Victoria's diverse population:
2016 Census

Victoria is home to one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world.

Of Victoria's total population of 5.93 million at the 2016 Census:

» 28.4 per cent (1,680,271) were born overseas in over 200 countries (up from 26.2 per cent in 2011 and 23.8 per cent in 2006);

» 49.1 per cent (2,910,631) were born overseas or born in Australia with at least one parent born overseas (up from 46.6 per cent in 2011 and 43.6 per cent in 2006);

» 26.0 per cent (1,538,839) spoke languages other than English at home (up from 23.1 per cent in 2011 and 20.4 per cent in 2006); and

» 59.0 per cent (3,493,950) followed more than 130 different faiths (compared to 67.7 per cent in 2011 and 68.7% in 2006).

The proportion of the overseas-born in Victoria who come from non-main English speaking countries is 77.7%. This is the highest for all Australian states and territories.

Victoria also has the second highest proportion of persons speaking a language other than English (26.0%).

Victoria continues to attract migrants from all over the world, contributing to an increasingly multicultural society.

Photography: Jorge de Araujo, Artificial Studios

Victoria's population diversity — summary

Table 1. Victoria: Population diversity and change, 2016, 2011

Key facts	2016 Persons	2016 As % of pop	2011 Persons	2011 As % of pop	Change 2011-2016 Persons	Change 2011-2016 % change	2006-2011 % change
Total population	5,926,624	100.0	5,354,039	100.0	572,585	10.7	8.5
Australia-born	3,845,493	64.9	3,670,935	68.6	174,558	4.8	6.9
Overseas-born [a]	1,680,271	28.4	1,405,335	26.2	274,936	19.6	19.8
Birthplace not stated	400,856	6.8	277,772	5.2	123,084	44.3	-14.5
Overseas-born							
Born in MESC [b]	374,476	6.3	357,258	6.7	17,218	4.8	11.9
Born in NMESC [a][c]	1,305,795	22.0	1,048,074	19.6	257,721	24.6	22.7
Total Overseas-born [a]	1,680,271	28.4	1,405,335	26.2	274,936	19.6	19.8
Australian-born:							
With both parents OSB	638,800	10.8	549,583	10.3	89,217	16.2	13.8
With only one parent OSB	584,025	9.9	539,889	10.1	44,136	8.2	10.5
With at least one parent OSB	1,222,825	20.6	1,089,472	20.3	133,353	12.2	12.1
With both parents born in NMESC	525,653	8.9	na	-	na	-	na
With only one parent born in NMESC	314,099	5.3	na	-	na	-	na
With at least one parent born in NMESC	839,752	14.2	na	-	na	-	na
Speak a LOTE at home	1,538,839	26.0	1,235,433	23.1	303,406	24.6	22.6
With a religion [d]	3,493,950	59.0	3,614,939	67.5	-120,989	-3.3	7.6
Citizenship, overseas born							
OSB who are Australian citizens	979,256	58.3	886,365	63.1	92,891	10.5	11.9
OSB who are not Australian citizens	672,900	40.0	494,488	35.2	178,412	36.1	38.0
Not stated	28,130	1.7	24,485	1.7	3,645	14.9	9.1
Total overseas-born	1,680,286	100.0	1,405,335	100.0	274,936	19.6	19.8

Note:

Cells in this table and other tables in the brochure have small random adjustments to protect the confidentiality of data. These adjustments may cause the sum of rows or columns to differ by small amounts from table totals or when the same tables are generated at different occasions.

When calculating the number of persons as a % of the population, the population includes the "not stated" category.

Data for Victoria is based on Place of Usual Residence. Australia-born excludes External Territories.

(a) Includes "Inadequately described" and "At sea".

(b) Main English-speaking countries (MESC) are the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, USA and South Africa.

(c) Non-main English-speaking countries (NMESC) include all other countries of birth, except for the MESC and 'not stated'.

(d) Excludes "No Religion, so described", "Inadequately described", "Not defined" and "Not stated".

Victoria's population growth between the 2011 and 2016 censuses is among the highest in Australia. Our population is becoming more multicultural, mainly due to changing migration trends.

As shown in Table 1, the total population increased by 10.7% between 2011 and 2016, compared to 8.5% between 2006 and 2011. The overseas-born population increased by 19.6%, which is similar to 19.8% in the previous period. The number and proportion who did not state their birthplace increased at the 2016 Census.

Those born overseas made up 28.4% of the total population in 2016, compared to 26.2% in 2011. The proportion of overseas-born from non-main English-speaking countries (NMESC) was 22.0% (1,305,795), while 6.3% (374,476) were born in main English-speaking countries (MESC).

