

Research matters

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INSIDE

Towns in Time: The Rise of the Degree	3
Victoria in Future	4
What's new online	4

New Director

Dr Tim Patton has recently been appointed Director of Spatial Analysis and Research. Tim joins the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) from the Department of Transport (DOT) where he had a variety of senior management roles.

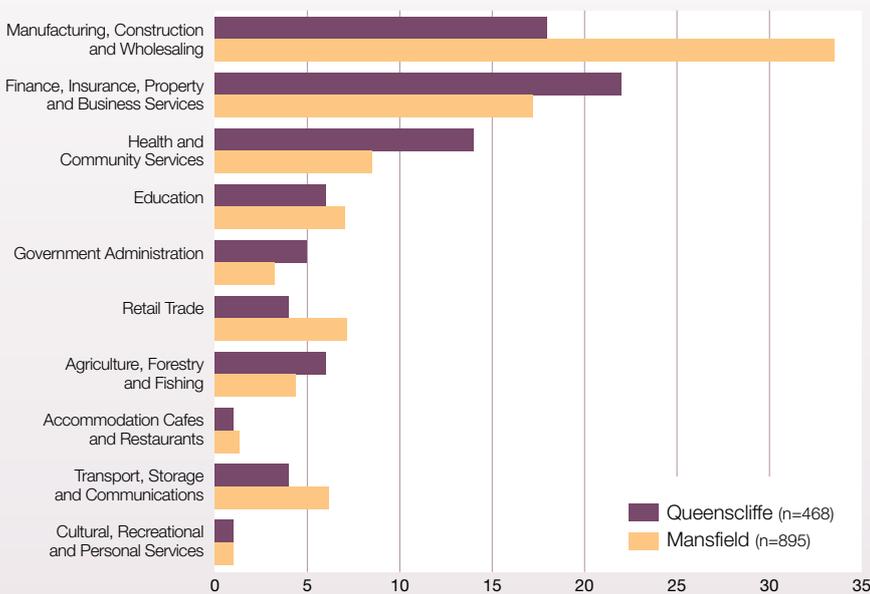
Mobile populations research program Queenscliffe Survey

In 2008, the Spatial Analysis and Research Branch (SAR) continued its research into mobile populations by undertaking a survey on non-resident ratepayers in the Borough of Queenscliffe¹. The study followed the style of the Mansfield survey which was completed in late 2006². In both cases the project was carried out in partnership with the local municipality and with the assistance of Sweeney Research consultants.

As a coastal municipality, the Borough of Queenscliffe provides a valuable comparison to Mansfield which is located inland, to the north of Melbourne. The Borough has a smaller population (c. 3,000) than Mansfield (c. 7,200)³. Queenscliffe is also notable for its older age structure - at the time of the 2006 Census, the median age of Queenscliffe's population was 53 compared to 44



Figure 1: Industry of employment non-resident respondents, Queenscliffe and Mansfield



Source: DPCD, Surveys of non-resident ratepayers, 2006 and 2008

- 1 A sample of residents was also surveyed for comparative purposes.
- 2 Refer *Research Matters* No. 41, March 2007 for summary of Mansfield Study findings
- 3 ABS Census 2006, usual resident population

for Mansfield. The non-resident population also has a relatively old age profile compared to the non-residents of Mansfield.

Around half the ratepayers in each location have their main residence outside the municipality. In the case of Mansfield, Melbourne is the source of 80% of non-residents. For Queenscliffe the figure is lower with only 66% of respondents indicating their primary residence was in Melbourne. The proximity of Geelong to Queenscliffe is one factor which would account for this difference as many non-residents would live in Geelong.

The industry profile of non-residents in the two locations provides an interesting contrast (Figure 1).

Mansfield's non-residents are strongly represented in the manufacturing, construction and wholesaling industry while Queenscliffe has a high proportion of non-residents in business-related services. This contrast suggests that non-resident populations have a variety of socio-economic profiles across different locations. Hence the stereotyping of 'seachange' and 'treechange' migration may be an oversimplification of a trend that can include a wide range of people. Furthermore, different locations will have different issues of concern to non-residents as Table 1 shows.

