



AUSTRALIAN LIVING STANDARDS STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE

A few weeks ago you would have received a letter inviting you to participate in a research study that involves you completing a questionnaire survey. This survey will help us better understand what the community thinks about social issues like poverty, inequality and social disadvantage. We mentioned in the letter that we are following up with those who kindly completed a similar survey some years ago (in 2010) to find out how things have changed, for different families and for all Australians. We hope that you will take the time to complete this more recent 2017 survey and return it as soon as you can.

COMPLETING AND RETURNING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Most of the questions provide a number of boxes with different answers. Just place a tick (✓) in the box or circle the number that best describes your answer. Most questions require you to only provide one answer. However, some questions allow you to tick or circle more than one box or number.

No special knowledge is required and there are no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your opinion. If you are living with your family, then provide answers that relate to your family as a whole unless otherwise indicated.

The questionnaire should not take you more than 20 minutes to complete. Only you should fill it in. ***Your answers will be treated as confidential and used only for research purposes.***

When you have completed the questionnaire, please post it back to us in the reply-paid, addressed envelope as soon as possible. **CHANCE TO WIN one of five \$100 prizes:** A draw will be made from among all those who have returned a completed questionnaire, with 5 winners each receiving a gift voucher worth \$100. We will contact you if you are one of the lucky winners.

Thank you again for your help – the information you provide will help us to understand what Australians think about social disadvantage and track how they are faring.

Professor Peter Saunders
Chief Investigator

STANDARDS OF LIVING

- 1. The things people buy and do - their housing, furniture, food, cars, recreation and travel - make up their standard of living and determine how well off they are. How would you rate your current standard of living?**

Please tick one box only.

- Very high
- Fairly high
- Medium
- Fairly low
- Very low

- 2. How satisfied or dissatisfied do you feel about your overall standard of living at present?**

Please tick one box only.

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

- 3. How has your standard of living changed since you completed the previous survey (in 2010)?**

Please tick one box only.

- It has increased substantially
- It has increased slightly
- It is about the same
- It has decreased slightly
- It has decreased substantially

- 4. How well do you think each of the following groups have done in terms of increased incomes over the last ten years or so?**

Please circle one number for each statement.

	Very well	Fairly well	About average	Fairly badly	Very badly	Don't know
a) Those with high incomes	1	2	3	4	5	9
b) Those with average incomes	1	2	3	4	5	9
c) Those with low incomes	1	2	3	4	5	9
d) You or your family	1	2	3	4	5	9
a) Other people like you	1	2	3	4	5	9

- 5. Overall, in terms of how you feel generally, would you say that you are:**

Please tick one box only.

- Very happy
- Happy
- Unhappy
- Very unhappy

6. Given your current needs and financial responsibilities, would you say that you and your family are:

Please tick one box only.

- Prosperous
- Very comfortable
- Reasonably comfortable
- Just getting along
- Poor
- Very poor

7. How much choice and control do you believe you have over your own life and the things that happen to you?

Please circle one number only.

None at all			Some choice and control				A great deal of choice and control		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. How satisfied are you with your overall financial situation at the moment?

Please circle one number only.

Totally dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied				Totally satisfied			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Have there been times over the last 12 months when you have experienced any of the following because of a SHORTAGE OF MONEY?

Please tick ALL the boxes that apply.

- Could not pay electricity, gas or telephone bills on time
- Could not pay the mortgage or rent on time
- Pawned or sold something
- Went without meals
- Was unable to heat home
- Asked for financial help from friends or family
- Asked for help from a welfare/community organisation
- None of the above

10. When was the last time you spent \$100 or more on a “special treat” for yourself?

Please tick one box only.

- Within the last week
- Within the last month
- Within the last 3 months
- Within the last 12 months
- More than a year ago
- I have never had that much to spend on myself

Living Conditions for all Australians

11. We are interested in what kinds of things you think are ESSENTIAL for all Australians – THINGS THAT NO-ONE IN AUSTRALIA SHOULD HAVE TO GO WITHOUT TODAY.

For each item, please circle in the first column whether or not you think it is essential for all Australians.

Then circle in the second column whether or not you/your family have it.

If you have the item, there is no need to provide an answer in the third column.

If you do NOT have an item, indicate in the third column whether or not this is because you cannot afford it.

