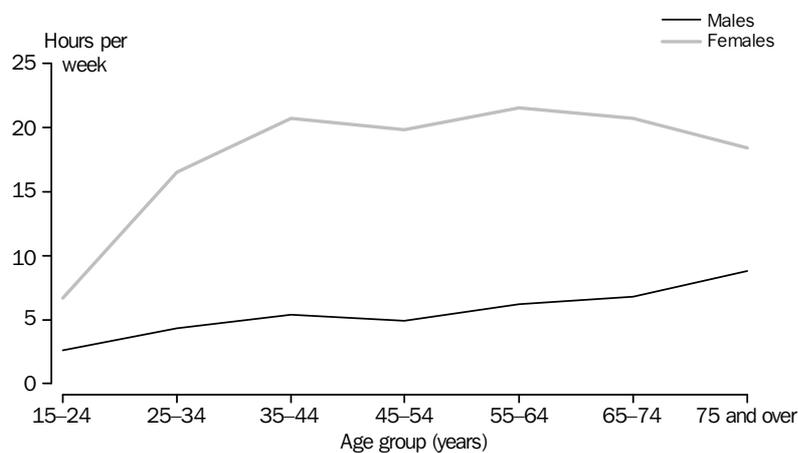
## DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES

Domestic activities are broadly classified into two groups: housework and other household work. Housework includes such tasks as food preparation and clean-up, washing, ironing, indoor cleaning and tidying. Other household work includes home maintenance, paying bills and maintaining the yard. People may undertake domestic activities as their only activity or in conjunction with another activity such as caring for others or watching television. In this case one activity is designated as the main activity (see Glossary). In addition, more than one domestic activity may be undertaken at the same time. Main activities were presented in the previous sections; the following analysis is based on all (simultaneous) activities.

The amount of time people spend on domestic activities increases with age. In 1997, those aged 65 and over spent on average 23 hours per week on all domestic activities, a higher amount than for any other age group (see table 6.25).

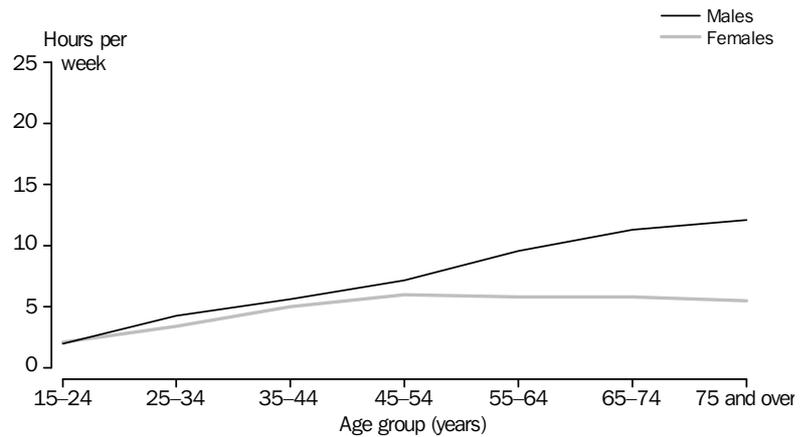
## Type of domestic work

Women of all ages spent more time on domestic activities than men; however the disparity decreased with age. There were also marked differences in the type of domestic activity undertaken by men and women. Older women spent almost 20 hours per week on housework (for example food preparation, washing, cleaning), whereas older men spent just under 7 hours 30 minutes. This pattern is reversed for other household work (for example home maintenance and paying bills); older men allocated around 11 hours 30 minutes to these activities, whereas older women spent around 5 hours 30 minutes (see table 6.25).

**6.5 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON HOUSEWORK, By Age and Sex—1997**

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

**6.6 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON OTHER HOUSEHOLD WORK, By Age and Sex—1997**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

Living arrangements

Overall, the amount of time spent on domestic activities increased with age. In all age groups, men living alone spent more time on domestic work than those living with their partners or in other living arrangements. Conversely, women living alone commonly spent less time on domestic activities than other women.

**6.7 AVERAGE TIME PER WEEK SPENT ON DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES, By Age—1997**

Living arrangements	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....					
	15-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total 15 and over
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min
.....						
MALES						
Living alone	11:40	17:51	22:03	24:44	22:59	15:10
With partner only	9:55	16:13	18:40	21:14	19:36	14:28
All other living arrangements	8:59	15:31	16:06	15:10	15:52	9:41
<b>Total</b>	<b>9:20</b>	<b>16:13</b>	<b>18:54</b>	<b>21:21</b>	<b>19:43</b>	<b>11:26</b>
.....						
FEMALES						
Living alone	14:00	21:07	23:34	24:02	23:48	19:43
With partner only	19:29	28:21	28:21	28:07	28:21	24:02
All other living arrangements	20:46	29:10	26:57	19:08	23:34	21:21
<b>Total</b>	<b>20:04</b>	<b>27:25</b>	<b>26:29</b>	<b>24:02</b>	<b>25:40</b>	<b>21:42</b>
.....						
PERSONS						
Living alone	12:36	19:36	23:06	24:09	23:34	17:37
With partner only	14:56	22:17	23:27	23:55	23:34	19:15
All other living arrangements	14:56	21:28	21:35	17:58	20:18	15:31
<b>Total</b>	<b>14:42</b>	<b>21:35</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>16:41</b>

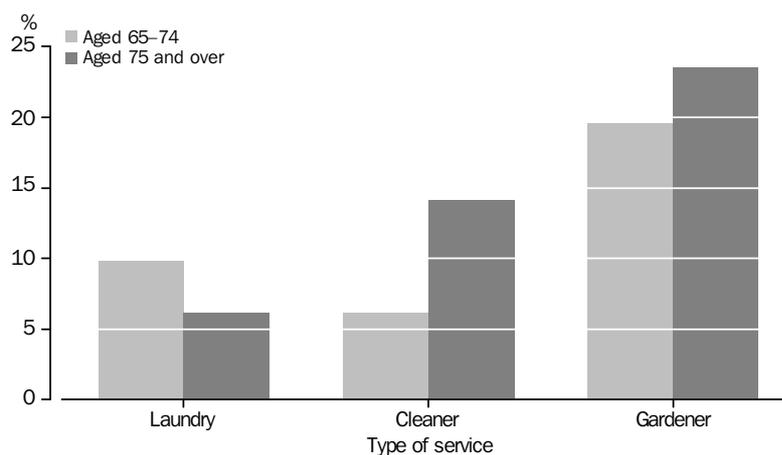
Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## Use of services

In addition to the housework they undertake themselves, older people may purchase help with specific domestic tasks such as cleaning, laundry and gardening. Provision of these services may enable older people to remain independent and in their own homes. Under the Home and Community Care program, for example, older people with a disability may receive subsidised domestic services in their homes.

