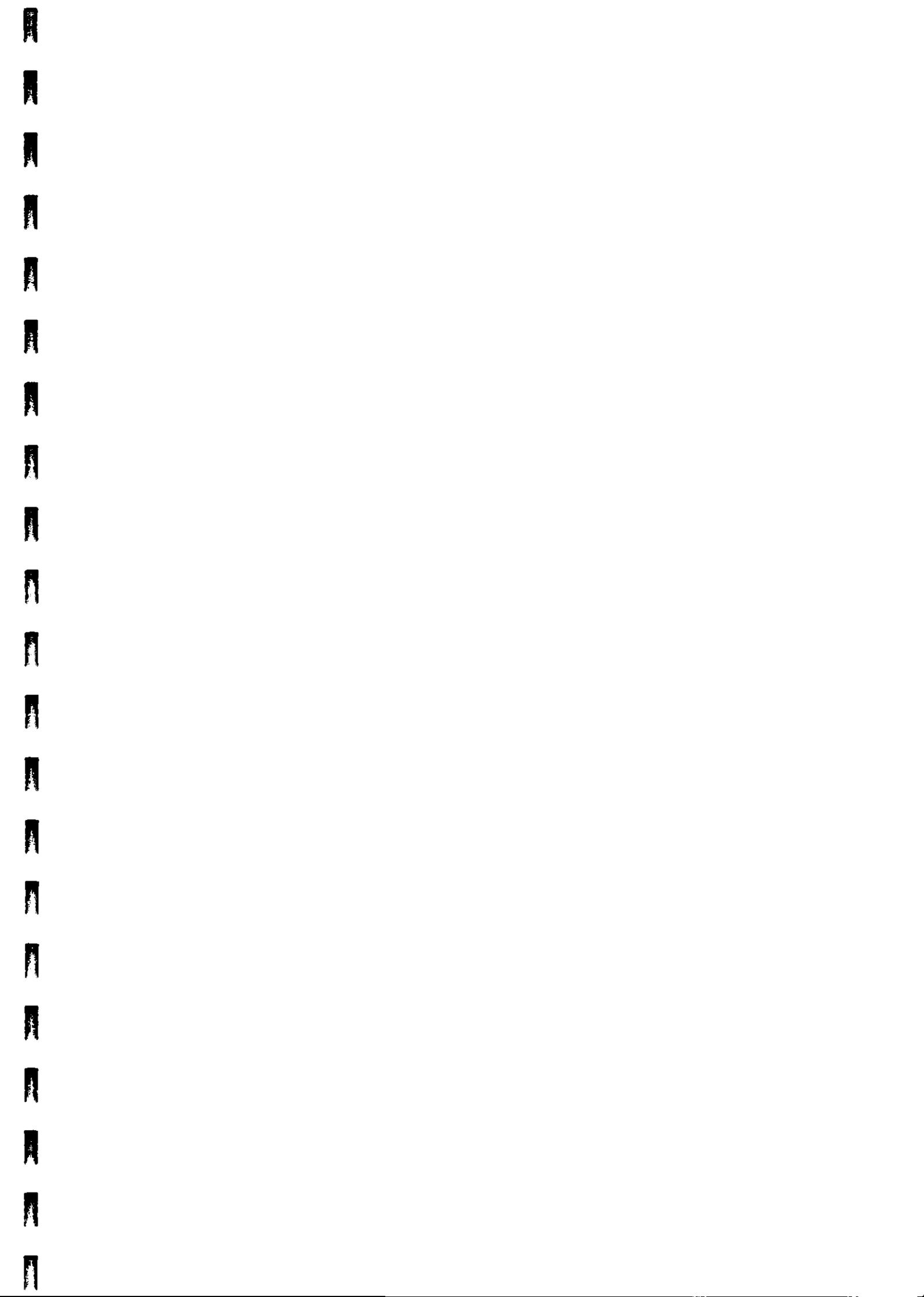


Volunteering Vision 2010



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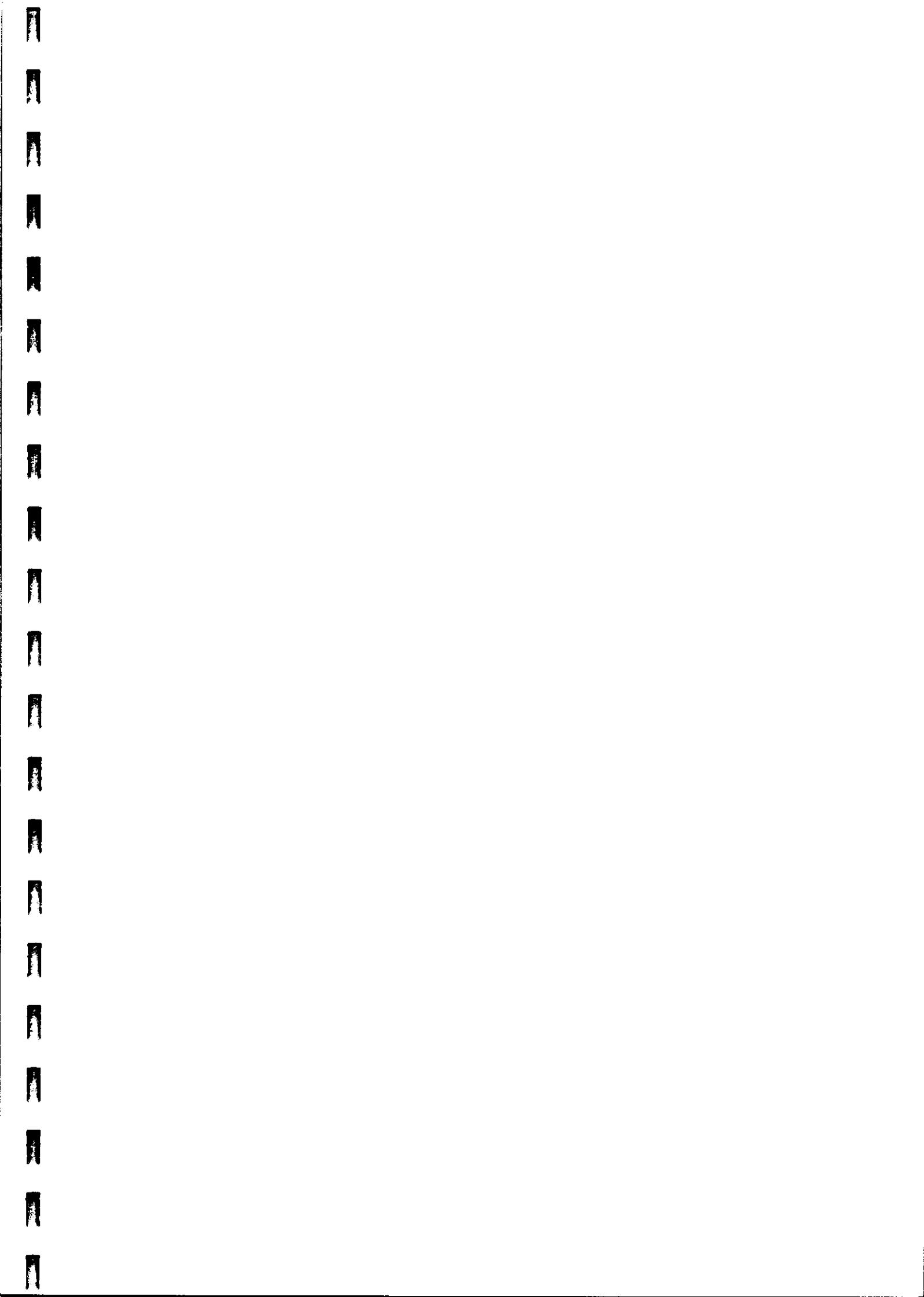
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Scenario Planning

Current trends in society, and in social and public policy, are creating a number of common challenges and opportunities for the volunteering sector.

Early in 2000 Volunteering SA facilitated a scenario planning day to explore a volunteering vision for 2010.

Major themes centred on creating a picture of who will be volunteering in 2010 and how this picture would be passed to, and supported by, the community and communities of interest.

Thinking about Volunteering

Participants at the scenario workshop sought to refine and expand their thinking on volunteering. They wanted to explore perceived conflicts between the 'old' and 'new' ways of volunteering, the way organisations were responding to changes in volunteering, in particular volunteers' expectations and whether volunteers and organisations were displaying flexibility in their responses.

Participants wanted, by mapping organisational structures, to work through the dilemmas of variations between infrastructure for paid staff and support structures for volunteers and between appropriate paid and unpaid (volunteer) work.

They were interested in who volunteers, why they volunteer, how to make volunteering more attractive, that is challenging and enjoyable, and what skills and career paths required development. They sought an understanding of the barriers facing potential volunteers, including liability and insurance issues, and the supports that could overcome such barriers.

Participants were keen to take the lessons from other societies in exploring a clear definition of volunteering and in developing a handbook for best practice.

'Lending' the community a vision, encouraging the social responsibilities that underpin volunteering, adapting to the socio-economic policy environments, providing volunteers with a voice and ensuring a future for community partnerships were other concerns.

Socio-political Context

There were a number of key issues providing a socio-political context to the workshop's discussions.

Paradigm shifts that caused concern included the challenge to traditional structures and systems by enterprise development, the development of a business focus by not

for profit organisations and by the culture of competition. The cult of individualism was causing fragmentation. The focus on facilitating community development had changed to one of providing community services. There were increasing demands for quality rather than quantity.

Government changes having an impact on the ascendancy of the economic over the social included the decreasing tax base, the movement to reduce debt and a plethora of Government legislation, regulations and agreements.

Demographic issues concerning the participants included an ageing population within zero population growth, the decline of rural regions and the environment and the role and structure of the family.

Participants recognised that change can be difficult with conflicts between the old and the new, with changing expectations, changing values of volunteers, volunteering being seen increasingly as a way to re-enter the labour market and changing ways of community participation in voluntary effort.

