

CONTEXT

Glenelg Shire has an area of over 6,000 square kilometres and is located in the far south west of Victoria adjoining the South Australia border. Glenelg is about 350 kilometres west of Melbourne and 550 kilometres south east of Adelaide.

The Traditional Owners of the region are the Gunditjmarra, Bunganditj and Jarwadjali people.

The Shire is characterised by a rugged coastline, dense native forests and woodlands, rolling rural plains and rivers, lakes and wetlands. The Glenelg River and estuary flows through the Shire from the Grampians, carving deep gorges in the Dundas Tablelands and Glenelg Plain before reaching the Southern Ocean at Nelson.

The Shire's regional strengths include rich natural resources, a natural deep-sea port with road and rail links, prosperous fishing and primary production industries in a high rainfall area with fertile soils.

The Shire had a total population of 19,557 in 2016 (ABS 2016).

The Shire is serviced by three major centres, Portland, Heywood and Casterton. Portland is the main regional centre and is home to over half of the population of the Shire. Heywood and Casterton are the main district towns and the small towns of Narrawong, Dartmoor, Merino, Tyrendarra, Nelson, Cape Bridgewater, Sanford, Condah and Digby comprise about 12 percent of the Shire's population.

The Shire is projected to experience slow population growth over the next 25 years, with an estimated population increase of 6.41% from 2018 to 2036 (.id 2016).

The Shire's economy is primarily based on productive rural land that supports agriculture and timber production. The fishing industry and the aluminium smelter at Portland are important sectors of the economy. Retailing is the largest of the Shire's service industries.