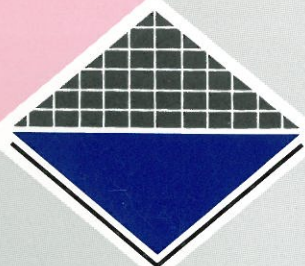


ChildWelfareSeries
Number 7

Adoptions Australia 1992-93

**Penelope Zabar
Graham Angus**



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND WELFARE
CHILD WELFARE SERIES
Number 7

Adoptions Australia 1992–93

Penelope Zabar
Graham Angus

Australian Government Publishing Service
Canberra

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Contents

Contributing departments	ii
List of tables	vi
List of figures	vii
Preface	viii
Summary	1
1 Introduction	3
2 Adoptions in Australia	4
Introduction	4
Access to information	4
Adoptions by relatives	6
Adoptions by non-relatives	7
Inter-country adoptions	7
Adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	8
3 References	9
4 Adoptions 1992–93	10
All adoptions	10
Adoptions by relatives	11
Adoptions by non-relatives	11
Adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	14
Changes over time	14
Access to information	17
5 Detailed tables	19
6 Explanation of terms	33
7 Related legislation	37
8 Related publications	38

List of tables

Table 1:	Children adopted: arranging body by relationship of adoptive parents, 1992–93	10
Table 2:	Information applications and contact or identifying information vetoes lodged, 1992–93	18
Table 3:	Children adopted: relationship of adoptive parents and arranging body by State/Territory, 1992–93	19
Table 4:	Children adopted: age, by relationship to adoptive parents and sex, 1992–93	20
Table 5:	Children adopted by relatives: State/Territory, by sex, 1992–93	20
Table 6:	Children adopted by relatives: age, by State/Territory, 1992–93	20
Table 7:	Children adopted by non-relatives: country of birth, by sex and State/Territory, 1992–93	21
Table 8:	Children adopted by non-relatives: country of birth, by age, 1992–93	21
Table 9:	Children adopted by non-relatives: State/Territory, by birthplace, 1992–93	22
Table 10:	Children adopted by non-relatives: age, by State/Territory, 1992–93	22
Table 11:	Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: age of birth mother, by nuptiality and sex of adopted child, 1992–93	22
Table 12:	Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: State/Territory, by nuptiality, 1992–93	23
Table 13:	Children adopted: Aboriginality and sex of adopted child, by relationship to and Aboriginality of adoptive parents, 1992–93	23
Table 14:	Children adopted: relationship of adoptive parents to and Aboriginality of adopted child, by State/Territory, 1992–93	24
Table 15:	Children adopted: arranging body, 1979–80 to 1992–93	24
Table 16:	Children adopted: number of adoptions, by State/Territory, 1968–69 to 1992–93	25
Table 17:	Children adopted: arranging body, by State/Territory, 1982–83 to 1992–93	26
Table 18:	Children adopted: relationship to adoptive parents, by State/Territory, 1979–80 to 1992–93	27
Table 19:	Children adopted by non-relatives: birthplace, by State/Territory, 1987–88 to 1992–93	29
Table 20:	Children adopted by non-relatives: birthplace, 1979–80 to 1992–93	30
Table 21:	Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: nuptiality, by State/Territory, 1987–88 to 1992–93	31
Table 22:	Children legally available for adoption: location of child at 30 June, by State/Territory, 1988 to 1993	32

List of figures

Figure 1: Relationship of adoptive parents, by age of children adopted	11
Figure 2: Birthplace of children adopted by non-relatives	12
Figure 3: Country of birth of overseas-born children adopted by non-relatives.	12
Figure 4: Birthplace of children adopted by non-relatives, by sex.	13
Figure 5: Nuptiality of Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives, by age of birth mother	14
Figure 6: Children adopted, 1968–69 to 1992–93	15
Figure 7: Birthplace of children adopted by non-relatives, 1979–80 to 1992–93	16
Figure 8: Arranging body for children adopted, 1979–80 to 1992–93	16
Figure 9: Nuptiality of Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives	17

Preface

This report was prepared by Penelope Zabar and Graham Angus of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. It is the Institute's third report on adoptions and the seventh in its Child Welfare Series.

Those tables in this publication that show statistics only for the whole of Australia are available for individual States and Territories on request.

Symbols used

The following symbols are used in the tables of this report:

- nil or rounded to zero
- .. not applicable
- n.a. not available.

Summary

- Seven hundred and eighty-three adoption orders were made between 1 July 1992 and 30 June 1993—a decrease of 26% from the previous year and a decrease of 92% since the peak in 1971–72.
- The majority of adoptions (533, or 68%) were by non-relatives; adoptions by step-parents accounted for 236 (30%) and adoptions by other relatives 14 (2%).
- Of the children adopted by non-relatives, 56% were aged under 1 year. The majority (68%) of children adopted by relatives were aged between 5 and 14 years.
- Of children adopted by non-relatives, 43% were born overseas. Of these, 51% were girls.
- The number of overseas-born children adopted by non-relatives has decreased by 46% since 1989–90 and by 33% since 1991–92.
- The majority (85%) of adoptions of Australian-born children by non-relatives involved an ex-nuptial child (259 out of 306).
- There were 259 ex-nuptial Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives in 1992–93, a decrease of 26% from the previous year and a decrease of 51% from 1988–89.
- The number of Australian-born children who were born nuptially and adopted by non-relatives has declined from 80 in 1989–90 to 45 in 1992–93.
- Five of the seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children adopted were placed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- In 1992–93, 6,167 applications for adoption information were lodged. The great majority were lodged by adopted persons.

1 Introduction

This publication presents adoption statistics provided by State and Territory welfare departments for the period 1 July 1992 to 30 June 1993. These statistics cover all finalised adoptions notified to State and Territory welfare departments and all children legally available for adoption during that year.

It should be noted that this report shows the number of adoptions finalised within the year and not the number of placements made. Children are often placed with a family prior to an adoption order being made.

The data provided by State and Territory departments were collated according to the definitions and explanatory notes set out in 'Adoption Standards', dated March 1982 and agreed to by the States, the Territories and the Commonwealth. The definitions used are shown in Section 6 'Explanation of terms'. Data for years before 1985–86 are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics publication *Adoptions Australia* (catalogue number 4406.0). Data for the years 1987–88 to 1989–90 are from the WELSTAT publication *Adoptions: National Data Collection*.

This report presents data across Australia according to standardised definitions and counting rules. The tables and figures are based on the data provided, so their accuracy is dependent on factors such as the scope and completeness of data collection, reporting procedures, policy guidelines and the legal requirements of the particular State or Territory. These factors may also affect the comparability of data across States and Territories.

2 Adoptions in Australia

Introduction

Each State and Territory in Australia has responsibility for all aspects of adoption within its jurisdiction. In Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory adoptions can be arranged only through the department responsible; in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania they can also be arranged through non-government agencies; further, in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia adoptions by relatives can be arranged through solicitors.

In recent years the emphasis in adoption has changed from being a service for couples wishing to adopt a child, to being a service for children; the priority is now the welfare of the child (Stonehouse 1992).

There has been a major change in attitudes towards secrecy surrounding adoptions. In the past various State legislative provisions were based on the premise that secrecy protected all parties. Emerging practice, both in Australia and overseas, is moving towards a more open adoption process, for existing adoptions as well as future ones. Recent practice around Australia is for a register to be provided, allowing adopted children and their birth parents to make contact. In some States and Territories the adoptive parents and the birth parents can negotiate an adoption plan before placement of the adoptee; the plan can range from no contact and no exchange of information to regular contact between parties (Western Australian Parliament 1993).

The dominant feature of adoption in Australia in the past four or five years has been the continual decline in the number of adoptions of both Australian-born children (caused by a decline in the number of children available for adoption as a result of the declining birthrate and an increase in the retention of children by single mothers) and overseas-born children (because of the development of domestic adoption programs and changing attitudes within the source countries).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recommends inter-country adoption only if a child cannot be placed in a foster or adoptive family or cared for in any suitable manner in his or her country of origin (United Nations General Assembly 1989).

Access to information

As noted, adoption law in Australia has undergone significant change in the past decade, particularly in the area of access to information.

Victoria led the way with the *Adoptions Act 1984*, and all States and Territories have now legislated to grant rights to information to adopted people over 18 years old and their birth parents. (The Northern Territory's *Adoption of Children Act 1994* was enacted in March 1994). The extent of these rights and of the protection of the privacy of all parties varies (Stonehouse 1992).

In an attempt to achieve a balance between the right to information and the right to privacy, most States and Territories have limited the right to information by requiring the consent of the person identified or giving that person the opportunity to prevent disclosure of information or contact by applying for an information veto or a contact veto.

In the case of a veto on identifying information, in some States and Territories a party to an adoption can make an application requesting that information that could identify them not be released to the other party to the adoption. A person can lodge a contact veto when he or she

does not wish to be contacted by the other party to the adoption. This veto is legally binding and if the person receiving the identifying information goes on to contact the other party legal action can be taken. A contact veto can be lifted by the person who lodged it. In some States and Territories vetoes have a limited life so new applications need to be lodged to continue them.

In New South Wales the *Adoption Information Act 1990* provides that at 18 years of age or over adoptees can have access to their original birth certificates; it also enables birth parents to have access to details of their offspring's adopted identity when that child reaches 18 years of age.

The New South Wales approach is to provide for unqualified rights to information, but also to give birth parents and adult adoptees the right to lodge a contact veto. On the lodgement of such a document, it becomes an offence for the information recipient to attempt to make contact with the person who imposed the contact veto. (*Australian Journal of Family Law* 1993)

In Victoria an adopted person aged 18 years or over may apply for a copy of their original birth certificate; an adopted person under the age of 18 years requires their adoptive parents' agreement before information can be given, and the written consent of the birth parents is required before identifying information can be given. Birth parents and birth relatives may obtain non-identifying information from records about the adopted person, and identifying information can be given with the written consent of the adopted person or of their adopted parents if the adopted person is under 18 years of age.

