

LIVING IN AUSTRALIA



YOUR CASH BONUS

YOUR PRIVACY EXPLAINED

SCQ PRIZE OFFER

A message from Jenny Gordon Principal Advisor Research at the Productivity Commission

Dear Living in Australia study participant,

The HILDA Study is a 'go to' data source for the Commission in many of its inquiries and research studies. And as it includes more waves of data, HILDA is providing a much richer picture of the lives of Australians. The information on the housing wealth of older Australians, for example, was essential in exploring the potential standard of living available to older Australians. HILDA has also been central to the Commission's work on income distribution and, as the only Australian data source that follows people over time, the Commission has used HILDA to provide measures of persistent disadvantage.

HILDA is one of the few sources that allows us to model the likely response to policy induced changes in prices of goods and services and the effect of changes in income on demand for services. For example, for the inquiry into Childcare and Early Childcare Learning, the Commission drew on HILDA derived estimates to assess the effect of changes in the cost of childcare on the working hours for women with young children. HILDA also supports a growing body of research that the Commission draws on its analysis of influences on outcomes such as employment, savings and health.

Looking forward, HILDA is the only data source that can monitor trends in, and the outcomes of, life-long learning. HILDA has been and will remain an important source of information about the lives of Australians that better informs policy choices.

Jenny Gordon
Principal Advisor Research
Productivity Commission



What's new this year?

Now in our eighteenth year, HILDA has become an integral longitudinal data source for economic analysts contributing to reviews and research by the Productivity Commission, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

This year the HILDA (Living in Australia) study will ask you and your household questions about superannuation, assets, liabilities and wealth. While your finances may not be your favourite topic - how you manage, spend, and invest your money can have a profound impact on your life.

So, no matter how healthy your finances – whether you're renting or paying your mortgage, living from paycheck to paycheck or investing for your retirement – we need to hear from you. Whatever your circumstances, the HILDA study provides you with the opportunity to influence Government and social decisions with hard facts about your life and your household situation.

Why are YOU so important to this study?

The Living in Australia study is the largest and only study of its kind that provides regular information on the economic and social welfare of Australians over time. By collecting data annually, from the same people, we are able to put together a true, detailed story of Australian life.

You are unique and your participation will contribute to changing the lives for present and future Australians. Strict statistical guidelines that the HILDA study adheres to mean that you cannot be replaced or represented by any other person. The success of this study is dependent upon your participation.

Our thanks to you

We greatly appreciate the time you put aside for our interviewers each year. As a small gift for your participation, we will give you \$35 cash at the end of your interview. When every eligible member in the household has taken part, your household will receive an additional \$35.

Thank you for your ongoing support and participation. With your continued support, this important national study will remain to be a valuable tool in helping shape our nation.



Our study is BIG NEWS

Home-ownership and debt level among young home-owners

Many Australians aspire to own their own home. However, rising house prices have made purchasing a home less affordable, especially for young Australians, who typically have lower income and wealth than older Australians.

Wealth data from HILDA, which have been collected every four years since 2002, show that home-ownership among those aged 18 to 39 fell from 35.7 per cent in 2002 to 25.2 per cent in 2014. Fewer home-owners own their home outright as the proportion of those with home debt rose from 89.3 per cent to 94.1 per cent.

The Loan to Value Ratio, a risk-measure often used by lenders that relates home debts to values, rose to 58.3 per cent in 2014. Young Australians thus borrow more to purchase a home, possibly reducing their ability to deal with financial hardship. Particularly vulnerable are those with negative equity — they owe more than their home is worth; their proportion increased by 60 per cent, from 2.4 per cent in 2002 to 3.9 per cent in 2014.

As HILDA collects data from the same persons over time, it can be inferred that borrowing to purchase a home is not the only reason for increased levels of debt: 57.2 per cent of young home-owners accumulated additional home debt in the four years since 2002. The good news is that this proportion fell over time; it was 41.4 per cent for the 2010 to 2014 period.

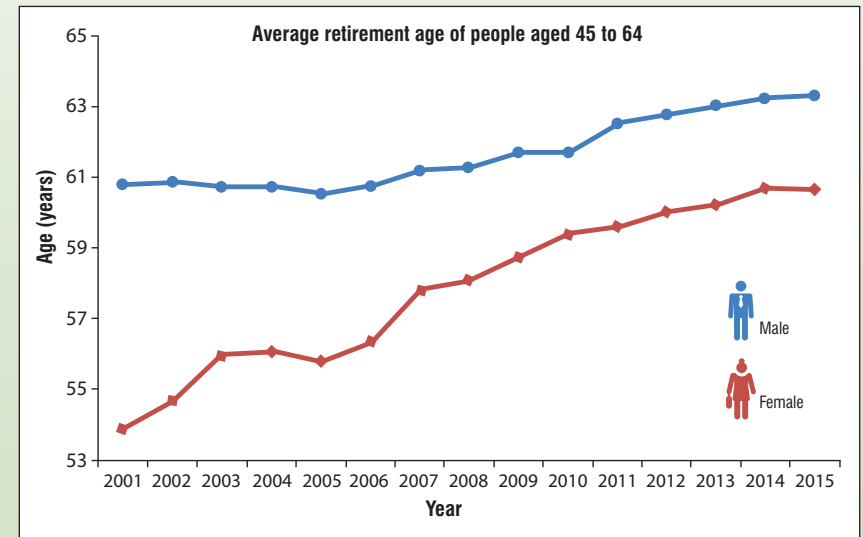
Home-ownership and debt level among young home-owners aged 18 to 39 years, 2002 to 2014

	2002	2006	2010	2014
Home-ownership rate (%)	35.7	32.1	31.2	25.2
Have home debt (%)	89.3	91.9	92.6	94.1
Loan to Value Ratio (%) (home debt divided by value)	42.7	48.0	52.5	58.3
Negative equity (%) (home debt exceeds value)	2.4	3.2	3.2	3.9
2002 - 2006 2006 - 2010 2010 - 2014				
Proportion for whom home debt increased (%)	57.2	49.5	41.4	

Retirement trends

The HILDA Survey regularly collects information on retirement, including whether people are already retired and, if not, when they expect to retire. The figure shows, for each year of the HILDA Survey, the change in the average age of retirement of people aged 45 to 64.