The use of some domestic services increases as people age. In 1997, 6% of people aged 65–74 used cleaning services, compared with 14% of those aged 75 years and over. However, the use of laundry services decreases with age; 10% of people aged 65–74 used laundry services compared with 6% of those aged 75 years and over. In general, nearly one-third (30%) of older people made use of at least one domestic service; gardening assistance was the most frequently used service.

Living arrangements also influence the use of domestic services. In 1997, older people living alone made nearly twice as much use of cleaning (13%) and gardening (34%) services than older people living with a partner (7% and 17% respectively) (see table 6.26).

**6.8 USE OF SERVICES, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997**

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## Care of grounds

For older people, gardening activities and care of the yard make up a considerable proportion of their week—on average 5 hours 22 minutes for those aged 65 and over in 1997.

In the 1997 Time Use Survey, care of grounds included gardening, mowing and looking after pets. On average, older men aged 65–74 spent 6 hours 25 minutes and older men aged 75 and over spent 8 hours a week on care of grounds, considerably more time than older women in either age group. Older men tended to make significant time savings when employing someone to help. Men aged 65–74 spent over an hour less each week on care of grounds, and those aged 75 and over spent 2 hours less on these activities if they were using a gardener. In contrast, for women in both age groups, using a gardener made little difference to the time they spent on care of grounds.

6.9 TIME SPENT ON GROUNDS CARE(a)(b), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997

	MALES.....			FEMALES.....			PERSONS.....		
	65-74 years	75 years and over	Total	65-74 years	75 years and over	Total	65-74 years	75 years and over	Total
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min
Employed a gardener	5:15	*6:32	5:50	3:58	3:44	3:51	4:19	4:40	4:26
Did not employ a gardener	6:32	8:31	7:14	4:12	3:51	4:05	5:22	5:50	5:29
<b>Total</b>	<b>6:25</b>	<b>8:10</b>	<b>7:00</b>	<b>4:05</b>	<b>3:51</b>	<b>3:58</b>	<b>5:08</b>	<b>5:36</b>	<b>5:22</b>

(a) Average time per week.

(b) Includes gardening, lawn care, harvesting home produce, cleaning grounds, pool and pet care.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Participation in social and community life is an important indicator of individual wellbeing for people of any age. For older people, the nature of their social experiences changes as they age. On the one hand, they may have increased opportunity for leisure and voluntary activities, and enjoy freedoms not always available to younger people. On the other hand, older age may lead to a reduction in social activities because of the death of close family members and friends, restricted mobility due to ill-health, or changed work and financial circumstances.

As people age, their contribution to community and society is made less through paid work and more through unpaid work, such as voluntary work, child care and other forms of caring (see chapter 2, Living Arrangements, for information about care for a spouse or relative with a disability).

Time spent with others and alone

In 1997, although older people spent more time alone than younger people, both groups spent the majority of their time with others (67% and 82%, respectively). Older people spent somewhat more time with family members with whom they were living than younger people, whereas younger people spent more of their time with friends.

Because they lack the opportunity to interact with other people at home, people who live alone generally spend more time by themselves than those who live with others. This was particularly the case for the 591,900 older people (32% of people aged 65 and over) who lived alone in 1997 (see table 6.26). Older people living alone spent 79% of their waking hours by themselves compared with 33% for older people overall. Young people living alone spent considerably less of their time by themselves than older people living alone.

## 6.10 TIME SPENT WITH OTHERS AND ALONE(a), By Age and Sex—1997

Social context	MALES.....		FEMALES.....		PERSONS.....	
	<i>Aged</i> 15-64	<i>Aged 65</i> <i>and over</i>	<i>Aged</i> 15-64	<i>Aged 65</i> <i>and over</i>	<i>Aged</i> 15-64	<i>Aged 65</i> <i>and over</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
LIVING ALONE						
Alone(b)	58.2	82.3	54.6	77.1	56.5	78.5
Family	6.4	5.8	7.4	10.4	6.7	9.2
Friends	14.1	8.5	16.3	8.0	15.1	8.1
Other(c)	21.3	3.4	21.3	4.4	21.4	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
TOTAL						
Alone(b)	19.7	25.8	15.8	38.0	17.7	32.7
Family in household(d)	39.8	60.1	51.2	44.9	45.6	51.5
Family not in household	1.5	1.8	2.2	5.3	1.8	3.8
Friends	9.4	4.1	8.2	5.3	8.9	4.8
Other(c)	29.6	8.2	22.7	6.6	26.1	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Average time per week. Excludes time spent sleeping.

(b) Administrative, service and shop personnel, crowd or undescribed people may also be present.

(c) Includes family and friends present together.

(d) Includes family living in and outside the household when present together.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## Spare time

Perceptions of the value of spare time can differ. Some older people may appreciate having time which does not have to be filled with productive activity. For others, however, having a large amount of spare time may be associated with loneliness or boredom.

In 1997, older people were only slightly more likely than younger people to feel that they always or often had time they did not know what to do with. Of those aged 65 and over, 8% felt they always or often had spare time compared with 6% of 15-64 year olds.

Generally, regardless of age, people living alone were more likely to say they had spare time than those living with others. For example, 13% of older people living alone felt that they always or often had spare time, compared with 4% of older people living with a partner.