Volunteering Vision 2010

This paper is based on the discussions of the scenario workshop in its identification of challenges, in its exploration of strategies that maximise opportunities as they occur and in its exploration of possible scenarios for 2010.

In presenting *Volunteering Vision 2010* Volunteering SA seeks to further stimulate the discussions about who will be volunteering in 2010, what they will be doing and with whom they will be doing it. Of particular interest are the changes in social policy, the demographics relating to volunteering and the conditions for volunteering. The paper provides some background information and 'food for thought' for volunteer involving organisations as they develop their own programs and strategic plans for the next ten years and beyond.

Anything Can Happen

We cannot, of course, predict what major events politically or geographically may happen between now and the year 2010, but possibilities include economic recession, more oil in Bass Strait, the collapse of the Murray system and its supply of water, alternatively the regeneration of the Murray system and Murray towns, the Alice to Darwin railway and the regeneration of Port Augusta, the development of desalination, and the development of a new industrial base in South Australia.

What is Volunteering?

Volunteering SA describes formal volunteering as an activity which is

- of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- undertaken of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- for no financial payment
- in designated volunteer positions

Across society there are other uses of the term 'volunteer' including informally assisting neighbours and family at home or in their businesses; the 'pro bono' work of businesses, particularly the legal profession, by the provision of staff; being 'guinea pigs' to trial new drugs; unpaid overtime; and increasingly, the use of the term 'volunteer' to describe participation in community activity ('social participation') as part of 'mutual obligation' requirements for unemployed people.

Volunteering SA

Volunteering SA, a not for profit organisation, is the peak body representing the interests of volunteers and the volunteering sector in South Australia.

Volunteering SA's core business is to raise the profile of citizen participation through volunteering and to contribute to the growth of social capital in South Australia by resourcing and supporting the development of volunteering across the state.

Services include advice on policy development, outreach and resources; volunteer referral; education and training for managers and volunteers through the workshops and formal courses of the School of Volunteer Management; research; consultancies; access to a resource centre with its unique collection on volunteering and related issues; telephone help line; access to two hour advice and information sessions; publications including newsletters and discussion papers; provision of best advice to Government; lobbying on behalf of the volunteering sector; and coordination of special projects, for example National Volunteer Week and conferences.

The Nature and Size of the Volunteering Sector

The volunteering sector is vast and complex. It consists of a diverse range of volunteers and volunteer interested and involving organisations.

Volunteering SA itself deals with over seven hundred community organisations and two thousand potential volunteers each year through its volunteer referral service.

People volunteer for all sorts of reasons including personal and skills development; to meet people, make friends and develop new networks; to belong and make a contribution to the life of the community; to investigate possible careers; or just to fill a gap in their lives.

There are volunteers making a career of their involvement, volunteers involved in small self help organisations making a difference at a local level, volunteers involved in social action, volunteers seeking a return to the paid workforce and corporate volunteers forging links between businesses and the community.

They come from all walks of life and are involved in almost every sector of our society – arts, heritage, community services, consumer services, education, emergency services, environment, health services, justice, migrant support, sport and recreation, tourism and women’s services.

The work they undertake is as diverse as the opportunities that exist for paid employment. Their involvement spans from individual efforts to participation in small informal groups, organised clubs, community organisations and community businesses. Their time commitment varies from ongoing commitments of one hour per week, or forty, to participating in the occasional activity, for example building playgrounds, to event happenings for example Clean up Australia.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimated that there were 259,800 volunteers working in South Australia during 1995, contributing around 46.7 million hours between them.

However this estimate may be a conservative one. In 1995 the ABS estimate was that 17,700 people volunteered in the Justice and Emergency Services sector. However data received by Volunteering SA from this sector indicated that approximately 43,000 volunteers were currently providing services in that portfolio, over 240% more than reported in the ABS survey.

This would indicate either that the ABS data is a significant understatement or there has been disproportionate growth in volunteer involvement in the Justice sector over recent years.

Regardless of concern over the validity of the data sources it is clear that the contribution and value to society of volunteer effort is immense.

Future Opportunities

The Need for Volunteers

The retreat from the 'welfare state' of the 1980s and 1990s and its associated diminishing resources at a time of continuing high unemployment has caused a greater reliance on community supports, including volunteer involving agencies. Demographic changes, in particular in family structures and an increasingly professional management have exacerbated these demands. Smaller organisations are disappearing through lack of funding support or through amalgamations. This is a continuing trend.

Whilst recent economic trends have seen an increase in employment and associated decrease in unemployment these improvements have been painfully slow. Regardless of relatively strong economic growth the year 2000 has seen volatile unemployment rates, rising interest rates, uncertainty over the future of South Australia's manufacturing base and uncertainty with the mid-year introduction of the GST. Some commentators predict relatively high unemployment levels for South Australia throughout the decade.

With the decline in fertility rates and accompanying decline in mortality rates there is a growing imbalance between older and working age populations, expected to grow rapidly through 2011 to 2031 as the Baby Boomers move from the workforce into retirement. Of particular concern is the anticipated increase in costs associated with the care and income support of this rapidly growing aged population, and how much Australians will be willing and or able to pay. In 1990 there were six taxpayers for every retiree. By 2030 there will only be three. Much of recent government policy has focussed on either cost reduction or shifting costs and responsibilities from the public sector to individuals, families, community groups and private business.

Factors impacting on the resources available for aged care, health, housing and income support include future trends in education, labour force participation, unemployment rates, income distribution among the younger age groups and support for low-income families.

As well there will be an increasing number of elderly people who were born overseas who may not speak English fluently, have different cultural practices and who do not have as many family members available locally to support them.

South Australia has a higher proportion of households relying for income support on government pensions and benefits than any other state or territory. Ageing, rural recession, limited qualifications and structural changes in the economy all contribute to this outcome. Of the twenty most 'at risk' communities in Australia seven are in South Australia. In the spatial distribution of socio-economic areas in Adelaide the northwestern and southern areas generally have a low socio-economic status with the eastern suburbs being relatively well off. Perceived connection to the local community tends to reflect socio-economic status as do levels of health.

The Supply of Volunteers

What will the 'face' of volunteering be in 2010? Trends in society that are impacting on the ability or willingness of people to volunteer include:

- increasing prevalence of single parent and dual income families
- experience of financial hardships in rural and remote communities
- increased time spent on education by young adults
- lower job security and greater work commitment by individuals
- persistent high levels of unemployment
- a growing proportion of older people in the population
- greater community awareness of social and global issues
- expectation of more flexible working conditions
- increasing awareness of cultural backgrounds and expectations
- increasing numbers of people living with disabilities
- low public awareness of the full range of volunteer opportunities that currently exist
- increasing numbers of people either living below the poverty line or just above it.

Regardless of perceived barriers to participation, there are clear indications that as the demand for volunteers has increased the overall supply of volunteers in South Australia has also increased. Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicates that the volunteer participation rate in South Australia increased from 21.4% of the population in 1988 to 22.5% in 1995 and there is little to suggest a diminution of this trend in recent years. This trend is underpinned by a desire by many in the community to move away from the individualism and materialism espoused through the 1980s and 1990s to become reconnected to a sense of community.

What is changing is the greater choice of volunteering opportunities facing volunteers and the implications for volunteer involving agencies in providing attractive volunteer experiences.

There is evidence that many organisations are experiencing strong growth in volunteer support. In some instances it appears this growth is somewhat overwhelming. This was clearly illustrated during the 1999 Volunteers Summit where various groups reported unprecedented growth in the volunteer supply.

However, there are also indications that while more people are volunteering the number of hours they work, and the number of organisations they are involved with, is decreasing and they are more willing to move from one agency to another as they search for satisfactory placements.

At the same time as some agencies have experienced strong growth in volunteer numbers other organisations have experienced decreasing levels of volunteer support with difficulty attracting and maintaining current levels of volunteer effort. This has been particularly so where the organisation has not met the needs of the volunteers.

Rural and remote areas of the state are currently experiencing a significant erosion of historically high levels of volunteer participation, reported as one in three in 1996. The pressure of withdrawal of services leaves people in 'survival' mode with subsequent loss of voluntary effort and increased stress on service managers.

Population Statistics

The most significant trend in our population is the rapidly ageing nature of South Australia.

Population estimates from 1961 to 2011 have changed pictorially from a triangle shape, with a base of young people tapering off as it moves through the age groups, to a barrel shape with the population shrinking at the bottom, bulging through the middle ages with some tapering at the top. This changing shape is primarily the result of the movement of the post World War Two 'Baby Boomers' through the age cohorts, coupled with reducing fertility rates, now below replacement at just 1.75%.

Major increases over the next ten years will occur in the 50 plus age group with rapid growth in the over 65s in the following two decades.

Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates (Series 2 June 1997, refer population graphs at the end of this paper) indicate that in 2001 31.3% of the population of South Australia will be aged over 50 (470,000), increasing to 37% by 2011 (568,900). People aged 65 or more will make up 14.5% (218,400) in 2001 increasing to 16.6% in 2011 (254,900), whilst those over 85 currently 1.65% (24,800) will be 2.32% (35,700) in 2011.

In contrast the young people's share will decline. Those aged 14 and under, estimated at 19.3% (289,100) in 2001 will be 17.0% (261,400) in 2011 with those aged 15-29 years moving from 13.3% (200,800) to 12.9% (198,400).

The share of the state's population living in country regions is to fall slightly from its current 26.8% (401,300 of 1,496,200), registering 26.7% (405,200 of 1,519,800) in 2005 and 26.5% (406,400 of 1,535,000) in 2010.

The South Australian share of the total Australian population continues to fall from 8.0% in 1997 to 6.9% in 2012 (5.6% in 2051). The low fertility rates coupled with the migration of younger people to other parts of Australia have resulted in South Australia being the 'oldest' state of the nation.

There have been major changes in family structures over last decade. As a result of an ageing population, 'empty nesters' and young adults staying at home longer, couples living without children are now the most common category of living arrangement. Indeed couples and singles account for more than half of all households in the state.

