

What is Journeys Home?

Journeys Home (JH) is an important study that includes a national face-to-face survey to collect information about the living and housing challenges that people may be facing.

The survey is managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne, on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Over 1,680 people participated in the first Journeys Home survey in late 2011. In the past 2 years, nearly 90% of people have participated again in the three follow - up surveys. There will be a further two surveys conducted approximately six months apart.



Our thanks to you.

Thank you for the important contribution you make to this study. In appreciation for your participation we will give you \$40 each time we interview you.

Want to know more?

Further information about this study, including copies of paper versions of the survey scripts and research reports can be found at the survey website:

http://melbourneinstitute.com/journeys_home/



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Contact Us:

If you have any questions
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*Not a free call when made from a mobile phone

Journeys Home

Longitudinal Study of Factors Affecting Housing Stability



The Journeys Home Newsletter

What is the study about?

The study is trying to help policy makers get a better understanding of what factors contribute to housing stability and a healthy life. It is collecting information in a range of areas such as:

- Personal circumstances – participants' physical and mental health; participation in the workplace, employment, education and training; and any significant life events;
- Family circumstances – participants' family status and living arrangements, support networks; and experiences of domestic and family violence;
- Housing circumstances – participants' housing situation, the periods, nature of, and reasons for, homelessness; and
- Use of support services – types of assistance sought and used, including health care and support services.

What we have found so far.

There have been many important findings from the study already. The following points are a just a few of the simpler findings.

Profile of respondents

The profile of Journeys Home (JH) respondents is very different to that of the general population. Amongst Journeys Home respondents there are more younger people, more single people, people who have no dependent children, are Australian born, and there are more Indigenous Australians represented than in the general population.

In general respondents are likely to have physical health conditions and most have mentioned experiencing serious psychological distress at some point during the JH study. Most have relied on some form of government income support for a substantial amount of time. Crucially, most people report they have been under considerable financial stress throughout the first three waves of the study.

Housing Instability

One of the key findings of the study so far is that the housing situation of people we interviewed appears to vary considerably over time. For instance, JH respondents move a lot. Population estimates show that less than 20 per cent of the overall Australian population moves each year. In comparison, over three quarters (77 per cent) of JH respondents moved at least once over an 18 month period (see Figure 1). Over half (53 per cent) had lived in at least three places and over a third (35 per cent) had lived in more than three different places.

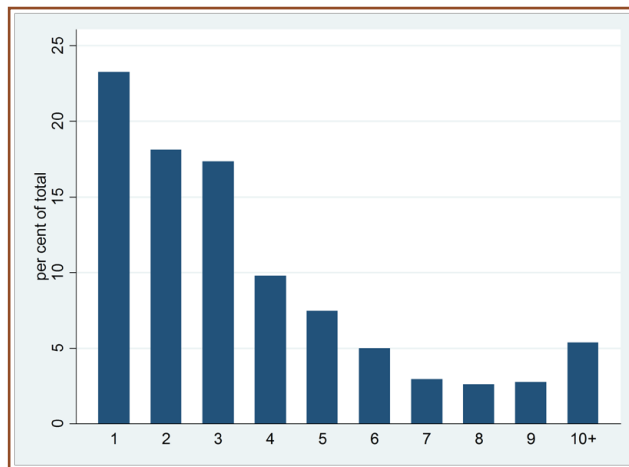


Figure 1: Number of places lived between wave 1 and wave 3

We have also found that experiences of homelessness are far more widespread than previously thought and the evidence suggests that many people find themselves in and out of homelessness over time.

It is also becoming clear that the greater the level of housing instability reported by the respondents, the poorer their circumstances are across a range of measures of health and wellbeing, with many respondents also experiencing severe financial stress.

Service Usage Patterns

Just under a quarter (23 per cent) of respondents reported having problems accessing welfare services.

What's next?

Future Research

The next report will include results from the fourth survey. We expect that after almost 2 years of data collection to have clearer insights into patterns of housing instability among the sample and to further refine our understanding of the factors that protect people from housing instability, the factors that cause it, and those that exacerbate it.

Waves 5 and 6

As the study has been so successful we have secured funding to conduct another two waves of interviews. Interviewing for wave 5 of the study will take place between September and November 2013, and for wave 6 between March and May 2014.

We hope you will be able to continue taking part in the study for waves 5 and 6. It is very important that we keep as many people involved in the study as possible. The more people that stay involved the more we can learn about how people's experiences change over time and what policies need to be implemented to assist people to maintain their housing.