### 6.11 SPARE TIME, By Age and Living Arrangements—1997

Living arrangements	AGED 15–64 YEARS.....				AGED 65 YEARS AND OVER...			
	Had spare time(a).....		Total(b).....		Had spare time(a).....		Total(b).....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Living alone	90.9	9.2	1 027.3	100.0	69.5	12.5	591.9	100.0
With partner only	86.9	3.8	2 395.6	100.0	39.1	4.3	955.5	100.0
Other living arrangements	502.9	6.0	8 756.4	100.0	*26.3	8.6	326.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>680.7</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>12 179.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>135.0</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>1 874.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Persons who stated that they always or often had spare time.

(b) Includes persons who did not state whether they had spare time.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

#### Voluntary work

The contribution of older people to voluntary activities provides many benefits to the community in terms of caring and social support. In the 12 months to June 1995, almost 350,000 older volunteers gave their time, service and skills to organisations and groups. They comprised 19% of older women and 16% of older men, with participation rates higher among those aged 65–74 than among those aged 75 and over.

The median time spent by older women and men on voluntary activities was about two hours per week, which was greater than for women and men aged 15–64 (about one hour per week). Welfare and community organisations attracted the highest levels of volunteers among older people. In contrast, younger people were more likely to volunteer in the areas of sport, recreation and leisure and in education, training or youth development (ABS 1996c).

### 6.12 VOLUNTEERS, By Age and Sex—1995(a)

Age group (years)	MALES.....			FEMALES.....		
	Number	Volunteer rate(b)	Median time worked	Number	Volunteer rate(b)	Median time worked
	'000	%	Hours	'000	%	Hours
15–64	1 003.0	16.8	72	1 288.2	21.7	72
65 and over						
65–74	109.1	18.3	104	151.8	22.3	117
75 and over	30.9	10.4	100	56.6	13.3	104
Total	140.0	15.7	104	208.4	18.9	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 142.9</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1 496.6</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>75</b>

(a) For the 12 months ended June 1995.

(b) For any group, the number of volunteers expressed as a percentage of the population in the same age group.

Source: ABS 1996c; ABS, unpublished data, 1995 Voluntary Work Survey.

## Child care

Grandparents are important providers of low cost child care, which may enable both parents to participate in the labour force. In this way, grandparents continue to care for their children by caring for their grandchildren. In 1997, in two-thirds (68%) of households which received informal child care, grandparents provided the care.

**6.13 RECEIPT OF INFORMAL CHILD CARE—1997**

Type of informal care provider	Households which used informal care for children aged 0–11.....	
	'000	%
Grandparent	537.6	67.6
Brother/sister	96.0	12.1
Other relative	191.3	24.0
Other person/organisation	184.3	23.2
Child looks after self	*17.5	*2.2
<b>Total(a)(b)</b>	<b>795.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Includes households where respondents did not know what type of child care they had used.

(b) Components do not add to total as more than one kind of informal care could be used.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## Free time activities

Transition to older age is often accompanied by increasing opportunities to participate in activities in which there is a high degree of choice. Such activities can be termed free time activities, and include active and passive leisure, attendance at cultural venues and socialising.

Older people have more free time than younger people. In 1997, older people averaged about 74 hours a week on free time activities, compared with 63 hours for those aged 15–64. Passive leisure pursuits such as talking, reading, watching television, relaxing and doing hobbies or craftwork took up most of older people's free time.

Older people spent slightly less time (5 hours 1 minute a week) than younger people (5 hours 29 minutes) participating in social activities including socialising, visiting cultural and religious venues and attending community meetings.

People aged 65–74 spent longer each week in sport and outdoor activities (3 hours 58 minutes) than younger people (3 hours 16 minutes), although these activities tapered off for those aged 75 and over (2 hours 34 minutes). Much outdoor activity comprised less energetic pursuits such as walking, fishing and holiday travel.

**6.14 FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By Age—1997**

Purpose of activity	15–64	65–74	75 years	Total 65	Total
	years	years	and over	years and over	15 years and over
	Hrs:min(a)	Hrs:min(a)	Hrs:min(a)	Hrs:min(a)	Hrs:min(a)
<b>Social participation</b>					
Socialising	1:24	1:31	1:24	1:24	1:24
Visiting entertainment/cultural venues	0:42	0:28	*0:28	0:28	0:42
Religious activities/ritual ceremonies	0:35	0:49	0:42	0:49	0:35
Community participation	0:14	*0:07	**0:07	*0:07	0:14
Other social participation	2:41	2:20	2:06	2:13	2:34
<i>Total</i>	5:29	5:15	4:47	5:01	5:29
<b>Recreation and leisure</b>					
Sport and outdoor activity	3:16	3:58	2:34	3:30	3:16
Games/hobbies/arts/crafts	2:06	3:51	4:26	3:58	2:20
Reading	3:37	7:14	10:09	8:10	4:19
Audio/visual media					
TV/video watching	18:12	25:26	26:08	25:40	19:15
<i>Total</i>	28:56	36:45	36:24	36:38	29:59
Resting/relaxing	1:31	3:16	4:40	3:44	1:52
Social drinking	1:10	0:35	0:21	0:28	1:03
Interacting with/walking pets	0:28	0:35	0:21	0:28	0:28
Talking including phone	14:00	9:48	9:27	9:41	13:25
Other free time	3:51	3:23	2:13	3:02	3:44
<i>Total</i>	57:17	68:15	70:00	68:50	58:55
<b>Total free time(b)</b>	<b>62:53</b>	<b>73:23</b>	<b>74:40</b>	<b>73:51</b>	<b>64:17</b>

(a) Average time spent per week.

(b) Components do not add to totals because persons may undertake more than one activity at a time.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

**Cultural activities**

Participation in cultural events and activities is lower among older people than among the younger age groups. In the 12 months to April 1999, 67% of people aged 65 and over had attended at least one of the selected venues and activities surveyed, compared with 88% of 15–64 year-olds. The top three cultural venues attended by older people were the cinema (36%), the library (34%) and the botanic gardens (27%).