Of two parent families 53.5% are on two incomes, with 15% having neither parent employed. 57.1% of single parents do not have jobs.

These themes of increasing numbers of older people, decreasing numbers of younger people and fewer families with children are explored below.

Migration

Changing values and aspirations as well as economic and administrative circumstances result in population movements. Recent trends in South Australia include migration to the rest of Australia, a movement back to inner suburbs and a movement to peri-urban areas.

Migration losses to other states of Australia have averaged 5500 since 1992-93, though at a diminishing rate since 1994-95. People leaving the state have tended to be young adults aged 15-29 years especially young women, with a smaller proportion of those aged 40-64 years. They were predominantly skilled people, singles and couple families and those born overseas from professional, management, sales and service backgrounds and clerical workers in middle (\$30,000-\$50,000) and high income groups (more than \$50,000). Some losses have been offset by in-migration of households earning below \$14,000.

On April 29 2000, the Premier, citing an improved economic situation and an international trend away from large cities to mid-sized ones, announced the Bring Them Back Home program, aimed at developing strategies to encourage the return to South Australia of skilled workers lost to other states and also to attract others to move here.

Adelaide has been the classic 'donut city' with strong population losses in inner metropolitan areas. This trend is now being reversed. Demand for housing in outer suburbs, created at time of strong growth in child rearing age groups, is likely to taper off as the ageing Baby Boomers' children enter adulthood and many Generation Xers put off families to concentrate on careers, and embrace the CBD and inner suburbs.

The distribution of the various age groups is changing too. The elderly are now strongly concentrated in the middle suburbs of the city where they settled as young families in the 1950s and 1960s. The regions appear to have a lower share of young people 15-25, with greater Adelaide having a lower share of the 55 and over age group.

There has been a movement of people, often in older age groups, to the 'lifestyle' peri-urban areas of the Adelaide Hills, Gawler and the Southern Coast, smaller communities but still within commuting distance of Adelaide.

Developments impacting on the regions include lifestyle, telecommuting, eco-tourism, the development of mines, planted cotton and citrus as well as wine grape vines creating a demand for labour in areas such as Roxby Downs, Emerald, and the Riverland. Negatives include the amalgamation of farms, the withdrawal of services

and the demand for access to the greater range of services, diverse employment opportunities and higher education opportunities that larger cities provide.

Comparison of the Adelaide and Rest of State age groups may suggest that despite a loss of about one third of the young people, largely to Adelaide, the Rest of State may be attracting some of these back at about 25 years of age.

Whilst this indicates some movement of age group populations across the state indications are for higher proportions of ageing people in the middle and peri-urban areas of Adelaide.

Hours

In 1997 Australians enjoyed an average 5 hours free time a day, but this average hides wide disparities. The proportion of employed people working 35-44 hours a week fell from 42% to 36% between 1988 and 1998. At the same time the proportions that worked longer hours and shorter hours both increased. Three out of every ten jobs to be created over the next decade will require people to work more than 49 hours per week whilst four will involve working fewer than 30 hours per week. Men aged 45-64 are working longer whilst young men and women aged 15-24 years are more likely to work part-time.

The impact on leisure and family time is profound. Overworked full timers suffer from ill health, fatigue and deteriorating family life while part-timers struggle to survive on low incomes. Growing numbers make lifestyle choices to balance their work, personal and family commitments.

Although many are unable or cannot afford to pursue voluntary participation there are some, as always, who will observe what is missing from local and regional community life and act to fill the gaps.

Baby Boomers as Older People

As stated above of most significance is the movement of the Baby Boomer bulge through the population age groups. This group will produce unprecedented growth of the elderly (over 65) age group in the second and third decades of this century. This rapid growth is exaggerated in South Australia because of the factors discussed earlier (migration, less children etc).

Over the next decade Baby Boomers will be in their 50s with many moving into forced or voluntary early retirement. Early retirement among men will be offset as some Baby Boomers choose to extend their working lives beyond current expected retirement ages, but job opportunities are limited. A number will choose to study.

Whilst there is a fear that as the Baby Boomer generation gets older they will overwhelm health and welfare services a number of commentators are arguing to the contrary. Unless something significant happens, they argue, there will not be any significant drain on these services.

Many Baby Boomers are expected to be in a better financial position to provide for a financially secure retirement than the current older generation. As a generation they will be healthier and not as demanding on services. They will be much more informed about their choices to appropriate medical attention, aware of their rights and responsibilities and will seek more home treatment and alternative methods. This combination of better health and higher incomes associated with government policy designed to reduce costs associated with the institutional care of the aged could see Baby Boomers remaining in their own homes and living relatively independent lives with the aid of family, paid help and community support programs.

There is some anecdotal evidence that ageing Baby Boomers are selfish and not wanting to volunteer, "Well I've had my kids, I have worked, I will not volunteer." However this is being offset by the growing desire by Australians generally to 'rebuild communities' and the growing involvement by all ages in environmental activity.

A largely healthy active older population with their skill and time resources could make a valuable contribution, either as private individuals or through voluntary organisations, to the care and support of the growing number of very old or infirm and to the welfare sector in general.

Currently about 17% of people aged 65 years and over donate time to voluntary organisations. Older volunteers work more hours on average than their younger counterparts. They are much more likely to be involved in the welfare and community fields not to mention increasing involvement in the arts, education and as mentioned above the environment. In addition to formal volunteer work, older people provide a range of unpaid services to family, friends and neighbours. A 1998 Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers estimated that people aged 65 and over accounted for 21% of all people who were the primary providers of informal care to someone needing help with self-care mobility or verbal communication. The majority of older primary carers were providing care to another older person – 75% were caring for their partner and 10% were caring for a parent.

Young People

Whilst the population of younger people aged 15-24 will remain relatively steady over the next ten years a number of initiatives are being established that will encourage greater volunteer participation. These include the Premier's Youth Challenge, the Enfield High School 'four-day week' with one day set aside for vocational training, study and projects, the Commonwealth's Potential Leadership in Local Communities and National Skills Development Program for Volunteers initiatives and Centrelink's income support mutual obligation reforms.

Young people, in education longer than previously, are looking for one off community events and short term 'episodic' volunteer places. Entry to volunteerism is often through the newer industries such as environment/ conservation rather than the more traditional church, scouts/guide groups and service clubs.

Education and community programs that introduce young people to volunteering and promote the work of younger volunteers should be further developed. The long-term influence of early involvement cannot be underestimated. Once younger people have been given a 'taste' for volunteering they want to continue their involvement. One of the biggest challenges for the volunteering sector is to develop new entry options, for volunteer involving organisations to engage young people through experiences that are interesting and challenging.

Social Participation Obligations

Whilst voluntary work has been seen for some time as a pathway to paid employment it is only in the last few years that people on unemployment benefits have been able to undertake voluntary activity as part of their return to work requirements. This has been mainly geared toward those aged 50 and over.

However, reforms proposed in the Interim Report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform, released in March 2000 and included in the 2000-01 Federal Budget include 'social participation' as part of the expectations of the 'mutual obligation' requirements for receipt of income support.

The expectation that unemployed people will engage in social participation is expected to have a significant impact on the volunteering sector. Volunteering SA, has in recent months seen an increase in unemployed people presenting for volunteer referral.

Other Comments

Women stand to gain 60% of new jobs whilst younger workers will get the smallest share of new jobs. Studies indicate that women are more likely than men to be volunteers though Volunteering SA referral statistics indicate this gap is narrowing. Whilst women are entering the traditional male fields such as emergency services the question remains as to whether similar proportions of men are joining the traditional female domain of health and welfare organisations.

Interaction with others is generally seen as a positive and necessary part of daily life, yet there are steady increases in the proportion of people of all ages who live alone. The likelihood of spending time alone increases with age, in association with the increased chance of living alone through death or divorce/separation from a spouse/partner. A likely symptom of loneliness is a feeling of inactivity or boredom. Characteristics of people who volunteer show that they appear to be well integrated into their communities and are involved in a range of activity in addition to volunteering.

Older jobseekers are less successful in obtaining work than young jobseekers, are more likely to drop out of the labour market and are less likely to find a job as a result of a training course. Jobs they do find are more likely to be part-time or casual and low paid. They tend to be less skilled and educated than employed compatriots, but are from more skilled occupations than younger jobseekers.

There has been significant labour force participation decline in older men through voluntary and involuntary earlier retirement. There is concern that this middle aged male volunteer market is going to waste, that men who are in their 50s “disappear into the shed and are never seen again”, but have incredible skills they could be sharing with people.

There is a strong correlation between having families and volunteering, particularly amongst the 35 – 44 year age group. Parents volunteer in support of their children’s activities. In their turn the children are influenced by the role models provided by their parents and become involved in volunteering activity. A decline in numbers of children per family and in couples who are having children is expected to result in fewer people volunteering. Other demands being placed on working parents without time to volunteer are exacerbating this situation.

Whilst significant barriers to volunteer participation exist for people on lower incomes, seen as concentrating their energies on the ‘struggle to survive’, nevertheless anecdotal evidence suggests significant informal involvement in community life, rather than the more formal volunteering common amongst those on higher incomes. Given that most voluntary groups arise because there are needs not being met through government or other authorities further development of local infrastructure to support such involvement is required.

Developing the Capacity to Utilise Volunteers

Developing capacity and sustainability by maintaining and increasing the diversity of volunteering opportunities will be the challenge of the next decade.

Problems encountered by volunteer involving organisations include mismatches between organisational needs and the volunteer work force; challenges in managing a diverse volunteer work force, providing training, career paths and greater choices for volunteers; poor management; and insurance liabilities.

Organisations will need to more fully understand the needs and expectations of volunteers in order to remain relevant and to attract volunteers into the future. This may require the re-engineering of organisations and their existing programs, including the development of new programs that are attractive and accessible to people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds including young adults, older people, individuals with disabilities, Aboriginal groups and people from non English speaking backgrounds.