Victoria's population diversity is also evidenced by those born in Australia but have overseas-born parents. In 2016, 20.6% of the Australia-born have at least one parent born overseas. In total, those born overseas or born in Australia with at least one parent born overseas made up 49.1% of the population, an increase from 46.6% in 2011 and 43.6% in 2006.

The proportion of Victorians speaking a Language other than English (LOTE) at home was 26.0% (1,538,839) in 2016, compared to 23.1% (1,235,433) in 2011 and 20.4% in 2006. Victorians speak more than 260 languages and dialects.

The proportion of Victorians with a religion decreased from 67.5% in 2011 to 59.0% in 2016. This reflects a national trend.

Of the total overseas-born in Victoria, 58.3% are Australian citizens, 40.0% are not Australian citizens and 1.7% did not state their citizenship.

Source countries by regions

Table 2. Victoria: Overseas-born by major geographic regions, 2016, 2011 and 2006

Major geographic regions	2016	%	2011	%	2006	%	% Change 2011-2016	% Change 2006-2011
Oceania & Antarctica	117,695	7.0	100,629	7.2	80,858	6.9	17.0	24.5
North & West Europe	292,479	17.5	296,896	21.2	284,998	24.4	-1.5	4.2
Southern & Eastern Europe	256,404	15.3	274,570	19.6	289,315	24.7	-6.6	-5.1
North Africa & Middle East	112,233	6.7	88,786	6.3	72,584	6.2	26.4	22.3
South-East Asia	264,527	15.8	210,733	15.0	166,080	14.2	25.5	26.9
North-East Asia	216,472	12.9	135,550	9.7	91,523	7.8	59.7	48.1
Southern & Central Asia	284,907	17.0	186,323	13.3	99,320	8.5	52.9	87.6
Americas	60,359	3.6	49,542	3.5	40,216	3.4	21.8	23.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	70,167	4.2	59,467	4.2	44,962	3.8	18.0	32.3
Total by regions	1,675,243	100.0	1,402,496	100.0	1.169,856	100.0	19.4	19.9

Chart 1. Victoria: Overseas-born by major geographic regions, 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census
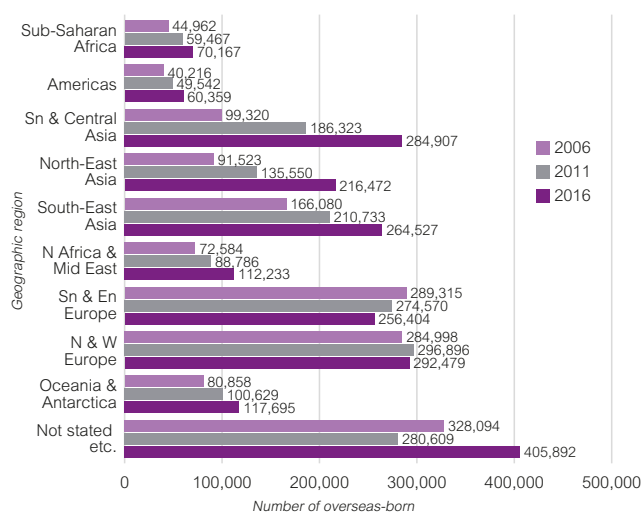

Table 2 shows the number and percentage proportion of overseas-born persons by major geographic regions for the 2016, 2011 and 2006 censuses. Chart 1 compares the changing numbers over the three censuses.

Victorian's migration trends are changing. Although the largest groups in 2016 were from North West Europe and Southern and Eastern Europe due to their long settlement history, their percentage shares are declining.

Those born in South-East and North-East Asia, Southern and Central Asia have increased significantly in numbers and percentage share as a result of more new arrivals in the last two censuses.

