

DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 667 postcodes in Victoria across 22 different indicators of disadvantage. The indicators, based on statistics collected from a number of government agencies, reflect factors that may limit life opportunities in the broad areas of social wellbeing, health, community safety, access to housing, education and employment.

Postcodes were ranked on each indicator, with high rankings indicating the postcode area was significantly affected by the particular limiting factor (eg unemployment or disability). These simple rankings were then used in a more comprehensive analysis (incorporating performance on all indicators, whether positive or negative), to produce an overall ranking of disadvantage.

Dropping off the Edge 2015 builds on similar reports released in 2007, 2004 and 1999.

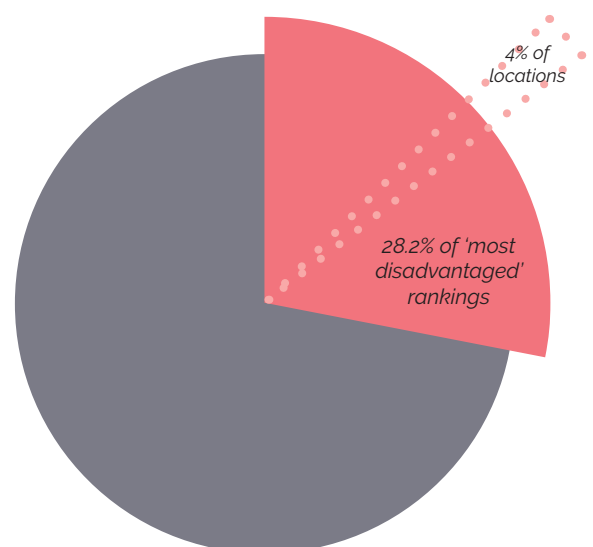
Key findings

- Disadvantage is concentrated in a small number of communities within Victoria.
- These communities experience a complex web of disadvantage and bear a disproportionately high level of disadvantage within the state.
- A significant number of postcodes have remained depressed for long periods demonstrating the persistent, entrenched nature of the disadvantage experienced by these communities.

Locational disadvantage is concentrated

A limited number of postcodes account for a disproportionate number of 'top ranked' (ie most disadvantaged) positions:

- **11 postcodes (1.6% of total) accounted for more than 13.7% of the most disadvantaged rank positions.** This is a nine-fold overrepresentation and similar to the 2007 result.
- **27 postcodes (4% of total) yielded more than a quarter (28.2%) of the most disadvantaged rank positions.** This is a seven-fold overrepresentation.
- **44 postcodes (6.6% of total) account for 35.3% of top rankings.** This is a five-fold overrepresentation.



The disproportionate distribution of disadvantage within the state is thrown into sharp relief when the incidence of particular factors such as unemployment, violence and contact with the justice system among those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes is compared with the rest of the state. Those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state are:

- 3 times more likely to be experiencing long term unemployment or have been exposed to child maltreatment
- 2.6 times more likely to have experienced domestic violence
- 2.4 times more likely to be on disability support
- Twice as likely to have criminal convictions as the rest of the population.

A complex web of disadvantage

The study examined postcodes which ranked in the 'most disadvantaged' group on more than five indicators, and found that these multiply-disadvantaged postcodes had a number of dominant features:

- **High unemployment** - around 70% of multiply-disadvantaged areas recorded unemployment levels in the highest band.
- **Interaction with the criminal justice system** - three in five of the multiply-disadvantaged localities showed criminal convictions in the highest band.
- Just under half of these multiply-disadvantaged postcodes:
 - had a population with **an overall level of education that was low**; and
 - recorded **significant levels of disability**.
- More than a third of the multiply-disadvantaged localities recorded high levels of child maltreatment, family violence and mental health problems.