**6.15 ATTENDANCE AT SELECTED CULTURAL VENUES—1999(a)**

Age group (years)	Total attending selected venues.....	
	'000	%
15–64	11 076.3	87.9
65 and over	1 539.5	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 615.8</b>	<b>84.6</b>

(a) For the 12 months ended April 1999.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1999 Survey of Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues.

Cultural activities *continued*

At almost all venues and activities, older women had higher levels of attendance than older men, particularly at the cinema and opera/musical venues. In contrast, men had slightly higher attendance rates at animal/marine parks and museums.

**6.16** TYPE OF CULTURAL VENUE ATTENDED, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1999(a)

Venue/activity	MALES AGED 65 AND OVER...		FEMALES AGED 65 AND OVER...		PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER...	
	Attendance rate		Attendance rate		Attendance rate	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Cinema	319.9	31.6	503.3	38.8	823.1	35.6
Library	326.6	32.3	447.9	34.5	774.5	33.5
Botanic garden	271.7	26.8	360.2	27.8	631.9	27.4
Animal/marine park	166.9	16.5	211.5	16.3	378.4	16.4
Art gallery	146.3	14.5	227.8	17.6	374.1	16.2
Opera/musical	98.4	9.7	198.5	15.3	269.9	12.9
Museum	138.0	13.6	149.3	11.5	287.3	12.4
Other performing arts	98.7	9.8	142.1	11.0	240.9	10.4
Theatre	86.7	8.6	151.7	11.7	238.4	10.3
Classical music concert	80.9	8.0	125.4	9.7	206.2	8.9
Popular music concert	66.1	6.5	100.5	7.7	166.6	7.2
Dance	43.4	4.3	75.1	5.8	118.5	5.1

(a) For the 12 months ended April 1999.

Source: ABS 1999g.

## Sport and physical activity

Participation in a variety of sports and physical activities decreases with age. In a 12 month reference period during 1998 and 1999, 42% of men aged 65 and over and 33% of women in this age group participated at least once in some form of sport or physical activity. This compared with 66% of men and 61% of women aged 18–64 (ABS 1999h). The most popular activities among both older men and older women were walking and lawn bowls.

**6.17** LEADING SPORTS/PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1998–99

Sport/physical activity	Males.....		Sport/physical activity	Females.....	
	'000	%		'000	%
Walking	164.7	17.7	Walking	200.1	17.7
Lawn bowls	98.7	10.6	Lawn bowls	70.3	6.2
Golf	84.3	9.1	Swimming	69.7	6.2
Swimming	66.0	7.1	Golf	51.8	4.6
Fishing	45.1	4.9	Aerobics/fitness	42.8	3.8
Aerobics/fitness	27.2	2.9	Tennis	27.2	2.4
<b>All sports(a)</b>	<b>389.1</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>All sports(a)</b>	<b>368.5</b>	<b>32.6</b>

(a) Components do not add to totals as only selected sports/physical activities are shown, and persons could participate in more than one sport/physical activity.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998–99 Population Survey Monitor.

## TRAVEL

Travel for older people encompasses both domestic and international trips. It includes travel for pleasure and business purposes.

## Domestic travel

In the 12 months to June 1997, 74% of people had travelled overnight or longer away from their home. The proportion of people travelling peaked at 79% of those aged 14–19 and 20–29 and then fell gradually to 69% of people aged 60–69 and 55% of those aged 70 and over. The main reason for more domestic travel by younger age groups was the greater proportion of business trips, accounting for about 40% of all trips taken by people aged 25–54 (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1998).

**6.18 DOMESTIC TRAVELLERS(a), By Age—1996–97**

<i>People undertaking domestic travel.....</i>		
<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>% of age group</i>
14–19	1 205	78.9
20–29	2 173	79.4
30–39	2 333	76.6
40–49	1 975	76.2
50–59	1 309	73.4
60–69	1 072	69.1
70 and over	868	55.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 937</b>	<b>73.9</b>

(a) People who took at least one trip involving at least one overnight stay 40 kilometres from home.

Source: Bureau of Tourism Research, 1998, unpublished data.

## International travel

Overall, 47% of all short-term overseas visits in 1997–98 were for holidays, 22% were to visit friends or relatives and 22% were for business purposes. In the case of older people 53% of trips were for holidays and 37% to see friends or relatives. There was little variation by the age of the older traveller.

**6.19 SHORT-TERM OVERSEAS VISITS(a), By Age—1997–98**

Type of visit	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....				
	15–64	65–74	75 and over	Total aged 65 and over	Total aged 15 and over
	%	%	%	%	%
Holiday(b)	46.3	53.2	54.2	53.4	46.8
Visiting friends/relatives	20.9	36.7	39.7	37.3	22.1
Business/employment	23.5	4.7	1.8	4.1	22.0
Convention/conference	4.5	2.0	1.3	1.8	4.3
Other(c)	4.9	3.5	3.0	3.4	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 539.3</b>	<b>159.7</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>202.5</b>	<b>2 741.8</b>

(a) Comprises visits lasting less than 12 months.

(b) Includes people accompanying business travellers.

(c) Includes in transit and not stated.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997–98 Overseas Arrivals and Departures.

The leading overseas destinations visited by older people were the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States. These three destinations accounted for 41% of all overseas short-term visits made by older people in 1997.

While going on holiday accounted for the highest proportion of visits to all main destinations, the proportion of older Australians travelling to the United Kingdom (46%), Hong Kong (44%), New Zealand (42%) and Italy (41%) to visit family or friends was higher than for those travelling to other destinations for this purpose, reflecting the high proportion of Australian residents born in these countries.

## 6.20 OVERSEAS DESTINATIONS(a), Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997–98

	REASON FOR VISIT.....					Total.....	
	<i>Holiday(b)</i>	<i>Visiting friends/ relatives</i>	<i>Business/ employment</i>	<i>Convention/ conference</i>	<i>Other(c)</i>		
<i>Main destinations</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%	'000
United Kingdom	48.6	46.0	1.9	0.9	2.6	100.0	35.5
New Zealand	45.9	42.4	4.6	3.2	3.9	100.0	27.9
United States	55.1	33.2	7.1	2.7	1.9	100.0	19.1
Indonesia	86.0	7.8	3.0	—	3.2	100.0	9.0
Singapore	74.5	18.6	2.2	1.8	2.8	100.0	8.1
Italy	46.4	41.3	5.0	1.5	5.8	100.0	8.0
Norfolk Island	99.1	—	—	0.9	—	100.0	7.6
Hong Kong	44.5	44.4	8.7	1.0	1.5	100.0	5.6
Greece	57.9	34.0	1.1	0.0	7.1	100.0	5.4
Other	48.4	40.9	4.8	2.0	3.9	100.0	76.2
<b>All countries</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>202.5</b>

(a) Comprises visits lasting less than 12 months only.