Top ranked overseas countries of birth

Table 3. Victoria: Top 15 countries of birth and change, 2016, 2011

Rank 2016	Rank 2011	Country of Birth	2016			2011	Change 2011-2016	
			Persons	As % of Overseas-born	As % of Tot Pop	Persons	Persons	% Change
1	1	England	171,443	10.2	2.9	172,068	-625	-0.4
2	2	India	169,802	10.1	2.9	111,787	58,015	51.9
3	3	China	160,652	9.6	2.7	93,896	66,756	71.1
4	4	New Zealand	93,253	5.5	1.6	80,234	13,019	16.2
5	6	Vietnam	80,787	4.8	1.4	68,297	12,490	18.3
6	5	Italy	70,527	4.2	1.2	76,909	-6,382	-8.3
7	8	Sri Lanka	55,830	3.3	0.9	43,991	11,839	26.9
8	10	Philippines	51,290	3.1	0.9	38,002	13,288	35.0
9	9	Malaysia	50,049	3.0	0.8	39,790	10,259	25.8
10	7	Greece	47,240	2.8	0.8	49,991	-2,751	-5.5
11	13	South Africa	27,184	1.6	0.5	24,447	2,737	11.2
12	12	Germany	26,308	1.6	0.4	28,021	-1,713	-6.1
13	11	Scotland	26,073	1.6	0.4	29,802	-3,729	-12.5
14	17	Hong Kong	21,642	1.3	0.4	18,204	3,438	18.9
15	34	Pakistan	21,125	1.3	0.4	9,187	11,938	129.9

Among the top 15 ranked countries of birth in 2016, the largest percentage increases were for those born in Pakistan (129.9%), China (71.1%), India (51.9%), Philippines (35.0%), Sri Lanka (26.9%) and Malaysia (25.8%). Percentage decreases were highest for Scotland (-12.5%), Italy (-8.3%), Germany (-6.1%) and Greece (-5.5%).

Top ranked ancestries

Table 4. Victoria: Top 15 ancestries, total responses, 2016

Rank 2016	Ancestry Response [a]	First Response	As % of Tot	Second Response	As % of Tot	Total Responses	As % of Tot
1	English	1,759,476	31.7	9,735	0.5	1,769,211	23.7
2	Australian	1,099,629	19.8	553,664	28.8	1,653,293	22.1
3	Irish	319,704	5.8	277,551	14.4	597,255	8.0
4	Scottish	212,720	3.8	279,564	14.6	492,284	6.6
5	Chinese	347,436	6.3	23,202	1.2	370,638	5.0
6	Italian	282,765	5.1	69,940	3.6	352,705	4.7
7	Indian	187,368	3.4	21,887	1.1	209,255	2.8
8	German	95,366	1.7	106,481	5.5	201,847	2.7
9	Greek	134,779	2.4	35,667	1.9	170,446	2.3
10	Vietnamese	93,885	1.7	14,257	0.7	108,142	1.4
11	Dutch	43,553	0.8	54,136	2.8	97,689	1.3
12	Maltese	43,468	0.8	30,404	1.6	73,872	1.0
13	Filipino	54,661	1.0	13,657	0.7	68,318	0.9
14	Sri Lankan	49,526	0.9	9,063	0.5	58,589	0.8
15	Polish	33,274	0.6	23,278	1.2	56,552	0.8

[a] Respondents have the option of providing more than one response but only the first two responses are coded. Total responses may exceed total persons.

Table 4 shows that English ancestry is top ranking (23.7%) of total responses, followed closely by Australian ancestry (22.1%).

The rest of the top ancestries are represented by ancestries from source countries of more established migrants and from rapidly increasing source countries from Asia.

Most diverse local government areas

Chart 2. Victoria: Top 20 LGAs, OSB as % of LGA pop, 2016

Local Government Area	Overseas-born as % of LGA pop.
Gr. Dandenong	57.7
Melbourne	55.7
Monash	49.1
Brimbank	47.9
Wyndham	41.6
Maribyrnong	40.1
Manningham	39.9
Whitehorse	38.5
Casey	38.2
Glen Eira	36.7
Hume	35.7
Whittlesea	35.5
Moreland	34.0
Darebin	33.3
Port Phillip	31.6
Stonnington	31.5
Kingston	31.2
Boroondara	30.9
Hobsons Bay	30.5
Knox	30.2

