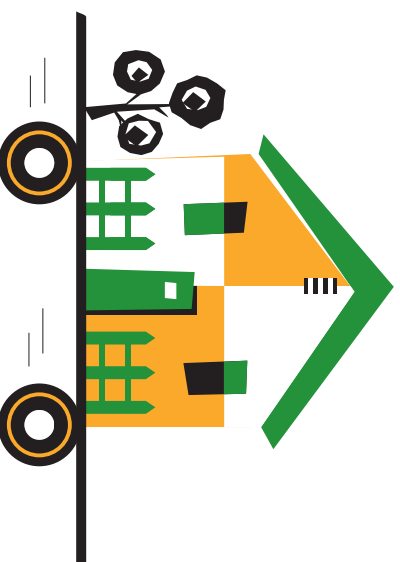


Moving house?

The **Living in Australia** study has shown that nearly one-fifth of the Australian population moves house each year.

To ensure this study remains representative of people that move as well as those that don't move, it is important that we keep your address details up to date. You can do this by calling **1800 656 670** or emailing your new details to livinginaustralia@acnielsen.com.au.



Moving house is often associated with other changes in your life, such as purchasing your own home, moving in with a partner, changing jobs, beginning study, or moving out on your own. All of these changes are of interest to researchers of the **Living in Australia** study.

Most people move quite short distances (43 per cent are moves of less than 5 kilometres). If you did move, you may recall being asked about the reasons for moving house. Housing reasons were the most common reasons given for the move (for example, to get a better or larger place), family or personal reasons were next, followed by job or education reasons, then by neighbourhood reasons. Moves for work or education purposes are typically medium to long distance, whereas moves for housing reasons typically involve quite short distances.

Distance and reason for move

Reason for move	Proportion of movers (%)	Typical distance moved (kms)
Housing	51	4
Personal/family	34	13
Work/education	16	77
Neighbourhood	7	8

Note: The reasons given for the move could fall into one or more categories.

More information

If you have any questions, need more information or want to get a message to your interviewer please telephone **1800 656 670** or visit our website www.livinginaustralia.org. When your interviewer arrives they will also be able to help with any queries you may have.

Should you 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 sending a fax to 03 9347 6739.

Thank you for your continued support of this important study.

Lorna Hall
Project Director
ACNielsen

Professor Mark Wooden
Project Director
Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research
University of Melbourne

Shaping Australia's Future

Welcome to the fourth year of the *Living in Australia* study!



THANK YOU!

With your help, we have now completed the third year of the study and are beginning the fourth year. The information you provide is vital and gives researchers a better understanding of the many economic and social changes that affect life in Australia.

IN THE NEWS

Results from the **Living in Australia** study are making headlines. You may not have recognized the study as researchers refer to the study as the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia study (HILDA). The main topics covered in the articles published recently include:

- Happiness, income and wealth;
- Unpaid overtime;
- Couples: paid work and household work; and
- Balancing parenting and work.

To read some of these articles visit our website www.livinginaustralia.org.

HOW THE DATA ARE BEING USED

Researchers are using the **Living in Australia** data in a wide range of projects. Here are some recent research projects:



HOW LIVES ARE CHANGING

The four big areas that affect all of us are who we share our lives with, what we do with our time, how we are managing financially, and what we think are the good and bad things about our lives. To understand the things that affect you, our interviewers ask questions about your family, education, employment, income and how you feel about various aspects of your life.

Our aim is to find out how things are changing in Australia. To do this we need to ask many of the same questions every year. Surprisingly, when people think nothing has changed and they are asked the same questions, we often find that things have changed.

In this year's interview, we are pleased to introduce some new questions about the issues that teenagers and young adults face when making choices about work, education, housing and relationships.

YOUNG PEOPLE - YOUR SAY

You are our future and researchers need to understand the issues that are important to you!



MELBOURNE INSTITUTE
of Applied Economic and Social Research



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Health, wealth and happiness - results from the Living in Australia study

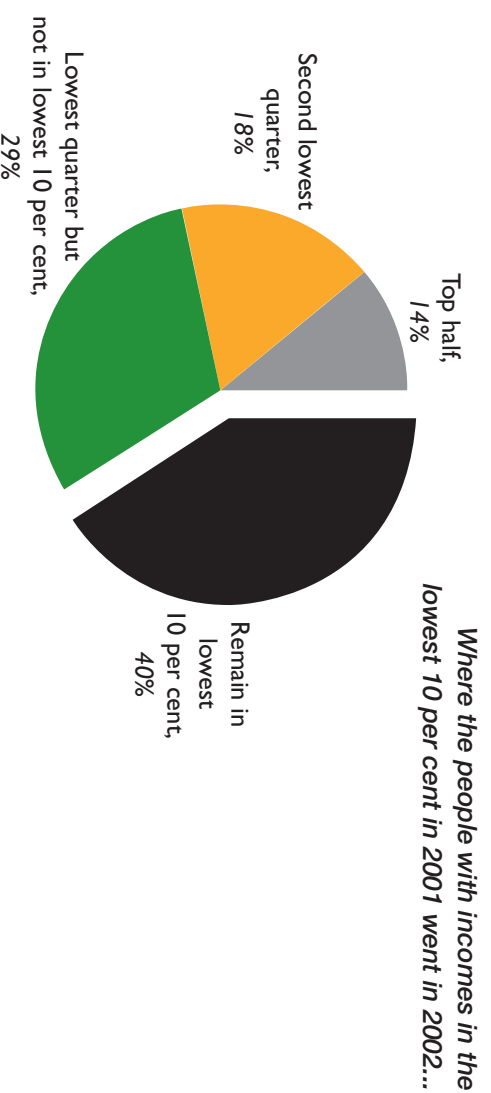
DO THE POOR GET RICHER?

