

# MEDIA RELEASE

4 February 2013

## It's official: 40 will be the new 20.

As the first of the baby boomers turn 65 this year, the phenomenon of population ageing continues in earnest.

Presenting at a recent conference, Senior Research Fellow at the ARC Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research (CEPAR), Rafal Chomik, told the audience Australia is well on the way to 40 being our average median age.

"At Federation, Australia was a youthful country with an average age of 22," Mr Chomik said.

"This year, the average age of Australians is 37 and by 2050, it will be 42. Each year, the median age in Australia is increasing by one and a half months."

The difference in median ages between 1901 and 2050 corresponds to the age difference between Daniel Radcliffe and Mark Wahlberg. (See graph over page).

"We're on our way from being a youthful magician to a retired welterweight champion," Mr Chomik added.

Analysis of the 2011 Census reveals that Australia is at a cross-roads: for the first time, there are more people who are aged 60 and above than those aged 14 and below. (See graph over page).

"In the 2006 census, 18% of the Australian population was over 60, while 19.8% were children aged 14 and under. In 2011, this reversed for the first time with 19.3% under 14 and 19.6% over 60," Mr Chomik said.

"These changing proportions demonstrate the demographic shift and the phenomenon we know as population ageing.

"The trend will see a reduction in the ratio of working age people to older non-working Australians," he said.

Australia is not alone is facing this global phenomenon, which is affecting how the provision of pensions, health care and aged care. By 2050, Japan will have an average age of 52.

"Recent analysis reveals that our investment in superannuation sees us comparatively well placed internationally to meet the demands of population ageing," Mr Chomik said. (See chart over page).

"Australian public spending on pensions, though increasing, is expected to remain third lowest in the OECD.

"The Replacement Rate (the amount of income in retirement compared to income during working age) for an average earner with a full career is estimated to be around 60 percent – higher for someone on less than average earnings."

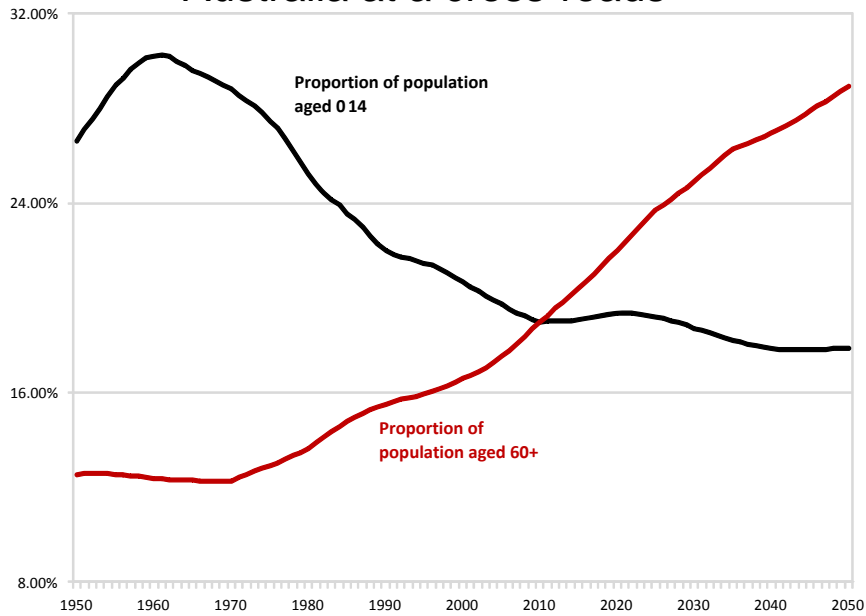
For more information on CEPAR's population ageing research, visit our website: [www.cepar.edu.au](http://www.cepar.edu.au)

