

How do your finances stack up?

Information and Insight

LIVING IN AUSTRALIA



60% of adults in Australia hold a personal credit card

Australians who own a credit card are more satisfied with their financial situation



In 2006, 10% of credit card holders had a limit in excess of \$20,000



Approximately 64% of Australians currently own or are buying their own home or other residential property

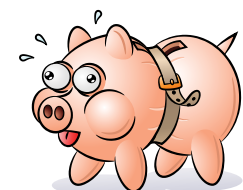
Tasmanians are the most likely to own their home



The average HECS debt was \$11,800 in 2006 compared to \$9,100 in 2002



Females are more likely to have a HECS debt



During 2008, approximately 3% of Australians went without meals because of a shortage of money

Between 2002 and 2006 the net-wealth of an average household increased by 50%



Approximately 70% of people say that their family is reasonably comfortable or better



Females are more likely to save for emergencies or a holiday, males are more likely to save for investments or for their own business

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.

If you should have any concerns about the conduct of this study, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, The University of Melbourne by calling 03 8344 2073 or by sending a fax to 03 9347 6739.

Why are you so important to this study?

You represent an important voice in Australian society and by taking part you are having a vital and long term impact on Australia's future.

You are participating in the only study of its kind that provides regular information on the economic and social welfare of Australians over time. Furthermore, the HILDA study is conducted by strict statistical guidelines and that means you are irreplaceable. The success of the study is dependent upon your participation.



Just turned 15?

To our younger members of the study, we would like to say a big hello!

In 2009, over 800 young people aged 15 -17 just like you contributed to the HILDA study. That's fantastic! Your experiences and opinions are unique and we think it's important you have an opportunity to express them. So **thank you** if you participated last year and a big **welcome** to those turning 15 this year and taking part for the first time.



Special offer to all Living in Australia participants

Due to an overwhelming response to our special offer last year, we are pleased to once again offer a free printed copy of the most recent HILDA Statistical Report.

The report is full of interesting statistics that have helped shape our nation.

If you would like to receive your own personal colour printed and bound report, simply freecall 1800 656 670. The report is also available for free download from <http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/hilda/statreport.html>.



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 comply with the Privacy Act 1998.

Your identifying information is collected for the purpose of the Living in Australia study. Access to your identifying information will be restricted to those who require it for the purpose of administering or conducting the study.

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

HOW DO YOUR FINANCES STACK UP?



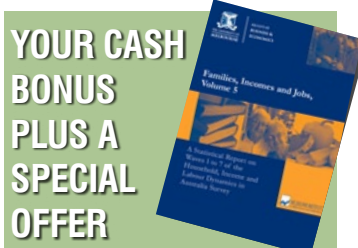
WHAT PERCENTAGE OF AUSSIES OWN THEIR OWN HOME?

Helping shape Australia's future

Could working longer hours help your marriage?



A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA



What's new this year?

As Australia slowly emerges from the Global Financial Crisis, your participation in the Living in Australia study is more important than ever before. Australians come from diverse economic, social and cultural backgrounds so each individual and family provides unique information. This information is essential to the success of the study.

Our focus this year is on economic issues and the many financial and social changes that may occur. This year our study will give us a clearer insight on how Australian lives have been affected by the financial uncertainty of the last 12 months.

Our thanks to you

Thank you for the important contribution you make to this study. As a small gift for your participation we will give you \$30 cash at the end of your interview. When everyone in the household has taken part, your household will receive a bonus \$30. With your ongoing support and cooperation, this important national study will continue to be a valuable tool in helping shape our nation.



Meet the team

We would like to introduce you to some of the people from Roy Morgan Research who, like you, contribute to the HILDA study each year.

I have the best job in the world. I love meeting people and I love the flexibility of my job. What I love about being a HILDA interviewer is being re-acquainted with the families that I have now been interviewing for 9 years.

I've seen primary school children grow to become young adults and now they are 15 years of age and being interviewed themselves. I now interview the 'original teenagers' (GEN Ys) in their own homes with their new partners ... yes, some do move out! Over the past 9 years there has been the sad news of some passing of the elderly but also the joy of new babies being born. I've been fortunate enough to interview in Melbourne as well as interstate and intrastate and loved every minute of it. *Cheryl Perrett, HILDA Field Interviewer*

A message from Team 1800

Here at Team 1800 we're so excited to have the opportunity to work with the participants in the Living in Australia study. We have the challenging but rewarding task of conducting interviews and answering any questions you may have. Here are some of our favourite comments participants made about last year:



'Our interviewer was great. Keep up the good work!'

'I think the introduction of computers and cash payments with the study this year is a fantastic initiative'

'You're doing a good job, getting good results, and helping people. Thanks!'



Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Message from Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

in support of HILDA Survey

In my role I am privileged to see the best of what Australians do for our society and to learn from their insights into Australian life. Every day, I talk with people who live and work across the nation and abroad; I read their heartfelt letters about the issues that strike at the heart of their families and communities. Wherever I go, I endeavour to pass on their remarkable stories.

The HILDA Survey is an important undertaking towards strategically and comprehensively capturing the data, essence and complexities of Australian life. The Survey's results are a vital public resource in the conduct of a vast range of evidence-based research that guides policy formulation and decision making in areas affecting social cohesion, housing, employment, disability, ageing and the well-being of our population.

I express my admiration for the vision and rigour with which the Survey's authors at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research design and administer the data collection processes. And I express my gratitude for the generous, willing and sustained participation by Survey respondents - Australians who understand the value and power of citizenship in a modern democracy.



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YOU make all the difference!

Work long hours – it may be good for your marriage!

Now you have a reason to work more! New research implies that being obsessed with your job is no longer the sin it used to be.

Many people believe that working long hours is damaging for personal relationships. However, recent studies have shown that the likelihood of divorce falls with the number of hours worked by the husband.

Research using Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) study data from 2001 to 2006 has found that men in jobs with long hours are no more likely to divorce than anyone else. This research has also found that the optimal work arrangement is where the male works a 41 - 49 hour week.

Beyond this the risk of separation rises, but is still lower than for couples where the male works a 35 - 40 hour week. The likelihood of separation declines with the duration of the marriage and with higher household income.



How well have we really survived the GFC?

Dear Living in Australia study participant,

In 2009, Australia got lucky and avoided a recession. The population continues to grow and the housing boom keeps on going. Are we heading towards a better future? What was the real impact of the Global Financial Crisis on Australian families?



In 2010, the Living In Australia study will be again be collecting information about assets and debts. This will provide researchers with valuable information on how Australian families have fared financially with the economic downturn.

Because you are willing to dedicate some of your time each year, the information you provide will have a long term impact on Australia's direction.

- How have Australians been affected by the increasing interest rates?
- Has the job market bounced back?
- Are retirement plans being put on hold?

These are important questions that you can help answer. I hope you enjoy being involved and making a difference.

*Professor Mark Wooden
Project Director, Living in Australia study Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research.*