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Melbourne loses the world's most liveable city title after 7 years at the top

Vienna has assumed the number one position as the world's most liveable city, stealing the coveted place from Melbourne after seven years, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index 2018.

"In a nutshell, Melbourne's liveability is being compromised because housing and infrastructure is lagging population settlement, which is affecting community sentiment, cost-of-living, congestion and connectivity," said Danni Addison, Victorian CEO of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA).

"Melbourne's population growth has consistently been undercooked. We're due to hit 5 million people this year, over 20 years earlier than the ABS predicted two decades ago. That type of population growth has to be planned for well in advance if we're going to minimise growing pains and maintain the city's liveability."

The Liveability Index focuses on five categories to rank the world's cities – stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure.

"Melbourne has hit an awkward point where it's transitioning into a global city. We are shifting towards being a city where density, apartment living, long-term renting and public transport over driving is the norm. Our communities, our state and local governments, and our industries are adapting to these changes, so there's a bit of resistance associated with that.

"Resistance to population growth is particularly rife across some of the more established areas where existing residents are concerned that more people equates to increased congestion and decreased liveability. This doesn't have to be the case; but governments at all levels must focus their efforts on playing catch-up and delivering the infrastructure, services and housing required to comfortably meet the demands of population growth. It can be done, and it should be done; but it has to happen quickly otherwise we will see more Melburnians start to resent population growth," said Ms Addison.

"When it comes to creating new communities, we're fortunate that we still have opportunities available to us that will enable true liveability for future generations. We have major urban renewal projects like Fishermans Bend that could potentially be one of the city's most thriving and liveable areas.

"In the outer suburbs, we need to build more housing than ever before, faster than ever before, but like with all new communities the housing needs to be well-serviced by infrastructure, amenity and services such as childcare and healthcare. Otherwise people simply will not enjoy living in those communities and that will be a big hit to liveability.

"Victoria's regional areas also have the opportunity to absorb some of the population growth we're seeing here in Melbourne," she said.



It is worth noting that housing affordability isn't a primary consideration in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index, which is interesting because according to the Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey, Melbourne house prices are almost 10 times higher than median household income, making us the 5th "least affordable" city in the world.

"We can't ignore that housing affordability is another key issue that demands continued attention from local and state governments," said Ms Addison.

Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index 2018

5 categories:

1. Stability
2. Healthcare
3. Culture and environment
4. Education
5. Infrastructure

Top 10 List 2018:

1. Vienna, Austria
2. Melbourne, Australia
3. Osaka, Japan
4. Calgary, Canada
5. Sydney, Australia
6. Vancouver, Canada
7. (tie) Toronto, Canada
7. (tie) Tokyo, Japan
9. Copenhagen, Denmark
10. Adelaide, Australia

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UDIA (Victoria) Media Release



ABOUT

Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA)

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) is a nationally recognised body that advocates for Australia's urban development industry. In Victoria, UDIA informs and engages government and industry members, **enabling better policy and better business decisions.**

With a primary focus on the residential property sector, UDIA protects and promotes over 350 member companies across Victoria including developers and a range of other professionals involved in producing, financing and marketing residential property.

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