There is a vast potential for expansion of volunteering in the community with a number of trends in society that could have a positive impact on volunteering, including young people volunteering, ‘virtual’ volunteering, increased access points for referral through web sites and Centrelink mutual obligation requirements and cultural shifts with greater community awareness of social issues as evidenced by the desire to rebuild communities.

New industries are being created that have never existed before. Recent examples include the information technology and environmental technology industries that have opened up many new opportunities. Already we have seen growing numbers of South Australians providing voluntary support for conservation activity.

Trends in innovation and entrepreneurship in the volunteering sector include the redesign of organisational structures and work processes to become more efficient and effective, finding new ways to get services to client or clients to services, working with other organisations and sectors in different ways and developing the capability and self sufficiency among paid and unpaid staff and clients through skills building.

Promotion

Promotion of volunteering as a concept and as an activity is one of the biggest challenges for the sector. Few organisations have the financial resources to adequately promote or market their programs to attract new volunteers. A sustained statewide promotion campaign is needed to promote volunteering.

Recent government support in promoting volunteering includes elements of the Commonwealth's Stronger Families and Communities package.

Standards

It is an increasingly sophisticated environment in which volunteers and volunteering involving organisations operate. Today's volunteers exercise greater rights and come with greater expectations. They expect to be considered in a similar light to paid workers. The volunteering sector has responded over time by developing and promoting best practice in volunteer management. Standards have been developed to cover key issues including occupational health and safety, insurance, job specification and orientation, training and education, screening and privacy, duty of care and reimbursement of expenses.

Volunteering Australia has developed national accreditation standards defining the characteristics and requirements of an effective volunteer-based program including both large and small organisations.

However, there is a perception that monitoring and adherence to best practice is low in the Australian volunteering sector. Factors contributing to this situation include the lack of quality accreditation processes for volunteer management, a shortage of accredited training for volunteer managers, the absence of structural incentives to encourage organisations to meet best practice and the lack of adequate resources by many organisations, particularly small ones, to meet existing standards.

Technology

Advances in technology continue apace through genetics, bio-technology, nano-technology and robotics, to the better known information technology and interactive media applications such as Internet devices, wireless phones and computer touch screen mobile phones.

Recent uses of the Internet for the development of volunteering include the launches in 2000 of GoVolunteer, Australia's first national volunteer recruitment website and the international interactive journal *e-Volunteerism*, "the Electronic Journal of the Volunteer Community".

More and more Australians are accessing the Internet, with recent surveys indicating over 50% logging on. Australian domain sites increased 38% in 1999 to a total of 1.09 million.

In a similar way to mobile phones the Internet is fast becoming essential to many people's lives. Whilst governments are providing resources to ensure access across all Australian communities many Australians, in particular the poor, unemployed, under-educated, isolated or those living in rural or remote areas, are not getting on-line. Others lack not only the access, but also the skills to make the Net work for them. The Internet has not created a new social divide; it is just exacerbating existing ones created by poverty, poor education and isolation.

What people are looking for is not just reliable access but effective training and community based information they can understand.

Partnerships

Traditionally there has been a great deal of networking and collaboration between organisations of all sizes within the volunteering sector, particularly important for the many voluntary organisations that receive no funding. However recent competition for funding has worked to separate organisations not bring them together. Smaller organisations are being urged to merge or to be taken over by larger ones often to the detriment of local content and knowledge and with the loss of those volunteers who want to be part of a smaller group.

Developing capacity is increasingly relying on new longer term partnerships being developed across the government, business and community sectors. To deliver lasting benefits these partnerships will require all parties to work together in a mutual support that engenders more sharing, cooperation, and a better quality of life for more people than we have at present. In the process voluntary work will become more, not less central to the processes of everyday living.

Business Sector

There is an emerging role for the business sector in helping to support volunteers and volunteer involving organisations. Further promotion of this support is indicated as we seek to balance the role of public and private contributions to the volunteering sector.

The volunteering sector is well placed to adopt a proactive leadership role in approaching the corporate sector and inviting the involvement and partnerships.

Corporate volunteering is somewhat new in Australia. Whilst some of the larger corporates have fully embraced employee volunteering with well developed programs there remains largely untapped potential.

At the core of strategic reasons for corporate involvement is the concept of good citizenship. Epoch Foundation research has explored a new era of business responsibility where businesses are looking at the 'triple bottom line' of profit, shareholder return and impacts on the social and environmental fabric. As community attitudes change businesses are also realising that being a good corporate citizen is good for business.

Governments, through initiatives such as the South Australian 100 Hours Project and the Commonwealth Community Business Partnership Initiative, have been encouraging the business sector to provide support to the community sector as a social obligation. Prime Minister Howard, in a number of keynote speeches, has actively encouraged a more 'philanthropic' approach by Australia's wealthy individuals and the corporate sector as part of a 'social contract'.

Support from the business sector includes corporate volunteering in the traditional 'pro-bono' sense, support for local community projects, sponsorship of national projects such as the GoVolunteer recruitment website, support for staff who need time for emergency services commitments as well as generally encouraging employees to become volunteers in their own time

Government

Mutual interdependence remains at the core of the partnership between governments and the volunteering sector. The involvement of the community in active, ongoing and focussed dialogue in meeting social policy goals is fundamental. Governments play their part in supporting volunteers through committing funds, incorporating the concerns of the volunteering sector into policy and in recognising and valuing the contribution of volunteers to the life of the community.

Government support remains fluid. Policy changes can be caused by changes of government or by changes in attitudes across the range of government departments. Such changes can have significant impact on the way the volunteering sector goes about its business. This paper has explored the changing needs of society and the availability of volunteers to play their part in meeting such needs.

Almost 50% of the income of the major charities is sourced from government funding. This means the capacity for community organisations to achieve best practice, maintain infrastructure and secure long-term viability is largely dependent on the government sector. Funding agreements are increasingly influencing what and more importantly how services are delivered by volunteer involving organisations.

Rationalisation of public sector service provision over time has changed the way government is doing business with community organisations. Many organisations, particularly smaller regional organisations, are now finding themselves in increasingly vulnerable positions as governments look to non government providers to compete for funding in the delivery of specified programs and community services.

Government support in South Australia has been boosted through the appointment of a Minister responsible for Volunteers with carriage of encouraging and coordinating government strategic support. Individual ministers are being asked to look at how they can improve their portfolio's support for volunteers in the most efficient and appropriate ways by exploring the changes in society which affect volunteers and reflecting these changes in policy making, by maximising the use of available funds and by appropriate recognition and publicity for the work of volunteers as well as by encouraging more people to become volunteers, especially young people.

Similarly a number of Federal Government programs such as the Volunteer Management Program and aspects of the Family and Community Package assist in the development of volunteers. But as stated above policy changes. There have been radical shifts in the last ten years. One example is the movement from the acceptance of voluntary work through the development of the Voluntary Work Initiative toward mandated volunteerism as part of the obligations of income support recipients. The implications of mandated volunteerism in Australian society are only just being considered.

Here too the volunteering sector has an important role to play in seeking a strong and equal partnership with governments in the development of responses to society's needs through volunteering opportunities.

Scenarios for 2010

Entry and Motivation: Volunteering is for All

Just as there will always be a need for volunteers – members of the community freely offering their time – in 2010 the desire to volunteer – to participate – will be as strong as ever. In the continuing evolution of the volunteering sector there will be the ongoing debate on motivation, incentives and rewards. Indeed the very definition of what is a volunteer will continue to be hotly debated.

Motivation across all age groups will be underpinned through a widespread understanding of the supports volunteer involving organisations will provide their volunteers, the diversity of opportunities in type and length and the way that such organisations involve volunteers in all aspects of management and accountability processes.

As always there will be recognition of the varying demands placed on differently sized organisations and in particular the need for outside support for small, all volunteer self help and advocacy groups.

Women and men will volunteer in equal numbers across the range of volunteering experiences. Inter-generational volunteering in families and volunteering across ethnic and cultural groups will be commonplace.

Volunteering will be considered an important part of Australia's democratic processes, not just through citizen involvement in social and political advocacy groups, but also because of their participation in the decision making processes of the organisations that affect their lives and the lives of their communities.

Following the successful youth leadership, volunteering and 'civil and civics' programs in schools, the sense of social responsibility will be fostered amongst young people who will then seek volunteering opportunities as the 'norm'. Employers and tertiary educational institutions will have long recognised the skills gained through voluntary experiences as prior learning. Volunteer involving organisations will offer a wide range of experiences that fully engage their young volunteers.

The achievements of volunteers will be further documented disseminated and recognized for their contributions, which would be more valued, more offered and more sought after.

Professionalism

Professionalism of Volunteering

In 2010 the volunteering environment will be dynamic and flexible providing a diverse range of informal and professionally managed volunteer opportunities.

Volunteering SA will continue to play a strong advocacy role in the community on behalf of volunteers celebrating the role of volunteers in society, promoting the benefits of volunteering and encouraging good practice. Volunteering SA will auspice an annual council of key stakeholders to review and renew the strategic directions for volunteering in South Australia, including short and long term marketing plans and funding and sponsorship for training and support.

Volunteering SA will also work closely with Volunteering Australia in the promotion and development of accreditation for volunteer involving organisations through the Australian Volunteering Standards. Following debate regarding a legislated regulation regime for the sector, it will remain up to individual volunteer involving organisations to uphold good practice. Organisations will be rewarded for meeting the Australian Volunteering Standards through accreditation recognition and certification and through mechanisms to provide additional funding.

Significant in the development and maintenance of the professionalism of the volunteering sector will be the Centre for Volunteer Leadership, a joint venture between South Australian universities and Volunteering SA, built on the successes of the South Australian School of Volunteer Management.

The Centre, with strong financial support from government and business sources, will undertake research and evaluation into volunteering, provide a range of academic degree courses as well as seminars and workshops and maintain a data base of local and international examples of good practice. Access to information and courses will be provided through interactive media as well as the more traditional techniques.