(b) Includes people accompanying business travellers.

(c) Includes in transit and not stated.

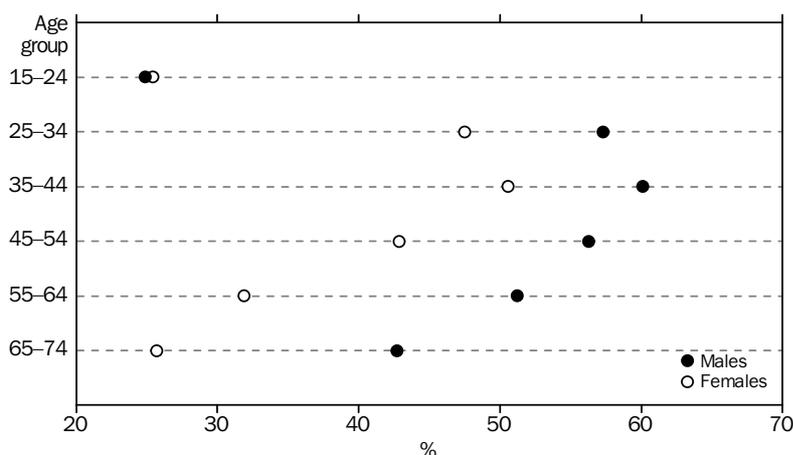
Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997–98 Overseas Arrivals and Departures.

## EDUCATION

Over the past 50 years there have been increasing opportunities for education and greater demands for skills and qualifications in the workforce. Reflecting these trends, in 1996 older people aged 65–74 were less likely than the total population to have post-school qualifications (34% compared with 46%) or to have completed the highest year of secondary school (44% compared with 63%). The steady rise in the proportion of people with post-school qualifications in younger age groups indicates that successive generations of older people will have increasing levels of educational attainment.

Consistent with other age groups, a higher proportion of men aged 65–74 had post-school qualifications than women in the same age group (43% compared with 26%). The difference in incidence of post-school qualifications between older men and women was most apparent in the case of vocational qualifications (27% of older men had post-school vocational qualifications compared with 16% of older women) (see table 6.27).

**6.21 POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS, By Age and Sex —1996**



Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Survey of Aspects of Literacy.

Participation in education

Not all education and training are job-related. For many older people, education provides opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills simply out of interest rather than to address specific vocational objectives. This is reflected in the high participation rate of older people in non-award courses. These are often community-based adult education programs, including courses on recreation and leisure, personal development, social awareness and craft.

**6.22 ATTENDANCE AT POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION(a), By Age—1996**

Age group (years)	TOOK AT LEAST ONE COURSE.....					Total '000
	Did not take a course '000	Award course %	Non-award course %	Total courses(b)..... %	Total courses(b)..... '000	
15-24	821.3	88.0	20.0	100.0	1 762.3	2 583.7
25-34	1 626.2	53.9	61.5	100.0	1 189.5	2 815.6
35-44	1 646.0	42.2	70.9	100.0	1 113.0	2 759.0
45-54	1 557.8	34.7	78.7	100.0	735.8	2 293.6
55-64	1 211.2	18.7	84.9	100.0	302.4	1 513.6
65-74	1 163.0	*19.2	85.9	100.0	92.3	1 255.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 025.5</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>53.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5 195.3</b>	<b>13 220.7</b>

(a) In previous 12 months.

(b) People may undertake more than one course and therefore components do not add to 100%.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Survey of Aspects of Literacy.

## USE OF NEW ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGIES

New electronic technologies (including personal computers, the Internet and automatic teller machines) provide opportunities for communication, education and managing everyday tasks such as purchasing goods and services. These technologies provide a challenge to all people to meet change through continuous learning. The current generation of older people has relatively low rates of use of electronic technologies. However, higher rates of use among younger people indicate that future generations of older people are likely to be better equipped to take advantage of these opportunities.

## Finance

High proportions of younger people make use of electronic banking and funds transfer services. While use of these technologies is considerably lower among older people, 23% of people aged 65 and over used an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) and 20% used Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale (EFTPOS) in 1998.

**6.23 ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS, By Age—1998**

Selected transactions	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....			Total
	18-54	55-64	65 and over	
	%	%	%	%
Used an ATM	81.3	51.4	22.6	68.9
Paid bills or withdrew funds via EFTPOS	71.8	42.9	20.1	60.6
Paid bills or transferred funds by phone	40.6	26.6	15.6	35.2
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 841.1</b>	<b>1 567.3</b>	<b>2 020.7</b>	<b>13 429.1</b>

(a) Components may exceed total because persons may undertake more than one type of transaction.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Population Survey Monitor.

## Computers and the Internet

In 1998, 45% of households (3.0 million) had a computer and 85% of these households used the computer frequently (once a week or more). Computers were used frequently at home by almost one-third (29%) of people aged 18 and over. However, frequent home computer use was much lower for people aged 55 and over (17% for people aged 55-64 and 6% for people aged 65 and over). In all age groups, men were more likely than women to make frequent use of a computer. While cost and skills may be barriers to computer ownership and use, the lower incidence of use of home computers from age 55 is also associated with retirement from paid employment. Similarly, the pattern of computer use outside the home reflected the movement of older people from the labour market (ABS 1999i).

Computers and the Internet *continued*

Home Internet access is growing rapidly. Nearly 16% of households (1.1 million) had access to the Internet in 1998 compared with 4% (0.3 million) in 1996. Internet access from home declined sharply with age to negligible levels among people aged 65 and over. Once again, the pattern of Internet access from any site was influenced by employment activities (ABS 1999j).

