Centre	1921			% Increase		
		1933	1947	Since 1921	Since 1933	
Melbourne	785,300	995,800	1,270,400	+61.8	+ 27.8	
Geelong	35,627	43,353	49,566	+39.1	+14.3	
Ballarat	40,362	41,658	44,440	+10.1	+ 6.7	
Bendigo	25,682	25,340	26,739	+ 4.1	+ 5.5	
Warrnambool	7,730	7,906	9,993	+29.3	+26.4	
Mildura	5,101	6,617	9,527	+86.8	+44.0	
Shepparton		5,698	7,914		+38.9	
Benalla	7,587	8,115	8,461	+11.5	+ 4.3	
Hamilton	5,097	5,786	7,180	+40.9	+24.1	
Portland	2,555	2,518	3,462	+35.5	+37.5	
Horsham	3,790	5,273	6,388	+68.5	+21.1	
Wangaratta	3,689	4,795	6,670	+80.8	+39.1	
Morwell	3,685	7,427	11,277	+206.0	+51.8	
Sale	3,769	4,262	5,119	+35.8	+20.1	

Table 6POPULATION INCREASE IN VICTORIAN URBAN CENTRES

—namely, Geelong's access to a port, and for Morwell the extensive brown coal deposits of the Latrobe Valley. Ballarat and Bendigo, which were originally gold mining towns, have actually fewer inhabitants today than they had at the beginning of the century, a reflection of the decline of the gold mining industry. The future growth of all these cities is now dependent on the development of manufacturing and service industries. At the present time over 70% of all such industries in Victoria are in Melbourne.

Since the war, the Government has been making every effort to encourage the decentralisation of new industries throughout the Stafe, and this has facilitated the growth of several provincial urban centres. But this development has had a relatively small overall effect on the growth of Melbourne and, for economic and geographic reasons, it is difficult to foresee any such development ever having any marked effect on its growth and importance. The increasing advantages of Melbourne as a manufacturing and distributive centre for the whole Commonwealth together with the absence of any other port in Victoria capable of really largescale commercial development, offset the possibilities of other large urban centres developing sufficiently to affect Melbourne's growth. In fact, the growth of a ring of large, prosperous urban centres around Melbourne would tend to increase the importance of the city particularly as a distribution and administrative centre because of its strategic central location as regards land and sea communications of both the State and Commonwealth.

THE AGE STRUCTURE

In addition to studying the probable future growth of the population of Melbourne, it is also important to note the changes in the age structure of the population. The average age of Australia's population, like that of most other countries, has been slowly increasing as a result of the gradual decline in both birth rate and death rate in past decades. Not only has there been a decreasing proportion of children born, but the average person has been living to a greater age. From a planning viewpoint, the importance of these trends is that they cause changes in the composition and size of the work force, in the size of the school age groups, in the number of elderly people, and in the size of the average family.

Table 7 and diagram 12 show the gradual change that has taken place in the age structure of the Australian population since the beginning of this century.

It will be seen that the proportion of elderly people has constantly risen, whereas the proportion of young children has fallen, although there has been a slight recovery since the war as a result of the increased birth rate. The proportion of people in the work force group (15 to 64 years) has varied with the changing birth rate, rising with the decline in births and falling, since the war, as the birth rate has recovered. The proportion of young people in this work force group, however, has constantly declined as a result of the continued decline in the birth rate between 1900 and 1941. This trend will continue until the children born in increasing numbers over the past 10 years reach a working age. If the birth rate again declines, this change may be only temporary.

The age structure in Melbourne itself is somewhat different although it reflects the same general trend. The proportion of children in large urban centres like Melbourne is lower than for the whole of Australia, while the proportion of elderly people is correspondingly higher.

Melbourne has a higher proportion of its population in each of the age groups over 20 years than has Australia as a whole.



12 AUSTRALIA'S CHANGING AGE STRUCTURE

What then are likely to be the changes in the future in the light of the population projections already made? On the basis of the birth rate already used, the percentage of children in the 0-14 age group would tend to level out at a somewhat similar figure to that existing in 1947, namely 25% for the whole of Australia and 22% for Melbourne. Because of the low birth rate following the depression the 1947 figures include a high proportion in the under 5 age group but a low proportion in the 5 to 14 age group. The proportion in the over 65 age group will probably tend to rise slightly because of the constant tendency for the death rate to fall.

For planning purposes, therefore, it has been assumed that the figures will tend to level out during the 25 to 50 years period somewhat as follows:

Age Group	Australia	Melbourne
0 - 14	25%	22%
15 - 65	65%	67%
65 and over	10%	11%

These figures are based on the assumption that over the long period migrants will tend to conform to the basic trend in the Australian population as has been the experience in the past. At the present time the migrants arriving include a higher proportion in the over 20 years age group and a correspondingly lower proportion of children than in the overall Australian population. While this trend continues it will naturally result in a slightly lower percentage in the 0-14 age group than the long-range figures shown.

Age and Sex Distribution in Melbourne: The age and sex structure of the population of Melbourne at the time of the 1947 Census is set out in diagram 13. This shows the proportion of both males and females in 10 year age groups for each municipality within the metropolitan area, as well as the distribution for Melbourne as a whole. It clearly illustrates the decline of population in the 10-19 age groups as a result of the low birth rate years of the depression, and the considerably higher proportion in the 0-10 age groups, which cover the war and early post-war years when the birth rate was rising.

The individual municipal figures show the different age structure of the inner and outer suburbs. The higher proportion of elderly people in the inner suburbs and the higher proportion of children in the outer suburbs. For example, those suburbs within the central district have an average of 13.8% of their population in the 0-10 years age group, compared with the average for the whole metropolitan area of 17%. Conversely, the average proportion of people over 60 in the central suburbs is 13.7%, while the average for the whole metropolitan area is 11.4%.

The distribution of children is better illustrated by map 14 which shows the proportion of the total municipal population under the age of 15 years in each municipality. This

 Table 7

 PERCENTAGE OF AUSTRALIAN POPULATION IN EACH AGE GROUP

Age Group	1901	1911	1921	1933	1938	1941	1947	1950
0-14	35.1	31.6	31.7	27.5	25.1	24.2	25.1	26.5
15-64	60.9	64.1	63.9	66.0	67.7	68.6	66.9	65.4
65 and over	4.0	4.3	4.4	6.5	7.2	7.2	8.0	8.1