A register operates in Victoria on which people can record their wishes in relation to giving or receiving information and making contact. There is no veto system. Adopted people can make contact with birth relatives themselves, but an authorised agency makes contact with adopted people on behalf of birth parents and relatives or with birth parents on behalf of adoptive parents. The agency will ask the person what their wishes are and mediate between the parties.

In Queensland an adopted person aged 18 years or over and the birth parents may apply for and receive identifying information as long as the other party has not objected to its disclosure. It is possible to lodge either an objection to disclosure of information and contact or an objection to contact only. This means that one party can allow the other party access to identifying information but then request that they not be contacted.

In Western Australia an adopted person aged 18 years or over can have access to their original birth certificate provided there is no veto by the birth parents. Only adopted people can have access to identifying information under the current legislation.

In South Australia adopted people aged 18 years or over can have access to information contained in their original birth certificate as well as details (if known) such as occupation, date of birth, physical attributes and the personal interests of their natural parents. They are also entitled to know the names of any biological siblings who were adopted. Birth parents can have access to the adoptive name of their relinquished child and the names of the adoptive parents. Both adopted people and birth parents can veto the release of identifying information, thus restricting contact (a specific contact veto is not available). The veto provision is effective only for adoptions that occurred before the South Australian *Adoption Act 1988* came into force.

In Tasmania an adopted person aged 18 years or over may apply for access to their pre-adoption birth record and information from the adoption record. An adopted person aged less than 18 years requires the agreement of their adoptive parents and the written consent of their birth parents before identifying information is given. Birth parents and birth relatives may obtain non-identifying information from the adoption record and may be given identifying information with the written consent of the adopted person or of the adoptive parents if the adopted person is under 18 years of age.

Tasmania does not have a veto system but operates an Adoption Information Register, where people affected by adoption may record their wishes in relation to contact and exchange of information. Adopted people aged 18 years or over may search for and contact their birth family themselves or may request the adoption agency's help. Birth parents and relatives may request the agency to seek the adopted person's views about contact and exchange of information.

Under the Australian Capital Territory's *Adoption Act 1993* people aged 18 or more years, their birth parents, their adoptive parents and their birth relatives may apply for identifying information in relation to their adoptions. The Act also makes provision for greater accountability in obtaining consents to adoptions, augments the rights of the birth parents, and promotes a more open system of adoption.

In the Northern Territory legislation prior to the *Adoption of Children Act 1994* did not provide for the release of information to any parties to an adoption. The *Adoption of Children Act 1994* allows for a more open adoption process, with identifying information becoming available unless a veto has been lodged.

All States and Territories have established adoption information services and information and contact registers or similar systems. In Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania people requesting information must undergo counselling before the information can be released. The purpose of counselling is to ensure that the rights of all parties involved are fully understood and to make people aware of some of the issues that may arise in the search and reunion.

Adoptions by relatives

The majority of adoptions by relatives are adoptions by step-parents wishing to incorporate children in a new marriage.

Adoption by relatives other than parents are comparatively less common because most States and Territories pursue policies that promote the use of guardianship or custody orders, rather than adoptions, to place children in the care of non-parental relatives. Indeed, in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory legislative provisions now allow for adoptions by relatives only in exceptional circumstances, when a guardianship or custody order would not adequately provide for the welfare and interests of the adoptee (Stonehouse 1992).

In Queensland, adoptions by relatives other than parents are special cases. They are few, and each case is carefully assessed on its merits to determine the adoptee's best interests.

With the full implementation of the Tasmanian *Adoption Act 1988*, adoptions by relatives have largely been replaced by the use of other orders. The Act allows for adoption by relatives only in exceptional circumstances. In 1992–93 there were no such adoptions in Tasmania.

In the Australian Capital Territory specific adoption consent can be given to a close relative. New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are the only jurisdictions in which adoptions by relatives can be arranged other than through the appropriate department or an agency.

In New South Wales when the custodial parent remarries, a solicitor may organise applications for formal adoptions by step-parents without notifying the Department of Community Services. The Supreme Court validates these adoptions but does not at present provide the information in the form required for the purposes of this collection. The figures for children adopted by parents through solicitors are therefore not included here. The Department of Community Services estimates that approximately 200 adoptions by relatives are validated by the Supreme Court each year, although the number is declining. It is anticipated that these statistics will be available for inclusion in the 1994–95 collection.

In Western Australia and Victoria adoptions by relatives can be arranged privately and processed through solicitors. In recent years most such adoptions were arranged in this way; they are included in this collection. Age and gender information on the children so adopted is not available for Victoria.

Adoptions by non-relatives

A child is legally available for adoption by non-relatives if all the necessary consents to his or her adoption have been obtained or dispensed with. Nearly half of all adoptions by non-relatives are inter-country adoptions.

A couple wishing to adopt a child must satisfy the department or agency concerned that they will be suitable parents. Generally, only married couples are allowed to adopt unrelated children, although de facto couples are eligible in New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. Other factors considered in the assessment of potential parents are their age, health, reasons for wanting to adopt, and the stability of their relationship.

In New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania adoptions by unrelated people may be arranged by either the authorised department or an approved adoption agency. In Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory all adoptions must be arranged through the authorised department. In Western Australia most adoptions by non-relatives are arranged through the Department for Community Development; only a small number of such adoptions are arranged privately.

Inter-country adoptions

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises,

...inter alia, that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child care if the child cannot be placed in a foster or adoptive family, or cannot be cared for in any suitable manner in the child's country of origin. (United Nations General Assembly 1989)

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s there was a substantial increase in the number of adoptions of children born overseas; it involved children predominantly from Asian countries. The process has been strictly controlled by the Commonwealth under the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946* and adoption Acts in each State and Territory. The Commonwealth Government and State and Territory Governments are jointly responsible for investigating and approving overseas adoption programs, and they require that there be a suitable central agency in the overseas country to administer the programs in accordance with Australian standards.

The number of inter-country adoptions increased steadily up until 1989–90 but has since been declining. South Korea, which provided the majority of children for adoption in recent years, has limited the number of new applications and the program is scheduled for complete closure in 1996.

As the older programs are scaling down adoption programs are being developed within new source countries (including Romania and Ethiopia).

Adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are adopted. Each State and Territory has different legislation and policies relating to the adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The prevailing view is that, when it is deemed appropriate to adopt Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the children should be adopted by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people so as to maintain their cultural integrity.

Although not recognised in legislation, the adoption policies of the respective departments in Queensland and Tasmania do recognise the cultural differences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In New South Wales every effort is made to place Aboriginal children with Aboriginal parents. Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory have restrictive eligibility criteria for adoptive parents of Aboriginal children:

In Victoria, for example, the parent of an Aboriginal child can place conditions on a consent to adoption, that the child go to an Aboriginal family, or that a right of access to the child be granted to the natural parents, other relatives and members of the Aboriginal community. (Stonehouse 1992)

In Western Australia, in his second reading speech on Adoption Bill No. 2 1993, the Minister for Community Development stated,

Wherever possible it will be the Government's intention to support the placement of children in their own ethnic group; however, recognising that this may not always be possible, and may sometimes conflict with the stated views of relinquishing parents. This legislation seeks to provide greater flexibility for practitioners to place children with the best possible family that is available. The Bill ensures that the widest range of options is available for children. When placing children with ethnic or aboriginal backgrounds, the guiding principle will always be placement based on the best interest of the child. (Western Australian Parliament 1993)

In the Northern Territory, the new *Adoption of Children Act 1994* will limit the ability of courts to make adoption orders in respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to those cases where alternative custody cannot be arranged within the child's extended family. In the event that an adoption order is made, the court is to ensure that the placement is in accordance with the Aboriginal Placement Principle.

3 References

Anonymous. Developments and events. Adoption information: review of NSW Act. Australian Journal of Family Law 1993; 7(1).

Stonehouse B. Adoption law in Australia. Australian Family Briefings No. 1. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 1992.

United Nations General Assembly 1989. The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Western Australia Parliament 1993, Hansard, 30 November 1993: p. 8377.

4 Adoptions 1992–93

All adoptions

During 1992–93 there were 783 adoption orders made in Australia. This was a decrease of 269 (26%) from the previous year, and a decrease of 92% since the peak in 1971–72 (Table 16).

The majority (533, or 68%) of adoptions were by non-relatives; adoptions by step-parents accounted for 236 (30%) and adoptions by other relatives 14 (2%) (Table 1).

Table 1: Children adopted: arranging body by relationship of adoptive parents, 1992–93

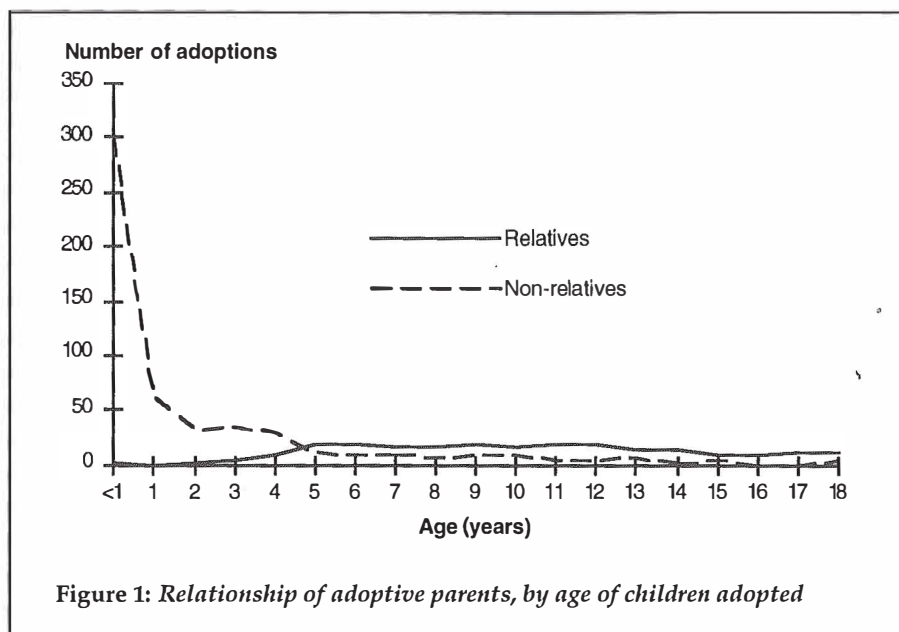
Arranging body	Relatives		Total	Non-relatives	Total
	Parents ^(a)	Other relatives			
State/Territory welfare department	165	11	176	446	622
Non-government organisation	8	–	8	87	95
Other ^(b)	63	3	66	–	66
Total	236	14	250	533	783

(a) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

(b) Arranged privately and legalised through solicitors.