In recognition of the differing levels of resources within the volunteering sector the Centre will be charged with ensuring access to its products by the smaller volunteer involving organisations.

Linked with the Australian Volunteering Standards will be accreditation recognition and certification for volunteer managers and administrators. Careers in volunteer management and administration will be encouraged by this accreditation, the professional training underpinning it, and through the appropriate recognition and remuneration for skills developed in the management and administration of volunteer programs.

A wide range of professional development products for managers and administrators of volunteer programs including publications, training events, opportunities for networking, mentoring and information exchange will be provided through the South Australian Association for Volunteer Administration, Volunteering SA and the Centre for Volunteer Leadership.

Underpinning the professionalism of the volunteering sector will be the protection of volunteer involving agencies and their volunteers. Central to this protection will be comprehensive risk management including recognition, analysis and reduction of potential risk circumstances through comprehensive occupational health, safety and welfare policies and procedures and adequate legal protection through appropriate statewide liability insurance brokered by Volunteering SA in conjunction with the Attorney General, insurance brokers and insurance companies.

Professionalism of Volunteers

In the past the conventional public image of the volunteer often carried a flavour of amateurism. However by 2010, along with the greater accountability of volunteering involving agencies and volunteer managers there will be an increasing professionalism expected of the volunteers themselves.

Selection and recruitment will be similar to paid staff. Induction training will be followed by further on the job and associated off the job training where appropriate depending on the circumstances, needs and desires of volunteers and agencies. Volunteers will be offered greater choice, encouraged to move around different organisations and develop career paths. This increased training, skills development and education for personal development and empowerment will be linked with more responsibility and accountability.

Auspiced by Volunteering SA an Association for Volunteers will become a voice for volunteers, a mechanism for volunteers to have their say. The Association will be a forum for ideas, tackling such issues as volunteer rights, volunteer participation on boards of management, organisational responsibilities and reimbursement of expenses. It will be concerned with bringing volunteers 'the good word' about volunteering from a volunteer's perspective.

Partnerships

In 2010 a vibrant volunteering sector will be closely connected to the government and corporate sectors, underpinned by a series of compacts between them, developed in the first years of the decade, on the strategic development of volunteering.

The resurgence of the 'village mentality' across society in the 2000s will lead to greater community participation and further utilisation of community resources offering greater attention to local and community groups.

With the entrenchment of 'small government' the community sector will play an increasingly important role. Traditional services will continue to be provided as well as a growing range of entrepreneurial activity in which community businesses work alongside the corporate sector bridging the traditional gaps between business and community sectors.

Smaller government will be seen not so much as a means of reducing the costs or importance of government but rather government will play an important policy coordinating role with community and business sectors providing the services.

Governments for their part will recognise the place of volunteering in underpinning social capital and community empowerment with clear policies on volunteer involvement and infrastructure support.

Positive incentives, including specific programs and tax credits, will be provided to businesses for their increasing participation in volunteering. Businesses in turn will see the need and value to become involved as good corporate citizens, not just with larger high profile sponsorship but at a quieter community level. They will investigate and develop strategies for investing in communities and supporting community businesses for mutual benefit.

The strategic partnership between community, business and government resources in encouraging the movement from an individualistic to an inclusive society will see the end of an era of youth cynicism and apathy. Increasing numbers of young people will become involved in leadership positions in their communities as well as volunteering generally.

With the decentralisation of education services, schools will become community resources offering a much greater range of activity than previously seen. They will open at all hours to a diverse range of community activity including community businesses. Central to the life of these communities will be the increasing numbers of younger people encouraged into life long volunteerism through school based volunteer education and experiential programs.

Interactive Media

In 2010 a large proportion of the population will be adept at interactive media including information and Internet technologies.

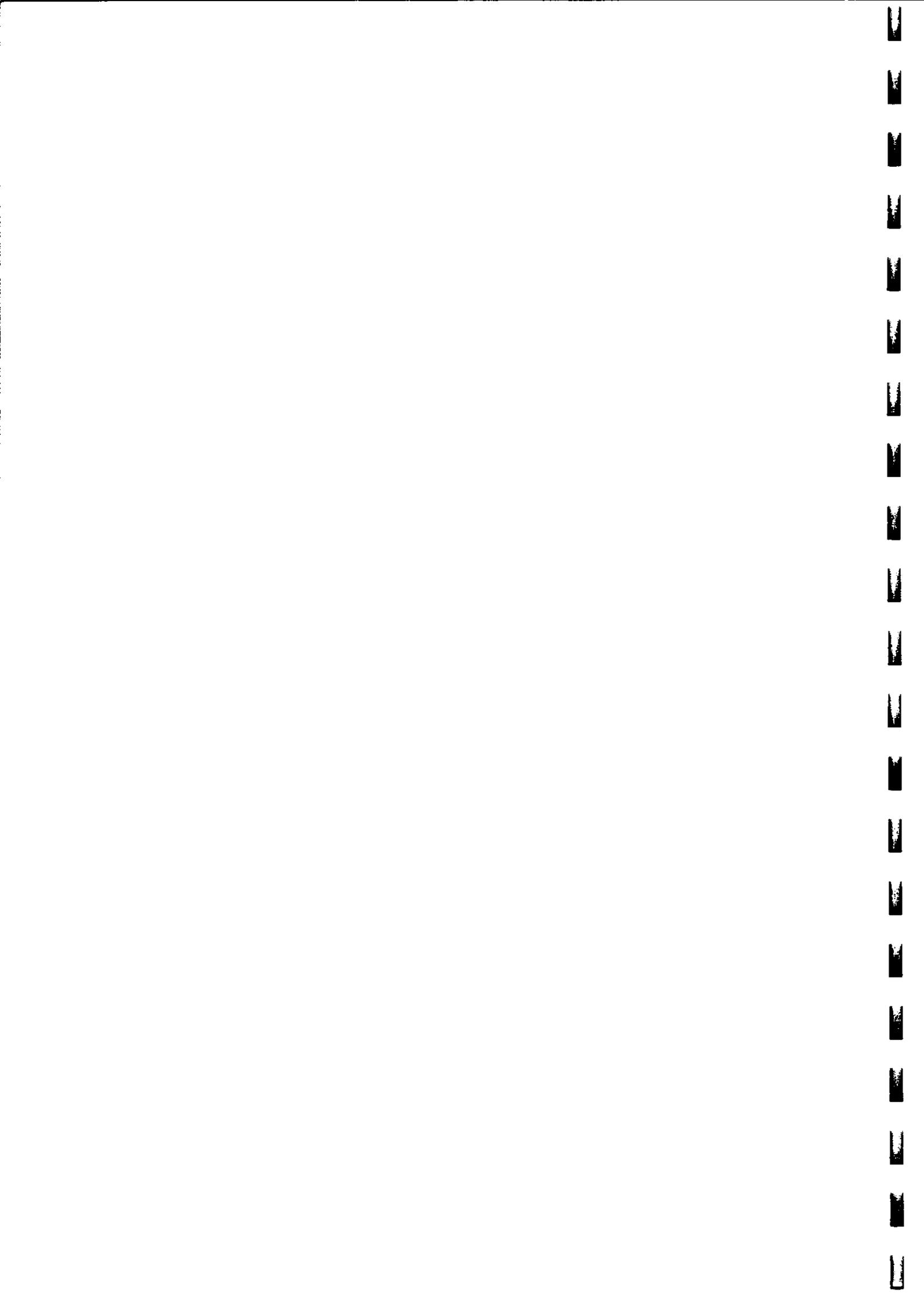
The further improvements and ever reducing costs of interactive media will not only enable greater participation from rural and remote communities but will see the development and growth of international Internet volunteerism. In the late twentieth century people travelled overseas for volunteer opportunities. In 2010 they will sit at home!

People interested in volunteering will log on to Volunteering SA's interactive web site, express an interest in volunteering, undertake an on line interview with a Volunteering SA volunteer interviewer and be referred to a volunteer opportunity with an appropriate organisation. Through a web link they will enter an induction program, including an introduction to the concepts and principles of volunteering, an outline of Volunteering SA and the volunteer involving organisation, a job description of the voluntary role they are going to be doing and other information pertinent to their involvement. They will then download the work to be done.

Through interactive media volunteer 'friends' will coordinate chat room morning teas for people isolated through geography, disability or other reasons and make sure that their 'smart' houses are providing the necessary facilities for their involvement in the group's activities for that day.

Access and communication will be the key issues for the ongoing professional development and interaction with colleagues and other volunteers. This worldwide networking will begin 'at home' through the interactively linked sites of Volunteering SA, the Centre for Volunteer Leadership, the South Australian Association for Volunteer Administration and the Association for Volunteers.

For many volunteers, however, the social aspects of volunteering, just like the social aspects of paid work, will result in them going to an office or workplace to undertake their duties. At the worksite they will be confronted with the continuing advancement of changing technologies.