**6.24 COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET ACCESS, By Age—1998**

Selected activities	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....			Total
	18-54	55-64	65 and over	
MALES				
	%	%	%	%
Frequently used a computer at home	38.2	19.2	8.3	31.8
Frequently used a computer outside the home	47.0	19.0	*2.1	37.4
Accessed the Internet at home	19.9	11.2	1.8	16.4
Accessed the Internet from any site(a)	43.7	16.8	2.2	34.7
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES				
	%	%	%	%
Frequently used a computer at home	34.1	14.1	3.8	26.9
Frequently used a computer outside the home	43.0	16.4	*1.4	33.2
Accessed the Internet at home	13.2	3.6	*0.8	10.1
Accessed the Internet from any site(a)	37.5	8.3	*1.5	28.4
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
PERSONS				
	%	%	%	%
Frequently used a computer at home	36.2	16.7	5.8	29.3
Frequently used a computer outside the home	45.1	17.7	1.7	35.3
Accessed the Internet at home	16.5	7.5	1.2	13.2
Accessed the Internet from any site(a)	40.6	12.6	1.8	31.5
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
TOTAL				
	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total males</b>	<b>4 913.5</b>	<b>794.7</b>	<b>911.7</b>	<b>6 619.9</b>
<b>Total females</b>	<b>4 927.6</b>	<b>772.6</b>	<b>1 108.9</b>	<b>6 809.1</b>
<b>Total persons</b>	<b>9 841.1</b>	<b>1 567.3</b>	<b>2 020.7</b>	<b>13 429.1</b>

(a) Includes Internet access at home.

(b) Components may exceed total since persons may undertake more than one type of activity.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1998 Population Survey Monitor.

## ADDITIONAL TABLES

**6.25 TIME SPENT ON HOUSEWORK(a)—1997**

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....									
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	Total 65 and over	Total
	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min	Hrs:min
HOUSEWORK									
Males	2:34	4:19	5:22	4:54	6:11	6:46	8:45	7:28	4:54
Females	6:39	16:27	20:39	19:50	21:28	20:39	18:26	19:50	17:09
<b>Persons</b>	<b>4:33</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>12:57</b>	<b>12:22</b>	<b>13:32</b>	<b>14:21</b>	<b>14:28</b>	<b>14:21</b>	<b>11:05</b>
OTHER HOUSEHOLD WORK									
Males	1:59	4:19	5:36	7:14	9:34	11:19	12:08	11:40	6:11
Females	2:06	3:23	5:01	5:57	5:50	5:50	5:29	5:43	4:33
<b>Persons</b>	<b>2:06</b>	<b>3:51</b>	<b>5:15</b>	<b>6:32</b>	<b>7:42</b>	<b>8:17</b>	<b>8:17</b>	<b>8:17</b>	<b>5:22</b>
TOTAL DOMESTIC ACTIVITY									
Males	4:47	8:52	11:33	12:29	16:13	18:54	21:21	19:43	11:26
Females	8:45	20:04	25:54	25:47	27:25	26:29	24:02	25:40	21:42
<b>Persons</b>	<b>6:46</b>	<b>14:35</b>	<b>18:40</b>	<b>19:08</b>	<b>21:35</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>22:59</b>	<b>16:41</b>

(a) Average time per week.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

### 6.26 USE OF SERVICES BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS, Persons Aged 65 and Over—1997

Type of service	LIVING ARRANGEMENTS.....					
	Males living alone	Females living alone	Persons living alone	Persons in couple only households	Other	Total
AGED 65–74						
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Laundry	5.3	6.7	6.2	11.7	9.1	9.8
Cleaner	*8.1	10.5	9.8	4.7	5.0	6.1
Gardener	*9.2	41.3	31.2	16.3	11.0	19.5
All persons who used at least one service	18.0	44.6	36.2	26.4	20.2	28.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	105.2	228.7	333.9	674.8	211.6	1 220.3
AGED 75 AND OVER						
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Laundry	16.1	*4.7	7.4	5.7	4.2	6.1
Cleaner	18.1	15.6	16.2	13.3	11.2	14.1
Gardener	31.6	38.6	36.9	17.3	8.8	23.5
All persons who used at least one service	49.7	45.9	46.8	27.1	20.4	33.7
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	62.2	195.8	258.0	280.7	115.0	653.8
TOTAL AGED 65 AND OVER						
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Laundry	9.3	5.8	6.7	10.0	7.4	8.5
Cleaner	11.8	12.9	12.6	7.2	7.2	8.9
Gardener	17.6	40.1	33.7	16.6	10.2	20.9
All persons who used at least one service	29.8	45.2	40.9	26.6	20.2	30.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>167.4</b>	<b>424.5</b>	<b>591.9</b>	<b>955.5</b>	<b>326.7</b>	<b>1 874.0</b>

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1997 Time Use Survey.

## 6.27 POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS(a)—1996

Age group (years)	WITH POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS.....				WITHOUT POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS.....			
	Bachelor Degree or higher(b)	Undergraduate or associate diploma	Vocational qualifications	Total	Completed highest level of secondary school	Did not complete highest level of secondary school	Total(c)	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
MALES								
15-24	6.0	6.7	19.0	31.7	38.0	30.3	68.3	100.0
25-34	16.4	11.8	29.0	57.3	15.1	27.3	42.7	100.0
35-44	18.1	12.0	30.0	60.1	12.6	27.1	39.9	100.0
45-54	14.3	14.1	27.9	56.3	10.9	32.7	43.7	100.0
55-64	11.0	13.5	26.8	51.2	8.9	38.7	48.8	100.0
65-74	6.6	9.5	26.7	42.7	9.9	45.8	57.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES								
15-24	7.8	4.6	19.1	31.5	42.8	25.7	68.5	100.0
25-34	17.1	8.5	21.9	47.5	18.0	34.3	52.5	100.0
35-44	18.1	11.7	20.7	50.6	10.9	38.6	49.4	100.0
45-54	13.8	9.4	19.7	42.9	8.8	48.1	57.1	100.0
55-64	6.7	8.3	16.8	31.9	10.8	56.3	68.1	100.0
65-74	*4.0	5.3	16.4	25.7	7.6	65.7	74.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
PERSONS								
15-24	6.9	5.7	19.0	31.6	40.4	28.0	68.4	100.0
25-34	16.8	10.2	25.4	52.4	16.5	30.8	47.6	100.0
35-44	18.1	11.9	25.3	55.3	11.7	32.9	44.7	100.0
45-54	14.1	11.8	23.8	49.7	9.8	40.3	50.3	100.0
55-64	8.9	10.9	21.8	41.6	9.9	47.4	58.4	100.0
65-74	5.2	7.3	21.3	33.8	8.7	56.3	66.2	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>37.0</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Excludes people who are still at school.