...continued overleaf

Mobile populations research program Queenscliffe Survey continued



Table 1: Most important issues Council should address, non-resident ratepayers, Mansfield and Queenscliffe

Mansfield (n = 1,144)	%	Queenscliffe (n = 712)	%
Roads to be sealed/roads in general	22	Protect town character (heritage, no high rise)	47
Water/conservation/management	20	Seafront/foreshore restoration	13
Tourism	11	Town planning - consistency	10
Managing Lake Eildon/Weir	9	Oppose Stockland development	9
Environment issues	6	Traffic management	7
More recreational activities/facilities	6	Upgrading streets/area/footpaths	6
Waste control/rubbish	6	Increase parking availability/disabled parks	6
Forward planning/town planning	6	Address subdivision/boundary issues	6

Source: DPCD, Surveys of non-resident ratepayers, 2006 and 2008

Inland areas can have issues caused by the dispersal of population. In Mansfield this can be seen in the high levels of concern regarding road infrastructure and water supply – both being networked infrastructure which is expensive to provide for dispersed populations. In coastal areas like Queenscliffe the issues are related more to concentration of development and protection of the area's heritage character and environment. In part this reflects a particular history and heritage area of the town, but it also reflects the pressures that can occur in coastal locations where a single geographic feature (i.e. the coastline) is the focus for residents, non-residents and visitors alike. Concerns about over-development, foreshore degradation and traffic are more likely to occur in these locations⁴.

An important part of the surveys was to investigate whether the non-resident respondents were likely to move permanently to Mansfield or Queenscliffe respectively. Table 2 shows the findings of the two surveys.

In both cases around half of the respondents indicated that they were planning to spend more time in these locations in the future with the proportion for Queenscliffe (55%) being slightly higher than for Mansfield (46%). The proportion planning to move permanently was also higher in Queenscliffe (46%) than Mansfield (36%). These figures are significant in terms of potential resident numbers moving to the municipalities in question.

A further breakdown of those planning to move permanently shows a difference between the two locations in terms of retirement status. Queenscliffe shows a high proportion of potential movers being retirees whereas the Mansfield sample shows a third of the potential movers who expect to still be working after a permanent move. This suggests that the traditional pattern of 'retiring to the coast' still exists, but that inland locations like Mansfield may have a more complex array of population characteristics and aspirations than is usually considered when describing this movement as 'treechange'.

Table 2: Future intentions of non-residents

	Mansfield (n = 1,144)	Queenscliffe (n = 712)
Plan to spend more time there in future	46%	55%
Plan to move there permanently	36%	46%
<i>and retire</i>	52%	70%
<i>and continue working</i>	35%	23%

Source: DPCD, Surveys of non-resident ratepayers, 2006 and 2008

For further information, please contact fiona.mckenzie@dpd.vic.gov.au

⁴ Such concerns were also evident in the findings of the coastal population fluctuations survey undertaken by SAR. Refer *Research Matters*, No. 43 Sept 2007 or our website for further details

Towns in Time: The rise of the degree

Towns in Time, DPCD's time series analysis of Victorian towns, is being progressively published on the web. As part of that analysis, Spatial Analysis and Research is looking at the trends emerging in education data over a twenty year period.

This research compares data from ten year intervals (1986, 1996 and 2006) to look at the changes in the proportion of adults with a degree in the towns of Victoria.

The findings from this analysis show there was a sharp increase in the proportion of people who had a degree in 1986 to those who had a degree in 2006. Over this period of time the median proportion had risen significantly in each of the ten year intervals.

In 1986 the proportion of people who had a degree in Victoria was very low, with a median value of 2.7%. Figure 1 shows that Victorian towns generally had a low proportion of people with degrees, except for Mount Macedon which had a proportion of 12%, and Queenscliffe, Balnarring and Panton Hill which had proportions of 10%, 7% and 8% respectively.

Other towns had much lower proportions, with the lowest values of 3% or below situated in the regional areas of Victoria, and the slightly higher values located close to or inside the Melbourne Statistical Division (MSD).

This low average was the result of a lack of demand in the labour market for highly skilled workers, which meant that there was no need to get a degree as careers could be advanced without this level of education.

Government policies around this time were aimed at increasing the retention rates of year 12 students which also pushed up the number of students who could then continue on with further study. The rise over the years can also be attributed to the increases in tertiary funding from the government which would have resulted in an expansion of the tertiary education sector.