Most adoptions (79%) were arranged through State and Territory welfare departments. In Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory all adoptions were arranged in this way. Eighty-seven of the 95 adoptions (92%) arranged by non-government organisations were adoptions by non-relatives (Table 3).

Children adopted by non-relatives are generally younger than those adopted by relatives, the former group having 301 out of 533 children (56%) aged under 1 year and 86% under 5 years. Only two persons adopted by relatives were aged under 1 year, the majority (68%) being aged between 5 and 14 years (Figure 1; Table 4).



New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are the only States or Territories in which adoptions by relatives can be arranged by someone other than the welfare department or a non-government agency; these adoptions are arranged privately and processed through solicitors. In 1992–93 there were 53 such adoptions in Western Australia and 13 in Victoria; no data are available for New South Wales (Table 3).

Adoptions by relatives

Of the 783 adoptions in Australia in 1992–93, 250 (32%) were by relatives. The proportion of total adoptions by relatives was, however, much higher in Queensland (56%) and Western Australia (63%) (Table 3). Adoptions by relatives in these two States totalled 179, or 72% of all adoptions by relatives in Australia. It should be noted that no data are provided on adoptions by parents in New South Wales.

There were no adoptions by relatives in Tasmania during 1992–93.

Almost all children adopted by relatives were adopted by step-parents (236 out of 250). In Victoria there were no adoptions by relatives other than parents.

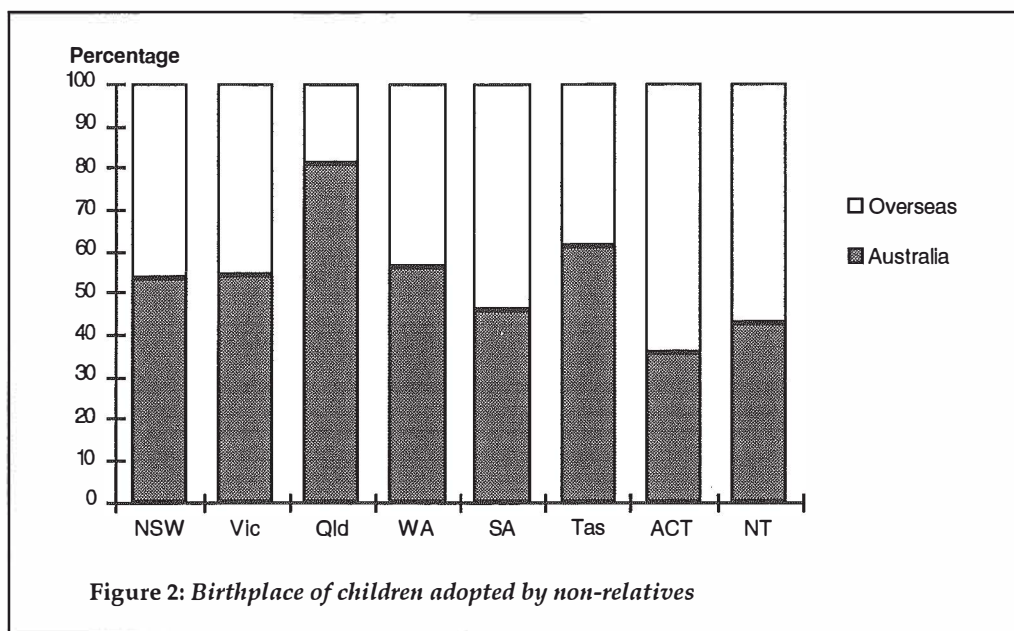
Seventy per cent of adoptions by relatives were arranged through State and Territory welfare departments (Table 1). The actual proportion of adoptions arranged in this way is, however, probably somewhat less because there are no data on adoptions by parents in New South Wales; as noted such adoptions are arranged by solicitors and validated by the Supreme Court.

Adoptions by non-relatives

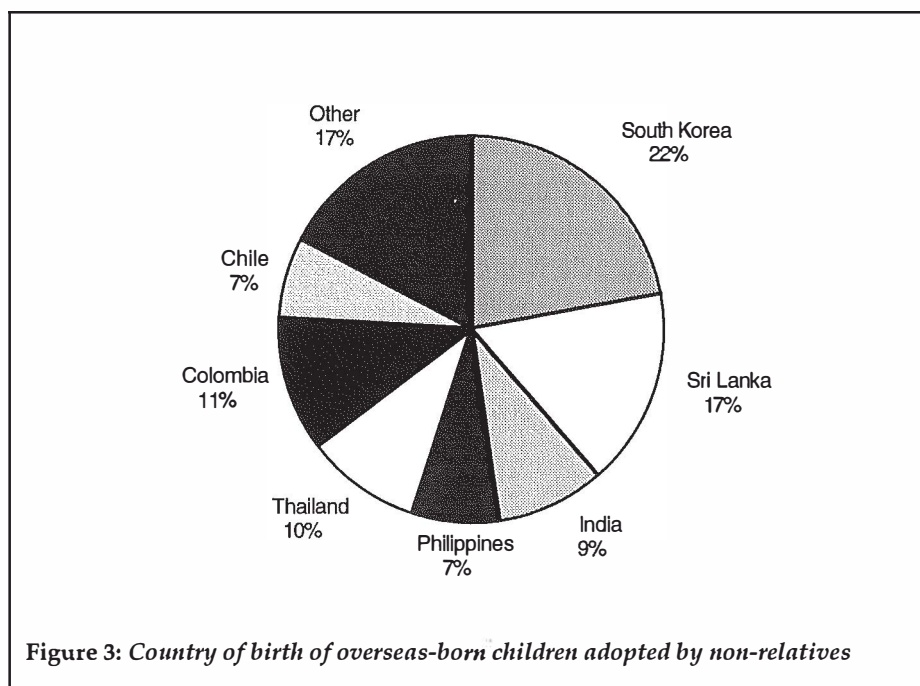
Australian-born and overseas-born adoptees

Of the 533 children adopted in 1992–93 by non-relatives, 43% (227) were born overseas. The proportion of children adopted by non-relatives who were born overseas varied markedly between States and Territories, Queensland having only 19% (19) compared with 64% (nine)

in the Australian Capital Territory, 57% (four) in the Northern Territory and 54% (40) in South Australia (Figure 2; Table 9).



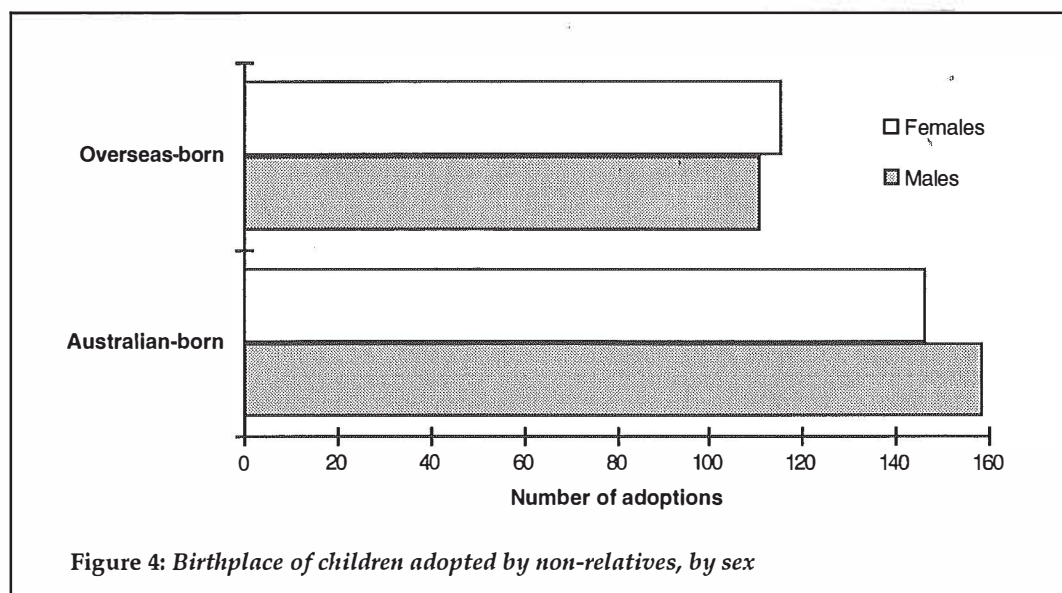
Of the children adopted from overseas, 50, or 22%, were born in South Korea and 38, or 17%, were born in Sri Lanka. The number of adoptions of children born in South Korea is considerably lower than the figure of 203 for 1990–91: South Korea has scaled down its adoption program to Australia (Figure 3; Table 7).



Of overseas-born adoptees, 51% were female, compared with 66% in 1990–91. This reflects the decrease in the number of adoptions from South Korea, whence a high proportion of girls had

previously been adopted. Females represented 48% of Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives in 1992–93, slightly higher than in the previous year (45%).

Of the adoptions of children born overseas, there were more girls than boys adopted in New South Wales and the Northern Territory, while in South Australia more boys than girls were adopted. In the other States and Territory there were almost equal numbers of boys and girls adopted (Table 7).

