

9 POPULATION GROWTH

For purposes of comparison, forecasts have been made on two different rates of migration — namely, 50,000 and 100,000 persons yearly. Migration at these rates represent annual increases of 0.55 per cent. and 1.1 per cent respectively of the present population. Of the two it is felt that the former figure is a sounder one on which to base an estimate for as far ahead as 25 to 50 years. This might be too conservative for shorter periods and could well be so even over a long period if any future large-scale mass migration scheme should eventuate. However, in the light of present trends and past experience 50,000 a year is considered a reasonable figure on which to base any future estimates of Melbourne's growth for periods of from 25 to 50 years ahead.

*Population of Melbourne
in Relation to the Australian Population*

Having selected a basis for estimating the rate of natural increase and migration, it is possible to forecast the future growth of the Australian population. It then remains to analyse the relationship of the population of Melbourne with that of Australia in order to arrive at some basis of estimating the future population of the city.

As will be seen from Table 3 the population of Melbourne has been gradually increasing as a percentage of the Australian population. This reflects the trend towards urbanisation, which has been a feature of population movements throughout the world. At the present time Melbourne accounts for 16% of the total Australian population.

The trend of growth as indicated by these figures is that over the last 30 years the population of Melbourne, when expressed as a percentage of the Australian population, has increased on the average by about .06% annually. It may be presumed therefore that this trend will continue at least for the next 25 years

Estimate of Melbourne's Future Population

Table 4 gives estimates of the rate of growth of Melbourne based on the various assumptions mentioned — namely, a gradual decline after 1955 in the rate of natural increase towards replacement level by 1975, a continuation of the present trend in the growth of Melbourne in relation to that of Australia, and, for purposes of comparison, net national migration at the rates of 50,000 and 100,000 persons per annum.

Table 3

MELBOURNE POPULATION AS A PERCENTAGE
OF TOTAL AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Year	Percentage
1915	13.76
1920	14.10
1925	15.28
1930	15.38
1935	14.92
1940	15.30
1945	15.88

At the more conservative figure, based on a net migration rate of 50,000 per annum, Melbourne could reach a population of 2,000,000 within the next 25 years and 2,500,000 by the end of the century. Should, however, the net rate of national immigration be maintained at an average of 100,000 per annum, then the population of Melbourne could reach 2,000,000 within the next 15 years and 2,500,000 within the next 30 years. In other words, Melbourne could reach a population of from 2,000,000 to 2,500,000 within the next 25 to 50 years depending on how the average rate of national migration varies between 50,000 to 100,000 per annum during that period.

Melbourne's Population Growth in Relation to Victoria

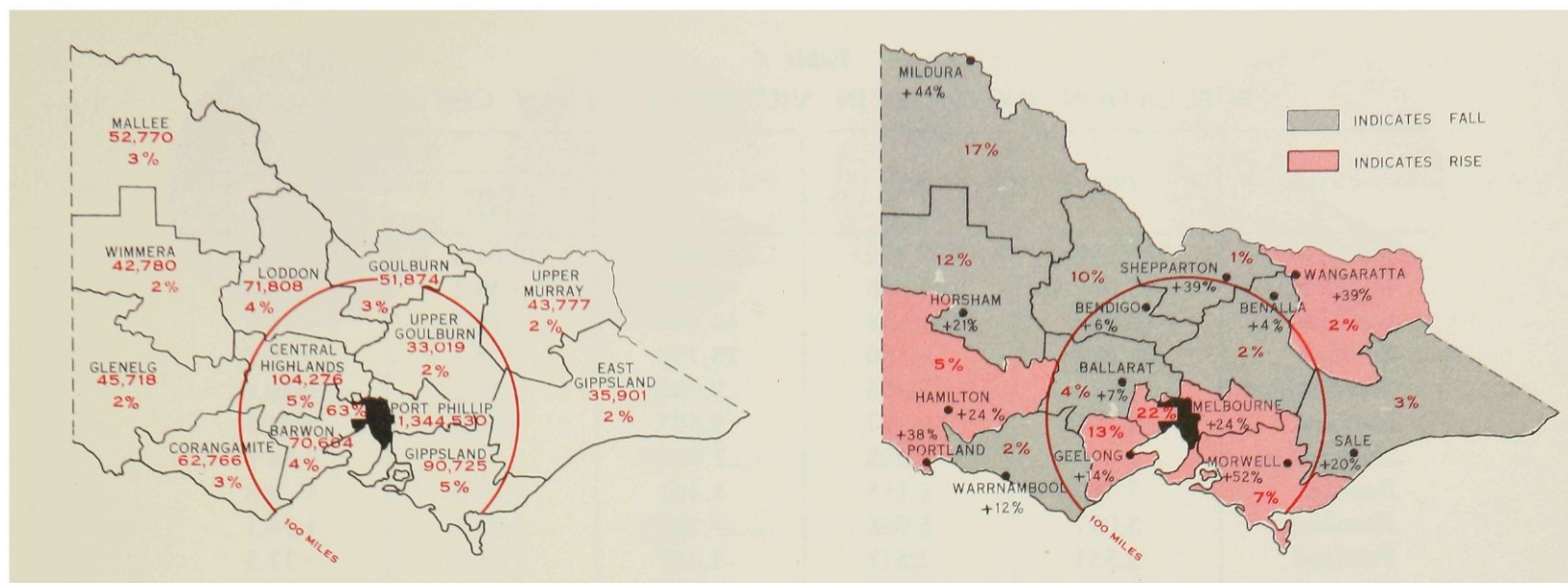
Although in the foregoing discussion the future population of Melbourne has been related to the population growth of Australia, it is nevertheless desirable to analyse the movements of population within Victoria to appreciate fully the influence of such developments on Melbourne's urban growth and future development. Whereas the population of Melbourne has continued to grow steadily with the Australian population, that of Victoria has increased much more slowly and, in relation to the Australian population, has in fact been gradually declining over the past 40 years.