	Is it essential for everyone?		Do you have it? ...if No →		Is it because you cannot afford it?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) A decent and secure home	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b) A substantial meal at least once a day	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c) Warm clothes and bedding, if it's cold	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d) Walls and floors free from damp and mould	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
e) Adequate heating for when it's cold	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
f) Furniture in reasonable condition	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
g) A spare room for guests to stay over	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
h) A car	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
i) Comprehensive motor vehicle insurance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
j) A landline phone	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
k) A mobile phone	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
l) A washing machine	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
m) A clothes dryer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
n) A dishwasher	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
o) A television	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
p) A DVD player	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
q) A desk top, laptop or tablet computer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
r) Access to the internet at home	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
s) Up to \$500 in savings for an emergency	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
t) Up to \$2,000 in savings for an emergency	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Living Conditions for Children

12. We are interested in the type of LIVING CONDITIONS that children (aged under 18) should not have to go without.

For each item, circle in the first column whether or not you think it is ESSENTIAL for all children.

Then circle in the second column whether or not you or your family have it.

If you do have children living with you and you do NOT have an item relevant to you, indicate in the third column whether or not this is because you cannot afford it.

If there are no children living with you, then just answer 'No' in the second column and do not provide an answer in the third column.

	Is it essential for children?		Does your family have it? ...if No		Is it because your family cannot afford it?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) A separate bed for each child	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b) A separate bedroom for each child aged over 10	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c) A place at home to study or do homework	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d) Books at home suitable for children	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
e) A safe outdoor space for children to play at or near home	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
f) Up to date schoolbooks when needed for school-age children (aged 5-17)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
g) New school clothes when needed for school-age children (aged 5-17)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
h) Children can participate in extra-curriculum school activities	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
i) Children can participate in school outings	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
j) A desk top, laptop or tablet computer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
k) Access to the internet at home	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
l) The right kind of clothes to fit in with other children of the same age	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
m) A pair of shoes that fit properly	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
n) A hobby or leisure activity for children	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
o) A mobile phone	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
p) Some money to spend or save each week	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
q) A games console	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

HOUSING AND LOCATION

13. We are interested in the type of HOUSING that no-one should have to go without.

For each item, circle in the first column whether or not you think it is ESSENTIAL for everyone.

Then circle in the second column whether or not you/your family have it.

If you have the item, there is no need to provide an answer in the third column.

If you do **NOT** have an item, indicate in the third column whether or not this is because you cannot afford it.

	Is it essential for everyone?		Do you have it? ...if No →		Is it because you cannot afford it?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) To be able to buy one's own home	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b) A home with doors and windows that are secure	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c) A roof and gutters that do not leak	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d) Air conditioning	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
e) Solar panels on the roof	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
f) At least two bathrooms	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
g) A lock-up garage or car port	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
h) Home contents insurance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
i) Streets that are safe to walk in at night	Yes	No	Yes	No		
j) Access to public transport in the local area	Yes	No	Yes	No		
k) Access to a local doctor or hospital	Yes	No	Yes	No		
l) Access to a bank or building society	Yes	No	Yes	No		
m) Access to a public telephone	Yes	No	Yes	No		

14. Do you have problems with any of the following in your local neighbourhood?

Please tick **ALL** the boxes that apply.

- Noisy neighbours
- Loud traffic noise
- Noise from aircraft, trains or industry
- Homes and gardens in bad condition
- Rubbish and litter lying around
- Teenagers hanging around on the streets
- People being hostile and aggressive
- Vandalism and deliberate damage to property
- Burglary and theft
- None of the above

HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

15. In general, how would you describe the state of your health?

Please tick one box only.

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

16. Do you have an on-going disability or on-going medical condition that restricts your daily activities?

Please tick one box only.

- Yes
- No

17. Have you encountered any of the following health-related conditions over the last 12 months?

Please tick ALL the boxes that apply.

- Often felt too sick to get out of bed in the morning
- Felt depressed and lacking in self-esteem
- Felt isolated and lonely
- Often felt anxious about your problems
- None of the above

18. We are interested in the type of HEALTH CARE that no-one should have to go without.

For each item, circle in the first column whether or not you think it is ESSENTIAL for everyone.

Then circle in the second column whether or not you/your family have it.

If you have the item, there is no need to provide an answer in the third column.

If you do NOT have an item, indicate in the third column whether or not this is because you cannot afford it.

