Fertility – behaviour and intentions

The HILDA study asks men and women between the ages of 18 and 44 who intend to have children (or more children) what factors were important when making the decision to have a child. The following table shows the top five most important factors for men and women with and without children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 Most Important Factors when Deciding to Have More Children</th>
<th>Men - No Children Yet</th>
<th>Men - Already Parents</th>
<th>Women - No Children Yet</th>
<th>Women - Already Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>availability and affordability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>providing more purpose in life</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job security of job or partner's job</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>availability and affordability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeling loved by partner</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health – doctor visits

In 2009, the HILDA study asked about doctor visits and found that most people see a doctor at least once a year. Children under 15 and males aged 15-44 are the least likely to see a doctor, approximately three-quarters having done so in the last year.

In comparison, roughly a quarter of both men and women who reported high levels of relationship satisfaction in 2002.

Meet the team

“I’ve had a great time meeting many of the interesting people who make up the HILDA project. It’s exciting to be part of contemporary Australian history.”

Melissa Voderberg
2012 HILDA Interviewer

As a professional interviewer, gathering information to assist in making better decisions has been an ongoing commitment. I am proud to be a long time member of the HILDA study which makes an important contribution to Australia’s future.”

Sandy Grieve
2012 HILDA Interviewer

Offer to all Living in Australia participants

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 about 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.
We need your help to make a DIFFERENCE

What’s new this year?

What life stage are you in? Are you focusing on your career, thinking about starting a family, moving out of home, a retiree, or just finding your feet? Many of our decisions on health, finances, work, relationships, and our hopes and dreams change as our life stage changes.

This year the HILDA project includes questions on areas such as retirement, relationships, and other life stage topics. We are also proud to once again have been selected by the United Nations to ask questions on their behalf, as part of an International Survey into why people make particular decisions when forming families.

Most importantly, we are interested in knowing how things change in your life over time to gain an insight into the issues that are important to you now, and insights into those issues that will become more important to you in the future.

Thanks for your important contribution you make to this study.

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 participated last year. So if you are just turned 15, welcome!

In more recent years, as HILDA has matured and more waves of data have become available, the Commission staff have been able to exploit the study as a powerful tool for longitudinal analysis. The Commission values the accessibility, level of detail and capacity for broad and varied applications of the HILDA data. The breadth and depth of the data have significantly enhanced the quality of the publications in which they have been used.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Banks, AO
Chairman, Productivity Commission

A message from the Productivity Commission Chairman, Gary Banks

The HILDA study has regularly informed Productivity Commission work since the release of the first wave of data in 2002.

HILDA has played a vital role in quantitative research, assisting the Commission to produce evidence-based policy advice. In particular, the data has been crucial for our ability to analyse the effects of the human capital stream of Council of Australian Governments (CAG) reforms. It has also been central to our work on the Paid Parental Leave Scheme and Vocational Education and Training Workforce.

In more recent years, as HILDA has matured and more waves of data have become available, the Commission staff have been able to exploit the study as a powerful tool for longitudinal analysis. The Commission values the accessibility, level of detail and capacity for broad and varied applications of the HILDA data. The breadth and depth of the data have significantly enhanced the quality of the publications in which they have been used.

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.

“HILDA has been central to our work on the Paid Parental Leave Scheme.”

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.

Influencing the FUTURE

Baby Boomer Surprise

Many people expected it, some feared it and a few prepared for it, but the baby boomers took everyone by surprise. They decided not to retire. The increase in the proportion of workers aged over 60 has many policy makers in overdrive – the big question is when will the baby boomers retire? Traditionally the process of retirement has been viewed as an abrupt change from working continuously in a full time job to leaving the labour force completely. Today, the transition into retirement is much more diverse with more people making the transition gradually.

Research using Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) study data has found that although 80 percent say they intend to retire gradually, many don’t switch to transitional jobs, and those that do, around one-third switch back to more demanding jobs.

The HILDA study has regularly informed Productivity Commission work since the release of the first wave of data in 2002. The breadth and depth of the data have significantly enhanced the quality of the publications in which they have been used.

The HILDA data are a tremendous resource to researchers and policy makers.

As an economist I am one of the many researchers in Australia making enthusiastic use of the HILDA data. Until the HILDA study, we only had information about people at one point in time. Although this can be useful, the introduction of the HILDA study opened up a new set of questions we can answer because outcomes for individuals are observed for many years in a row. For example, the question whether individuals on low incomes, remain on a low income year after year. If there is a group of individuals who are persistently poor, we can now investigate who they are and perhaps even uncover the underlying reasons to their poverty.

This knowledge can be the key to better policies assisting Australians to escape poverty or at the very least alleviate the effects of poverty.

Commission Director of Labour Economics and Social Policy

Gayeene Kahl

University of Melbourne