Chart 3. Victoria: Top 20 LGAs, no. of overseas-born, 2016

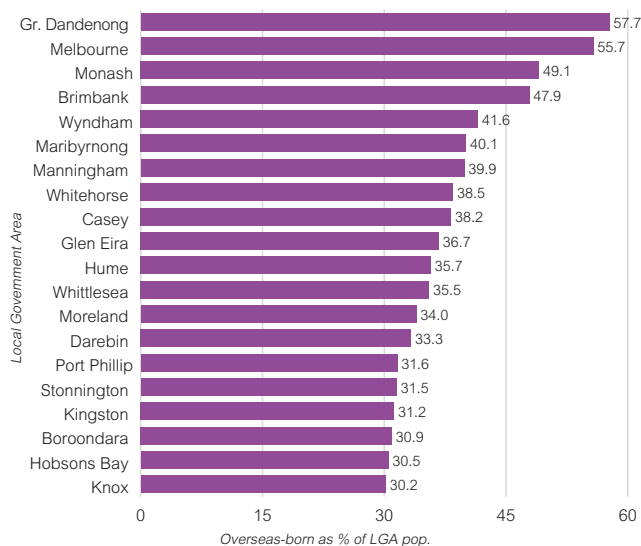| Local Government Area	Number of overseas-born
Casey	114,422
Brimbank	93,001
Wyndham	90,248
Monash	89,590
Gr. Dandenong	87,766
Melbourne	75,797
Hume	70,535
Whittlesea	70,138
Whitehorse	62,353
Moreland	55,227
Glen Eira	51,747
Boroondara	51,744
Darebin	48,848
Kingston	47,252
Knox	46,510
Manningham	46,376
Melton	40,613
Gr. Geelong	37,981
Maribyrnong	32,988
Stonnington	32,732

Chart 2 shows the ranking of LGAs in Victoria by the overseas-born as a percentage proportion of its LGA population. Greater Dandenong has the highest proportion of its LGA population born overseas, i.e. 57.7%, compared to an overall 28.4% for the state.

Other LGAs with high proportions of overseas-born include City of Melbourne (55.7%), Monash (49.1%), Brimbank (47.9%) and Wyndham (41.6%).

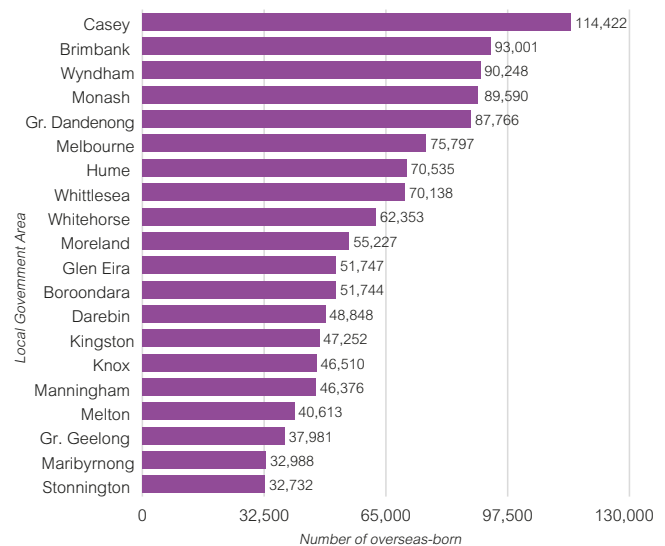These LGAs include large, outlying suburbs and new residential growth areas.

Chart 3 shows the top 20 LGAs with the largest number of overseas-born residents. The ranking varies slightly compared with Chart 2. The top 5 LGAs are Casey (114,422), Brimbank (93,001), Wyndham (90,248), Monash (89,590) and Greater Dandenong (87,766). City of Melbourne is ranked sixth, jumping from thirteenth place at the 2011 Census.

Figure 1. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria: number of overseas-born by LGAs, 2016
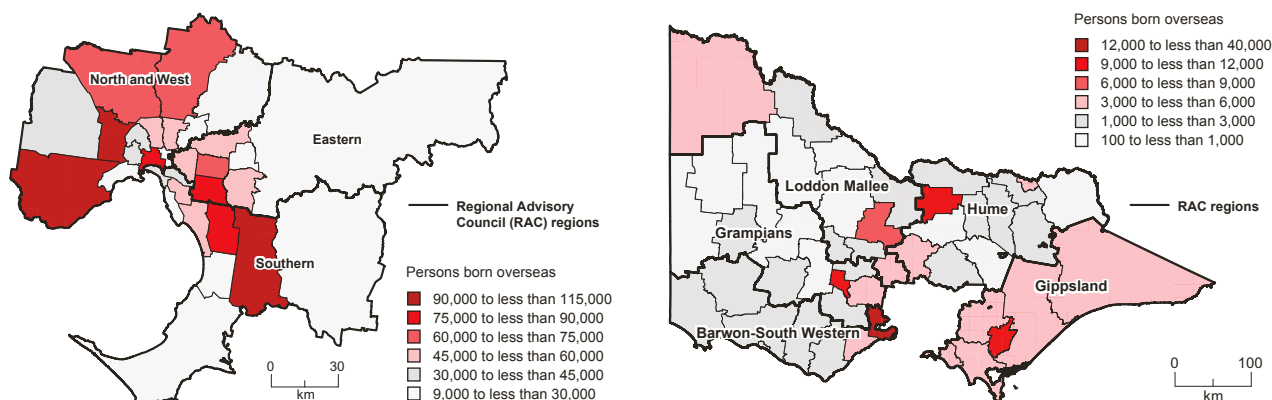

Figure 1 shows the geographic distribution of the overseas-born population by metropolitan and regional LGAs. LGAs in the northeast (such as Brimbank and Wyndham) and south-east of Metropolitan Melbourne (Casey, Monash and Greater Dandenong) have the largest number of overseas-born.