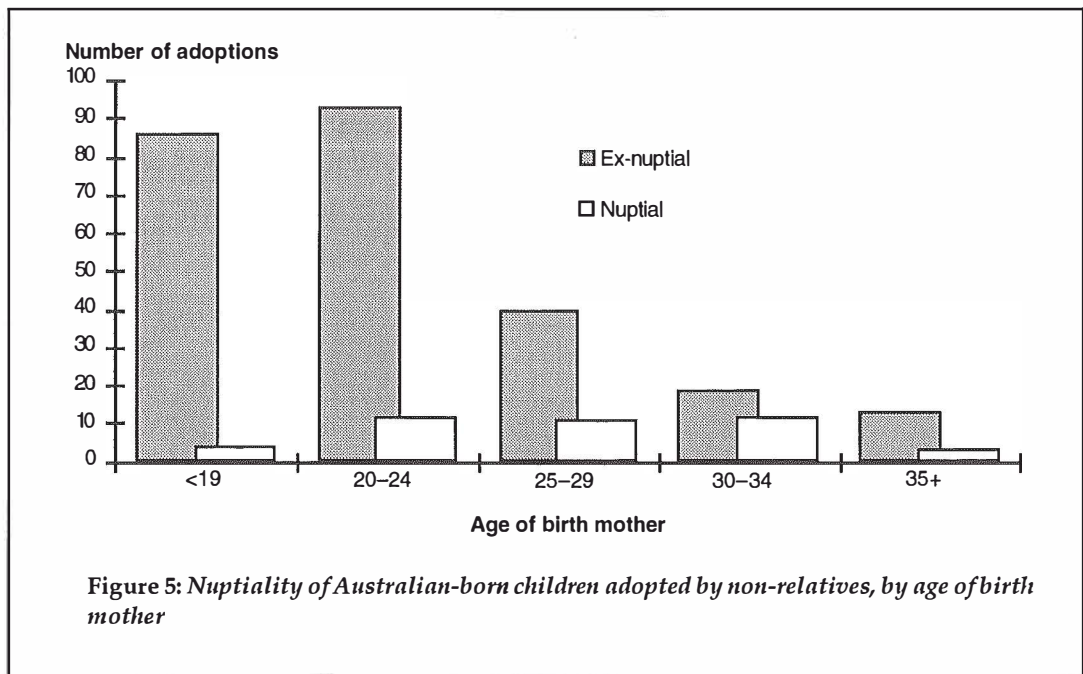


New South Wales received 28 (56%) of the 50 children adopted from South Korea and 21 (81%) of the 26 children adopted from Colombia. South Australia received 14 (64%) of the 22 children adopted from Thailand. This pattern reflects the process of adoption in Australia, whereby an agency establishes contacts in a particular country and generally deals only with prospective parents in its State or Territory (Table 7).

Nuptiality of Australian-born adoptees

The majority of adoptions of Australian-born children by non-relatives involved an ex-nuptial child (85%, or 259 out of 306). Adoptions by non-relatives involving an ex-nuptial child decreased by 26% from 1991–92 (Table 21).

In the case of non-relatives adopting an ex-nuptial child, 33% (86) of such children were relinquished by unmarried mothers aged 19 years or less and 51% (133) were relinquished by unmarried mothers aged 20 to 29 years (Figure 5; Table 11).



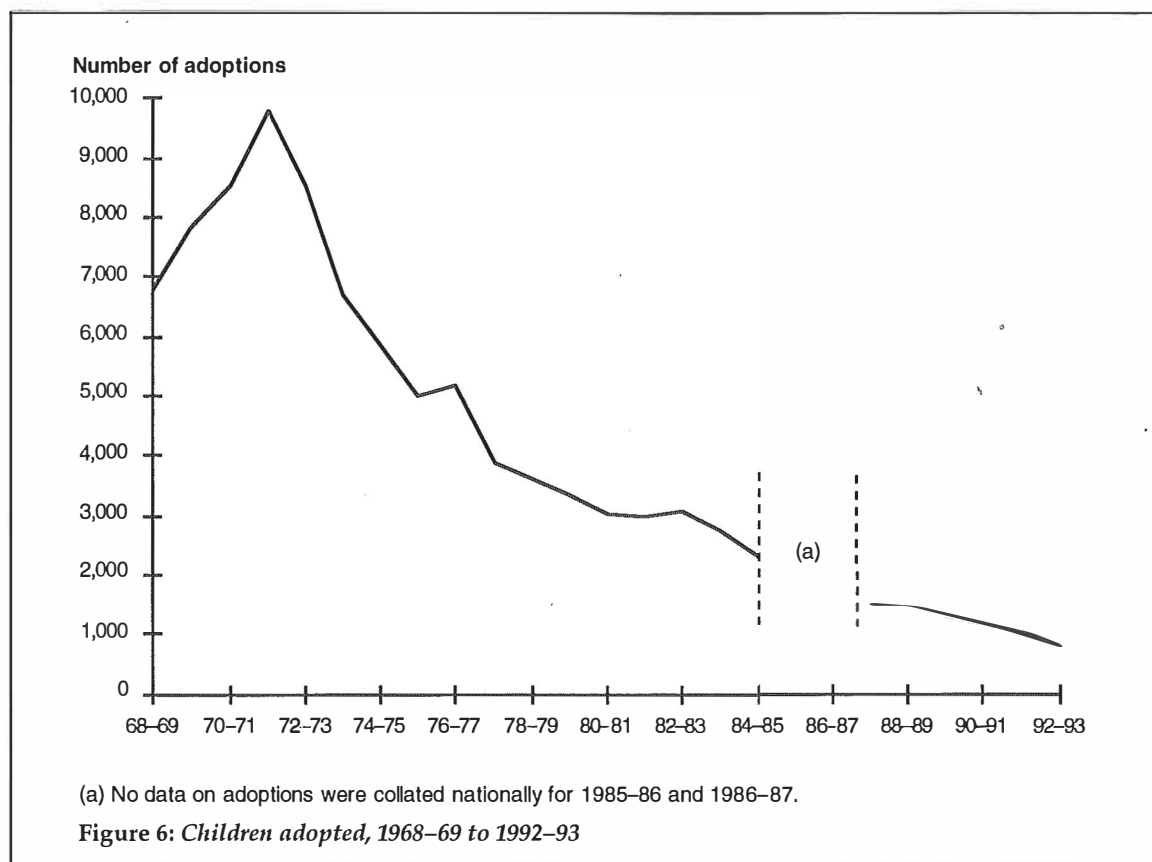
The number of children born nuptially adopted by non-relatives decreased from 67 in 1991–92 to 45 in 1992–93 (33%). There were considerable variations in the proportion of such adoptions between States and Territories: 32% in South Australia, 20% in the Australian Capital Territory, 15% in New South Wales, and none in the Northern Territory (Table 21).

Adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were adopted in 1992–93: three males and four females. Of the seven, five were adopted by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people (Table 13).

Changes over time

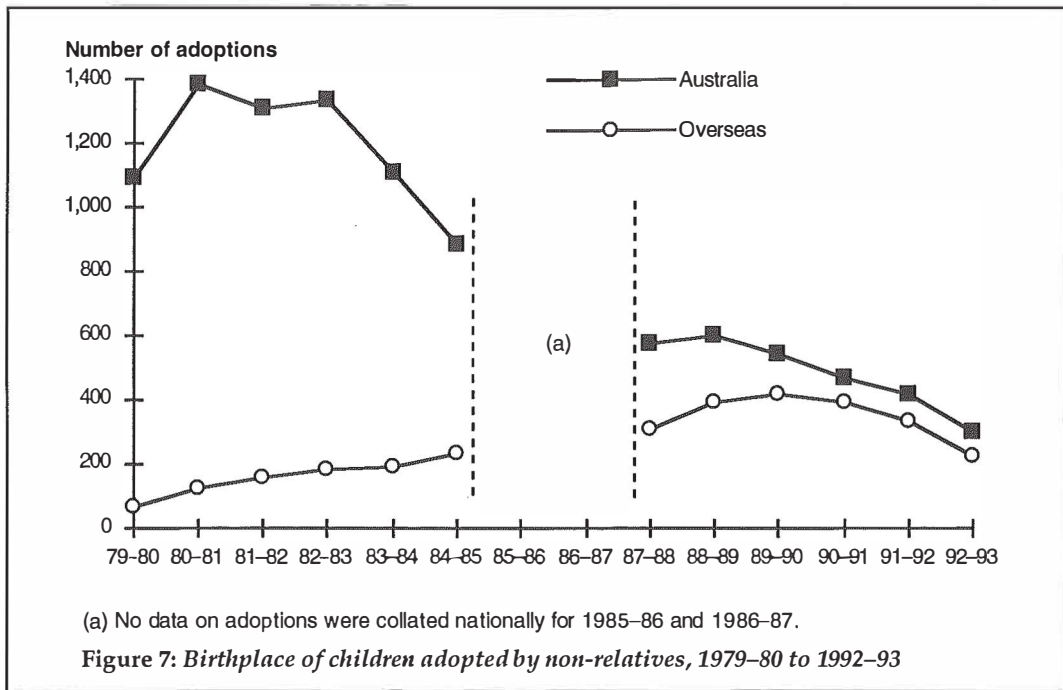
The number of adoptions in 1992–93, 783, was 269 fewer than for the previous year (a decrease of 26%). This continues the decline evident since the number of adoptions peaked in 1971–72 at 9,798 (Figure 6; Table 16). The omission of adoptions by parents from the New South Wales figures since 1987–88 does, however, exaggerate the decline (there were 254 adoptions by parents and other relatives in New South Wales in 1984–85, the most recent year for which data are available) (Table 18).



