

Research Matters

News from the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Spatial Information and Research

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Beyond Five Million – The Victorian Government's Population Policy

Population issues are not only of interest to the Department of Sustainability and Environment – all State Government Departments rely on annual estimates provided by the ABS and population projections produced by DSE for a range of planning, policy and program and service delivery functions.

The State Government is also interested in issues relating to population change because they are so strongly linked to issues such as the health of our economy, our families, our regions and the environment. Hence, the Victorian Government has developed a population policy that was released late in 2004 to coincide with Victoria passing the 5 million population mark.

Beyond Five Million: The Victorian Government's Population Policy explains the Victorian Government's vision for growing our population in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner. But, as importantly, it identifies strategies to plan for and manage population change. The Population Policy provides a framework for policies designed to increase migration, encourage family formation, increase regional population growth and respond to the challenges of demographic change.

The development of the population policy involved input from across State Government including input from the Demographic Research Team in Spatial Information and Research.

You can find *Beyond Five Million: The Victorian Government's Population Policy* on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's website – www.dpc.vic.gov.au

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Name this building competition – Winner

Congratulations to Knowles Tivendale from the City of Greater Dandenong who correctly identified the pictured building as the Selfridges Department Store which is part of the Bull Ring Retail Development in Birmingham. Our lucky winner will be receiving a \$50 gift voucher from the DSE Information Centre. Thanks to all those who entered.

Demographic Presentations Online

Presentations given by the Demographics Team over the last six months are now available online to view or download. These include those presented as part of the Victoria in Future Seminar Series and papers presented at conferences and workshops. The files can be downloaded by navigating to www.dse.vic.gov.au/research and following the links to demographics, and also at www.dse.vic.gov.au/victoriainfuture then follow the links to presentations.

The following is an abstract from one of the presentations available, a paper given by Anne Barlow at the Australian Population Conference in Canberra, in September 2004:

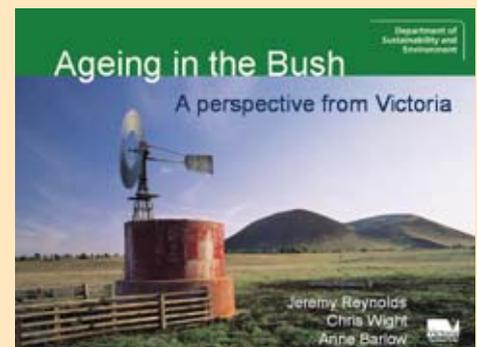
Ageing in the Bush: A Perspective from Victoria

This presentation is about the ageing population of rural and regional Victoria and its implications for state and local government and other service providers.

Ageing populations are a common phenomenon in all advanced countries. They stem from the combination of greater life expectancy and lowering fertility rates and their historical and ongoing legacy. Victoria is no different in this respect. In 1971 Victoria's population exhibited a classical pyramid. But it has changed since. The highest numbers of people are now aged in their early thirties and the bulge of population born in the 25 years after WWII are now aged in their 30s, 40s and 50s.

Regional Victoria already has an older population than Melbourne. Over time regional Victoria's entrenched migration patterns accentuate this ageing process. Regional Victoria's population is projected to grow by 27% over the 2001 to 2031 period. Its population aged over 60 is projected to grow by 133% and its population over 80 by 553% over the same period.

Within regional Victoria there are fundamental differences in age structure between the peri-urban areas around Melbourne, regional centres, coastal areas and the remoter dry land farming areas. Service providers need to understand this geography of ageing. The loss of children in many rural areas presents issues for providers of education services and a larger aged population creates greater demands for health services. In the dry land farming areas the loss of young and middle aged populations leads to further shortages of skilled people required to provide services.



Journey to Work 2001 Reports for Local Government

In the 2001 Census, for the first time the journeys to work of people in all regional areas were coded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

For every municipality in Victoria, the Sustainability Analysis Team within Spatial Information and Research has completed an analysis of journeys to work into and out of the LGA. A separate report has been prepared for each LGA.

This analysis shows at a sub-LGA level where workers originated from, where they went to and whether they used public transport. It provides patterns of travel for different industries, occupations, household income groups, age groups, and sex and contains some comparisons between

individual local government areas and metropolitan Melbourne / regional Victoria as a whole.

Readers may find interest in following patterns for neighbouring LGAs by comparing separate reports.

Some additional data also exists for larger towns in regional Victoria. In all there are over 30 pages of information about each LGA.

These reports will shortly be available in PDF format for download from the website www.dse.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional. For further information, please email christine.kilmartin@dse.vic.gov.au

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The Growth of Melbourne

The legacy of Melbourne's development over the last 170 years provides pointers and challenges for the future. By any standards, Melbourne's early development was fast with its population passing one million on the eve of the Wall Street Crash in 1929. The gold rush and the subsequent development of agriculture across Victoria had led to Melbourne becoming a busy colonial administrative and trade capital. Melbourne's shape and size in 1928 has shaped its future. Its train and tram network was as good as anywhere in the World and housing and commerce hugged around these arteries. Also, owing to swamps to the west of the City, Melbourne developed a bias to the south-east and east, something it has retained to the present day whereby three quarters of Melbourne's population lives east of a line running north-south through the City.