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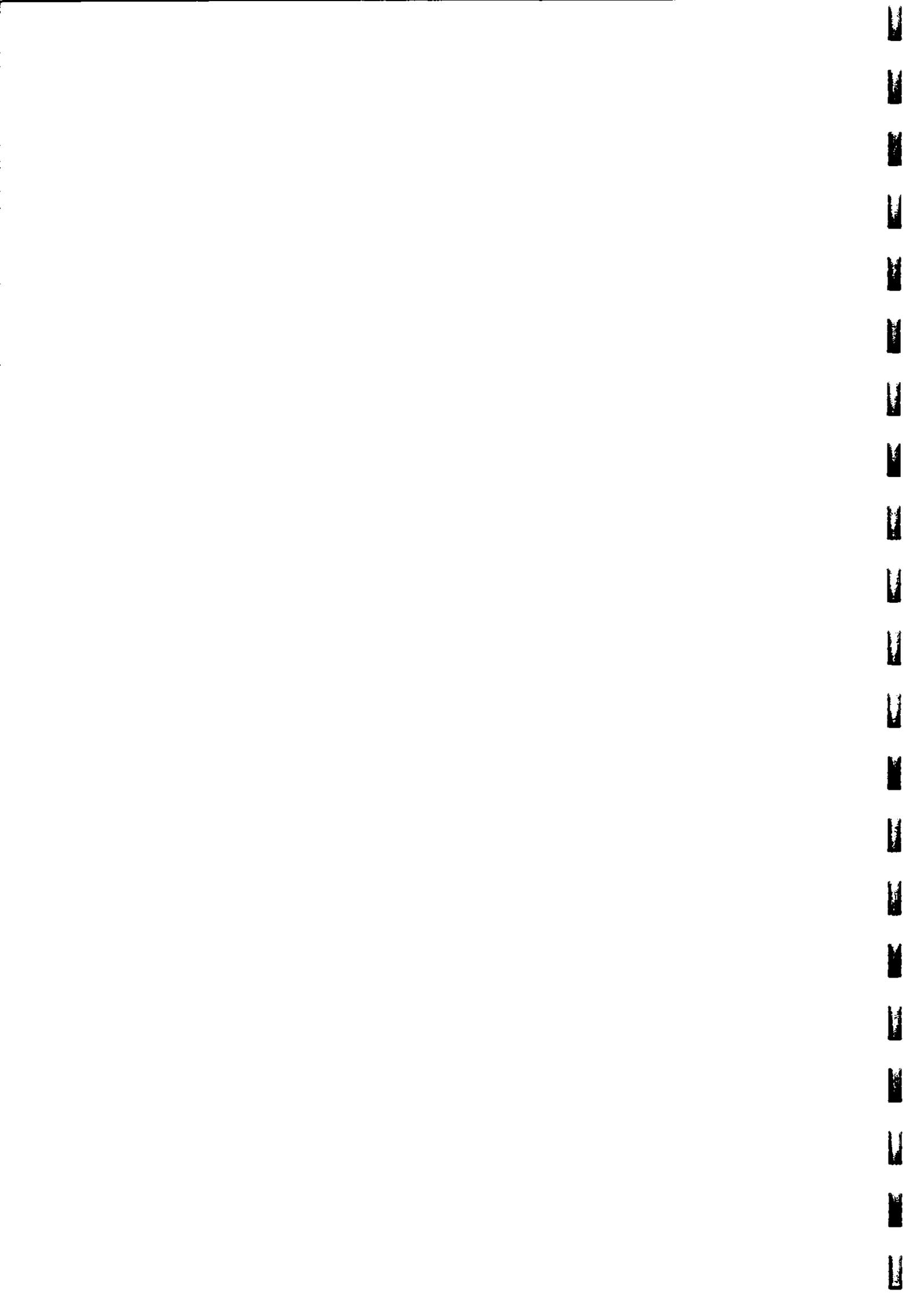
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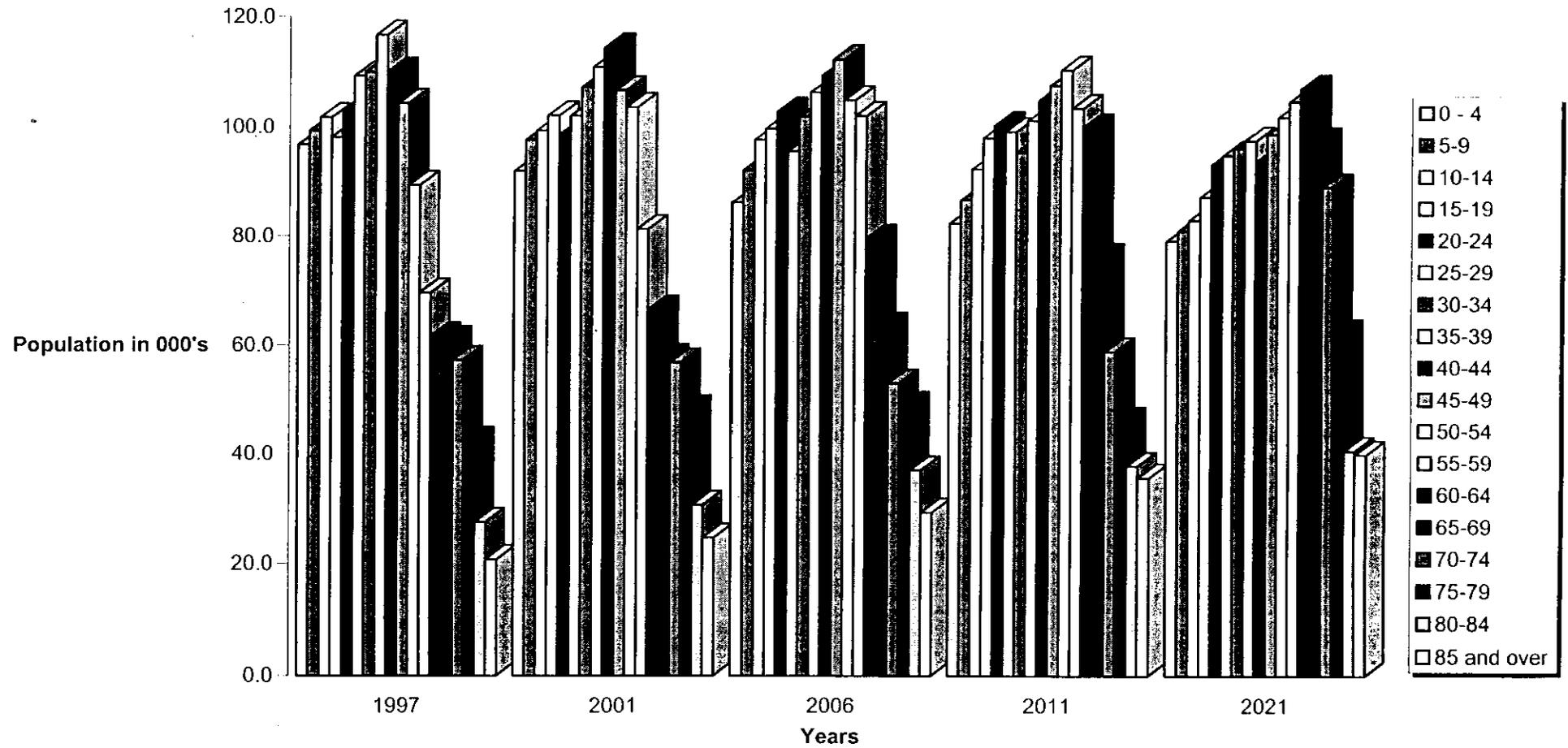
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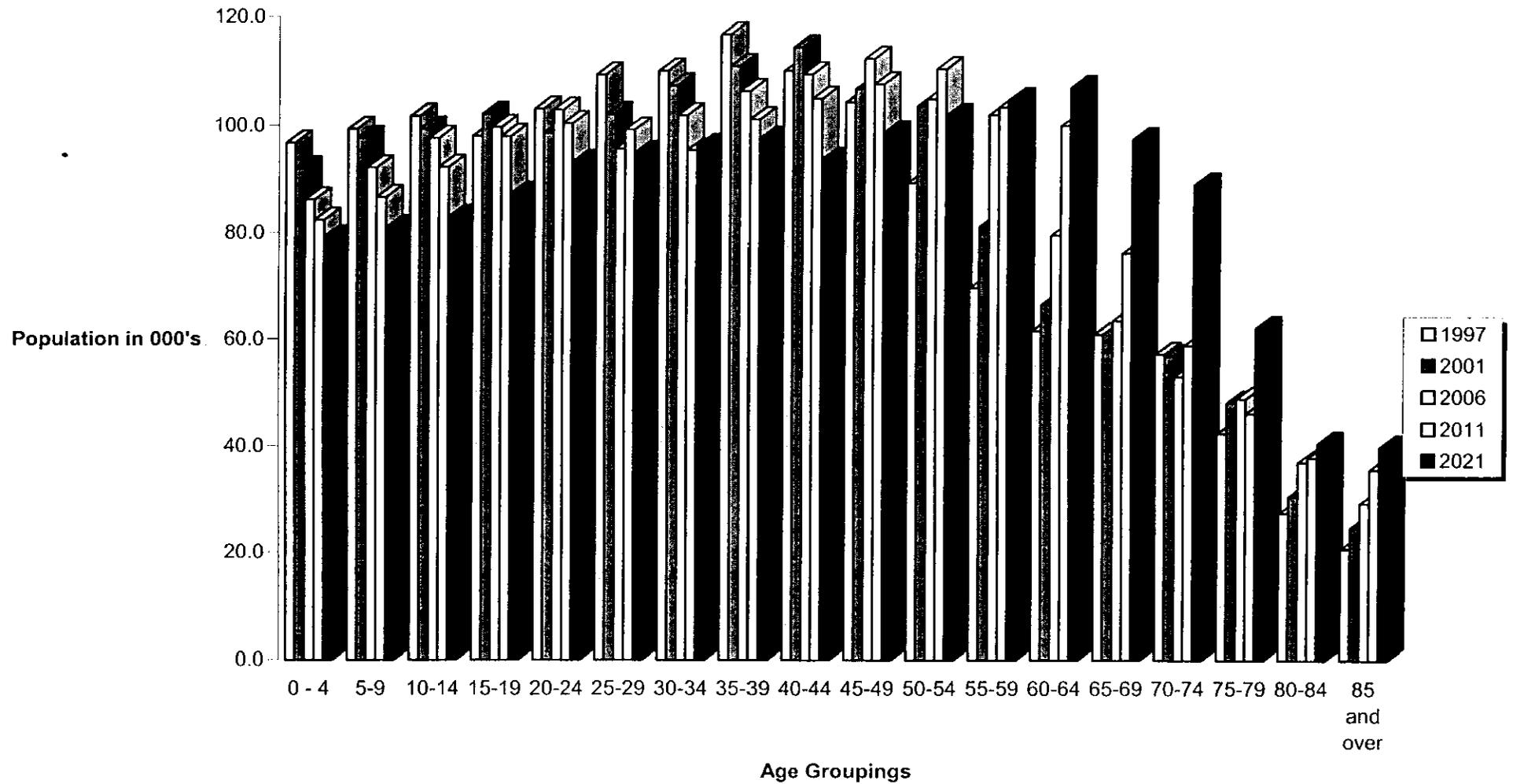


