

Free Public Seminar

Population and Ageing: Disaster or Triumph?

7 March, 1 pm - 5 pm

Bradley Forum, Hawke Centre, Uni SA, West Campus, 55 North Tce

In recent years it has become common wisdom that an ageing population poses a problem for Australia. This view has been strongly promoted by some business interests that seek immigration as an answer. This seminar will explore the parameters of ageing and whether an ageing population is indeed a problem, an advantage or some of each.



Dr Katharine Betts, Adjunct Professor of Sociology, Swinburne University

Challenges and benefits of an ageing population

The demographic transition is a reproductive revolution. It has worked its way through European populations and many Asian nations. In all instances it has beneficially increased the efficiency of generational replacement. This revolution presents challenges but compared with continual growth these are trivial. The revolution means a more efficient use of resources, more incentive to invest in education, and assuming low net migration, more inherited wealth and less competition for positional goods. Claims by the growth lobby that they can engineer youthfulness via high migration are misleading; high migration would make Australia much bigger but only marginally younger and that only temporarily.

Associate Professor Philip Lawn, Business School, Flinders University,

Myths about superannuation and the intergenerational debate

Superannuation need not impose a large tax burden on the working population. The best form of compulsory superannuation is the public investment in sustainable productive capacity to support a decent pension for all retirees. The secret to providing for future retirees is: (a) ensuring the economy can be ecologically sustained; and (b) boosting the productivity of the working population, which requires adequate investment in education, training, health, R&D, natural capital, and low-emissions and energy-efficient critical infrastructure.



Dr Jane O'Sullivan, Agricultural research scientist, University of Queensland with particular interest in demography and food security

A Sustainable Future cannot be reached through the pursuit of youthfulness

Jane O'Sullivan examines the claimed impacts of an ageing society, and of the measures promoted to address ageing, and finds the cure is far worse than the disease. Indeed, the economic and environmental impacts of an older society are generally beneficial, and contribute to more sustainable prosperity.



This Seminar is sponsored by Sustainable Population Australia, a national environment organisation committed to a sustainable Australia in a sustainable world with a primary emphasis on population

Visit: population.org.au

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