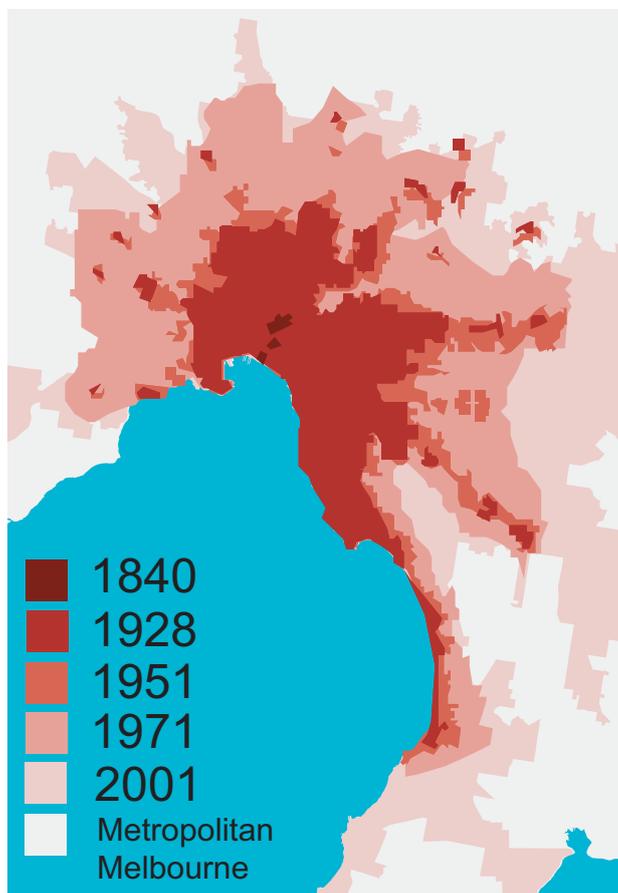
Post WWII, Melbourne, like other Australian cities, boomed. Just when European cities were legislating to contain urban sprawl, Melbourne's suburbanisation took off. Its population doubled in the post war generation, industry flourished, and the car and a favourable financial environment led to a period of strong suburbanisation. Despite fluctuating economic conditions over the last thirty years and lower immigration and fertility rates, Melbourne's outward expansion has continued apace, although increasingly determined in its direction of growth by the corridor green wedge policies established by the MMBW in 1971.

In terms of residential densities, Melbourne now has about 15 persons per hectare. This is slightly lower than Sydney's but higher than Australia's other capitals. It is similar to cities such as Chicago or San Francisco, two-thirds the density of Vancouver and one-third Toronto's. London and Paris are both three times more dense than Melbourne while EEC capital Brussels comes in at five times higher. Hong Kong, at 300 persons per hectare is twenty times higher.

Our history provides us with many challenges. About two-thirds of Melbourne has been built since 1945. It was largely built for a family oriented society working in an industrial economy. Melbourne, however, has diversified economically and socially.

Many of the planning battles we see are about the tension between these changing roles and an established and much admired built environment.

The extent of metropolitan Melbourne from 1840–2001



Source: DSE

Urban and Regional Research Online

The Urban and Regional Research web page can be accessed at www.dse.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional. Recent updates to the site include the latest editions of our quarterly Bulletins – *Research Matters*, *Residential Land Bulletin* and *Local Connections*. The *Urban Development Program 2004 Report* is now available as html pages. Upcoming content includes the 2005 *Victorian Population Bulletin* and Transport Strategies and Sustainability Strategies pages within the *Local Government Research Network* section. Please email your comments, questions and suggestions to christina.inbakaran@dse.vic.gov.au.

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New Atlas projects for 2005

Regional Matters, an Atlas of Regional Victoria, was published in 2002. Its aim was to illustrate the drivers and impacts of change in regional areas of the State, and generate understanding and debate about change.

The Atlas took a fresh look at mapping change – for example using football club closures and amalgamations to indicate the social impacts of areas that are losing population. Among the issues that the Atlas focussed on were the supply of health services, transport costs and the demand for skilled labour in growth areas.

Regional Matters has been widely read and used across Victoria. In response to popular demand, the Atlas is being updated, and a companion volume will be published to cover metropolitan Melbourne.



This time around the Regional Atlas will build on the first edition Atlas, updating relevant information and developing new themes to reflect recent changes and emerging issues in Regional Victoria. The Regional Atlas will use maps and succinct data presentations to illustrate issues across a range of disciplines. As these issues affect all areas of society, the document should be invaluable for policy makers at all levels of government, service providers, academics and the general community.

The Melbourne Atlas will provide a concise overview of key demographic, social, economic and physical factors driving change in the metropolitan area. The audience for the Melbourne Atlas includes industry, government, councils, academics, and community members who are interested in how Melbourne has changed over the past several decades and what the changes mean for these service providers.



Participants workshop issues at the Regional Atlas Forum in Bendigo

Two groups of researchers and mappers are now working on each of the Atlas projects. Both products are expected to be ready for publication in the latter part of 2005. The published versions will be supported by website access.

The 2002 Regional Matters Atlas is available through the Information Victoria website, at www.information.vic.gov.au/resources.

Comments on the previous Regional Atlas and proposals for metropolitan or regional issues to be covered in the new atlases are welcome. Comments and suggestions should be forwarded through Simone Hoey at simone.hoey@dse.vic.gov.au.

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