

# Baby, you are one in Australia's 21 million

By MICHELLE CAZZULINO

THE Australian population continues to boom, with the birth last night of the nation's 21 millionth baby.

Australian Bureau of Statistics demographer Phil Browning said although it was virtually impossible to pinpoint who was officially Australia's 21 millionth citizen, the target was reached about 9.30pm.

The result comes in the same week that the 2006 Census findings were released, revealing the number of births was the highest since 1971 and the second-highest since 1911.

The outcome was hailed by Federal

Treasurer Peter Costello, who said the nation would be better-equipped to cope with its ageing population.

"The improvement in the number of births represents a greater sense of economic security for families and a vote of confidence in Australia's future," he said.

Demographers and social commentators yesterday predicted the next generation would be more techno-savvy and better-travelled than their ancestors, with society becoming increasingly competitive.

Retail analyst Barry Urquhart said home ownership was likely to become less of a priority for young adults as they instead used higher discretion-

ary income to indulge themselves. "With the growth of technology and interactivity, they will centre expenditure around themselves, they will be connected, they will be accessible and they'll be far more global than we've ever been," he said.

Emir and Amra Halilobic were among the infants born this week.

The twins arrival at Manly Hospital on Thursday night followed a herbal fertility treatment after six failed IVF attempts by parents Indira and Frank.

"It's just magic," Mr Halilobic, who escaped war-torn Bosnia with his wife in 1995, said. "This is not for Peter Costello," he added.



## Living in Australia Then and now

|                                  | 1973     | 2007         |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| Population                       | 13.1m    | 21m          |
| Average wage                     | \$100wk  | \$466wk      |
| <b>THEY SPENT THEIR WAGES ON</b> |          |              |
| Loaf of bread                    | 26c      | \$2.89       |
|                                  | Torana   | Nissan Tiida |
|                                  | \$2189   | \$17,990     |
| Sydney Opera House tickets       | \$2-\$16 | \$58-\$232   |
| Small house in Waterloo          | \$27,000 | \$540,000    |
| Bottle of beer                   | 46c      | \$2.50       |

...growing population . . . Emir and Amra Halilobic, in their mother Indira's hands at Manly Hospital, were among the infants born this week. Picture: CRAIG GREENE