



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

9239/12

Paper 1 Written Exam

February/March 2023

INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

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## INFORMATION

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



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This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

The following documents consider issues related to demographic changes. Read them both in order to answer all the questions on the paper.

**Document A:** adapted from *Covid rewrites Australia's future, with huge drop in population signalling challenges ahead*, an article written by Amy Remeikis published in 'The Guardian (Australia)' in October 2020. The author is the newspaper's political reporter. She has covered federal politics and crime, working for radio and newspapers during her career.

Australia has relied on population growth – mostly through migration – to support economic growth for the past thirty years. The pandemic, however, has created problems for Australia as it now faces a shift to a smaller and older population, forever altering the future. The decision to shut Australia's borders, made necessary to prevent Covid-19 spreading, has pulled the country into a new reality.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics reported Australia's population was 25,649,985 at the end of March 2020. Net overseas migration made up 61.8% of the annual growth rate. Australia had previously been forecast to hit 30 million people by 2029. However, the international border closure has meant Australia's population growth statistics have been thrown completely off course.

Economic consultancy Deloitte forecasts the nation's population will grow by 600,000 fewer people than had previously been estimated for 2022. Deloitte is not alone in its predictions. Assuming the international border would reopen by late 2021, the Treasury predicted Australia would have 1 million fewer people than anticipated in 2022.

The Treasury also predicts a slump in the domestic fertility rate that will continue for the next decade. Thus, Australia is looking at a substantially older population than was forecast just a year ago. The substantial drop in migration will further reduce Australia's birth-rate – fewer migrants also means fewer mothers giving birth. "That's two-thirds of a million missing Australians," the analysts said.

"That loss of migrants will have impacts for many years; it weighs on the pace of recovery, slowing everything from housing construction to the utilities. And, combined with a slumping birth-rate, it will change the outlook for school numbers," Deloitte said.

Lower rates of population growth will affect everything from the number of schools built to the rate of investment in infrastructure and growth plans. This also cuts down on the amount of revenue governments across the country will receive, putting increased pressure on already stressed budgets.

And it's not just spending. Australia's existing population includes about five million people in their seventies. Younger migrants of working age have traditionally been used to boost the workforce as the older generation retires. Deloitte forecasts that the absence of migrants from the labour force will cut into longer-term growth. They also predict Australia's net migration arrivals will shrink by 20,000 in the 2020–21 financial year. This is the best-case scenario, based on predictions that the rest of the world, not just Australia, will have the coronavirus under control sometime in the next year.

There is a risk that further waves of the pandemic will keep borders closed around the world. In this case, "net migration rates could remain suppressed for more than the two or three years that we currently expect," Deloitte said.

The coronavirus will leave behind a huge hangover. The Australian economy will be permanently at least 3% smaller than our pre-Covid forecasts, mainly because closed borders mean our population will be similarly smaller.

Deloitte's latest report says, "The arc of our nation's history is bending before our very eyes – a smaller and older Australia awaits us. That isn't necessarily bad, but it's definitely big. It will reshape the nation's future in a bunch of ways."

**Document B:** adapted from *The future of migration, human populations, and global health in the Anthropocene* by Professor Ibrahim Abubakar of University College London (UCL) Institute for Global Health. He was chair of the UCL-Lancet Commission on migration and health and is currently co-chair of Lancet Migration. Published in 'The Lancet' in July 2020. 'The Lancet' is an international general medical journal.

In 'The Lancet', Christopher Murray and colleagues report forecasts of the global population in 2100 that are lower than previous estimates. The authors projected the global population to peak in 2064 at 9.73 billion people and decline to 8.79 billion in 2100. This is based on estimates of a lowering total fertility rate (TFR). A key finding of Murray and colleagues is the projected decrease in the working-age population for several countries such as Spain and Japan. This shortage of workers and, at the same time, an aging population might cause problems. It may lead to a decline in life expectancy and quality of life, as well as worsening inequality.

To address the potential catastrophic impact of a shrinking working-age population, countries have several options.

First, countries could consider incentives, such as free childcare, to increase fertility rates before their population declines. Falling fertility rates are driven largely by gains in female education and access to contraception. However, so far, attempts to reverse decreases in fertility rates have not worked.

Second, countries could consider the use of new technologies, including artificial intelligence and robotics. This would provide a path to self-sufficiency in the context of a shrinking working-age population. Automation, such as in car manufacturing, shows that further use of robots in parts of the economy is inevitable. However, the promise that artificial intelligence and robotics will provide social, economic, and psychological support for human societies is speculative. Available evidence also suggests that these changes would have a worse impact on lower paid workers.

Third, countries could choose to establish long-term migration links with culturally similar nations. However, Sub-Saharan Africa as well as North Africa and the Middle East were the only regions forecasted to have higher populations in 2100. Wealthier countries such as the UK and the US that need immigration of working-age adults are unlikely to accept migrants from these countries because of nationalism and increasing hostility to migration.

Demographers disagree about migration as a remedy for decreasing total fertility rate. For it to be successful, we need a fundamental rethink of global politics. We need greater cooperation between all countries and a new global leadership. This should enable both migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries to benefit, while protecting the rights of individuals. Nations would need to cooperate at levels not yet seen. Only then can they strategically support and fund the development of skilled workers in countries that are a source of migrants.

Ultimately, even if Murray and colleagues' predictions are only partially accurate, migration will become a necessity for all nations and not just an option. A fair approach to global migration policy will need the voice of rich and poor countries.

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