

INTERPRETING THE LATEST POPULATION FIGURES

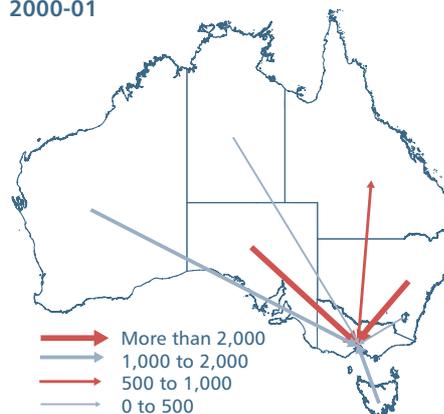
The recently released Estimated Resident Population (ERPs) for Victoria and its local government areas (available in the *2002 Victorian Population Bulletin* – see back page) are estimates and will shortly be corrected by the 2001 Census. Nevertheless, they show a number of trends worthy of comment.

Overseas migration levels are steady. Read the popular press and you would be excused for thinking that we were experiencing an explosion in the numbers of new migrants either coming or trying to come to Australia. The truth is that net overseas migration levels are low by historical standards – in most of the 25 years after the Second World War we received higher rates and more migrants in absolute numbers.

We would also do well to remember that international flows of people – moving in and out – are increasing, especially short-term tourism and longer term migrants such as students or business people. Meanwhile, permanent movements have declined in the past few years. Given Melbourne's many schools, universities and colleges, and its number of international businesses, it is a significant attractor for these longer-term migrants who are an expanding part of the migration puzzle.

Interstate migration continues to climb to record levels in Victoria's favour. As long as Melbourne's economy remains strong, one would expect this position to continue. As we have argued elsewhere, Melbourne appears well positioned in the post-industrial economy. In its last round of projections the ABS's most 'optimistic' assumption for Victoria was +2,000 per year. We are currently running at +8,000.

Net interstate migration, Victoria
 2000-01



Source: ABS 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2001

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The 'rust belt' tag has well and truly been shaken off and one would expect the ABS's next round of projections to reflect this reality. This should also bury the myth that Queensland's population will overtake Victoria's in the foreseeable future. While Victoria continues to attract far more overseas migrants than Queensland, and gains from interstate migration, it clearly won't.

The ABS estimates also show trends within Victoria. These tell us that Melbourne continues to grow at a faster rate than regional Victoria: Melbourne grew at 1.6 per cent and regional Victoria by 0.5 per cent. Of course, most new overseas and interstate migrants are young and are attracted by jobs. Metropolitan areas, with their range of services and career opportunities, have the lion's share of job growth so, while migration is robust, expect it to favour Melbourne's population.

Within regional Victoria, there is truly a 'jigsaw' of change that reminds one of those tourism slogans. 'Regional Victoria' is a term of convenience in many respects. Within it there are different demographic trends, factors driving change and prospects for further change. We hope to be reporting soon on the pieces of that jigsaw as the second stage of the Regional Atlas nears completion.

MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA — PART 2

In the previous issue of *Research Matters* (No. 21, March 2002), we began an explanation of issues relating to overseas migration to Australia. It detailed issues of the difference between permanent and long-term migration and the difficulty in counting migration due to 'category jumping'. In this issue, we will conclude the explanation by covering issues of permanent arrivals under the Migration and Humanitarian programs, and the issues of non-program arrivals and illegal overstayers.

Migration program

The Migration and Humanitarian programs operate with fixed annual levels on a financial-year basis, following consultation by the federal Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) with the States and Territories. Under the Migration program there are two main streams – Family and Skill. There is also a Special Eligibility stream that allows for former Australian citizens and former residents who have maintained ties with Australia.

In 1999–2000, there were 32,000 Family visas granted, making up 46 per cent of the total migration program. The majority (82.3 per cent) of these was for spouses/fiancés. During this period there were 35,330 Skills visas granted, making up 50 per cent of the total migration program, however, this figure includes the skilled applicant and any spouse or children. The total number of skilled applicants is estimated to be closer to 15,000 persons.

There are a number of subcategories in the Skills stream, including Skilled-Independent (44 per cent), Skilled-Australian Sponsored (22 per cent), Business Skills (18 per cent) and Employer Nominations (15 per cent, including the Regional Sponsored Migrations Scheme). The remaining visas in the Migration program (4 per cent) were for Special Eligibility.

Humanitarian program

For 2000–01, Australia's Humanitarian program was set at 12,000 places (the same as for 1999–2000). However, there were an additional 3,134 places as unused carryover from 1999–2000.

