



New
Issue

General Social Survey

Summary Results

Australia

2002

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Australian Statistician

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PREFACE

Many aspects of life are important to human wellbeing. Among these are health, family relationships and engagement with wider social networks, educational opportunities and outcomes, employment and other work, financial resources, a place to live, personal safety and security, and access to transport. In 2002 the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducted a new multi-topic social survey that ranged across all of these aspects of life. This *General Social Survey* (GSS) was conducted throughout Australia from March to July 2002 and summary results are presented in this publication. It is planned to repeat the survey at four-yearly intervals.

The aims of the GSS are to:

- present data on a range of social dimensions of the Australian community at a single point in time
- by collecting data on a range of topics from the same individual, enable analysis of the interrelationship of social circumstances and outcomes, including the exploration of multiple advantage and disadvantage
- provide a base for comparing social circumstances and outcomes over time and across population groups.

The 2002 GSS collected information from 15,500 people aged 18 years and over across all states and territories of Australia. Information was collected about both the individuals being interviewed and about the households in which they lived. Only a small number of topics could be included in the survey under each of the social dimensions being explored, but the information collected will enable research links to be made to more detailed data from other ABS surveys focused on particular social dimensions.

The publication also provides information to assist users in interpreting and using the results of the survey, including descriptions of the survey design and methodology and notes on the quality of estimates and their comparability with data from other ABS surveys. Information on other products and services available from the survey, including detailed tabulations by state and territory, is also provided.

The GSS will provide a rich source of data for analysis of the wellbeing of Australians. As well as assisting researchers in accessing and using GSS data, ABS is conducting a multivariate analysis project using GSS data. Publication of the results of this analysis are planned for early 2004.

The statistics in this publication draw on information provided freely by individuals. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated; without it, the wide range of population and social statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

Finally, the ABS welcomes comments on the usefulness of this publication and related products (see p64). Comments should be sent to the Director, Living Conditions Section.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
Aust.	Australia
CAI	computer assisted interviewing
CURF	Confidentialised Unit Record File
ERP	estimated resident population
GSS	General Social Survey
no.	number
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Qld	Queensland
RADL	Remote Access Data Laboratory
RSE	relative standard error
SA	South Australia
SE	standard error
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
Tas.	Tasmania
Vic.	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication presents summary results across a range of social dimensions for people aged 18 years and over, compiled from the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS). The survey collected information about personal and household characteristics for people aged 18 years and over resident in private dwellings throughout non-sparsely settled areas of Australia from March to July 2002.

2 The 2002 GSS collected data on a range of social dimensions from the same individual to enable analysis of the interrelationships in social circumstances and outcomes, including the exploration of multiple advantage and disadvantage experienced by that individual. It is expected that future cycles of the GSS will collect information for most of the dimensions covered in 2002, and for many of the topics and data items covered within those dimensions in 2002. However, it is also planned that the GSS will provide some content flexibility. The next GSS (currently planned for 2006 based on a four-yearly cycle) is expected to include topics relating to social capital and volunteering.

DIMENSIONS AND TOPICS INCLUDED IN THE 2002 GSS

3 The dimensions and topics included in the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS) were:

- demographic characteristics
- family and community
 - social networks
 - social participation
 - volunteering
 - personal stress
- health
 - self-assessed health
 - disability
- education
 - educational attainment
 - current study
- work
 - labour force status
 - employment characteristics
- economic resources
 - income
 - assets and liabilities
 - financial stress
- housing
 - tenure
 - housing costs
- crime
 - victims of crime
 - feelings of safety
- culture and leisure
 - attendance at culture and leisure venues
 - attendance at sporting events
 - participation in sport and recreational activities
- transport and communication
 - access to transport
 - journey to work
 - use of information technology

4 The following topics were included in the 2002 GSS as supplementary topics:

- household use of information technology
- attendance at selected culture/leisure venues
- sports attendance

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

DIMENSIONS AND TOPICS INCLUDED IN THE 2002 GSS *continued*

- participation in sport and recreational physical activities.

5 Each of these supplementary topics have been collected previously by the ABS. Only summary results for these topics are presented in this publication. Further results have been provided in separate ABS publications (see below under 'GSS Products and Services' for further information). These topics will not be included in the GSS in future, although summary indicators may be retained.

6 A full list of the data items from the 2002 GSS is contained in the *2002 General Social Survey: Data Reference Package* (cat. no. 4159.0.55.001) available on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au> or may be requested from the contact officer listed at the front of this publication. This list will also be published in the *2002 General Social Survey: Users' Guide* (cat. no. 4159.0.55.002) which is scheduled to be released in February 2004.

SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

7 Only people who were usual residents of private dwellings in Australia were covered by the survey. Private dwellings are houses, flats, home units and any other structures used as private places of residence at the time of the survey. People usually resident in non-private dwellings such as hotels, motels, hostels, hospitals and short-stay caravan parks were not included in the survey. Usual residents are those who usually live in a particular dwelling and regard it as their own or main home. Visitors to private dwellings are not included in the interview for that dwelling. However, if they are a usual resident of another dwelling that is in the scope of the survey they have a chance of being selected in the survey or, if not selected, they will be represented by similar persons who are selected in the survey. At June 30 2002, there were 384,000 people living in non-private dwellings throughout Australia. The exclusion of these people (2% of the population) is unlikely to impact on the estimates included in this publication.

8 The GSS was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, except for sparsely settled parts of Australia. New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have sparsely settled areas. With the exception of the Northern Territory, the population living in the sparsely settled areas represents only a small proportion of the total population. For this and other practical reasons no adjustment was made to state population benchmarks (population benchmarks are discussed below) when deriving survey results. However, at June 30 2002, a significant number of people aged 18 years or over were living in sparsely settled areas in the Northern Territory. These people have therefore been excluded from the population benchmarks in deriving the Northern Territory survey results. However, as these people represent only a very small proportion of the total Australian population, their exclusion has had a negligible impact on national estimates.

9 Only persons aged 18 years and over were included in the survey. The Australian population at 30 June 2002, after the exclusion of people living in non-private dwellings and in sparsely settled areas of the Northern Territory, was 19,171,000, of which 14,503,000 were aged 18 years and over.

10 The following non-residents were excluded from resident population estimates used to benchmark the survey results, and were not interviewed:

- diplomatic personnel of overseas governments
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia
- persons whose usual place of residence was outside Australia.

DATA COLLECTION

11 ABS interviewers conducted personal interviews at selected dwellings during the period March to July 2002. Interviews were conducted using a Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) questionnaire. CAI involves the use of a computer to record, store, manipulate and transmit the data collected during interviews.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

DATA COLLECTION *continued*

12 Much of the detail obtained from the GSS was provided by one person aged 18 years or over randomly selected from each participating household. The random selection of this person was made once basic information had been obtained about all household members. Some financial and housing items collected in the GSS required the selected person to answer on behalf of other members of the household. In some cases, particularly where household information was not known by the selected person, a spokesperson for the household was nominated to provide household information.

13 A copy of the GSS interview questions is available in the *2002 General Social Survey: Data Reference Package* (cat. no. 4159.0.55.001) which is available on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au> or may be requested from the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.

SURVEY DESIGN

14 The GSS was designed to provide reliable estimates at the national level and for each state and territory. The sample was therefore spread across the states and territories in order to produce estimates that have a relative standard error (RSE) of no greater than 10% for characteristics that are relatively common in the national population, say that at least 10% of the population would possess.

15 Dwellings included in the survey in each state and territory were selected at random using a multi-stage area sample. This sample included only private dwellings from the geographic areas covered by the survey. The initial sample for the survey consisted of approximately 19,500 dwellings. This number was reduced to approximately 17,000 dwellings due to the loss of households which had no residents in scope for the survey and where dwellings proved to be vacant, under construction or derelict. Of the eligible dwellings, 91% responded fully (or adequately) which yielded a total sample from the survey of just over 15,500 dwellings.

16 Some survey respondents provided most of the required information, but were unable or unwilling to provide a response to certain data items. The records for these persons were retained in the sample and the missing values were recorded as 'don't know or not stated'. No attempt was made to deduce or impute for these missing values. Approximately 1,200 respondents did not provide one or more required answers but were deemed to have responded adequately. Details of missing values for data items are presented in paragraph 31.

WEIGHTING, BENCHMARKING AND ESTIMATION

Weighting

17 Weighting is the process of adjusting results from a sample survey to infer results for the total in scope population whether that be persons or households. To do this, a 'weight' is allocated to each sample unit e.g. a person or a household. The weight is a value which indicates how many population units are represented by the sample unit.

18 The first step in calculating weights for each person or household is to assign an initial weight, which is equal to the inverse of the probability of being selected in the survey. For example, if the probability of a person being selected in the survey was 1 in 600, then the person would have an initial weight of 600 (that is, they represent 600 people).