For more information contact **Melanie Brake** on 0479 072 233

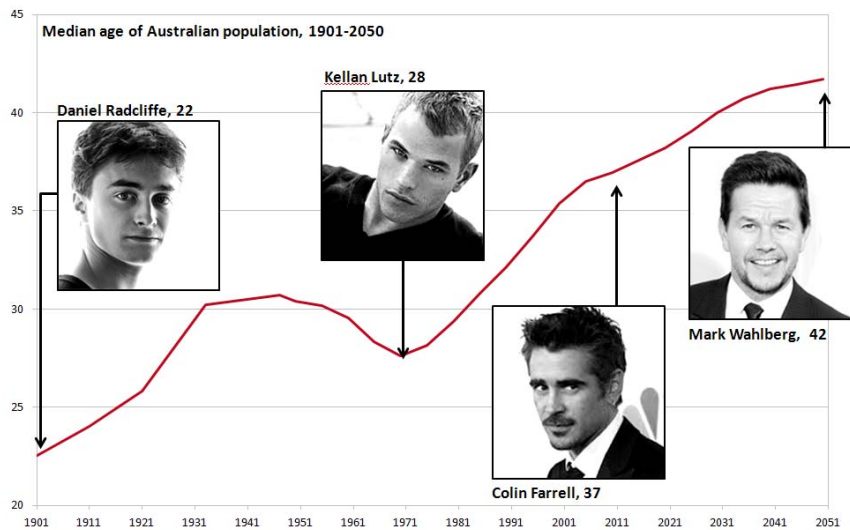
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EDITOR'S NOTES

### Australia at a cross-roads

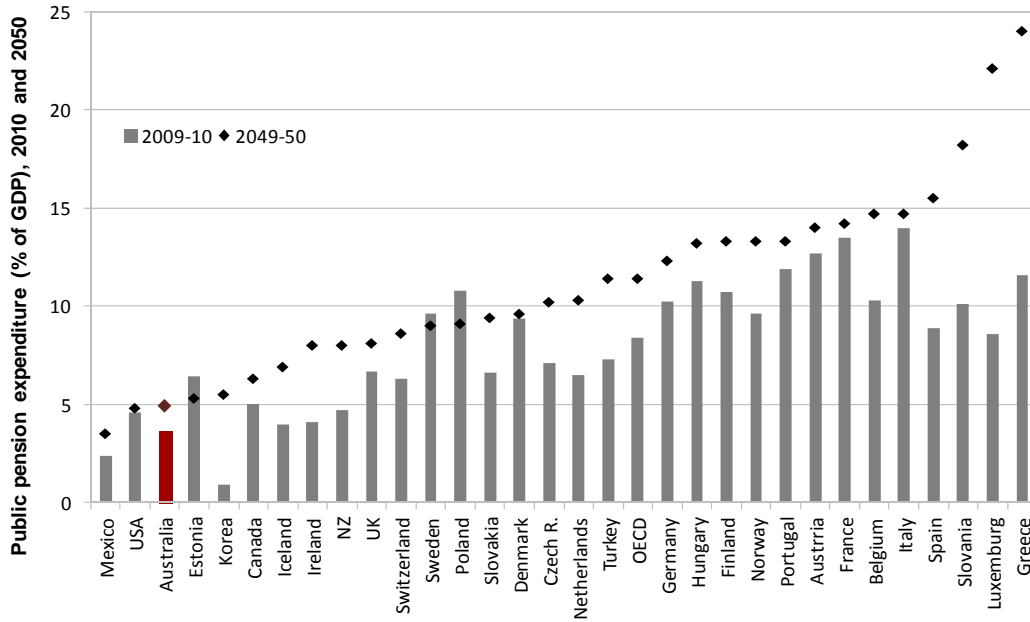


### 40 will be new 20



Year	1901	1970	2013	2050
Median Age	22.5	27.6	37.3	41.7
Median birth year	1989	1984	1975	1970

**Pension spending to remain comparatively sustainable**



Note: Calculations based on OECD, Australian Bureau of Statistics and UN Data