This has been brought about by several factors. Firstly, although with the exception of the island State of Tasmania, Victoria is the smallest Australian State in point of area, it is already 2½ times more densely settled than any other State. Secondly, Victoria has relatively few large urban

Table 4

ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION OF AUSTRALIA AND MELBOURNE

Year	Assuming 100,000 migrants per annum		Assuming 50,000 migrants per annum	
	Australia	Melbourne	Australia	Melbourne
1955	9,200,000	1,510,000	8,950,000	1,470,000
1960	10,100,000	1,690,000	9,550,000	1,600,000
1965	11,000,000	1,880,000	10,150,000	1,730,000
1970	11,900,000	2,070,000	10,750,000	1,860,000
1975	12,700,000	2,240,000	11,250,000	1,990,000
2000	16,600,000	3,000,000	13,700,000	2,500,000



10 DISTRIBUTION OF VICTORIA'S POPULATION BY REGIONS

11 TREND OF VICTORIA'S POPULATION BY REGIONS

centres outside of Melbourne, and the great bulk of Victorian industry and trade is centred in the capital city. The remainder of the State depends mainly on primary production, which is already fairly intensively developed compared with other parts of Australia. Maps 10 and 11 show the population distribution and trend within Victoria. It will be seen that, including the population of Melbourne, 80% of the entire population of the State is located within a radius of 100 miles of the metropolis. The trend of growth as shown by the variations in population within each of the 13 Victorian regions between the last two census years, 1933 and 1947, shows clearly the general relative decline in population in the rural areas as compared with the urban areas. The greatest percentage increase, for example, is shown in the regions surrounding Port Phillip Bay — namely, in the Port Phillip, Barwon and Gippsland regions, which include the principal industrial areas of Melbourne, Geelong and the Latrobe Valley. The greatest relative decline in population

is shown in the north-western part of the State which includes the Mallee, Wimmera and Loddon regions. The northern regions, including the Goulburn and Upper Goulburn regions, the eastern region of East Gippsland and the western region of Corangamite all show a slight overall decline in population. The remaining country regions, the Upper Murray and Glenelg regions, have shown a slight increase.

A significant factor throughout all country districts is that the population of the principal towns has generally increased irrespective of whether there has been a rise or a fall in the population of the surrounding region. For example, important country centres like Mildura, Ballarat and Bendigo have all increased in population although the overall populations of the regions to which they belong have fallen over the past 15 years. This further illustrates the drift from rural areas to urban centres even within the country districts themselves. The principal increases in population outside Melbourne have all been associated with urban development and usually with some form of industrial development. Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Morwell, Wangaratta, Shepparton, Benalla, Mildura and Warrnambool are typical examples where, over recent years, increased population has followed the development of local industrial activity. Melbourne and Geelong, centres where the greatest industrial expansion has taken place, show the largest overall increase in population.

A comparison of the increase in population of some of the principal urban centres throughout Victoria over the 1921-1947 census periods is given in Table 6.

It will be noted that the four largest urban centres outside of Melbourne — Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Morwell — are all located within a radius of 100 miles of Melbourne. The two expanding most rapidly, namely Geelong to the south-west and Morwell to the south-east, have special features which have helped their growth as industrial centres

Table 5
COMPARISON OF POPULATION OF VICTORIA
AND MELBOURNE

Year	Victorian Population		Melbourne Population	
	Persons	% of Australia	Persons	% of Victoria
1915	1,424,445	28.7	684,000	48.0
1920	1,527,909	28.2	763,000	49.9
1925	1,684,051	28.1	917,080	54.5
1930	1,792,605	27.6	999,650	55.8
1935	1,841,595	27.3	1,008,300	54.8
1940	1,914,918	27.1	1,083,000	56.6
1945	2,015,107	27.1	1,180,200	58.6
1950	2,231,255	26.8	1,326,400	59.4