For those who are not yet retired, the person's expected age of retirement is used. We can see that both men and women on average retire, or expect to retire, some years before reaching eligibility for the Age Pension, which currently occurs at age 65 for both men and women. However, we can also see that people are retiring at increasingly older ages. In 2001, the average retirement age was approximately 61 for men aged 45 to 64 and 54 for women aged 45 to 64. By 2015, the average retirement age had increased to 63 for men and 61 for women.



Health in later life and the family life course

We know that health outcomes are a function of your medical history, but are they also affected by your marital history and whether or not you had children, and by the timing of these events?

The answer from the HILDA Survey data is yes, but more so for men than women. For men, family trajectories characterised by early family formation, no family formation, an early marital disruption, or high fertility are associated with poorer physical health. Among women, only those who experienced both a disrupted marital history and a high level of fertility were found to be in poorer health.



Source: O'Flaherty M, Baxter J, Haynes M, Turrell G. 2016. The family life course and health: partnership, fertility histories, and later-life physical health trajectories in Australia. *Demography* 53(3): 777-804.

Meet the TEAM

Just turned 15? This is why we need you!



You've turned 15 - congratulations!

Young people, such as you, are critical to the future of Australia. By sharing your unique experience you are assisting all young Australians to influence their future.

Whether you are still at school, just started work or trying to figure out your next steps, you can make sure the young people in Australia are represented in this important study.

For your time, you will receive a \$35 cash gift on the spot.

What about privacy?

Your information is protected.

The people involved in the study are committed to ethical research and legally bound to ensure your information is secure. All people involved in the project must sign and comply with the Privacy Act 1988. Your rights are protected by Australian law. Your identifying information is collected for the purpose of the Living in Australia study only. Access to your identifying information is restricted to only those who require it for the purpose of administering or conducting the study.



I really enjoy being an interviewer on the HILDA study. Over the past 5 years this work has taken me all over NSW - from rural towns to coastal shores, city streets, and mountain ranges. Being a HILDA interviewer gives me an opportunity to spend time with so many different people, young and old, who are so important to this Australian study. I like that the HILDA study asks questions that are topical, and have the potential to make a real change in our country. Furthermore, the supportive project staff and other interviewers' make a great team that I love being a part of.

I look forward to seeing all of my respondents again this year!

Bridgitte. New South Wales

After spending over 40 years working in various roles and industries - I feel I have a lot to bring to the 'best job in the world'. I now know why my colleagues and friends love working on the HILDA study.

It is a great privilege to be welcomed into respondents' homes and to be able to assist them to have their say in this very important Australian study. I have interviewed many inspirational people who at first think they have nothing to offer, but end up really enjoying the chance to reflect back over their lives.

HILDA is a very important social research study that I hope to be working on for many years to come. It's so wonderful to hear those words 'see you next year'.

Gaynor. Victoria



This is my third year on the HILDA study and I'm looking forward to the next one. My interviewing landscape varies from suburbs in regional towns, to cattle and sugarcane farms only accessible via creek bed crossings and over rugged and dusty driveways.

My work is made easier because I believe in the significance and importance of the data collected. The best part of my job is meeting and interviewing such a variety of people, ranging from the elderly who may have been a part of the HILDA study for years, to new 15 year old teenagers making their very first contribution to the study.

I really enjoy working on this project and all the travelling that comes with it.

Glen. Queensland

Information and Insight

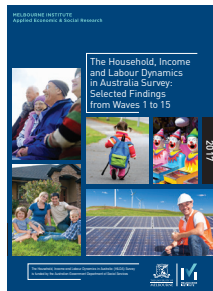
Offer to all Living in Australia participants

We are pleased to offer a free printed copy of the most recent HILDA Statistical Report.

The report is full of interesting statistics about our nation.

If you would like to receive your own personal colour printed and bound report, simply call 1800 656 670.

The report is also available for free download from
<http://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/hilda/publications/hilda-statistical-reports>



Complete and return your Self Complete Questionnaire to win 1 of 8 prizes!

This year our major prize winners will receive 1 of 8 \$500 gift cards from either Coles Group & Myer, Woolworths or Bunnings. Simply complete and return your Self Complete Questionnaire to be entered into the draw. For terms and conditions, you can visit www.livinginaustralia.org/scqprizedraw

Thinking of moving?

Your participation is critical to the success of the study, so please let us know if you are moving. Just freecall 1800 656 670 or email your new address to HILDA@roymorgan.com

More information about Living in Australia

If you have any questions, would like more information, or would like to contact your interviewer please freecall **1800 656 670** or visit us online at **www.livinginaustralia.org**. Your interviewer will also be able to help you with any queries you may have when he or she visits you.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Fax: +61 3 9347 6739 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team (HILDA Survey) or the name or ethics ID number of the research project (ID no. 1647030).



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MORGAN