(b) Includes bachelor degree and postgraduate diploma/higher degree.

(c) Includes small number of persons with no schooling.

Source: ABS, unpublished data, 1996 Survey of Aspects of Literacy.

## GLOSSARY .....

**Alcohol risk level** Derived from the average daily consumption of alcohol during the week prior to interview and grouped into relative risk levels based on recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council. One standard drink contains about 8–10 g or 10–12 ml of absolute alcohol. The risk categories are as follows:

### CONSUMPTION OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL PER DAY .....

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
<i>Relative risk</i>	ml	ml
Low	Less than 50	Less than 25
Moderate	50–75	25–50
High	Greater than 75	Greater than 50

**Average time spent** Calculated by dividing the total time all persons spend on an activity by the population of the particular group being examined. Average time spent per day is calculated over all days of the week, and may not reflect the usual pattern of time use on any given day. For further details see *Time Use Survey, Australia—User's Guide, 1997* (ABS 1998i).

**Body mass index** Based on height and weight as reported by the respondent. Persons were categorised into four groups according to their body mass, derived using the formula weight (kg) divided by the square of height (m<sup>2</sup>). The groups used, as shown below, are consistent with recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

<i>Body Mass Index</i>	
Underweight	Less than 20
Acceptable weight	20–25
Overweight	Greater than 25–30
Obese	Greater than 30

**Cared accommodation** Hospitals, homes for the aged such as nursing homes and aged care hostels, cared components of retirement villages, and other 'homes', such as children's homes.

<b>Carer</b>	A person of any age who provides any informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to persons with disabilities or long-term conditions, or persons who are elderly (i.e. aged 60 years or over). The assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing, for at least six months. Assistance to a person in a different household relates to 'everyday types of activities', without specific information on the activities. Where the care recipient lives in the same household, the assistance is for one or more of the following activities: communication, health care, housework, meal preparation, mobility, paperwork, property maintenance, self care, or transport.
<b>Collection District</b>	The smallest geographic area defined in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification. It has been designed for use in the Census of Population and Housing as the smallest unit for collection, processing and output of data, and usually comprises around 250 households.
<b>Core activity restriction</b>	<p>Four levels of core activity restriction are determined based on whether a person always needs help, sometimes needs help, has difficulty, or uses aids or equipment, with any of the activities of communication, mobility or self care. A person's overall level of core activity restriction is determined by their highest level of restriction in these activities.</p> <p>The four levels of restriction (in decreasing level of severity) are profound, severe, moderate and mild. For further detail, see <i>Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998</i> (ABS 1999b).</p>
<b>Couple family</b>	A family based on two persons who are in a registered or de facto marriage and who are usually resident in the same household. A couple family without children may have other relatives, such as ancestors, present. A couple family with children may have adult children and/or other relatives present.
<b>Couple only household</b>	A household comprising exactly one couple family without children or other relatives and with no unrelated persons in the household.
<b>De facto marriage</b>	The relationship between a male and female partner who live together in a consensual union and who are not registered as married to each other.
<b>Dependent children</b>	All family members under 15 years of age and dependent students.
<b>Dependent students</b>	In couple or one-parent families, sons or daughters aged 15–19 years attending school or aged 15–24 years attending a tertiary educational institution full-time (except those classified as husbands, wives or lone parents).
<b>Direct benefits</b>	Regular cash payments received directly from government without any requirement to provide goods and services in return.
<b>Direct tax</b>	Personal income tax and the Medicare levy.
<b>Disability</b>	In the context of health experience, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines disability as any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an action in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. A person is defined as having a disability if he/she has a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. For further detail, see <i>Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998</i> (ABS 1999b).



**Employed** Persons aged 15 years and over who worked during the reference week for pay, profit, commission, payment in-kind or without pay in a family business, or who had a job but were not at work. Workers may be classified as either:

- full-time—employed persons who usually worked 35 hours or more a week and others who, although usually working less than 35 hours a week, worked 35 hours or more during the reference week; or
- part-time—employed persons who usually worked less than 35 hours a week.

**Estimated Resident Population** The official ABS estimate of the Australian population according to where people usually live. Estimated Resident Population (ERP) is based on results from the latest population census, adjusted for under-enumeration and Australian residents temporarily overseas at the time of the census. Population estimates are then updated quarterly for subsequent births, deaths and overseas and interstate migration. Population estimates for reference periods close to the Census date differ from the census count of persons.

**Family** Two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household. The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent-child relationship or other blood relationship. Some households will, therefore, contain more than one family.

**Flat, unit or apartment** Includes all self-contained dwellings in blocks of flats, units or apartments. These dwellings do not have their own private grounds and usually share a common entrance foyer or stairwell. This category includes houses converted into flats and flats attached to houses such as granny flats. A house with a granny flat attached is regarded as a separate house.

**Group household** A household consisting of two or more unrelated people where all persons are aged 15 years and over. There are no reported couple relationships, parent-child relationships or other blood relationships in these households.

**Health care card** Refers to a range of government health entitlement and concession cards which provide for medical and/or related services free of charge or at reduced rates to recipients of Commonwealth government pensions or benefits. The Commonwealth government Medicare card is excluded.