The total figure of 15,134 places is divided into two main categories: Offshore and Onshore. Offshore is notionally allocated 8,000 places and the remainder of the 15,134 is used for Onshore requirements. Further use of Offshore is for other contingencies that may arise, or it is rolled over to the next year.

Offshore

The Offshore component of the Humanitarian program resettles refugees in need of resettlement and others who are in humanitarian need and have close links to Australia and is further divided into two main categories: the Refugee category (with 4,000 places including 420 places for women at risk) and the Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) (4,000 places). There is also a smaller Special Assistance Category. In 1999, there were 5,900 Temporary Safe Haven visas issued to people from Kosovo and East Timor.

Onshore

Australia accepts a number of Onshore applicants under its obligations under the United Nations' 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Whether they have arrived illegally (by boat or plane) or legally (usually on a visitor's visa), people already in Australia, who seek recognition of their claims for refugee status, can apply for a Protection Visa.

There were 12,713 applications for protection visas lodged in 1999–2000, a 54.0 per cent increase on the 8,257 lodged in 1998–99. During this period there were a total of 2,548 protection visas granted, of which, 1,584 were permanent protection visas (PPV) and 874 were temporary protection visas (TPV). The three-year TPV was introduced in 1999, as a response to the rapid increase in unauthorised arrivals in Australia.

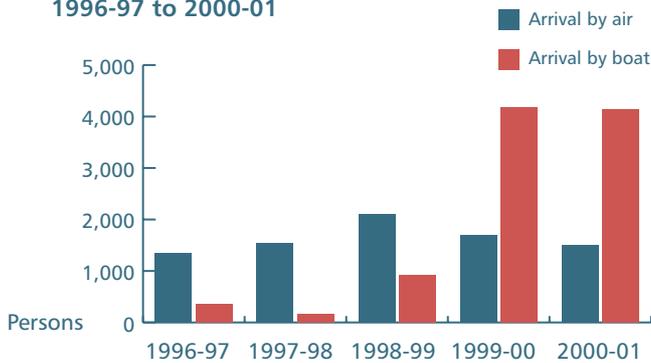
Unauthorised arrivals

The subject that has gained the most notoriety, particularly since the *Tampa* incident, has been that of unauthorised arrivals to Australia, particularly by boat. In 1999–2000 there were 5,871 persons who attempted to enter Australia illegally.



Of these, 4,176 arrived by boat and 1,697 arrived by air. The number of unauthorised arrivals by boat has increased significantly over the past few years, but still remains only a small proportion of our overall immigrant intake.

Unauthorised arrivals in Australia 1996-97 to 2000-01



Source: DIMIA Population Flows: Immigration Aspects 2000

Illegal overstayers

One subject that receives relatively little attention in the media is that of illegal overstayers. These are people who have entered the country legally, with a valid visa, but remain in Australia after their visa has expired.

While there is only a small proportion of visitors who actually overstay in Australia in any given year (just 7,196 overstayers of the 3,848,993 legal visitors to Australia in 1999–2000, representing an overstaying rate of just 0.2 per cent), there is a significant accumulated total of illegal overstayers – estimated at 58,748 persons at 30 June 2000. Around 25 per cent of these are estimated to have overstayed by less than one year, and in many cases only a few days, however, another 25 per cent are estimated to have overstayed by 10 years or more.

Bridging visas

Bridging visas can be issued to people who would otherwise be in Australia illegally and are liable to be detained. Generally they are for people who are either planning to apply for a visa or are awaiting the outcome of a decision on an application, or are making arrangements to leave Australia. At 30 June 2000, there were 61,224 people in Australia on bridging visas; 60.2 per cent originally arrived on visitor's visas and 14.2 per cent originally arrived on student visas.

For further information on immigration and visa application, please visit the DIMIA web site: www.immi.gov.au

Sources:

ABS Cat. No. 3412.0 *Migration Australia 1999–2000*
 Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA)
Population Flows: Immigration Aspects, 2000 edition, December 2000

CONSOLIDATING OUR CITY: RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT IN MELBOURNE

The Research and Analysis Branch has recently released Issue 6 of *Consolidating Our City – Residential Redevelopment in Melbourne*. This free report examines current and potential opportunities for the redevelopment of underutilised land for residential purposes. This land may include former industrial or commercial sites or vacant government-owned properties.

Highlights

- There are currently 1,210 redevelopment sites identified in metropolitan Melbourne, with a potential yield of 87,366 dwellings. This includes sites in the mooted, planning and construction stages.
- About 20 per cent of these potential dwellings are to be built on former industrial land and about a further 11 per cent to be built on former Commonwealth-owned land.
- More than 66 per cent of the identified potential dwellings are to be built in the 16 municipalities of inner Melbourne.