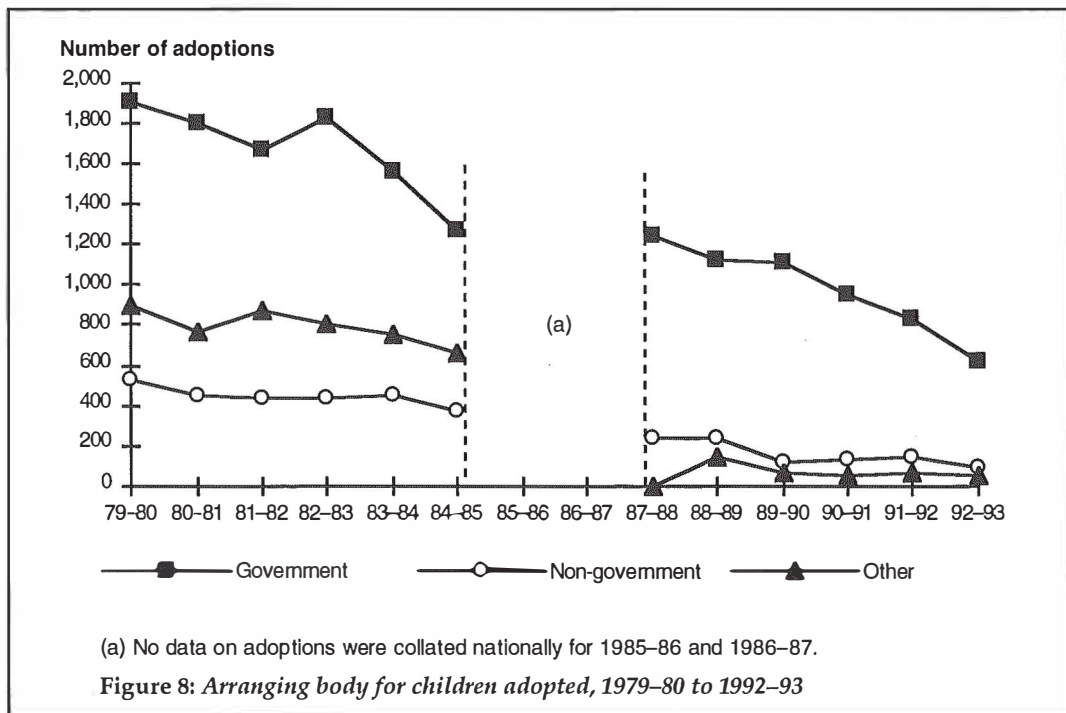
The number of adoptions by relatives has declined steadily in recent years; the small increase (6%) from 1990-91 to 1991-92 was offset by the decrease (15%) in the following year (Table 18).

Adoptions by non-relatives decreased by 223 (29%) from 1991-92 and by 1,167 (69%) from 1979-80 (Table 18).

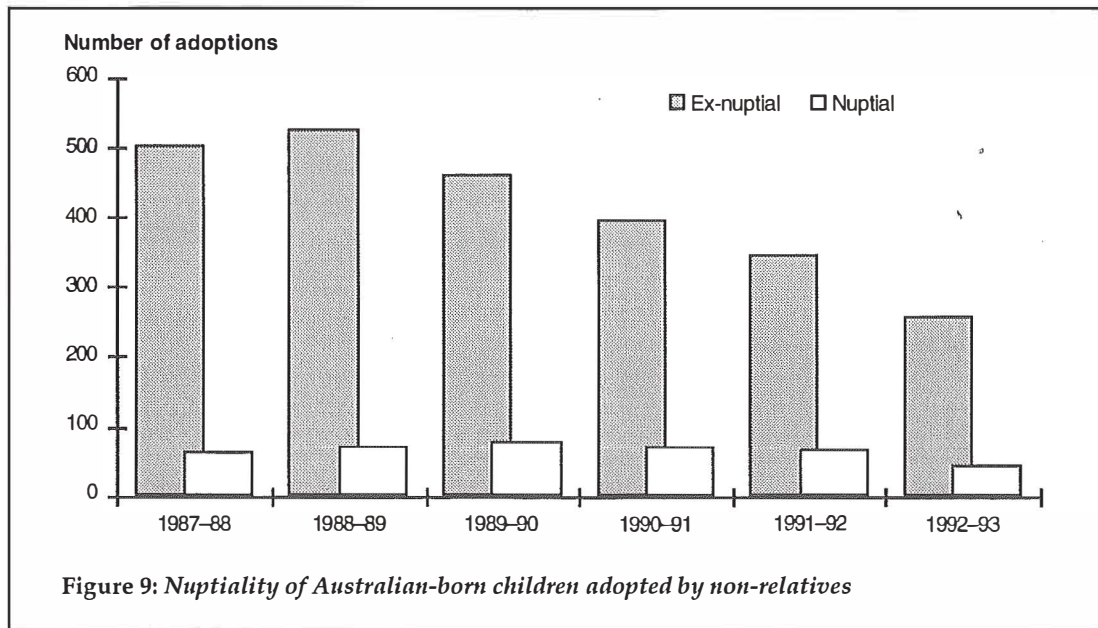
In the four years from 1988-89 the number of Australian-born children adopted declined by 300 (50%). The number of overseas-born children adopted peaked at 420 in 1989-90 but has declined in recent years. In 1992-93 there were 227 overseas-born children adopted in Australia; this represents a decrease of 33% from the previous year and a decrease of 46% from the recent peak in 1989-90 (Figure 7; Table 19).



The number of adoptions arranged through government agencies decreased from 1,909 in 1979-80 to 635 in 1992-93. Adoptions not involving the government also decreased, from 1,428 to 148 in the same period. Government agencies arranged 81% of adoptions in 1992-93, compared with 57% in 1979-80 (Figure 8; Table 15). The actual proportion of these adoptions arranged through government agencies is, however, probably somewhat less because there are no data on adoptions by parents in New South Wales, which, as noted, are arranged by solicitors and validated by the Supreme Court.



There were 259 ex-nuptial Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives in 1992–93, a decrease of 26% from the previous year and a decrease of 51% from 1988–89. The number of Australian-born children who were born nuptially and adopted by non-relatives has declined, from 80 in 1989–90 to 45 in 1992–93 (Figure 9; Table 21).



Between 1987–88 and 1992–93, almost all children legally available for adoption in the States and Territories (except for Victoria and South Australia, for which data were not available) were either living with prospective adoptive parents (the largest category) or in foster care. The exception to this was Queensland, where children were placed in foster care (the largest category) or with an approved person—not the prospective parent—until the adoption was finalised (Table 22).

Access to information

In 1992–93 there were 6,167 applications made for adoption information, approximately three-quarters being lodged by adopted people. In the same period 286 contact or identifying information vetoes were lodged, the majority being lodged by adopted people (Table 2).

Thus the number of applications for adoption information far exceeded the number of contact or identifying information vetoes lodged. It should be noted, though, that the contact or identifying information vetoes do not directly relate to the information applications lodged: it is possible that vetoes have been lodged in relation to adoptions for which information applications may never be made.

There were over 50,000 adoption orders made in the 1970s alone, so with access to information legislation in most States and Territories introduced only in the last five to 10 years the number of applications for information should continue to be high for many years to come.

Table 2: Information applications and contact or identifying information vetoes lodged, 1992–93

State/Territory	Applications for information			Contact or identifying information vetoes lodged ^(a)		
	Adopted person	Birth parents ^(b)	Total	Adopted person	Birth parents	Total
New South Wales	(c)	(c)	2,177	(c)	(c)	147
Victoria ^(d)	897	259	1,156	..	..	..
Queensland	1,025	291	1,316	28	4	^(e) 32
Western Australia	382	208	590	24	^(f) 11	35
South Australia	(g)	(g)	647	41	^(h) 16	57
Tasmania ^(d)	163	38	201	..	..	..
Australian Capital Territory ⁽ⁱ⁾	51	29	80	10	5	15
Northern Territory ^(j)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Australia	n.a.	n.a.	6,167	n.a.	n.a.	286

(a) In Queensland, where both objections to contact and objections to the disclosure of identifying information are available, only objections to contact are included.

(b) Includes a small number of applications by birth relatives other than parents.

(c) Applications by adopted persons and birth parents were not recorded separately; the Department of Community Services estimated the ratios to be 3:1 for information applications and 1:1 for contact vetoes lodged.

(d) No veto system operates in this State: the relevant Act does not provide for the release of identifying information.

(e) Excludes objections to contact and identifying information lodged by the adopted person and the birth parent (134 and 43 respectively).

(f) In Western Australia a veto placed by a birth parent is recorded as both an identifying information veto and a contact veto: that is, a veto by a birth parent applies to contact and identifying information. The two are not recorded separately.

(g) Applications by adopted persons and birth parents were not recorded separately; the Department for Family and Community Services estimated the ratio to be 5:2.

(h) Identifying information vetoes only. There are no provisions for contact vetoes under South Australian legislation.

(i) Release of identifying information began in August 1993, although applications were accepted from 29 March 1993.

(j) Prior to the *Adoption of Children Act 1994* legislation did not provide for the release of information to any parties to an adoption.

5 Detailed tables

Table 3: *Children adopted: relationship of adoptive parents and arranging body by State/Territory, 1992–93*

Relationship/arranging body	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Parents									
Government	–	–	121	2	35	–	5	2	165
Non-government	–	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	8
Other ^(a)	–	13	–	50	–	–	–	–	63
<i>Total</i>	(b)	21	121	52	35	–	5	2	236
Other relatives									
Government	4	–	3	–	2	–	1	1	11
Non-government	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	3
<i>Total</i>	4	–	3	3	2	–	1	1	14
Non-relatives									
Government	163	67	98	32	48	17	14	7	446
Non-government	42	13	–	–	26	6	–	–	87
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<i>Total</i>	205	80	98	32	74	23	14	7	533
Total									
Government	167	67	222	34	85	17	20	10	622
Non-government	42	21	–	–	26	6	–	–	95
Other ^(a)	–	13	–	53	–	–	–	–	66
<i>Total</i>	209	101	222	87	111	23	20	10	783

(a) Arranged privately and legalised through solicitors.

(b) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

Table 4: Children adopted: age, by relationship to adoptive parents and sex, 1992–93

Age	Adopted by relatives ^(a, b)			Adopted by non-relatives			Total		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Under 1 year	–	2	2	142	159	301	142	161	303
1–4 years	8	7	15	85	72	157	93	79	172
5–9 years	34	53	87	28	19	47	62	72	134
10–14 years	40	44	84	11	11	22	51	55	106
15 years and over	24	17	41	4	2	6	28	19	47
Total	106	123	^(c)250	270	263	533	376	386	^(c)783

(a) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

(b) All except two males and 11 females were adopted by parents; one under 1 year, one 1–4 years, six 5–9 years, three 10–14 years and two 15 years and over.

(c) Includes 21 adoptions by parents in Victoria, where age and sex of the adopted child are unknown.