	Is it essential for everyone?		Do you have it? ...if No →		Is it because you cannot afford it?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) Medical treatment if needed	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b) Able to buy medicines prescribed by a doctor	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c) Dental treatment if needed	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d) A yearly dental check-up for children aged over 3	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
e) Access to a bulk-billing doctor (Medicare)	Yes	No	Yes	No		

19. Listed below are some statements about the current health care system in Australia. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

Please circle one number for each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a) A good health care system is the hallmark of a good society	1	2	3	4	5	9
b) Medicare is important and should be protected at all cost	1	2	3	4	5	9
c) Everyone should be able to visit a GP without having to pay any fee (bulk-billing)	1	2	3	4	5	9
d) It is not unreasonable to expect all patients to pay a small fee to see a GP	1	2	3	4	5	9
e) Only those who can afford it should have to pay to see a GP	1	2	3	4	5	9
f) Higher taxes are needed to pay for increased health costs	1	2	3	4	5	9
g) It is fair that people with higher incomes can buy better health care than those with lower incomes	1	2	3	4	5	9
h) Health services should be allocated to those who need them, not to those who can afford them	1	2	3	4	5	9

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

20. We are interested in the type of SOCIAL PARTICIPATION, COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESPECT that no-one should have to go without.

For each item, circle in the first column whether or not you think it is ESSENTIAL for everyone.

Then circle in the second column whether or not you/your family have it.

If you have the item, there is no need to provide an answer in the third column.

If you do NOT have an item, indicate in the third column whether or not this is because you cannot afford it.

	Is it essential for everyone?		Do you have it? ...if No →		Is it because you cannot afford it?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) Regular social contact with other people	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b) A special meal once a week	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c) A night out once a fortnight	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d) A week's holiday away from home each year	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
e) Presents for family or friends at least once a year	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
f) To be able to 'pay your way' when out with friends	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
g) Someone to look after you if you are sick and need help around the house	Yes	No	Yes	No		
h) Someone to give you advice about an important decision in your life	Yes	No	Yes	No		
i) To be treated with respect by other people	Yes	No	Yes	No		
j) To be accepted by others for who you are	Yes	No	Yes	No		
k) To be free from discrimination	Yes	No	Yes	No		

21. Have you participated in any of the following community activities over the last 12 months?

Please tick ALL the boxes that apply.

- Education or school-based groups/activities
- A volunteer in health or community services
- Church groups or activities, other than attending services
- Arts, musical or cultural groups/activities
- Sport - as a participant
- Sport - volunteer or spectator (not on TV)
- A neighbourhood group/activity of any kind
- A political campaign or event of any kind
- None of the above

22. What was the MAIN source of income of you/your family last week?

Please tick one box only.

- Wages or salaries
- Self-employment income
- Interest, dividends, superannuation, etc.
- Age Pension
- Disability Support Pension
- Newstart Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Other Centrelink payment
- Other source of income

23. If you needed to raise \$2,000 within a week because of an emergency (e.g. to pay for medical treatment or replace a broken appliance) how would you raise it?

Please tick ALL the boxes that apply.

- Draw on my savings
- Borrow from family or friends
- Borrow from a financial institution (or use a credit card)
- Borrow from a welfare agency
- Would have to pawn or sell things
- Other means
- I could not raise \$2,000 in a week

24. Overall, which of these statements BEST describes what being in poverty means to you?

Please tick one box only.

- Having to struggle to survive each and every day
- Not having enough to buy basics like food, housing and clothing
- Not having enough to be able to live decently
- Not having enough money to make ends meet
- Not having enough to buy what most others take for granted
- Not being able to afford any of the good things in life

25. How big a problem do you think poverty is in Australia today?

Please tick one box only.

- A big problem
- A problem for some specific groups, but not for the majority
- A small problem
- Not a problem at all

26. Would you describe you/your family as poor?

Please tick one box only.

- Yes
- No

27. Listed below are some statements about the current level of inequality in Australia. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

Please circle one number for each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a) The gap between rich and poor is too great and should be reduced	1	2	3	4	5	9
b) Incomes at the top are too high and should be reduced	1	2	3	4	5	9
c) Incomes at the bottom are too low and should be increased	1	2	3	4	5	9
d) The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer	1	2	3	4	5	9
e) Large differences in income are necessary to maintain Australia's economic prosperity	1	2	3	4	5	9
f) Australia is more equal than most other similar countries	1	2	3	4	5	9

ABOUT YOU

Finally, we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself to help us to interpret the results of the survey.

28. What is your sex?

Please tick one box only.

- Male
 Female

29. How old were you on your last birthday?

Please write your age in years on the line below.

_____ years old

30. What is your postcode?

Please write your postcode on the line below.

31. Where were you born?

Please tick one box only.