Copies of *Consolidating Our City: Residential Redevelopment in Melbourne* are available from the Planning Information Centre on tel. (03) 9655 8830 or Information Victoria on tel. 1300 366 356. Detailed subregion maps, which provide site-specific information on each redevelopment project are also available or can be accessed online at www.doi.vic.gov.au. For further information, contact the Research and Analysis Branch on tel. (03) 9655 8814.

COMING SOON – CENSUS 2001

The latest ABS estimates of population are an appetiser for the eagerly awaited 2001 Census. In 1997, some major revisions were made to local populations when the 1996 Census was published, so expect more in June 2002. As we unpack the census we will be looking at each of the components of population change and the factors driving them – already there are some key questions forming:

With the 1996 Census, we found that while there was consistent movement out of regional Victoria to Melbourne, the numbers going back declined compared with the late 1980s. Will this continue? Is there a connection between this and family formation patterns where fewer are marrying and starting families, and those that do, do so at a later age?

Is the rise of the inner city being driven by 'empty nesters'? The evidence from the 1996 Census was a firm no! The net movement in (ie to the Inner Melbourne Statistical Subdivision) of '20-somethings' was more than 21,000 whereas for the '50 somethings' it was less than 300; but what will the 2001 census show?

COMING SOON – CENSUS 2001 CONT.

Has there been a demonstrable shift to the west of Melbourne? Many 'observers' see that the Western Ring Road has made a noticeable difference to the western suburban economy. It is either at, or close to, the centre of many national distribution systems and has weathered the worst of industrial restructuring. This economic activity has also spurred on a lot of residential activity – Caroline Springs, Point Cook and other developments are showcases of change in the west, but what is the big picture for the whole of Melbourne?

There are many other questions. The census is a milestone in our attempts to look to the future by understanding the present. Thanks to the ABS and continued public support for the census, we have the opportunity to review trends, understand the structure of change and see how these are producing a new geography of economic and social opportunity. Look out for the next issue of Research Matters as we start to explore some of the issues arising from the 2001 Census.

WHAT'S NEW

Changes to the Research Unit

The Research Unit is no more. Don't panic, however, we're not dead yet! The former Research Unit has been amalgamated with two other information units in the Department of Infrastructure – the Land Development and Information Unit and the Transport Modelling Unit. Together, we now form the Research and Analysis Branch, with John Hanna as Director. Please note our new email address: research.analysis@doi.vic.gov.au.

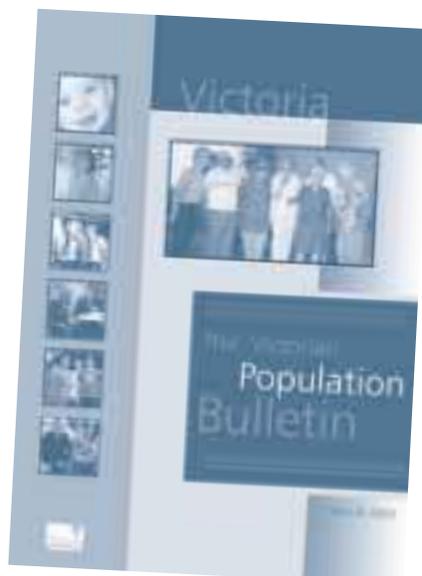
This amalgamation reflects some of the changing research priorities for DOI. We are hoping to develop broader expertise covering housing markets, employment trends, infrastructure investment, freight and logistics information, and access and personal mobility, as well as continuing our focus on demographics and land development information.

The Research and Analysis Branch section of the web site at www.doi.vic.gov.au/research will now include land development information. Over the next three months our web site will undergo further changes reflecting our new priorities. For further information, please contact Christina Inbakaran on tel. (03) 9655 6054.

2002 Victorian Population Bulletin

The 2002 edition of the *Victorian Population Bulletin* is now available from the Research and Analysis Branch, or on our web site: www.doi.vic.gov.au/research. It details pre-census population estimates and demographic data, from the ABS.

The Research and Analysis Branch will soon be publishing a *Special Edition Population Bulletin* based on the first release of the 2001 Census results. The special edition will summarise the most basic population trends, particularly looking at change in Victoria over the past five years.



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Department of Infrastructure, Level 20, Nauru House
80 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000

Tel: (03) 9655 8814
Email: research.analysis@doi.vic.gov.au
Internet: www.doi.vic.gov.au/research

Editor: Chris Wight

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