An interviewers perspective

Name: Gabriela Strunk
Position: Living in Australia Interviewer

"I have been an interviewer on the Living in Australia study for six years and have built many relationships with respondents during that time. The nature of the study means I am constantly meeting new and wonderful people from all walks of life. I start to become part of the family as respondents share their family's lives with me – I in turn tend to do the same. The majority of respondents know me by first name, my interests, right down to how I drink my tea. I know I am doing a good job when that happens!

The best reward is knowing that respondents have a sense of trust in me as an interviewer - they're happy to deal with me. Overall, it's a joyous experience! I love my job and enjoy the interaction and freedom it provides. Working with families and learning their views can be very rewarding."

Frequently asked questions

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 1988.
Your identifying information is collected for the purpose of the Living in Australian study. Access to your identifying information will be restricted to those who require it for the purpose of administering or conducting the study.

What if nothing has changed?
No change is just as important as change to this study. Besides, we include new questions each year. Every time you participate, the study becomes more valuable and powerful in influencing decision making.

More information

If you have any questions, would like more information, or would like to contact your interviewer please telephone 1800 066 670 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.

Are you aged 18 to 22? Then you would have faced the decision of whether to continue studying or to get a job.

The pathways into work are many and varied. The experiences of 18 to 22 year olds interviewed in the Living in Australia study show this diversity.

Just over 40 per cent of people aged 18 in 2001 or 2002 were working, 45 per cent were undertaking some form of education at school, university or TAFE, and most of the remaining 14 per cent were unemployed.

By the time these people reached 22, 67 per cent were working, 15 per cent were undertaking some form of education and most of the remaining 18 per cent were either looking after children or were unemployed.

After leaving school, six out of 10 people undertake further study by the time they were aged 22. Some chose to study before working (40 per cent), some chose to work before studying (27 per cent) and some undertake further studies but had not started working yet (27 per cent). University level study was the most popular choice, though 16 per cent studied at TAFE instead and six per cent of people undertook TAFE studies prior to university studies.
Influencing the future of Australia

A wealthy nation

Family life

Why is this study so important?

By taking part in this study you are having a vital and long term impact on Australia’s future.
The Living in Australia study is the only one of its kind that provides regular information on the economic and social welfare of Australians over time. The study adheres to strict statistical procedures which mean that we cannot replace you – therefore you represent a very important voice in Australian society.

What’s new this year?

Each year we add new questions to the study that are of particular interest to researchers and policy makers.

This year some of you will be asked about your plans for retirement and the transition from work into retirement, a topic that was last covered in 2003.

Other new topics include work-related training, eating habits, influencing the future of Australia’s future, retirement, a topic that was last covered in 2003. This year some of you will be asked about your plans for retirement and the transition from work into retirement, a topic that was last covered in 2003.

The Living in Australia study is the first Australian study to measure changes in household wealth over time. We can now begin to understand how people create, grow and use their wealth.

In 2002, the average Australian household held around $210,000 in wealth (total assets less total debts). Only four years later, a preliminary look at the data indicates that this wealth has increased to around $340,000, primarily driven by increases in housing assets. It’s a logical thought that wealth tends to accumulate with age and reach a maximum just before retirement. After retirement, people will usually live off some of their savings. The pattern in the change in wealth observed in the Living in Australia study between 2002 and 2006 is consistent with this. Excluding those households where the household head had either started living with their partner or separated from their partner, we have calculated the typical change in wealth for the various age groups. The three types of households that had the highest gain in wealth were, in order:

- couples aged between 45 and 54 without children under 15;
- couples aged between 45 and 54 without children under 15;
- couples aged between 35 and 44 without children under 15.

Top five most important factors when considering whether to have a child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Men aged 20-29</th>
<th>Men aged 30-44</th>
<th>Women aged 20-29</th>
<th>Women aged 30-44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having someone to love</td>
<td>Having someone to love</td>
<td>Security of your/your partner’s job</td>
<td>How old are you</td>
<td>Security of your/your partner’s job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting more purpose to life</td>
<td>Providing more purpose to life</td>
<td>Security of your/your partner’s job</td>
<td>Your partner having time/energy for a career</td>
<td>Security of your/your partner’s job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to buy a home or a better home</td>
<td>Being able to buy a home or a better home</td>
<td>Being able to buy a home or a better home</td>
<td>Available/affordable good quality childcare</td>
<td>Stress and worry of raising children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When deciding to have children

Fewer Australians are having children, and when they do, they have fewer than previous generations. In 2006, we asked why.

In 1970 the average number of children a woman was likely to have was 2.3. Around 30 years on, this number has fallen to 1.7.

We have included a new series of questions focusing on the decisions people make about whether or not to have children and, if they do, when to have them.

Our thanks to you

Once again, we will provide $25 to everyone who participates in the study.

When everyone in your household has taken part, your household will receive a bonus $25. Remember that your cheque will only be valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

$130,000 increase in wealth over last four years

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Change of name

AC Nielsen has changed its name to The Nielsen Company.

Nielsen still operates under the same strict guidelines to protect your privacy, but we have a new logo and the email address for the study has changed to:

livinginaustralia@nielsen.com

The email address for the study has changed to:

Nielsen still operates under the same strict guidelines and dieting, and smoking habits.

www.livinginaustralia.org

Why not take a look at the Living in Australia website?

The study, also known as the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) study, has been frequently referred to in the media. Links to some of these articles can be found on the Living in Australia website. In addition, you can view more results from the study, some frequently asked questions, useful links, including a link to Melbourne Institute, the Annual Report, and other published research.

Let us know if you’re moving

Your participation is really important, so please let us know if you are moving by calling 1800 656 670 or emailing your new address:

livinginaustralia@nielsen.com

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livinginaustralia@nielsen.com

Why has this study been so important?

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