Dominant characteristics of Victoria's multiply-disadvantaged locations

Unemployment

Criminal convictions

Disability

Long-term unemployment, prison admissions

Child maltreatment, low family income, rental assistance

Family violence, psychiatric hospital admissions

Locational disadvantage is entrenched

The persistent nature of locational disadvantage is further demonstrated when we compare findings of this 2015 study with previous studies undertaken in 2007, 2004 and 1999. Nearly half of the state's 40 most disadvantaged postcodes in **Dropping off the Edge 2015** were also found to be 'most disadvantaged' in the 2007 study (see table opposite), and many have been in a depressed state since the early studies were undertaken in 1999 and 2004.

This demonstrates the entrenched nature of disadvantage and the significant challenge faced in increasing the life opportunities of people living in Victoria's most disadvantaged communities. There is an immense social and economic cost to society as a result of this sustained social deprivation.

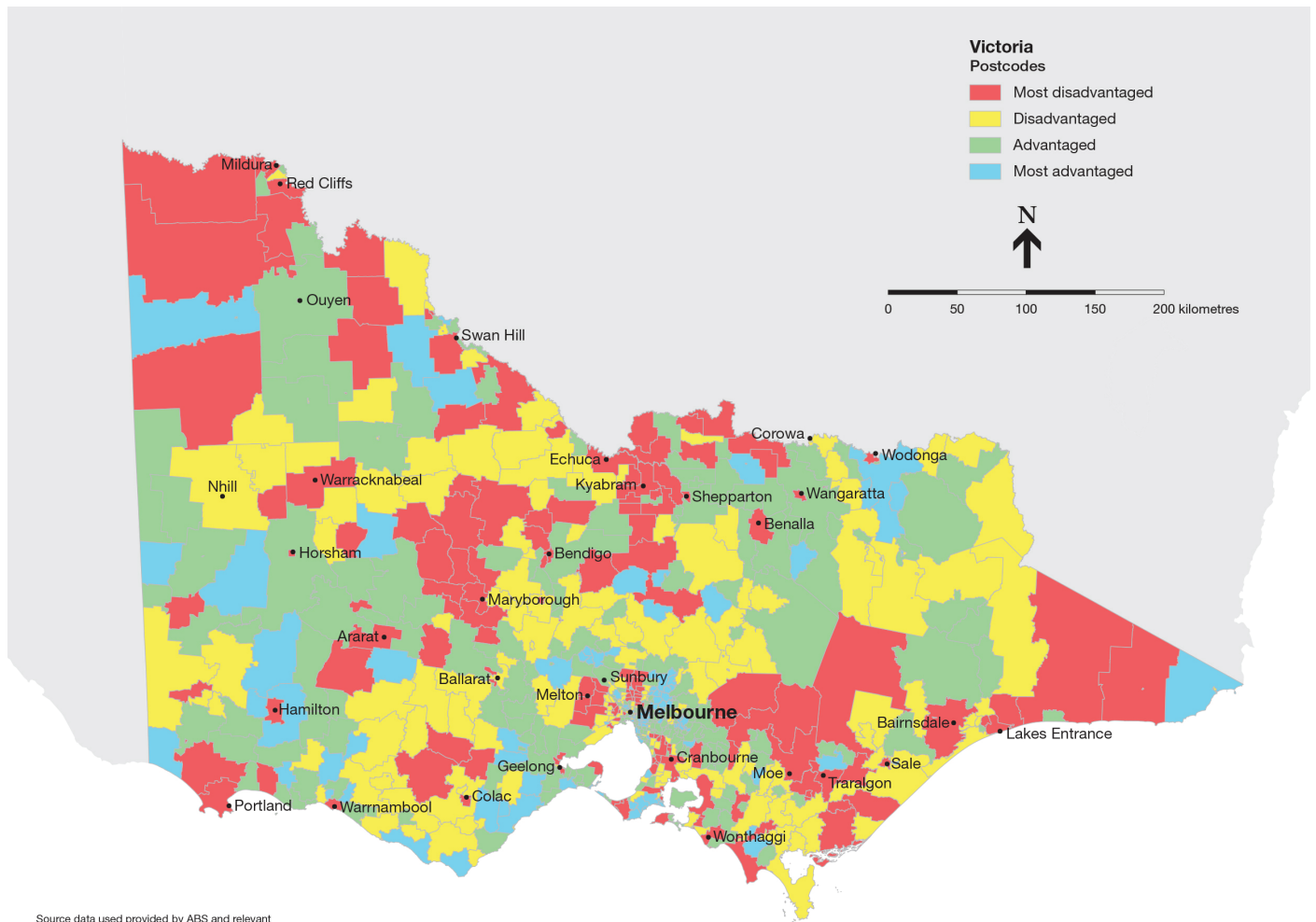
From the table, it can be seen that disadvantage is prominent around rural centres (Mildura, Shepparton, Morwell etc) as well as urban hubs such as Dandenong, Broadmeadows and around Sunshine.

