

Australia's Population Could Treble in 75 Years

Australia's population could treble to 53 million people by the year 2069, according to new estimates published today by The Australia Institute.

Developed by respected demographer, Dr Lincoln Day, the new projections indicate that the rate of annual immigration will be the vital factor determining Australia's population growth.

The analysis shows that if Australia maintained an annual rate of net immigration at the 1988 level (149,000) then population could double by the year 2044 and treble by 2069. On the other hand, if immigration were set at the 1984 level (57,000) then Australia's population could be 32 million by 2069.

"While the rate at which women have babies is important, it is unlikely to change much," said Dr Day. "So immigration policies are the key to population growth in Australia."

"Australia is lucky. It can make choices about its population because the rate of immigration can be controlled", said Dr Day.

The new figures are published in the latest Newsletter of The Australia Institute, a public policy research centre. Commenting on the figures Dr Clive Hamilton, the Executive Director of the Australia Institute, said that it is time that Australia had a serious debate on its population.

"Many people of integrity are concerned about the implications of population growth in Australia, but are reluctant to enter into public debate for fear of being branded racist. But the growing threats to Australia's resource base and areas of natural value will force the debate on us sooner or later", Dr Hamilton said.

Contact: *Dr Clive Hamilton & Dr Lincoln Day (06) 281 6566*