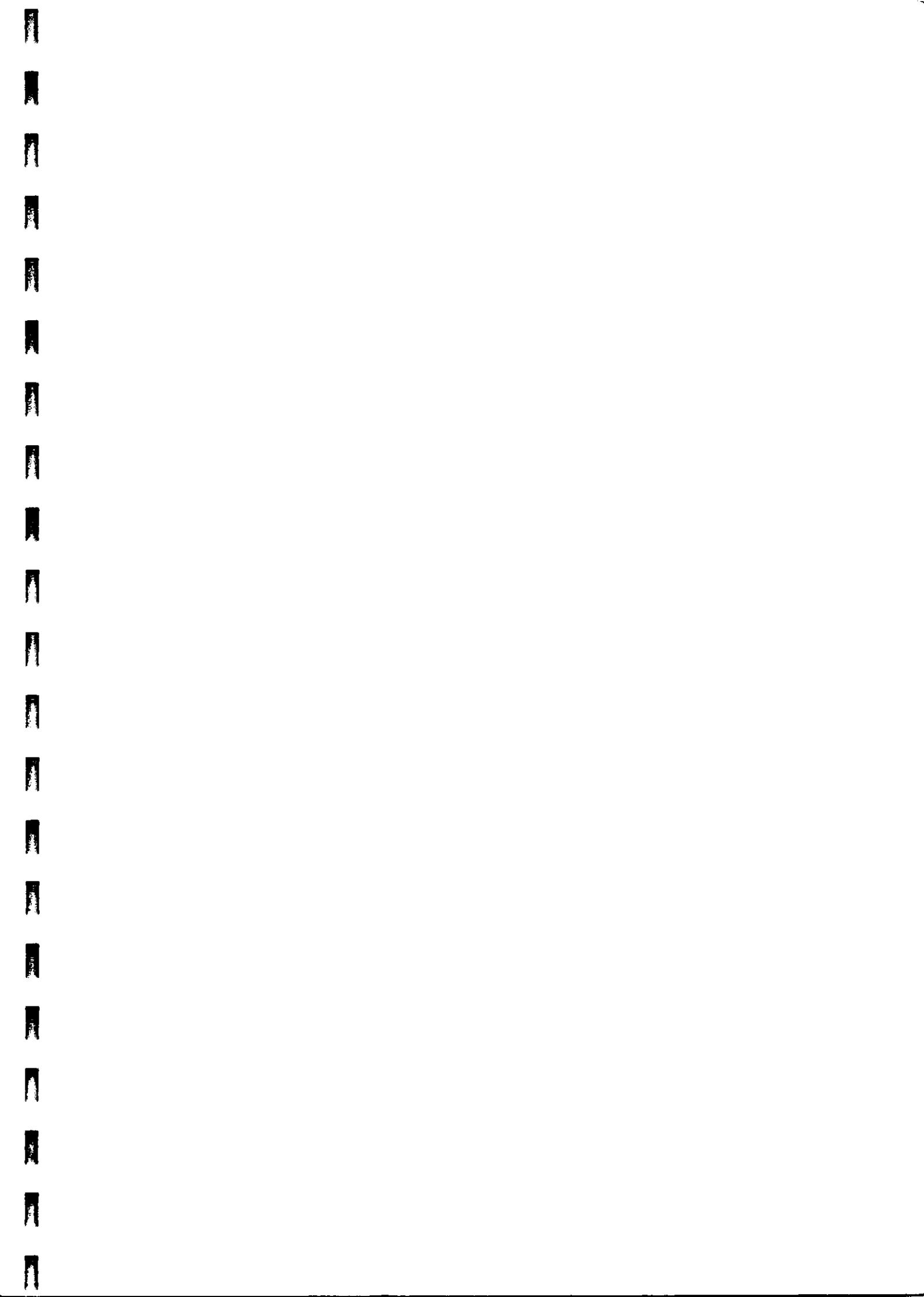
South Australian Population by Years



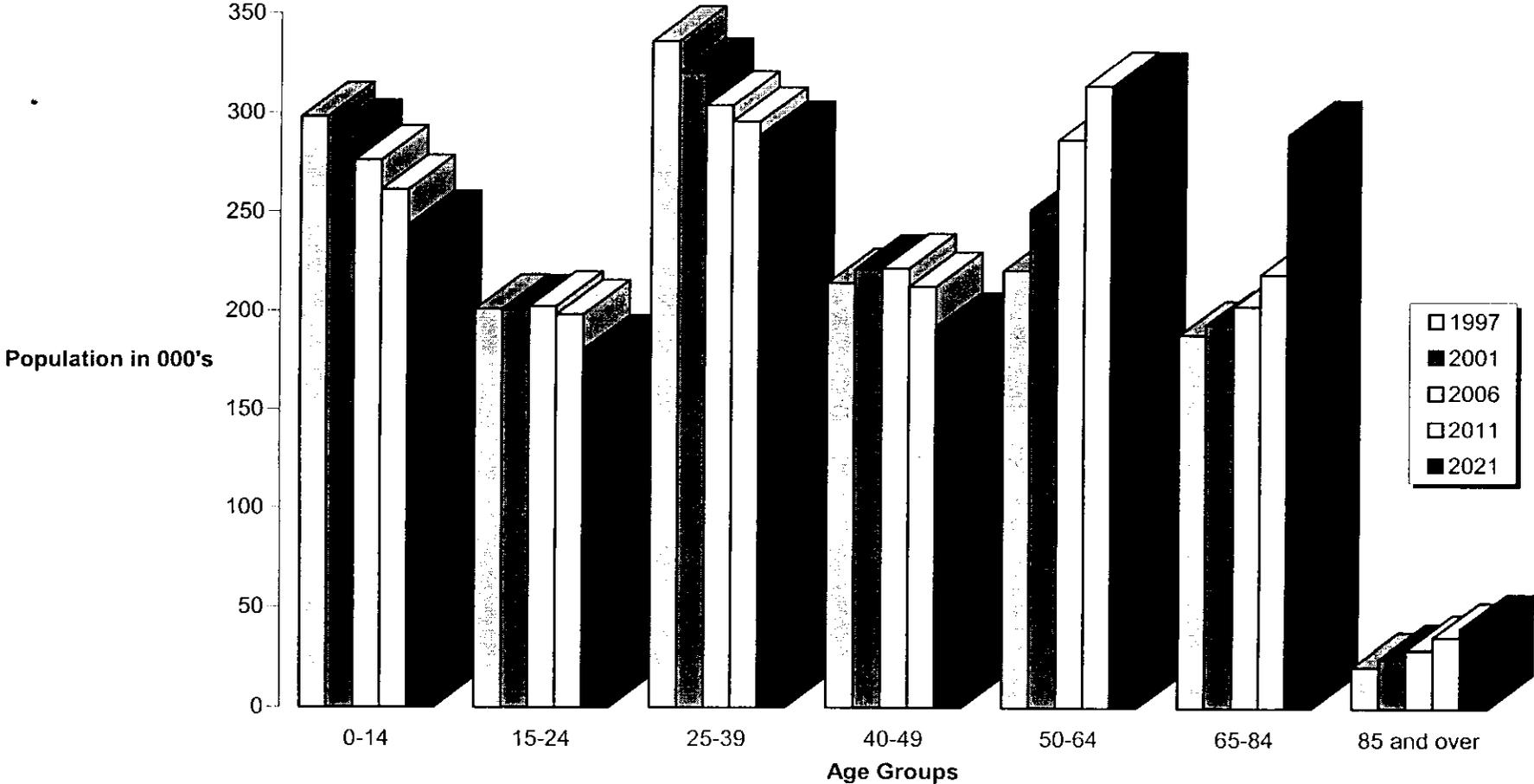


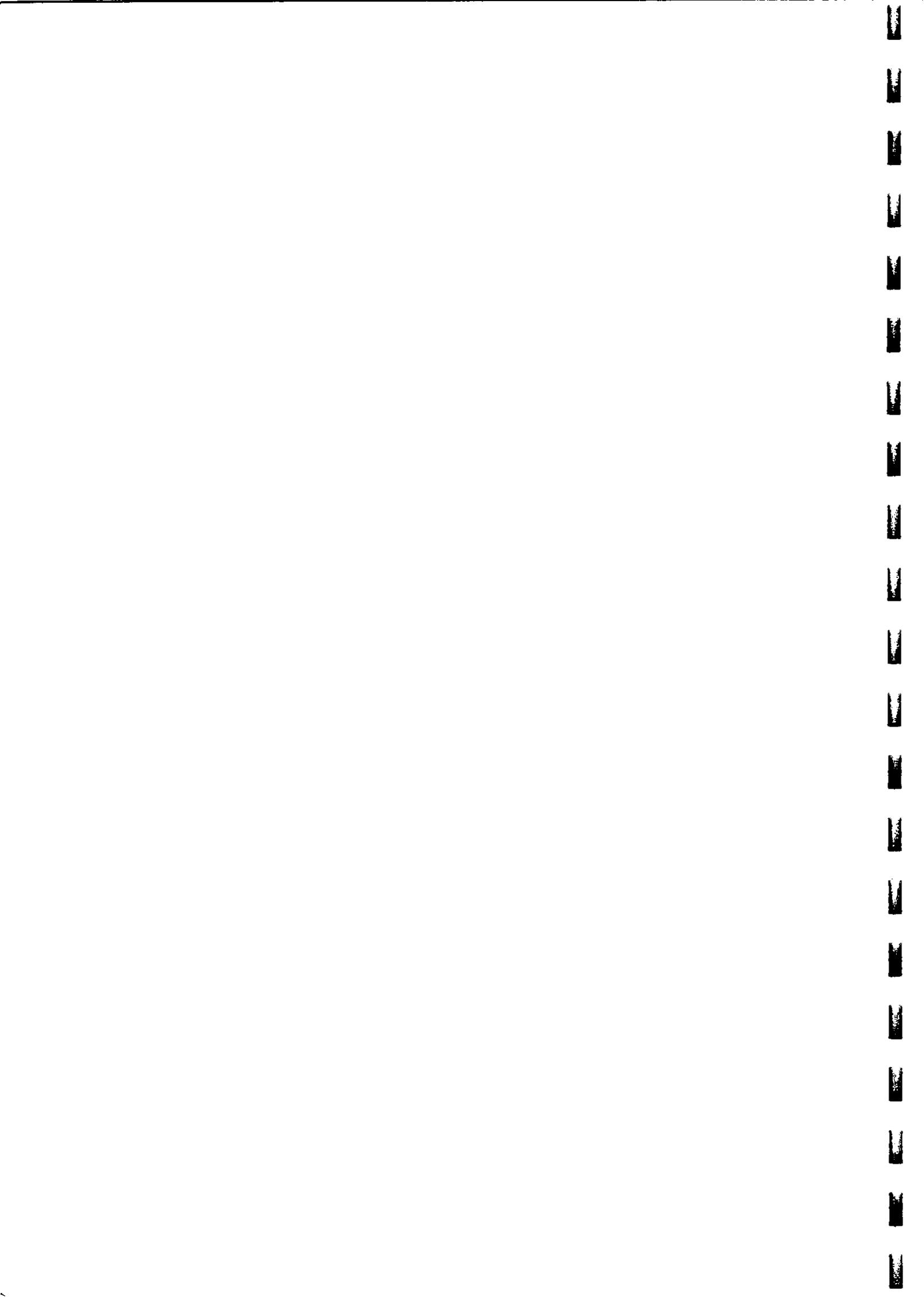
South Australian Population by Age Groupings



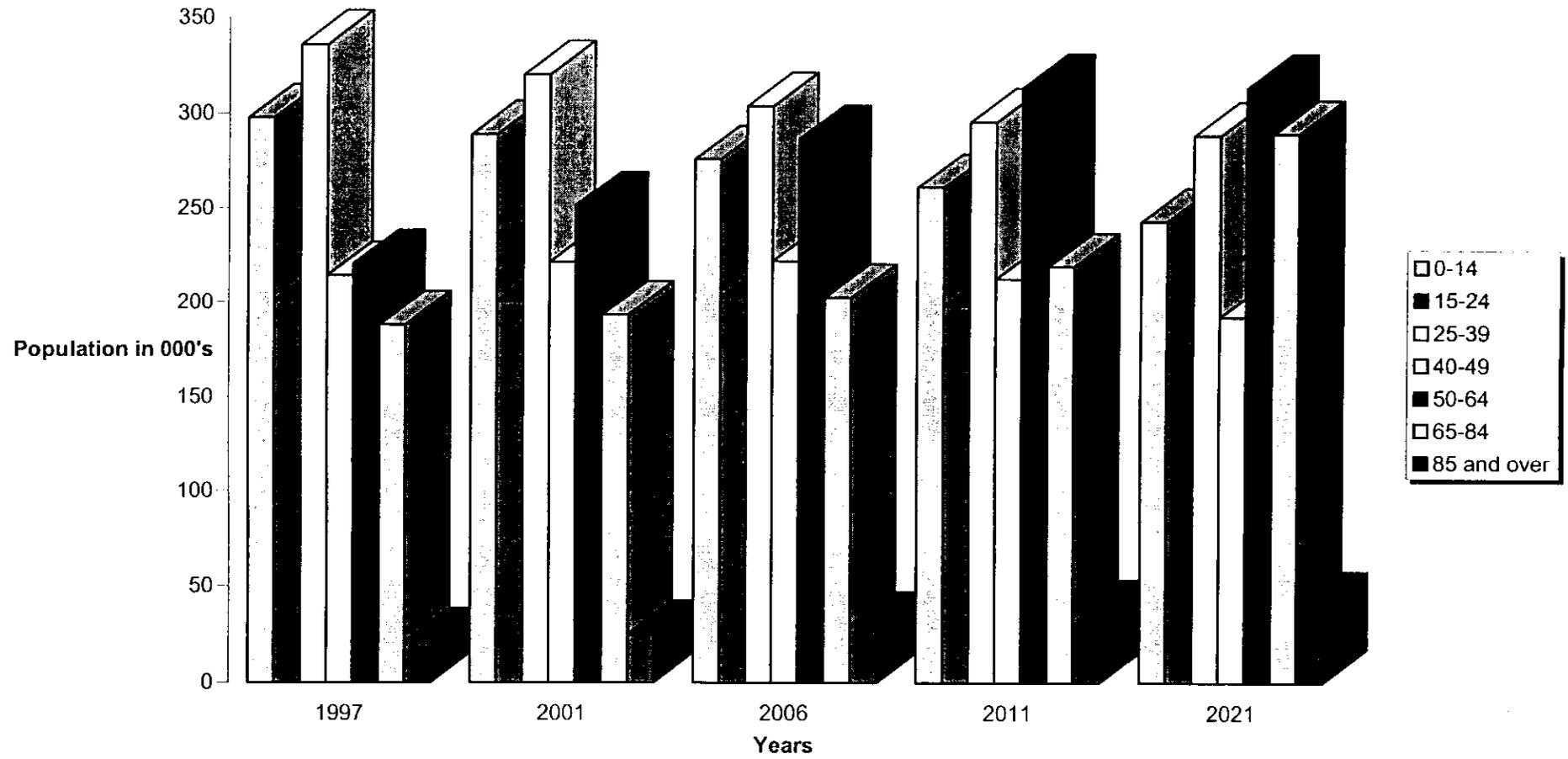