- Australia
 Another English-speaking country
 A non-English-speaking country

32. Do you/your family normally speak a language other than English at home?

Please tick one box only.

- Yes
 No

33. Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Please tick one box only.

- Yes
 No

34. What is your present marital status?

Please tick one box only.

- Married (or living with de facto partner)
 Separated, widowed or divorced
 Never married

35. Which of the following best describes your current living arrangements?

Please tick one box only.

- I live alone
- I just live with my spouse / partner
- I live with my spouse / partner and our children
- I live by myself with my children (sole parent)
- I live with my parents
- I live with my extended family
- I live in a group household
- Other

36. Please complete the following table that shows the number of people (INCLUDING YOU) that are living in your household.

Please circle only ONE number in each row.

	Number of people living in your household					
	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
a) Adults aged between 18 and 64	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
b) Adults aged 65 or over	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
c) Children aged under 18	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Total number of people living in my household	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more

37. Which of the following best describes your present housing situation?

Please tick one box only.

- Own home outright (no mortgage)
- Paying off a mortgage
- Renting from a private landlord
- Renting from a government agency (public housing)
- Boarding
- Other

38. How much are you currently paying PER WEEK in rent or mortgage costs?

In dollars per week \$ _____

39. Which of these best describes the HIGHEST qualification you have completed?

Please tick one box only.

- Primary school or less
- Some secondary/ high school
- Completed secondary / high school / matriculation
- Trade certificate / apprenticeship or similar
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate degree

40. Which of the following BEST describes the MAIN activity last week of you and your partner?

Please circle only ONE number in each column. Do not circle any number in the second column if you do not live with a partner.

	You	Your partner
Working full-time for pay	01	01
Working part-time for pay	02	02
Self-employed: full-time	03	03
Self-employed: part-time	04	04
Unemployed/looking for work	05	05
Retired	06	06
Caring for a child/children at home	07	07
Caring for an adult with a disability	08	08
Home or family responsibilities	09	09
Other	10	10

41. What is the income (before tax) from all sources, of you or your FAMILY?

Please include the TOTAL income of you and your partner (if you have one) and any children (if they live with you). If you live alone or in shared accommodation just include your own income. Do not deduct tax, superannuation, or health insurance contributions

<u>Weekly</u>		<u>Yearly</u>
Less than \$200 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than \$10,400 a year
\$200 to \$299 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$10,400 to \$15,599 a year
\$300 to \$399 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15,600 to \$20,799 a year
\$400 to \$499 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$20,800 to \$25,999 a year
\$500 to \$599 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$26,000 to \$31,199 a year
\$600 to \$699 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$31,200 to \$36,399 a year
\$700 to \$799 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$36,400 to \$41,599 a year
\$800 to \$899 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$41,600 to \$46,799 a year
\$900 to \$999 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$46,800 to \$51,999 a year
\$1000 to \$1249 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$52,000 to \$64,999 a year
\$1250 to \$1499 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$65,000 to \$77,999 a year
\$1500 to \$1749 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$78,000 to \$90,999 a year
\$1750 to \$1999 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$91,000 to \$103,999 a year
\$2000 to \$2499 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$104,000 to \$129,999 a year
\$2500 to \$2999 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$130,000 to \$155,999 a year
\$3000 to \$3499 a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$156,000 to \$181,999 a year
\$3500 and over a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$182,000 and over a year
No income or negative income	<input type="checkbox"/>	

42. In your opinion, what would be the VERY LOWEST net weekly income (that is, income after tax but before payment of any bills) that your FAMILY would need each week just to make ends meet?

If you live alone or in shared accommodation, just write what YOU would need.

In dollars per week \$ _____

43. Some people in Australia are rich, some are poor and others are somewhere in between. Thinking about your/your family's INCOME, how do you think you compare overall with other families in Australia?

Please mark where you think you fall, by circling a number on the line below (For example, if you think you fall four-tenths of the way up from the poorest, circle number four on the line below).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poorest					Richest				

44. Generally speaking, which political party do you vote for?

- Liberal Party
- National Party
- Australian Labor Party
- The Greens
- One Nation
- Swinging voter
- Unsure/Don't know

45. Would you describe yourself as a religious person?

- Yes – I regularly attend church or other places of religion
- Yes – but I do not regularly attend church or other places of religion
- No – I do not follow any religion

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Now please place your questionnaire in the reply paid envelope and post it back to us AS SOON AS YOU CAN – WE WILL CONTACT YOU IF YOU WIN A PRIZE IN THE DRAW

ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH