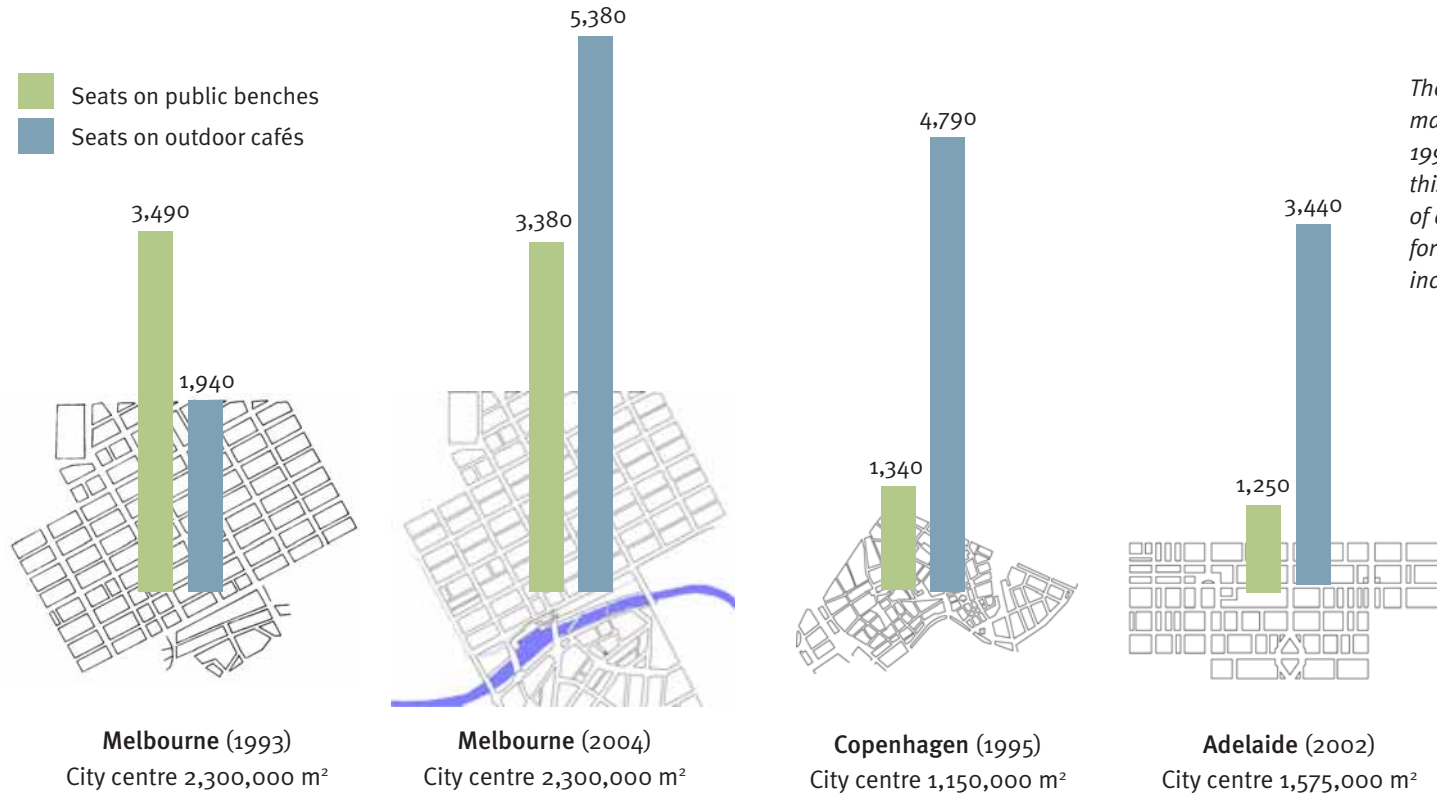


1.14 A REMARKABLE INCREASE IN PUBLIC LIFE



The density of public benches and seats in Melbourne is markedly higher than in the other cities shown. Already by 1993 this was the case. 2004 does not show any increase in this category, but shows a remarkable increase in the number of cafe seats. Altogether, Melbourne by 2004 offers seating for a total of 8,760 persons which compared to 1993 is an increase of 62 per cent.

1993-2004
275%
 MORE CAFES & RESTAURANTS
 ALMOST 4 TIMES MORE OUTDOOR CAFES

1993-2004
177%
 MORE CAFE SEATS
 ALMOST 3 TIMES MORE CAFE SEATS

An impressive increase in stationary activities

In addition to recording the pedestrian flows, the 2004 public life survey investigated on the city's stationary activities, namely all the activities people engage in when not walking: standing, sitting, watching, leaning, listening, playing and so on. These are often regarded as 'incidental' activities that can truly reflect the value of a place to 'be in' for its own sake, rather than just move through as part of destination-oriented activities.

These activities were recorded in nine areas of which seven were also surveyed in the 1993 study. While stationary counts from these locations appear less significant than the walking figures (i.e. 5-10 per cent more people staying in the survey

areas as an average number of persons at any time between 12 p.m. and 4 p.m.), there is still a clear logic to the overall picture. For example, in 1993 Southbank was among the few places in the city offering places for rest and enjoyment on Melbourne's waterfront. In 2004 Southgate has lower stationary figures than 10 years ago, however there is now a much wider range of attractions along the Yarra River, including Federation Square which has become a huge success with a constantly high number of visitors. Bourke Street (east) has moved ahead greatly with the introduction of many new benches and cafe seats. Here the activity levels have doubled since 1993. In other areas where no additional seats or attractions have been added – such as Bourke Street Mall – the number of stationary activities have more or less remained unchanged.

Quite clearly, where new cafe seats have been introduced, the number of people spending time in the city has increased. While the increase in stationary activities have been relatively minor for those sites surveyed in 1993, new and revitalised public spaces such as the laneways and Federation Square have more than compensated for these.

Given that the number of outdoor cafes has increased by 275 per cent in the past decade and the number of cafe seats has trebled, it can be safely assumed that the number of people spending time in the public spaces in Melbourne is between two and three times higher than in 1993. This is again an astonishing development towards a livelier and more attractive city.