**High series projections** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections which assume an increase in the propensity of persons to indicate Indigenous origin on census forms based on the change estimated between the 1991 and 1996 Censuses. See *Experimental Estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 30 June 1986 to 30 June 1991* (ABS 1994a); *Experimental Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 30 June 1996 to 30 June 2006* (ABS 1998c).

**Household** A group of two or more related or unrelated people who usually reside in the same dwelling and who make common provision for food or other essentials for living; or a person living in a dwelling who makes provision for his or her own food and other essentials for living without combining with any other person.



<b>Housing costs</b>	Housing costs comprise the following for the tenure type categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ owner without a mortgage—rates payments (general and water);</li> <li>▪ owner with a mortgage—rates payments plus mortgage payments if the purpose of the mortgage was to buy, build, add to or alter the dwelling; and</li> <li>▪ renter—rent payments.</li> </ul>
<b>Improvised dwelling</b>	Non-standard accommodation, examples of which include sheds, tents not located in caravan parks and humpies. Also includes persons sleeping on park benches or in other 'rough' accommodation.
<b>Income unit</b>	One person or a group of related persons within a household, whose command over income is assumed to be shared. Income sharing is assumed to take place within married (registered or de facto) couples, and between parents and dependent children.
<b>Indigenous</b>	Refers to persons who identified themselves as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
<b>Indirect benefits</b>	Non-cash benefits and services provided by the government to households for education, health, housing and social security and welfare.
<b>Indirect taxes</b>	Taxes associated with the production, sale, purchase or use of goods and services.
<b>Labour force</b>	The civilian population aged 15 and over who are employed or unemployed.
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>	The labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over in the same group.
<b>Labour force status</b>	A classification of the civilian population aged 15 and over into employed, unemployed or not in the labour force, as defined.
<b>Lone person</b>	A person who makes provision for his or her food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person to form part of a multi-person household. He or she may live in a dwelling on their own or share a dwelling with another individual or family.
<b>Long-term unemployed</b>	Persons unemployed for a period of 52 weeks or more.
<b>Main Activity</b>	In the Time Use Survey, the respondent's description of an activity in the first diary column was designated as their main activity. For many time periods, only one (the main) activity was described by respondents. For further details see <i>Time Use Survey, Australia—User's Guide, 1997</i> (ABS 1998i).
<b>Marital status</b>	A person's social marital status refers to their current living arrangements, that is whether or not they are living with another person in a couple relationship. A person's registered marital status refers to their status in relation to a legally registered marriage as either never married, currently married, separated, divorced or widowed. Some persons who are not living with their partner may still be currently registered married rather than separated.
<b>Mean gross weekly income</b>	The total income received by a group of income units divided by the number of units in the group.
<b>Mean housing cost</b>	The total weekly housing cost paid by a group of households (e.g. couple only households) divided by the number of households in that group.

<b>Median gross weekly income</b>	The level of income which divides the income units in a group into two equal parts, one half having incomes above the median and the other half having incomes below the median.
<b>Multifamily households</b>	Households which consist of more than one family. For the 1996 Census, up to three families were able to be coded in one household.
<b>Never married</b>	A person who has never been a partner in a registered marriage.
<b>Non-dependent child</b>	In couple or one-parent families, a son or daughter who is aged over 15 years and who is not a full-time student aged 15–24 years (except those classified as husbands, wives or lone parents).
<b>Not in the labour force</b>	Persons who, during the survey reference week, were neither employed nor looking for work. They include persons who were keeping house (unpaid), retired, voluntarily inactive, permanently unable to work, persons in institutions, trainee teachers, members of contemplative religious orders, and persons whose only activity during the reference week was jury service or unpaid voluntary work for a charitable organisation.
<b>Other renter</b>	A person, other than a private or public renter, who rented from an owner/manager of a caravan park, a government authority employer, another employer, a housing cooperative/community/church group or another type of landlord.
<b>Private dwelling</b>	Private dwellings are houses, flats, home units, caravans, garages, tents and other structures used as private places of residence at the time of the survey. These are distinct from non-private (or special) dwellings which include hotels, boarding houses and institutions.
<b>Private renter</b>	A person who rented from a real estate agent or another person not in the same household.
<b>Public renter</b>	A person who rented from a State or Territory housing authority. Government employer provided housing such as defence force housing is excluded.
<b>Self-care accommodation</b>	Accommodation for the retired or aged where the occupants provide their own meals and are regarded as being self-sufficient.
<b>Semi-detached, row or terrace house or townhouse</b>	A dwelling with its own private grounds and no dwelling above or below. A key feature of this dwelling is that it is either attached in some structural way to one or more dwelling or is separated from neighbouring dwellings by less than one-half metre.
<b>Separate house</b>	A dwelling which is self-contained and separated from other houses (or other buildings or structures) by a space to allow access on all sides (at least one-half metre). This category also includes houses that have an attached flat (e.g. a granny flat). The attached flat will be included in the flat, unit or apartment category.
<b>Smoking</b>	Refers to the regular smoking of tobacco, including manufactured (packet) cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars and pipes, but excludes chewing tobacco and smoking of non-tobacco products. The topic focused on 'regular smoking', where regular was defined as one or more cigarettes (or pipes or cigars) per day on average as reported by the respondent.

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<b>Statistical Division</b>	Statistical Divisions (SDs) are the largest statistical area building blocks of States and Territories as defined in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification.
<b>Statistical Local Area</b>	Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) are areas defined in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification which consist of one or more Collection Districts and often coincide with legal local government areas.
<b>Tenure type</b>	Tenure is the source of the legal right of a household to occupy a dwelling. For the purpose of this publication, households belong to one of four occupancy categories: owner without a mortgage, owner with a mortgage, renter or 'other'.
<b>Unemployed</b>	Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, but who had actively looked for work and were available to start work.
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	For any group, the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.
<b>Voluntary work</b>	The 1995 Survey of Voluntary Work defined a volunteer as someone who willingly gave help in the form of time, services or skills <i>through an organisation or group</i> . The definition of voluntary work adopted by the 1997 Time Use Survey includes, in addition, caring for adults and doing favours for friends, neighbours and others outside the household.

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