Table 5: Children adopted by relatives: State/Territory, by sex, 1992–93

State/Territory	Sex		Persons
	Males	Females	
New South Wales ^(a)	–	4	4
Victoria ^(a)	–	–	21
Queensland	51	73	124
Western Australia	31	24	55
South Australia	20	17	37
Tasmania	–	–	–
Australian Capital Territory	3	3	6
Northern Territory	1	2	3
Australia	106	123	^(b)250

(a) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

(b) Includes 21 adoptions by parents in Victoria, where sex of the adopted child is unknown.

Table 6: Children adopted by relatives: age, by State/Territory, 1992–93

Age	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Under 1 year	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	2
1–4 years	–	–	4	8	–	–	3	–	15
5–9 years	2	–	43	28	10	–	2	2	87
10–14 years	1	–	54	12	15	–	1	1	84
15 years and over	–	–	23	6	12	–	–	–	41
Total	4	21	124	55	37	–	6	3	^(b)250

(a) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

(b) Includes 21 adoptions by parents in Victoria, where age of the adopted child is unknown.

Table 7: Children adopted by non-relatives: country of birth, by sex and State/Territory, 1992–93

Country of birth	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Australia		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	P
Australia	53	57	28	15	40	39	9	9	17	17	8	6	3	2	1	2	159	147	306
Overseas																			
Brazil	5	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	2	7
Chile	3	2	3	2	–	1	–	–	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	8	7	15
Colombia	14	7	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	17	9	26
Fiji	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	2	–	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	5	6
India	1	5	2	1	1	1	2	1	–	2	–	1	1	2	–	–	7	13	20
Philippines	–	2	4	3	1	1	1	–	1	1	1	–	1	1	–	–	9	8	17
Sri Lanka	9	8	2	3	2	–	–	–	7	2	1	1	2	–	–	1	23	15	38
South Korea	6	22	1	4	3	3	2	3	3	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	15	35	50
Thailand	1	1	1	–	–	2	–	1	7	7	1	1	–	–	–	–	10	12	22
Other overseas	3	4	5	5	1	–	2	–	4	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	16	10	26
Total overseas	42	53	18	19	10	9	7	7	23	17	5	4	5	4	1	3	111	116	227
Total	95	110	46	34	50	48	16	16	40	34	13	10	8	6	2	5	270	263	533

M = males, F = females, P=persons.

Table 8: Children adopted by non-relatives: country of birth, by age, 1992–93

Country of birth	Age (years)					Total	
	Under 1	1–4	5–9	10–14	15 and over		
Australia		203	66	21	10	6	306
Overseas							
Brazil		2	4	1	–	–	7
Chile		1	10	3	1	–	15
Colombia		14	4	6	2	–	26
Fiji		3	1	–	2	–	6
India		5	12	1	2	–	20
Philippines		5	9	2	1	–	17
Sri Lanka		25	12	1	–	–	38
South Korea		31	16	2	1	–	50
Thailand		1	11	8	2	–	22
Other overseas		11	12	2	1	–	26
Total overseas		98	91	26	12	–	227
Total		301	157	47	22	6	533

Table 9: Children adopted by non-relatives: State/Territory, by birthplace, 1992–93

State/Territory	Australia		Overseas		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
New South Wales	110	53.7	95	46.3	205	100
Victoria	43	53.8	37	46.3	80	100
Queensland	79	80.6	19	19.4	98	100
Western Australia	18	56.3	14	43.8	32	100
South Australia	34	45.9	40	54.1	74	100
Tasmania	14	60.9	9	39.1	23	100
Australian Capital Territory	5	35.7	9	64.3	14	100
Northern Territory	3	42.9	4	57.1	7	100
Australia	306	57.4	227	42.6	533	100

Table 10: Children adopted by non-relatives: age, by State/Territory, 1992–93

Age	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Under 1 year	139	45	54	3	37	16	4	3	301
1–4 years	48	24	32	24	14	4	9	2	157
5–9 years	13	7	6	3	15	2	–	1	47
10–14 years	3	4	4	2	7	–	1	1	22
15 years and over	2	–	2	–	1	1	–	–	6
Total	205	80	98	32	74	23	14	7	533

Table 11: Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: age of birth mother, by nuptiality and sex of adopted child, 1992–93

Age of birth mother	Nuptial			Ex-nuptial			Total		
	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P
14 years and under	–	–	–	3	3	6	3	3	6
15 years	–	–	–	5	4	9	5	4	9
16 years	–	1	1	6	6	12	6	7	13
17 years	–	1	1	8	11	19	8	12	20
18 years	1	1	2	8	7	15	9	8	17
19 years	–	–	–	15	10	25	15	10	25
20–24 years	6	6	12	47	46	93	53	52	105
25–29 years	6	5	11	22	18	40	28	23	51
30–34 years	10	2	12	9	10	19	19	12	31
35–39 years	1	–	1	4	6	10	5	6	11
40 years and over	1	1	2	–	3	3	1	4	5
Unknown	2	1	3	2	6	8	4	7	11
Total	27	18	45	129	130	259	156	148	(a)306

(a) Includes one male and one female where both the age of the birth mother and the nuptiality were unknown.
M = males, F = females, P = persons.

Table 12: Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: State/Territory, by nuptiality, 1992–93

State/Territory	Nuptial	Ex-nuptial	Total
New South Wales	16	92	(a)110
Victoria	5	38	43
Queensland	9	70	79
Western Australia	2	16	18
South Australia	11	23	34
Tasmania	1	13	14
Australian Capital Territory	1	4	5
Northern Territory	–	3	3
Australia	45	259	(a)306

(a) Includes one male and one female child where both the age of the birth mother and the nuptiality were unknown.

Table 13: Children adopted: Aboriginality and sex of adopted child, by relationship to and Aboriginality of adoptive parents, 1992–93

Aboriginality/sex of adopted child	Adopted by relatives		Adopted by non-relatives		Total		Total
	ATSI	Other	ATSI	Other	ATSI	Other	
ATSI							
Males	–	–	2	1	2	1	3
Females	–	–	3	1	3	1	4
Persons	–	–	5	2	5	2	7
Other							
Males	–	85	–	180	–	265	265
Females	–	107	3	187	3	(a)295	298
Persons	–	213	3	447	3	661	664
Total							
Males	–	85	2	(b)183	2	268	270
Females	–	107	6	188	6	295	301
Persons	–	213	8	451	8	664	(b)672

ATSI = Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

(a) Includes one adoption where the relationship of the adoptive parent to the adopted child is unknown.

(b) Includes one adoption where the Aboriginality of the adopted child is unknown.

Note: 'Person' figures include cases where the sex of the adopted child is unknown.

Data for South Australia and for adoptions by parents in New South Wales not available.

Table 14: Children adopted: relationship of adoptive parents to and Aboriginality of adopted child, by State/Territory, 1992–93

Relationship/ Aboriginality of adopted child	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Relatives								
ATSI	–	–	–	–	n.a.	–	–	–
Other	4	21	124	55	n.a.	–	6	3
Non-relatives								
ATSI	2	–	2	2	n.a.	–	–	1
Other	201	80	96	30	n.a.	23	14	6
Total								
ATSI	2	–	2	2	n.a.	–	–	1
Other	^(b) 206	101	220	85	n.a.	23	20	9
Total	^(c) 209	101	222	87	n.a.	23	20	10

ATSI = Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

(a) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales.

(b) Includes one adoption of a non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child where the relationship of the adopted parents to the child is unknown.

(c) Includes one adoption by a non-relative of a male child where the Aboriginality of the child is unknown.

Table 15: Children adopted: arranging body, 1979–80 to 1992–93

Year	Government	Non-government	Other ^(a)	Total
1979–80	1,909	528	900	3,337
1980–81	1,802	446	770	3,018
1981–82	1,670	430	871	2,971
1982–83	1,827	435	810	3,072
1983–84	1,567	449	754	2,770
1984–85	1,270	369	655	2,294
1985–86 and 1986–87	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
1987–88 ^(c)	1,246	243	2	1,491
1988–89 ^(c)	1,118	240	143	1,501
1989–90 ^(c)	1,114	117	63	1,294
1990–91 ^(c)	955	132	55	1,142
1991–92 ^(c)	839	145	68	1,052
1992–93 ^(c)	635	95	53	783

(a) Arranged privately and legalised through solicitors.

(b) No data on adoptions were collated nationally for 1985–86 and 1986–87.

(c) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales from 1987–88.

Source: *Adoptions Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, cat. no. 4406.0, 1979–80 to 1984–85 and *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 16: Children adopted: number of adoptions, by State/Territory, 1968–69 to 1992–93

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1968–69	1,715	1,789	1,448	540	797	348	100	36	6,773
1969–70	2,346	2,031	1,500	703	834	243	102	61	7,820
1970–71	3,275	2,057	1,562	301	879	289	122	68	8,553
1971–72	4,539	1,768	1,774	457	776	303	127	54	9,798
1972–73	3,315	1,765	1,678	717	649	268	121	29	8,542
1973–74	1,936	1,557	1,458	783	558	268	120	25	6,705
1974–75	1,799	1,168	1,394	528	551	243	123	33	5,839
1975–76	1,449	1,032	1,112	531	549	211	87	19	4,990
1976–77	1,770	908	1,014	497	658	185	82	74	5,188
1977–78	1,068	951	660	417	506	164	55	46	3,867
1978–79	1,020	956	563	380	415	173	56	40	3,603
1979–80	853	914	450	387	475	148	85	25	3,337
1980–81	794	711	454	305	505	140	74	35	3,018
1981–82	855	753	467	261	396	119	81	39	2,971
1982–83	926	692	555	270	424	117	59	29	3,072
1983–84	698	686	517	250	438	87	51	43	2,770
1984–85	623	631	331	293	222	97	74	23	2,294
1985–86	(a)	(a)	359	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1986–87	(a)	(a)	268	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1987–88	^(b) 280	114	306	191	416	120	36	28	1,491
1988–89	^(b) 335	288	353	147	221	85	47	25	1,501
1989–90	^(b) 360	212	278	128	174	71	50	21	1,294
1990–91	^(b) 329	258	210	136	103	61	25	20	1,142
1991–92	^(b) 310	185	232	120	112	58	23	12	1,052
1992–93	^(b) 209	101	222	87	111	23	20	10	783

(a) No data on adoptions were collated nationally for 1985–86 and 1986–87.