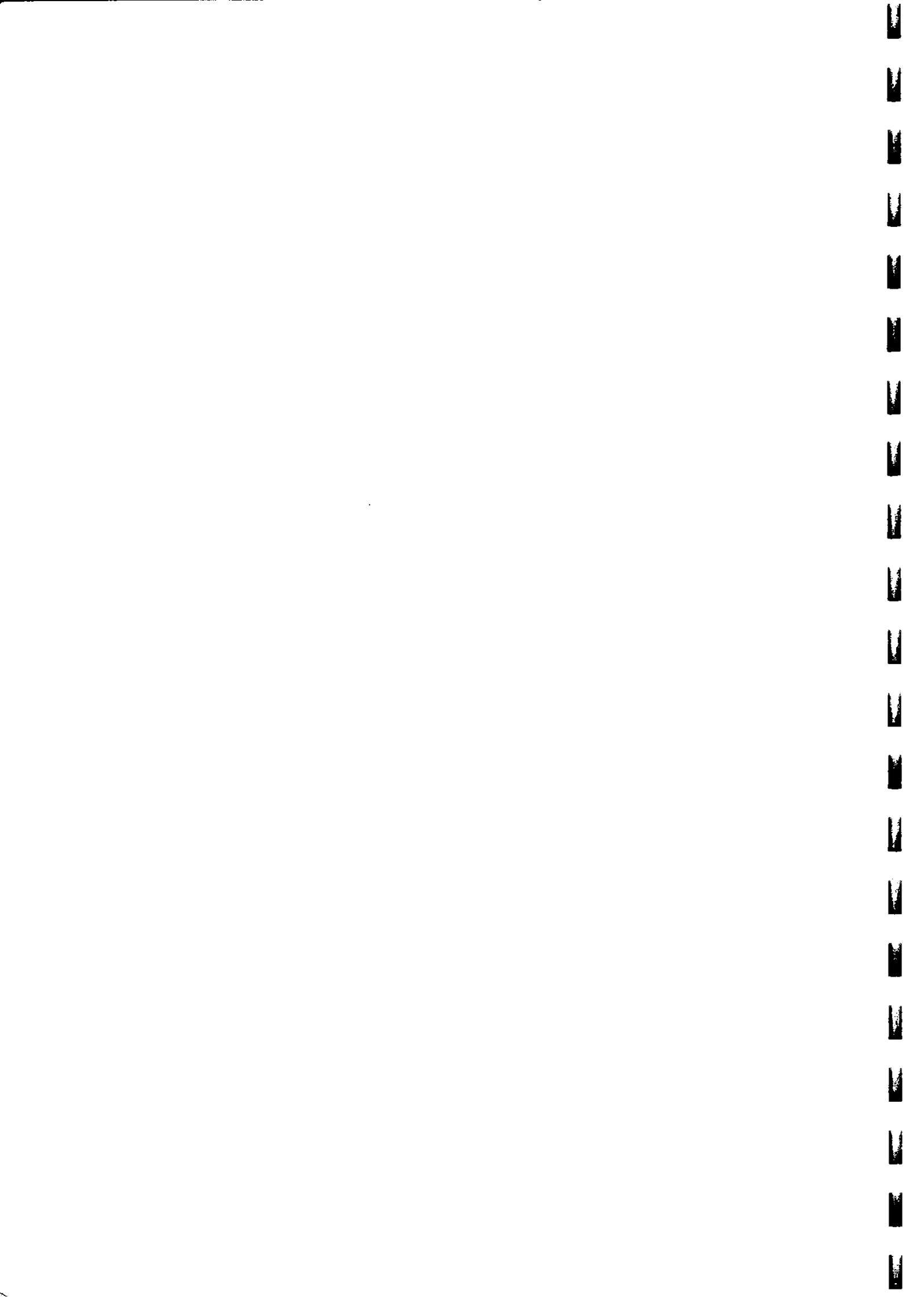
South Australian Population by Age Groups





South Australian Population by Years





Planning Scenario 2010 Workshop Participants

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