Most disadvantaged postcodes in Victoria – comparison with previous years

(Bands illustrate the severity of disadvantage experienced by a location with Band 1 being most severe. Locations listed alphabetically within bands.)

	2015	2007 ¹	2004	Estimated Population (2011)
Most disadvantaged				
BAND 1	3047 Broadmeadows	✓ (B1)	✓ (B3)	10,578
	3214 Corio	✓ (B3)	✓ (B3)	15,072
	3177 Doveton	✓ (B2)	✓ (B1)	8,404
	3200 Frankston North		✓ (B6)	5,626
	3464 Maryborough	✓ (B1)	✓ (B4)	7,630
	3840 Morwell		✓ (B4)	13,691
	Supplementary: Special case	3520 Korong Vale	✓ (B1)	✓ (B1)
BAND 2	3022 Ardeer			2,823
	3019 Braybrook	✓ (B2)	✓ (B1)	8,180
	3048 Coolaroo			3,261
	3061 Campbellfield	✓ (B4)		5,467
	3940 Rosebud West	✓ (B1)		4,579
	3355 Wendouree			9,766
BAND 3	3523 Heathcote	✓ (B1)	✓ (B1)	2,776
	3825 Moe		✓ (B6)	15,292
	3556 Eaglehawk	✓ (B3)	✓ (B4)	4,811
	3075 Lalor			19,873
	3021 St Albans			35,091
3478 St Arnaud			2,619	
BAND 4	3175 Dandenong			24,919
	3505 Merbein			2,671
	3500 Mildura			30,650
	3549 Robinvale	✓ (B4)		2,134
	3660 Seymour			6,360
	3074 Thomastown			20,331
Supplementary: Special case	3594 Nyah	✓ (B4)	✓ (B1)	483
BAND 5	3915 Hastings	✓ (B3)	✓ (B3)	8,685
	3909 Lakes Entrance	✓ (B6)	✓ (B5)	5,250
	3629 Mooropna			7,813
	3335 Rockbank			1,349
	3630 Shepparton			29,553
	3995 Wonthaggi	✓ (B2)	✓ (B5)	4,354
BAND 6	3030 Albion			4,337
	3377 Ararat			8,076
	3672 Benalla	✓ (B6)		9,328
	3888 Orbost	✓ (B5)		2,900
	3842 Churchill			5,000
	3984 Corinella	✓ (B2)	✓ (B2)	630
	3356 Delacombe			4,932
	3496 Red Cliffs			4,600
	3939 Rosebud	✓ (B5)		12,502
	3380 Stawell	✓ (B6)		6,150
	Supplementary: Special case	3081 Heidelberg West	✓ (B4)	✓ (B2)
Supplementary: Special case	3373 Beaufort	✓ (B6)		1,004

¹✓ = included in 40 highest-ranking postcodes on general disadvantage factor. Brackets indicate which band. More information about Supplementary/Special case locations is available in the full report.



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Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia

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