Most people believe that the rich stay rich, middle income people stay in the middle, and the poor stay poor:

Panel studies in other countries, which are like the **Living in Australia** study, have cast considerable doubt on this belief. They have shown that most families who become poor are no longer poor within two to three years. In most countries the rich are a somewhat more stable group, but there is still a fair amount of mobility in and out of this group.

The **Living in Australia** study has only been running for a short time, so it is too early to say to what extent poverty in Australia is long term or short term. But we can say whether people who were poor in 2001 remained poor in 2002.

The data shows that some people have been very upwardly mobile, with 14 per cent of people who were in the lowest 10 per cent of incomes in 2001 moving to the top half of the income distribution in 2002. Only 40 per cent of people who were in the lowest 10 per cent of incomes in 2001 remained there in 2002. Almost one fifth (18 per cent) remained in the bottom half of the income distribution, but they were nowhere near poverty.



Common sense perhaps says that people who have more money are bound to be happier. Research has never really found this. The usual finding, not just in Australia but in all Western countries where the issue has been studied, is that people with high incomes are only slightly more satisfied with their lives as a whole. Also, it seems that extra income does not produce extra happiness if everyone becomes better off.

The new **Living in Australia** evidence on wealth changes the story in one important way. Almost all previous research has looked only at incomes. It seems clear from our new evidence that wealth actually makes a bigger difference than income to life satisfaction.

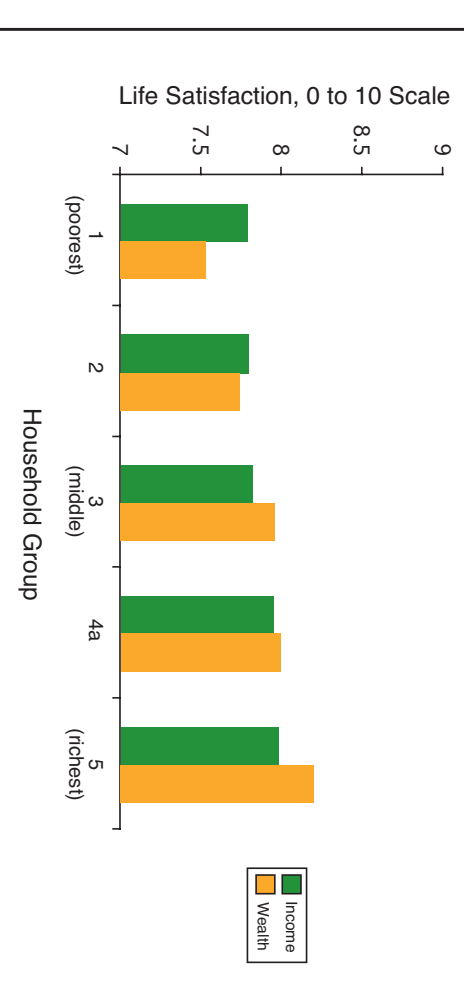
This can be seen in the graph at the top of the next page which shows life satisfaction against household wealth and income. Life satisfaction clearly rises much more with household wealth than it does with income. Indeed looking at income, life satisfaction does not change greatly between the poorest households and the richest.

Overall, these results make a lot of sense. If you have assets to fall back on, then you can cope a lot better with the hard times when regular income is cut off. For example, a family can cope better with unemployment, the financial consequences of poor health, and of course retirement.

While money helps, it still makes only a relatively small difference to life satisfaction. It still takes very large increases in wealth to achieve the same increases in life satisfaction as, say, getting married or ending a period of unemployment and finding a job.

DOES WEALTH INFLUENCE HEALTH?

Life satisfaction by household income and wealth group



You may recall completing some questions in our **self-completion questionnaire** on your health and how it impacts upon your life. In general it seems we are a healthy nation. Almost half of the people in the study last year described their health as 'excellent' or 'very good'. An additional 35 per cent said it was 'good'. Only three per cent of people described their health as 'poor'.

Health is an important area of research which overflows into many other areas of people's lives such as employment, income, the ability to take part in leisure activities, or for some, to maintain an independent living arrangement.

Looking at the graph below we see that health declines with age, as we would expect. Also people in the richest households are more likely to say that their health is excellent or good than people in the poorest households. This could be for two reasons. First, people can use their wealth to buy better health, both in the form of better treatment and more healthy lifestyles. Second, people who are not particularly healthy will have been restricted in their ability to build up wealth over their lifetime. These findings provide further evidence of the need for income support for the poorest sections of our society, and especially our aged population.

DOES MONEY BUY HAPPINESS?

Proportion of people who say their health is 'excellent' or 'very good'

