



An Australian Government Initiative



RIVERINA

MEDIA RELEASE

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COST-OF-LIVING SQUEEZE DRIVES MELBOURNIANS TO SEEK A COUNTRY CHANGE – AND THE RIVERINA IS BRACED

Soaring mortgages, rental stress and rising living costs are forcing many Melbourne families and professionals to consider a life beyond the city — and the Riverina is pitching itself as the perfect place to start fresh.

New figures show capital city residents moving to regional Australia **outnumbered those heading in the opposite direction by 26 per cent.** The [Regional Movers Index \(June Quarter 2025\)](#) — developed by the Regional Australia Institute (RAI), reveals migration from capitals to the regions made up **11.2% of all internal migration** for the quarter, compared to just **8.9% from regions back into the cities.**

Rachel Whiting, CEO of [RDA Riverina](#), said the data mirrors what communities in southern NSW are seeing on the ground.

“This is part of a national shift. People are realising they don’t have to put up with sky-high rents and endless commutes when regions like the Riverina can offer both opportunity and lifestyle,” Ms Whiting said.

“Here, you can buy a home without the crippling mortgage, walk to work in minutes instead of commuting for hours, and raise your family in a safe, connected community.”

Robert Busico, Senior Catering Officer, [Borambola Sport and Recreation Centre](#) has long known the benefits of a Riverina tree change. “I moved to the Riverina 15 years ago for a catering job, and I’ve never looked back. Life’s simpler out here—less stress, no traffic, everything’s close by and affordable. Melbourne had its pace, but this place gave me peace,” he said.

The push comes ahead of the [2025 Country Change Expos](#) in Wagga Wagga (13 September) and Griffith (25 October), where visitors can meet local councils, employers, education providers, and real families who’ve already made the move. Guided town tours will also give attendees the chance to see first-hand what life in the Riverina looks like.

According to a survey released by the RAI earlier this year, more than 50% of Millennials and over 40% of Gen Z are actively considering a move to the regions.

With major infrastructure projects underway and growing demand across healthcare, construction, IT and aged care, the Riverina is hungry for new talent.

“These expos are the perfect opportunity to come and have life-changing conversations. It’s not just about jobs — it’s about building a future,” Ms Whiting said. “For anyone ready to make the leap, the Riverina has the lifestyle, the industries and the opportunities to thrive. And with lower operating costs, it’s the perfect place to start or grow a business.”

EVENT DETAILS

- **Wagga Wagga Country Change Expo** – Saturday 13 September
- **Griffith Country Change Expo** – Saturday 25 October
- Free entry, with town tours available.
- More info: www.countrychange.com.au/events-for-visitors

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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[MEDIA KIT WITH PHOTOS AND VIDEO](#)

SOCIALS

Facebook: [@CountryChange](#)

Instagram: [@country_change](#)

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END RELEASE

About RDA Riverina and Country Change

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina is part of a national network driving economic growth, workforce development, and community prosperity. Country Change is its flagship program, showcasing the benefits of living, working, and investing in the Riverina through real-life stories, events, and partnerships that help potential movers turn their tree-change dream into reality.

KEY COMPARISON DATA

Life Factor	Greater Sydney	Greater Melbourne	Griffith City	Wagga Wagga
Median house price	\$1.722M	\$1.1M	\$582K	\$630K
Commute time (per day)	90 min	75 min	10 min	12 min
CBD Car parking (per day)	\$85	\$79	Free	Free
Median weekly Household Income <i>**Median Weekly household income ABS Table Builder 2021 Census</i>	\$2000-\$2499	\$1750-\$1999	\$1750-\$1999	\$1500-\$1749
Median Monthly Mortgage <i>** ABS Table Builder 2021 Census</i>	\$2400-\$2599	\$2000-\$2199	\$1400-\$1599	\$1400-\$1599