In 1996 the proportion of people who had a degree rose to a median value of 5.7%. The spatial pattern exhibited in Figure 2 shows how the level of education is related to distance from Melbourne. The towns closer to or within the MSD had better accessibility to education facilities, and therefore most of these towns had a higher proportion of people with a degree than towns further outlying. This pattern may also reflect the accessibility to the Melbourne job market. The towns from 1986 with a high proportion of people with degrees, Queenscliffe, Balnarring, Panton Hill and Mount Macedon, have continued to rise with all reaching a

proportion of at least 15% or more.

In 2006 the median continued to rise to a value of 9.2%. Figure 3 shows the rise is highly concentrated in the towns situated close to the MSD and large regional centres. This rise can be attributed to the now more common knowledge of the benefits of a further education, and the need for more

advanced qualifications in careers to meet the labour market demands for highly skilled workers. As a result, tertiary education has now changed from being an elite pursuit to a common experience and requirement.

For further information, please contact nardia.smits@dpced.vic.gov.au

Figure 1: Proportion of people with degrees in 1986

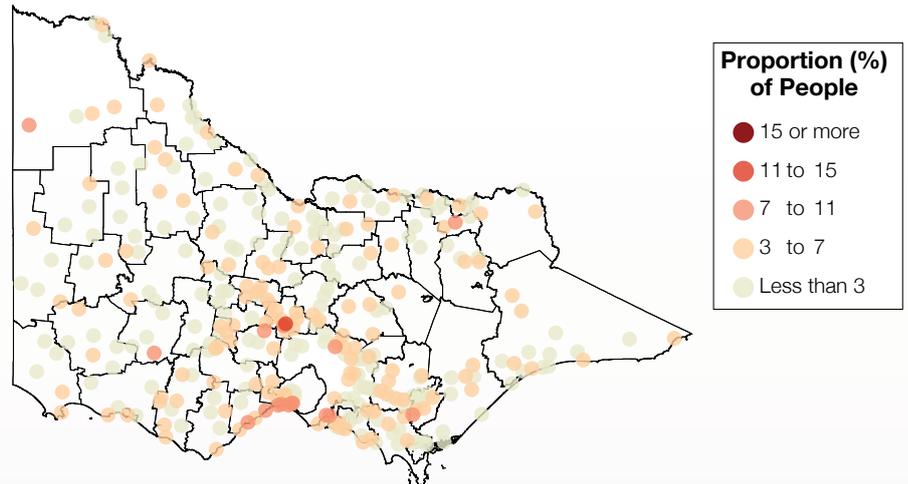


Figure 2: Proportion of people with degrees in 1996

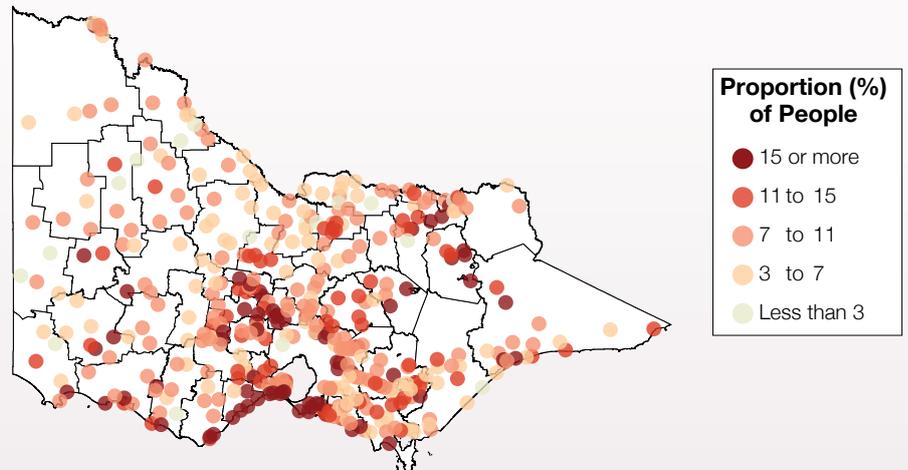
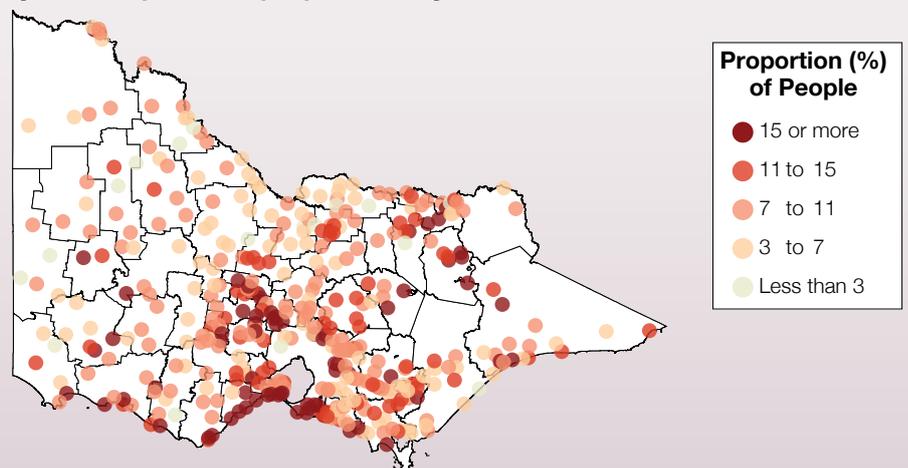


Figure 3: Proportion of people with degrees in 2006



Victoria in Future

'Australia and Victoria's population grew by record amounts in 2007/08'.

'The number of births the highest ever'.

'Population projections revised upwards'.

These were just some of the headlines appearing in the last four months of 2008. In September, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revised Victoria's projected population for 2036 upwards by over a million and Melbourne's by over 900,000. In November, the ABS reported record numbers of births in Australia, followed in December by record overseas migration levels and population growth. Meanwhile the new *Victoria in Future*, the Victorian Government's revised population projections, was published by DPCD in December along with a new statement on Melbourne 2030: Melbourne @ 5 million and a week later the new transport plan was released. In the meantime, the economy in Australia and beyond started to decline.

Reconciling these can be a major challenge for future thinking people. So some points of clarification are offered:

Why is the population growing so strongly? It is a combination of high natural increase, high overseas migration and small net losses of people to other states. Overseas migration is strong owing to growing long-term labour force shortages. Births are high because the bulge of people born in the early 1970s are of childbearing age and because fertility rates have surprisingly risen here and overseas.

Is this population growth a record high? Yes and No! Yes it is the largest growth in Victoria and Australia's history, but it is not the highest growth rate. That was in the gold rush. More recently, in every year between 1948 and 1964, Victoria's annual population growth exceeded its current rate of 1.8%.

Will slow economic growth affect future population growth? It is likely in the short-term that overseas migration will fall but it will come down from a peak that is only being reached in 2008/09. A 25% drop in overseas migration from this peak level has been factored into projections.



What about the longer term? Overseas migration and labour market conditions in Australia are closely linked (see *Research Matters* No.44). Over the last 30 years, labour force growth has been sustained by the entry of many women into the 'formal' labour force and by the entry of ageing baby boomers. In the future, baby boomers will increasingly age out of the workforce while women's participation cannot go on increasing as it has in the past. Consequently as long as the demand for labour continues to grow, overseas migration is likely to remain a way of satisfying that demand.

Victoria in Future population projections can be viewed online at www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/victoriainfuture

More detailed projections on the populations of local government areas in regional Victoria, the age structures of local populations and on households and their characteristics will be published in coming months.

For further information, please contact jeremy.reynolds@dpcd.vic.gov.au

What's new online

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional

Victoria in Future (MIF) 2008, the Victorian State Government current population and household projections, is available online. Total projected populations are currently available for Victoria, Melbourne, Regional Victoria, and the Local Government Areas within the Melbourne Statistical Division. One page profiles containing key demographic data are available for download, as are detailed data files.

An analysis on dwellings and housing covering the time period from 1981 to 2006 has been released as part of the *Towns in Time* analysis. It provides information on the changes that have occurred in this 25 year time frame in terms of dwellings and housing; vacant dwellings; average household size; and lone person households.

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GPO Box 2392, Melbourne, VIC 3001.

Tel (03) 9208 3000
Fax (03) 9208 3374

Email spatialanalysis.research@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Internet www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional

Editors: Nardia Smits and Kylie Birch

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