Benchmarking

19 The initial weights were calibrated to align with independent estimates of the population of interest, referred to as 'benchmarks'. Weights calibrated against population benchmarks ensure that the survey estimates conform to the independently estimated distribution of the population rather than to the distribution within the sample itself.

20 The survey was benchmarked to the estimated resident population (ERP) living in private dwellings in each state and the Australian Capital Territory, and for the ERP living in non-sparsely settled areas of the Northern Territory, at 30 June 2002. The ERP estimates for 2002 were based on results from the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. Therefore the GSS estimates do not (and are not intended to) match estimates for the total Australian resident population (which include persons and households

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Benchmarking continued

living in non-private dwellings, such as hotels and boarding houses) obtained from other sources.

21 The majority of estimates shown in this publication are based on benchmarked person weights. Estimates contained in table 33 and the estimates of mean incomes, mortgages and rents contained in tables 4 and 16–22 are based on benchmarked household weights.

Estimation

22 Survey estimates of counts of persons are obtained by summing the weights of persons or households with the characteristic of interest. Estimates for means, such as mean age of persons, are obtained by summing the weights of persons in each category (e.g. individual ages), multiplying by the value for each category, aggregating the result for each category, then dividing by the sum of the weights for all persons.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

23 All sample surveys are subject to error. Errors in sample surveys come in two broad groups. Sampling error occurs because only a small proportion of the total population is used to produce estimates that represent the population. Sampling error can be reliably measured as it is calculated based on the scientific methods used to design surveys. The second type of error is referred to as non-sampling error. These errors occur when survey processes work less effectively than intended. For example, not all persons selected respond to the survey, questions in the survey are not always clear to the respondent, and occasionally errors can be made in processing data from the survey.

Sampling error

24 Sampling error is the difference between the published estimates, derived from a sample of persons, and the value that would have been produced if all persons in scope of the survey had been included. For more information refer to Appendix 3: Measuring Sampling Variability. Sampling error is measured for this survey by relative standard errors (RSEs). In this publication estimates with RSEs of 25% to 50% are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *3.4) to indicate that the estimate should be used with caution. Estimates with RSEs over 50% are indicated by a double asterisk (e.g. **0.6) and should be considered unreliable for most purposes.

Non-sampling error

25 One of the main sources of non-sampling error is non-response by persons selected in the survey. Non-response can affect the reliability of results and can introduce a bias. The magnitude of any bias depends upon the level of non-response and the extent of the difference between the characteristics of those people who responded to the survey and those who did not.

26 To reduce the level and impact of non-response, the following methods were adopted in this survey:

- face-to-face interviews with respondents
- the use of interviewers who could speak languages other than English where necessary
- follow-up of respondents if there was initially no response
- ensuring the weighted file is representative of the population by aligning the estimates with population benchmarks.

27 Of the dwellings selected in the GSS, 9% did not respond fully or adequately. As the non-response to the GSS was low, the impact of non-response bias is considered to be negligible.

28 Every effort was made to minimise other non-sampling error by careful design and testing of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and extensive editing and quality control procedures at all stages of data processing.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Non-sampling error continued

29 An advantage of the Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) technology used in conducting interviews for this survey is that it enables edits to be applied as the data are being gathered. The interviewer is alerted immediately if information entered into the computer is either outside the permitted range for that question, or contradictory to information previously recorded during the interview. These edits allow the interviewer to query respondents and resolve issues during the interview. CAI sequencing of questions is also automated such that respondents are asked only relevant questions and only in the appropriate sequence, eliminating interviewer sequencing errors.

SEASONAL EFFECTS

30 The estimates in this publication are based on information collected from March to July 2002, and due to seasonal effects they may not be fully representative of other time periods in the year. For example, the GSS asked standard ABS questions on labour force status to determine whether a person was employed. Employment is subject to seasonal variation through the year. Therefore, the GSS results for employment could have differed if the GSS had been conducted over the whole year or in a different part of the year.

DATA INTERPRETATION

31 For a number of GSS data items some respondents were unwilling or unable to provide the required information. No imputation was undertaken for this missing information. Where responses for a particular data item were missing for a person or household they were recorded in a 'not known or not stated' category for that data item. These 'not known or not stated' categories are not shown in the publication tables. However, the person or household has been included in the total for most data items. The exception is the equivalised gross household income data item where it was more appropriate to calculate percentages excluding the missing values. Below is a table showing the number and proportion of missing values for key GSS data items.