For inner city LGAs, the overseas-born in the City of Melbourne is increasing rapidly.

In Regional Victoria, LGAs with significant numbers of overseas-born are those associated with larger regional urban centres, such as the LGAs of Greater Geelong, Ballarat, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Latrobe and Mildura.

Figure 2. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria: % change of overseas-born by LGAs, 2016 and 2011
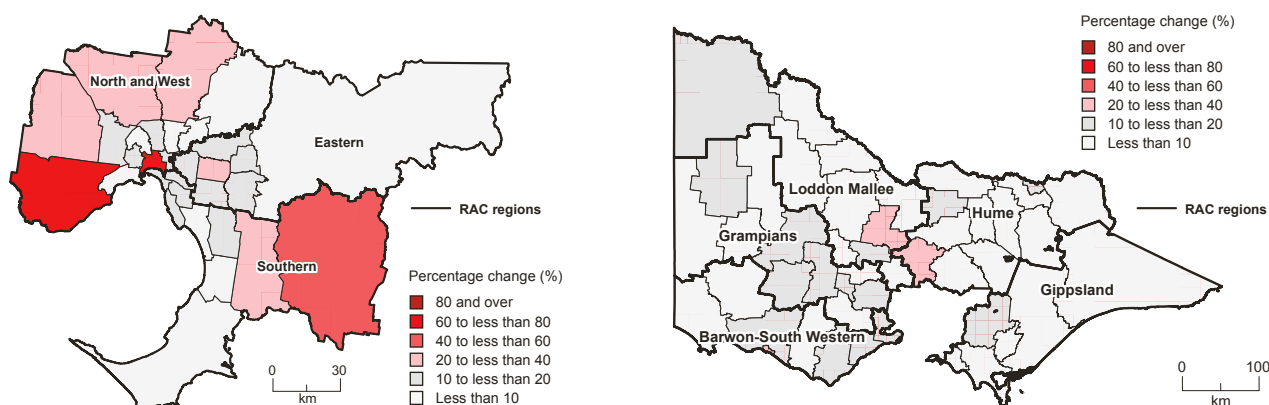
Figure 2 shows the growth patterns or percentage increases in overseas-born between 2011 and 2016. The largest increases were in the LGAs of the City of Melbourne, Wyndham (in the west) and Cardinia (in the southeast).

The overseas-born in regional LGAs experienced more moderate growth – the largest percentage increases were in Greater Bendigo and Mitchell. Migrant settlement plays an important role in contributing to population maintenance and growth in regional urban centres.

5

Languages other than English (LOTE)

Table 5. Victoria: Top 15 languages other than English and change, 2016, 2011

Rank 2016	Rank 2011	Language Spoken at Home	2016			2011	Change 2011-2016	
			Persons	As % of Tot LOTE	As % of Tot Pop	Persons	Persons	% Change
1	3	Mandarin	191,793	12.5	3.2	103,742	88,051	84.9
2	1	Italian	112,272	7.3	1.9	124,856	-12,584	-10.1
3	2	Greek	110,707	7.2	1.9	116,802	-6,095	-5.2
4	4	Vietnamese	103,430	6.7	1.7	86,592	16,838	19.4
5	6	Arabic	79,589	5.2	1.3	68,438	11,151	16.3
6	5	Cantonese	78,079	5.1	1.3	72,902	5,177	7.1
7	9	Punjabi	56,171	3.7	0.9	31,068	25,103	80.8
8	8	Hindi	51,241	3.3	0.9	32,704	18,537	56.7
9	12	Sinhalese	37,423	2.4	0.6	28,163	9,260	32.9
10	11	Spanish	35,494	2.3	0.6	29,014	6,480	22.3
11	7	Turkish	31,832	2.1	0.5	32,899	-1,067	-3.2
12	10	Macedonian	29,487	1.9	0.5	30,946	-1,459	-4.7
13	17	Tamil	25,662	1.7	0.4	17,452	8,210	47.0
14	25	Urdu	23,205	1.5	0.4	11,062	12,143	109.8
15	18	Tagalog	23,054	1.5	0.4	16,535	6,519	39.4

Victorians speaking a Language other than English (LOTE) at home increased by 24.6% from 1,235,433 persons in 2011 to 1,538,839 in 2016 (Table 1).

Table 5 shows that the top five LOTE in 2016 were Mandarin (up from third rank in 2011), Italian (down one rank), Greek (down one rank), Vietnamese (same rank) and Arabic (up one rank).

Languages with largest increase in number of speakers (over 10,000) were Mandarin, Punjabi, Hindi, Vietnamese, Urdu and Arabic.

Languages with a decrease in number of speakers include Italian, Greek, Turkish and Macedonian.

Distribution of LOTE speakers

Chart 4. Victoria: Top 20 LGAs, LOTE as % of LGA pop, 2016

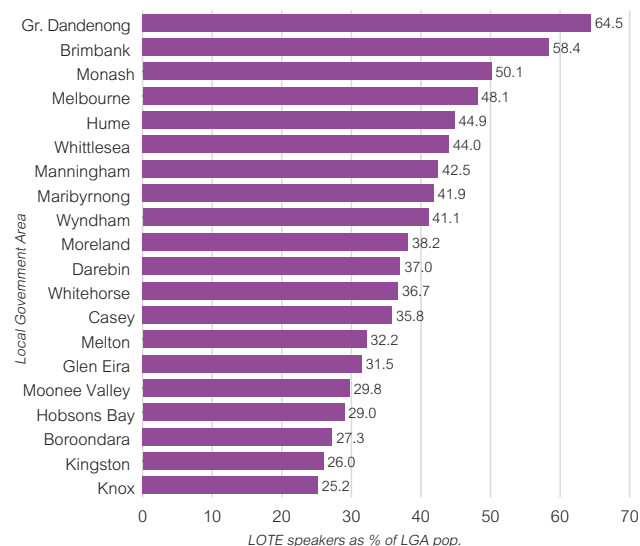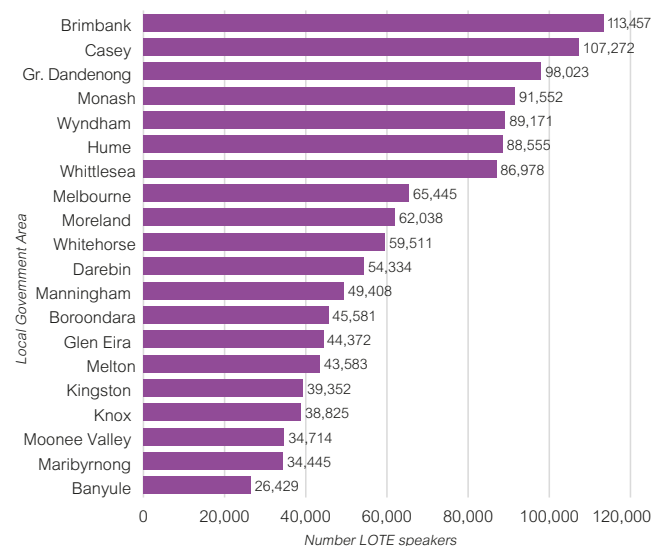**Chart 5. Victoria: Top 20 LGAs, no. of LOTE speakers, 2016**

Chart 4 shows the ranking of LGAs by the percentage proportion of population in each LGA who are LOTE speakers. Greater Dandenong has the largest proportion of LOTE speakers among its population (64.5%), followed by Brimbank (58.4%), Monash (50.1%), City of Melbourne (48.1%) and Hume (44.9%), compared to an overall 26.0% for whole of Victoria. Chart 5 shows that the rankings for the top 20 LGAs with the largest number of LOTE speakers vary from their percentage ranks in Chart 4.

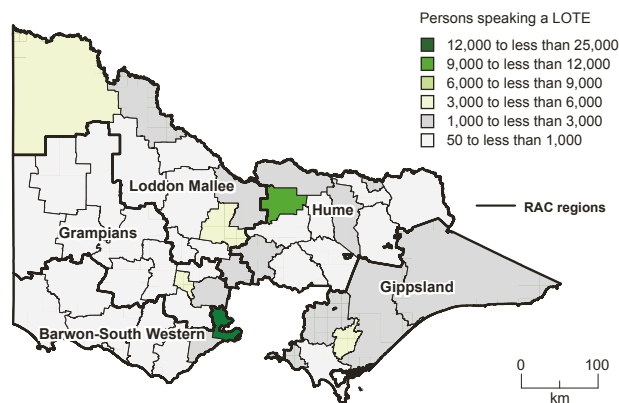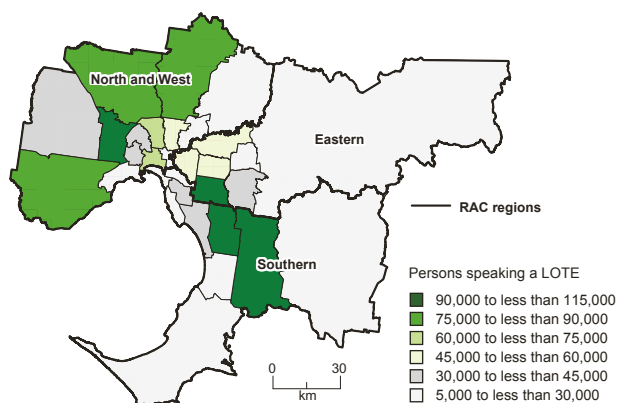**Figure 3. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria: number of LOTE speakers by LGAs, 2016**

Figure 3 shows the distribution of LOTE speakers in metropolitan and regional LGAs. The concentration of LOTE speakers in Metropolitan LGAs coincides with the pattern for overseas-born residents.

In Regional Victoria, there are significant numbers of LOTE speakers in Greater Geelong, Greater Shepparton, Latrobe, Mildura, Ballarat and Greater Bendigo.

Figure 4. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria: % change of LOTE speakers by LGAs, 2016 and 2011
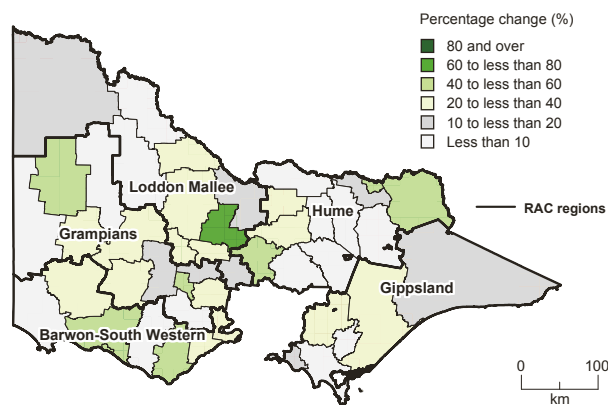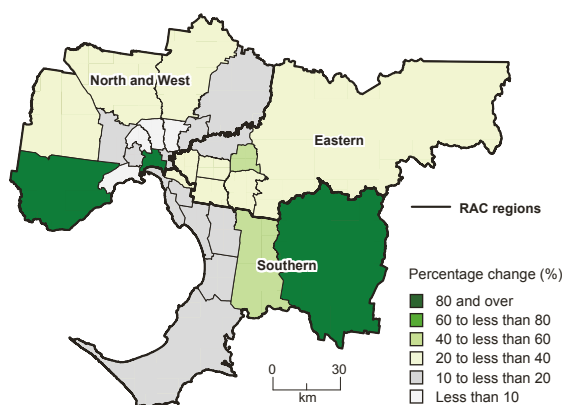
The growth patterns for LOTE speakers by LGAs between 2011 and 2016 can be seen from Figure 4. In Metropolitan Melbourne, the largest percentage increases were in the City of Melbourne, Wyndham (in the west) and Cardinia (in the southeast). These LGAs also experienced large increases in overseas-born.

In Regional Victoria, the largest percentage increases in LOTE speakers were in Greater Bendigo. Significant percentage increases also occurred in a number of LGAs such as Mitchell adjacent to Greater Bendigo, and Moyne and Colac in the southern part of the state.

Other Census publications by the Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria, available at www.multicultural.vic.gov.au, include:

» Ethnicity characteristics, 2016 Census
» Population diversity in Local Councils in Victoria: 2016 Census
» Community Fact Sheets, 2016 Census
» Community Profiles, 2016 Census

Religious affiliation

Table 6. Victoria: Top 15 religions and change, 2016, 2011

Rank 2016	Rank 2011	Religion (4 digit classification)	2016 Persons	As % of Tot Pop	2011 Persons	Change 2011-2016 Persons	% Change
1	1	Western Catholic	1,366,058	23.0	1,421,742	-55,684	-3.9
2	2	Anglican Church of Australia	530,676	9.0	656,532	-125,856	-19.2
3	3	Uniting Church	204,105	3.4	250,939	-46,834	-18.7
4	6	Islam	197,030	3.3	152,779	44,251	29.0
5	4	Buddhism	181,938	3.1	168,637	13,301	7.9
6	5	Greek Orthodox	162,943	2.7	167,757	-4,814	-2.9
7	8	Christian, not further defined (c)	146,441	2.5	99,518	46,923	47.2
8	9	Hinduism	134,939	2.3	83,137	51,802	62.3
9	7	Presbyterian	114,441	1.9	139,283	-24,842	-17.8
10	10	Baptist	77,469	1.3	77,854	-385	-0.5
11	15	Sikhism	52,762	0.9	29,443	23,319	79.2
12	13	Pentecostal, not further defined	48,584	0.8	38,545	10,039	26.0
13	11	Judaism	42,257	0.7	45,149	-2,892	-6.4
14	12	Lutheran	27,902	0.5	41,498	-13,596	-32.8
15	16	Macedonian Orthodox	19,609	0.3	21,839	-2,230	-10.2

Victorians with a religion decreased by 3.3%, from 3,614,939 in 2011 to 3,493,950 in 2016 (Table 1). Those with no religion increased by 49.4% from 1,256,143 in 2011 to 1,876,738 in 2016. Table 6 shows that the largest three religions, Western Catholic, Anglican Church and Uniting Church maintained their rankings, although they experienced a fairly significant decrease in number of followers. The other top ranking religions, while not as numerous as the Christian faiths, have experienced significant percentage increases, e.g. Sikhism (79.2%), Hinduism (62.3%), Islam (29.0%) and Buddhism (7.9%).

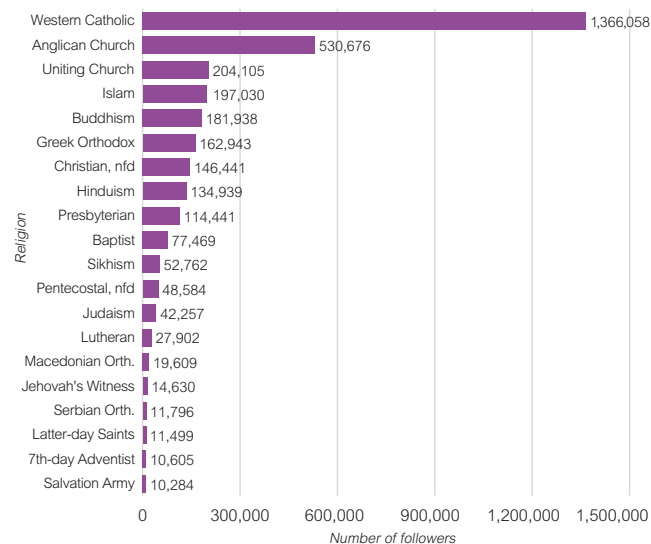**Chart 6. Victoria: Top 20 religions, number of followers, 2016**

Chart 6 shows the top 20 religions for Victoria. Chart 7 shows the ranking for the top 20 religions with largest increase in followers between 2011 and 2016. These religions are associated with the fastest-growing overseas-born population groups.

Chart 7. Victoria: Top 20 religions by increase in numbers, 2011, 2016

nfd = not further defined
nec = not elsewhere classified
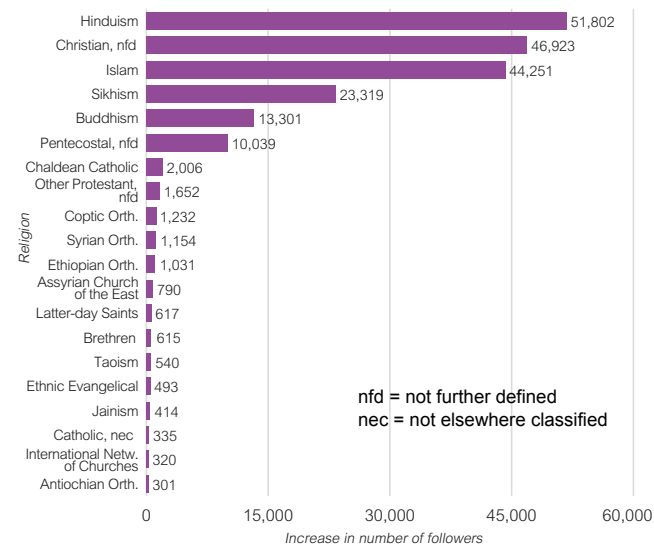
The top five religions with largest increase in followers are Hinduism (51,802), Christian, not further defined (46,923), Islam (44,251), Sikhism (23,319) and Buddhism (13,301).