(b) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales from 1987–88.

Source: *Adoptions Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, cat. no. 4406.0, 1979–80 to 1984–85 and *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 17: Children adopted: arranging body, by State/Territory, 1982–83 to 1992–93

Year/arranging body	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1982–83									
Government	436	123	555	181	341	103	59	29	1,827
Non-government	126	189	–	89	17	14	–	–	435
Other ^(a)	364	380	–	–	66	–	–	–	810
<i>Total</i>	926	692	555	270	424	117	59	29	3,072
1983–84									
Government	271	120	517	150	342	73	51	43	1,567
Non-government	88	151	–	100	96	14	–	–	449
Other ^(a)	339	415	–	–	–	–	–	–	754
<i>Total</i>	698	686	517	250	438	87	51	43	2,770
1984–85									
Government	237	139	331	168	208	90	74	23	1,270
Non-government	114	111	–	125	12	7	–	–	369
Other ^(a)	272	381	–	–	2	–	–	–	655
<i>Total</i>	623	631	331	293	222	97	74	23	2,294
1985–86 and 1986–87									
	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
1987–88^(c)									
Government	195	68	306	115	392	106	36	28	1,246
Non-government	85	46	–	74	24	14	–	–	243
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	2
<i>Total</i>	280	114	306	191	416	120	36	28	1,491
1988–89^(c)									
Government	240	61	353	103	211	78	47	25	1,118
Non-government	95	84	–	44	10	7	–	–	240
Other ^(a)	–	143	–	–	–	–	–	–	143
<i>Total</i>	335	288	353	147	221	85	47	25	1,501
1989–90^(c)									
Government	332	153	278	65	159	56	50	21	1,114
Non-government	28	59	–	–	15	15	–	–	117
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	63	–	–	–	–	63
<i>Total</i>	360	212	278	128	174	71	50	21	1,294
1990–91^(c)									
Government	287	199	210	81	87	46	25	20	955
Non-government	42	59	–	–	16	15	–	–	132
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	55
<i>Total</i>	329	258	210	136	103	61	25	20	1,142

(continued)

Table 17 (continued): Children adopted: arranging body by State/Territory, 1982–83 to 1992–93

Year/arranging body	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1991–92^(c)									
Government	261	130	232	52	82	47	23	12	839
Non-government	49	55	–	–	30	11	–	–	145
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	68	–	–	–	–	68
<i>Total</i>	310	185	232	120	112	58	23	12	1,052
1992–93^(c)									
Government	167	80	222	34	85	17	20	10	635
Non-government	42	21	–	–	26	6	–	–	95
Other ^(a)	–	–	–	53	–	–	–	–	53
<i>Total</i>	209	101	222	87	111	23	20	10	783

(a) Arranged privately and legalised through solicitors.

(b) No data on adoptions were collated nationally for 1985–86 and 1986–87. In Queensland there were 359 government-arranged adoptions in 1985–86 and 268 in 1986–87.

(c) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales from 1987–88.

Source: *Adoptions Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, cat. no. 4406.0, 1979–80 to 1984–85 and *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 18: Children adopted: relationship to adoptive parents, by State/Territory, 1979–80 to 1992–93

Year/relationship to adoptive parents	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1979–80									
Relative	334	524	168	201	288	58	53	11	1,637
Non-relative	519	390	282	186	187	90	32	14	1,700
<i>Total</i>	853	914	450	387	475	148	85	25	3,337
1980–81									
Relative	347	379	153	167	309	65	41	23	1,484
Non-relative	447	332	301	138	196	75	33	12	1,534
<i>Total</i>	794	711	454	305	505	140	74	35	3,018
1981–82									
Relative	396	445	164	137	230	56	42	24	1,494
Non-relative	459	308	303	124	166	63	39	15	1,477
<i>Total</i>	855	753	467	261	396	119	81	39	2,971
1982–83									
Relative	384	380	257	134	297	55	24	17	1,548
Non-relative	542	312	298	136	127	62	35	12	1,524
<i>Total</i>	926	692	555	270	424	117	59	29	3,072
1983–84									
Relative	309	415	196	135	306	41	18	32	1,452
Non-relative	389	271	321	115	132	46	33	11	1,318
<i>Total</i>	698	686	517	250	438	87	51	43	2,770

(continued)

Table 18 (continued): *Children adopted: relationship to adoptive parents, by State/Territory, 1979–80 to 1992–93*

Year/relationship to adoptive parents	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1984–85									
Relative	254	375	130	162	132	51	42	11	1,157
Non-relative	369	256	201	131	90	46	32	12	1,137
<i>Total</i>	623	631	331	293	222	97	74	23	2,294
1985–86 and 1986–87									
	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1987–88									
Relative ^(b)	4	5	131	89	301	57	10	8	605
Non-relative	276	109	175	102	115	63	26	20	886
<i>Total</i>	280	114	306	191	416	120	36	28	1,491
1988–89									
Relative ^(b)	2	112	146	60	131	20	19	10	500
Non-relative	332	176	207	87	90	65	28	15	1,000
<i>Total</i>	^(c) 335	288	353	147	221	85	47	25	1,501
1989–90									
Relative ^(b)	n.a.	27	120	81	59	22	11	7	327
Non-relative	360	185	158	47	115	49	39	14	967
<i>Total</i>	360	212	278	128	174	71	50	21	1,294
1990–91									
Relative ^(b)	9	26	95	80	36	20	2	9	277
Non-relative	320	232	115	56	67	41	23	11	865
<i>Total</i>	329	258	210	136	103	61	25	20	1,142
1991–92									
Relative ^(b)	13	27	109	77	33	29	2	5	295
Non-relative	296	158	123	43	79	29	21	7	756
<i>Total</i>	^(c) 310	185	232	120	112	58	23	12	1,052
1992–93									
Relative ^(b)	4	21	124	55	37	–	6	3	250
Non-relative	205	80	98	32	74	23	14	7	533
<i>Total</i>	209	101	222	87	111	23	20	10	783

(a) No data on adoptions were collated nationally for 1985–86 and 1986–87. In Queensland there were 148 adoptions by relatives and 211 by non-relatives in 1985–86 and 101 and 167 respectively in 1986–87.

(b) Data for adoptions by parents not available for New South Wales from 1987–88.

(c) Includes one adoption where relationship to adoptive parents is unknown.

Source: *Adoptions Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, cat. no. 4406.0, 1979–80 to 1984–85 and *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 19: Children adopted by non-relatives: birthplace, by State/Territory, 1987–88 to 1992–93

Year/ birthplace	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1987–88									
Australia	171	109	153	65	32	29	11	8	578
Overseas	105	n.a.	22	37	83	34	15	12	(a)308
<i>Total</i>	276	109	175	102	115	63	26	20	886
1988–89									
Australia	184	145	159	51	26	24	11	6	606
Overseas	148	31	48	36	64	41	17	9	394
<i>Total</i>	332	176	207	87	90	65	28	15	1,000
1989–90									
Australia	144	135	128	27	74	26	7	6	547
Overseas	216	50	30	20	41	23	32	8	420
<i>Total</i>	360	185	158	47	115	49	39	14	967
1990–91									
Australia	158	127	90	34	24	25	7	7	472
Overseas	162	105	25	22	43	16	16	4	393
<i>Total</i>	320	232	115	56	67	41	23	11	865
1991–92									
Australia	151	91	96	19	29	16	11	5	418
Overseas	145	67	27	24	50	13	10	2	338
<i>Total</i>	296	158	123	43	79	29	21	7	756
1992–93									
Australia	110	43	79	18	34	14	5	3	306
Overseas	95	37	19	14	40	9	9	4	227
<i>Total</i>	205	80	98	32	74	23	14	7	533

(a) Excludes Victoria, for which data were not available.

Source: Adoptions National Data Collection, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 20: Children adopted by non-relatives: birthplace, 1979–80 to 1992–93

Year	Australia	Overseas	Unknown	Total
1979–80	1,094	66	540	1,700
1980–81	1,388	127	19	1,534
1981–82	1,311	162	4	1,477
1982–83	1,336	188	–	1,524
1983–84	1,108	197	13	1,318
1984–85	888	235	14	1,137
1985–86 and 1986–87	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
1987–88	578	308	–	^(b) 886
1988–89	606	394	–	1,000
1989–90	547	420	–	967
1990–91	472	393	–	865
1991–92	418	338	–	756
1992–93	306	227	–	533

(a) No data on adoptions were collated nationally for 1985–86 and 1986–87.

(b) Excludes overseas-born adoptees for Victoria, for which data were not available.

Source: *Adoptions Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, cat. no. 4406.0, 1979–80 to 1984–85 and *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 21: Australian-born children adopted by non-relatives: nuptiality, by State/Territory, 1987–88 to 1992–93

Year/nuptiality	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1987–88									
Nuptial	22	8	24	8	2	1	–	–	65
Ex-nuptial	139	101	129	57	30	28	11	8	503
<i>Total</i>	171	109	153	65	32	29	11	8	578
1988–89									
Nuptial	18	7	30	8	6	3	–	1	73
Ex-nuptial	162	138	128	43	20	21	11	5	528
<i>Total</i>	184	145	^(b) 159	51	26	24	11	6	606
1989–90									
Nuptial	16	6	11	7	37	2	1	–	80
Ex-nuptial	126	129	113	20	37	24	6	6	461
<i>Total</i>	144	135	^(c) 128	27	74	26	7	6	547
1990–91									
Nuptial	20	24	12	9	3	3	–	1	72
Ex-nuptial	137	103	78	25	21	22	7	4	397
<i>Total</i>	158	127	90	34	24	25	7	^(d) 7	472
1991–92									
Nuptial	37	–	21	5	2	2	–	–	67
Ex-nuptial	113	91	73	14	27	14	11	5	348
<i>Total</i>	151	91	^(d) 96	19	29	16	11	5	418
1992–93									
Nuptial	16	5	9	2	11	1	1	–	45
Ex-nuptial	92	38	70	16	23	13	4	3	259
<i>Total</i>	^(e) 110	43	79	18	34	14	5	3	306

(a) Includes adoptions where nuptiality was unknown: 10 in 1987–88, four in 1988–89, two in 1989–90 and one in 1990–91.

(b) Includes one adoption where nuptiality was unknown.

(c) Includes four adoptions where nuptiality was unknown.

(d) Includes two adoptions where nuptiality was unknown.

(e) Includes one male and one female where the age of the birth mother and the nuptiality were unknown.

Source: *Adoptions National Data Collection*, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

Table 22: Children legally available for adoption^(a): location of child at 30 June, by State/Territory, 1988 to 1993

Year/location	NSW	Qld	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
At 30 June 1988						
Prospective adoptive parents	123	n.a.	91	n.a.	23	41
Foster care	65	n.a.	2	n.a.	–	4
Hospital/nursing home	1	n.a.	2	n.a.	–	–
Other	–	n.a.	3	n.a.	–	1
<i>Total</i>	189	n.a.	98	n.a.	23	46
At 30 June 1989						
Prospective adoptive parents	115	n.a.	57	n.a.	26	14
Foster care	17	n.a.	9	n.a.	–	7
Hospital/nursing home	–	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	1
Other	3	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	–
<i>Total</i>	135	n.a.	66	n.a.	26	22
At 30 June 1990						
Prospective adoptive parents	103	n.a.	48	n.a.	22	19
Foster care	32	n.a.	3	n.a.	–	6
Hospital/nursing home	1	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	1
Other	–	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	–
<i>Total</i>	136	n.a.	51	n.a.	22	26
At 30 June 1991						
Prospective adoptive parents	49	n.a.	15	n.a.	5	10
Foster care	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	2	2
Hospital/nursing home	–	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	–
Other	–	n.a.	1	n.a.	–	1
<i>Total</i>	51	n.a.	17	n.a.	7	13
At 30 June 1992						
Prospective adoptive parents	89	n.a.	26	n.a.	1	9
Foster care	20	n.a.	9	n.a.	2	1
Hospital/nursing home	–	n.a.	–	n.a.	–	–
Other	1	n.a.	–	n.a.	2	1
<i>Total</i>	110	n.a.	35	n.a.	5	11
At 30 June 1993						
Prospective adoptive parents	135	–	39	29	11	10
Foster care	12	50	17	2	1	–
Hospital/nursing home	1	3	1	–	–	–
Other	–	20	–	–	–	–
<i>Total</i>	148	73	57	31	12	10

(a) See 'Explanation of terms' on the following page.

Note: Data for Victoria and South Australia are not available.

Source: Adoptions National Data Collection, WELSTAT, 1987–88 to 1989–90.

6 Explanation of terms

Adoption

An adoption is the legal effect of an adoption order. It establishes a child or adult as if he or she were the issue of a particular person or persons. It also establishes the adopting persons as the parents of the child, as if the child had been born to them.

Adoption order

An adoption order is an administrative order made by a court under adoption legislation. It excludes legitimation orders made under the Commonwealth *Marriage Act 1961*.

Adoptive parent

An adoptive parent is a person who has become the parent of a child or adult as the result of an adoption order. In some States a de facto partner of a parent may become an adoptive parent.

Adult

An adult is a person aged 18 or more years.

Age of child

For the purpose of this document, the age of an adopted person is based on the date of the adoption order in completed years, or in completed calendar months where the age is less than 1 year. In New South Wales, age is based on the date of placement (that is, the date on which the adopted person began living with the adoptive parents). This also applies to children adopted by non-relatives in South Australia and Tasmania. It should be noted that the date of placement could be a considerable time before the date of the adoption order.

Age of birth mother

The age of the birth mother is the age, in complete years, at the date of birth of the child.

Child

A child is a person aged less than 18 years. Under State and Territory adoption legislation, it can include an older person for whom an adoption order is sought or has been made.

Child legally available for adoption by non-relatives

A child is legally available for adoption by non-relatives if all the legally necessary consents by relatives or others to the child's adoption have been obtained or legally dispensed with. The consent of the Minister, or the Director or another official of the State or Territory welfare department does not have to be obtained for the child to be available for adoption.

Children whose adoption has been deferred or who are already living with their prospective adoptive parents are included in this category. Children brought to Australia from overseas are included only if they are legally available for adoption under Australian legislation. Orphan children under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department are included only if an adoption consent was signed by at least one of the child's parents or if active steps are being taken to find adoptive parents for the child.

Guardianship

In this publication 'guardianship' refers to the allocation of responsibility for a child's total welfare to a couple or individual, rather than to a welfare department or other authorised department. Guardianship is not regarded as adoption, although some children under guardianship may be included in the count of children legally available for adoption.

Location of child

A child legally available for adoption is placed in one of the following categories of location: living with prospective adoptive parents; foster care; hospital or nursing home; or 'other'.

Living with prospective adoptive parents

A child in this category is living with prospective adoptive parents under the supervision of an adoption agency. The prospective parents must not be in receipt of a foster allowance for the support of the child. Cases where a child's foster parents have applied to adopt him or her are included only if the foster parents no longer receive a foster allowance for the child.

Foster care

A child is regarded as being in foster care when he or she is living in a private household apart from his or her natural or adoptive parents and is being cared for by one or more adults approved by the relevant welfare department. The adults are acting as substitute parents to the child and are being paid a regular allowance for the child's support by a government authority or non-government organisation.

Hospital or nursing home

A child is living in a hospital or nursing home if he or she is living in an establishment mainly engaged in providing hospital (including psychiatric or mental hospital) facilities such as diagnostic medical or surgical services as well as continuous inpatient nursing care or nursing or convalescent home facilities (including the provision of nursing or medical care as a basic part of the service).

Other

The 'other' category includes all children who are legally available for adoption and are living neither with prospective adoptive parents nor in foster care, a hospital or a nursing home. It includes children living in arrangements such as boarding schools, prisons, residential adult care establishments, with adults who are not their prospective adoptive parents or foster parents, living independently, or on unauthorised absence from their usual location.

Nuptiality of adopted child

Nuptial

The birth of an adopted child is classified as nuptial if the child's natural parents were legally married to each other at the time of the birth. Cases where the adopted child's birth father was legally married to the child's birth mother but died before the birth are included.

Ex-nuptial

The birth of an adopted child is classified as ex-nuptial if the child's natural parents were not legally married to each other at the time of the birth. Cases where the adopted child's birth father was legally married to the child's birth mother but died before the birth are excluded.

Relative

A relative is a parent or other relative as defined in the following two paragraphs.

Parent

A parent is a natural (that is, biological) parent, a spouse of a natural parent, an adoptive parent through a previous adoption order, or a spouse of an adoptive parent. Foster parents are excluded unless they otherwise fit the definition.

Other relative

'Other relative' means a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt or uncle, whether the relationship is full blood or half-blood or by marriage, and includes relationships based on the adoption of any person or traced through or to a person whose parents were not married to each other at the time of the birth or subsequently.

Non-relative

A non-relative is a person who is not a parent or other relative, as defined.

Arranging body

An arranging body is an agency authorised under legislation to approve and arrange adoptions. Adoptions can be arranged by governments, State and Territory welfare departments, and non-government agencies.

Government

A government authority is an agency in Australia that is owned or controlled by the Commonwealth or a State or Territory government, including departments and statutory authorities, State health departments, and public hospitals not run by religious institutions. In recent years no adoptions were arranged through government departments other than the welfare departments.

State and Territory welfare department

A State or Territory welfare department is one of the contributing departments listed on page iv of this publication. In recent years all adoptions arranged through government departments have been arranged through welfare departments.

Non-government agency

A non-government agency is an agency in Australia that is not owned or controlled by the Commonwealth Government or by a State or Territory government. This includes public hospitals run by religious institutions, private hospitals, church organisations, religious communities, registered charities, voluntary agencies, non-profit organisations, companies, and cooperative societies and associations.

The following non-government agencies were licensed to arrange adoptions in 1992–93:

New South Wales

- Centacare Adoption Services
- Anglican Adoption Agency
- Barnardo's Australia
- Seventh Day Adventist Adoption Agency

Victoria

- Copelen Street Family Services
- Western Family Services
- Gippsland Family Services
- Catholic Family Welfare Bureau
- Jewish Welfare Society
- LDS Social Services

South Australia

- Australians Aiding Children Adoption Agency

Tasmania

- Catholic Private Adoption Agency

Other arrangements

Some adoptions by relatives are arranged without the involvement of an organisation, when arrangements are made between parties and the legal aspects are handled through solicitors. Involved are private, local and overseas adoptions by relatives and local adoptions by step-parents. In 1992–93, some adoptions by relatives were arranged in this way in New South Wales and Western Australia; data for New South Wales are not collected (see 'Adoptions by relatives' in Section 2).

7 Related legislation

The following list contains State/Territory and Commonwealth Acts, Regulations and Bills relating to adoption in Australia.

Commonwealth

Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946

Marriage Act 1961

New South Wales

Adoption of Children Act 1965

Adoption Information Act 1990

Adoption Information Regulations 1991

Victoria

Adoption Act 1984

Adoption Regulations 1987

Adoption (Amendment) Act 1991

Queensland

Adoption of Children Act 1964

Adoption of Children Regulations 1988

Adoption of Children Amendment Act 1990

Adoption of Children Legislation Amendment Act 1991

Western Australia

Adoption of Children Act 1896

Adoption of Children Regulations 1986

Adoptions Bill 1993

South Australia

Adoption Act 1988

Tasmania

Adoption Act 1988

Australian Capital Territory

Adoption Act 1993

Northern Territory

Adoption of Children Act 1964

Adoption of Children Act 1994

8 Related publications

The following publications containing child welfare information have been issued by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Child welfare series

Number 1: *Adoptions Australia, 1990–91*

Number 2: *Child abuse and neglect Australia, 1990–91*

Number 3: *Children under care and protection orders Australia, 1990–91*

Number 4: *Adoptions Australia, 1991–92*

Number 5: *Child abuse and neglect Australia, 1991–92*

Number 6: *Children under care and protection orders Australia, 1991–92*

Other publications

Australia's welfare: services and assistance 1993



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