GSS DATA ITEMS WITH A 'NOT KNOWN OR NOT STATED' CATEGORY

<i>Data item</i>	<i>Estimated number of persons</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
	'000	%
Time that government support has been main source of income in last 2 years	14	0.1
Principal source of household income(a)	441	3.0
Gross household income	1 151	7.9
Equity in dwelling	467	3.3
Amount owing on mortgage against home	152	1.0
Weekly mortgage payments	2	0.0
Type/s of selected assets	63	0.4
Value of consumer debt	379	2.6
Unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important	380	2.6
Had at least one cash flow problem in last 12 months (and Number of different types of cash flow problem/s in last 12 months)	367	2.5
Took at least one dissaving action in last 12 months (and Number of different types of dissaving action/s taken in last 12 months)	270	1.9

(a) See also paragraph 32.

32 For persons or households reporting nil or negative total income, the principal source of income has been classified as 'undefined'. An estimated 101,000 persons live in households where the principal source of income was 'undefined'.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

COMPARABILITY WITH OTHER RESULTS

33 The GSS collected data across a range of topics, many of which have been included in previous ABS surveys. Where possible question modules from existing surveys were used in the GSS questionnaire. This practice ensured that GSS data is highly comparable with that of other surveys that users of the data may wish to compare with. However, due to the number of topics included in the GSS and in order not to overload survey respondents, it was not always possible to adopt the full question modules used in other surveys. For example, personal income was collected via eight questions in the GSS, while the Survey of Income and Housing Costs (SIHC) used more than 40 questions to fully collect personal income data. Many of the additional questions in other surveys simply provide more detailed breakdowns of the data collected. However, in some cases the reduced question modules used in GSS have resulted in small differences in the definition or scope of data items. Wherever possible standard ABS 'shortened' question modules have been used. These shortened question modules have been designed to maximise comparability with the full question modules and their use also ensures comparability with other surveys where these shortened modules have been used. Users should refer to the Glossary of this publication for the definitions of GSS items and to the *2002 General Social Survey: Data Reference Package* (cat. no. 4159.0.55.001) for the survey questions.

34 There are other reasons why results from the GSS may differ from other ABS surveys collecting information on the same topics. The GSS is a sample survey and its results are subject to sampling error. GSS results may differ from other sample surveys, which are also subject to sampling error. Users should take account of the RSEs on GSS estimates and those of other survey estimates where comparisons are made.

35 Differences may also exist in the scope and/or coverage of the GSS compared to other surveys. For example the GSS included persons aged 18 years and over, living in private dwellings across Australia but excluding persons living in sparsely settled areas. In comparison the Labour Force Survey includes persons aged 15 years or over, living in both private dwellings and non-private dwellings (institutions, hotels, etc.) in all areas of Australia.

36 Further, the GSS was collected over the period March to July 2002. Differences in GSS data when compared to the estimates of other surveys may result from different reference periods reflecting seasonal variations, non-seasonal events that may have impacted on one period but not another or because of underlying trends in the phenomena being measured.

37 Finally, differences can occur as a result of using different collection methodologies. This is often evident in comparisons of similar data items reported from different ABS collections where, after taking account of definitional and scope differences and sampling error, residual differences remain. These differences often have to do with the mode of the collections, such as whether data is collected by an interviewer or self-enumerated by the respondent, whether the data is collected from the person themselves or from a proxy respondent, and the level of experience of interviewers undertaking the data collection. Differences may also result from the context in which questions are asked i.e. where in the interview the questions are asked and the nature of questions that are asked beforehand. Because of the nature of such differences between statistical collections the impacts on data are difficult to quantify. As a result every effort is made to minimise such differences.

38 Appendix 1: Comparison of Data from GSS and Other ABS Sources presents comparisons between a number of key GSS data items and similar data items from other ABS sources. Where possible results from other surveys have been adjusted to the scope and coverage of the GSS (or vice versa).

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

COMPARABILITY WITH OTHER RESULTS *continued*

Self-assessed health status

39 As can be seen from Appendix 1, GSS data is broadly consistent with other ABS sources. However, there are a number of notable inconsistencies, which are commented on below. Further information about these GSS items and comparisons with other sources can be obtained from the contact officer noted on the front of this publication.

40 In comparison to the 2001 National Health Survey (NHS), the GSS shows a greater proportion of people reporting excellent health, with fewer reporting good or fair health. The NHS was conducted throughout the year in 2001. The GSS was conducted in the following year but only in the period March to July. It is unlikely that either the later time period or the time of the year that the GSS was conducted would have contributed significantly to the differences in health assessment. The 2001 NHS results showed only small shifts from the previous NHS which was conducted in 1995. However, it has been previously observed that people's assessment of their health can vary with the way that the assessment is obtained¹. It has not been possible to determine the extent to which the differences between the GSS and NHS methodologies may have contributed to the different results.

Crime

41 The 2002 GSS collected three crime related data items. Respondents were asked whether in the last 12 months they had been a victim of physical or threatened violence or had experienced a break-in or attempted break-in. Respondents were also asked about how safe they felt in their home alone both during the day and after dark. The rates of victimisation both for physical violence and break-in recorded by the 2002 GSS were substantially higher than those reported in the ABS's National Crime and Safety Survey (NCSS) and Recorded Crime Statistics collection. However, the GSS rates of victimisation for physical violence and for feelings of safety are broadly comparable with the rates recorded in the 1996 Women's Safety Survey (WSS). The GSS also reported a somewhat different pattern of feelings of safety compared to the NCSS, most notably with a much higher proportion of people reporting feeling very safe at home after dark. For a comparison of different ABS measures of crime related data, including the 2002 GSS results, refer to *Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimisation, Australia: The Impact of Different Collection Methodologies* (cat. no. 4522.0.55.001) available on the ABS web site.

Disability and long-term health conditions

42 The question module used in the GSS for this topic was a short form of the questions used in the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC). ABS analysis has shown that using the shorter format identifies a population somewhere in between the populations that would be obtained from SDAC for 'disability' and 'long-term health condition', where the latter are not necessarily restricted or limited in everyday activities as a result of their health condition. The term 'disability or long-term health condition' is used in GSS output to reflect this difference from the SDAC 'disability' population. In the GSS, considerably fewer people reported a core activity limitation, particularly where the limitation was mild. This also reflects differences in methodology, where questions in addition to those relating to 'use of aids/equipment' were used in the derivation of mild limitations for SDAC but not for GSS.

¹ T F Crossley & S Kennedy, 'The Reliability of Self-Assessed Health Status'. *Journal of Health Economics*, July 2002, vol. 21(4), pp. 643-58

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Income

43 In comparison with the Survey of Income and Housing Costs (SIHC) 2000–01, the GSS shows a 9% higher mean gross household income per week. The SIHC was conducted throughout the 2000–01 financial year, while the GSS was conducted in the following year but in the period March to July. Wages growth as shown in the average weekly earnings series rose approximately 5.5% between 2000–01 and May 2002 — the approximate mid-point of the GSS enumeration period. The SIHC used a considerably longer income question module than was used in the GSS. It is expected that the differences in the amount of detail obtained from these two collections would have caused some differences in the reported data. However, it has not been possible to determine the extent to which the differences between SIHC and GSS methodologies may have contributed to the different results.

Volunteering

44 GSS has recorded a higher rate of volunteering than the 2000 Survey of Voluntary Workers (SVW). However, a strongly increasing trend in volunteering was observed in the SVW between 1995 and 2000. The rate of volunteering increased from 24% to 32% over that period. Although the GSS was conducted less than two years after the 2000 SVW, the GSS result may reflect a continuing trend in volunteering.

GSS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

45 Below is information describing the range of data to be made available from the 2002 General Social Survey both in published form and on request. The program of publications and other releases may be subject to change. Products available on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au> are indicated accordingly. To request any of these products or to obtain further information on the products please contact the officer noted on the front of this publication.

2002 General Social Survey: Data Reference Package

46 A package containing sample copies of the GSS questionnaire and prompt cards, together with a list of the output items from the survey is available free-of-charge on the ABS web site. This package has been released as cat. no. 4159.0.55.001.

State/territory tabulations

47 Versions of the tables from this publication compiled separately for each state and territory will be available on the ABS web site from January 2004. These tabulations will be released as cat. nos. 4159.1.55.001 to 4159.8.55.001.

2002 General Social Survey: Users' Guide

48 Detailed information on GSS content, methodology, survey design and estimation will be included in the Users' Guide to be available on the ABS web site from February 2004. This product will be released as cat. no. 4159.0.55.002.

Microdata

49 For users who wish to undertake more detailed analysis of the survey data it is expected, subject to approval by the Australian Statistician, that microdata from the GSS will be released in the form of two confidentialised unit record files (CURFs), the basic CURF and the expanded CURF. The expanded CURF will contain more detail than the basic CURF and will only be available via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL), which is a secure internet-based data query service. The basic CURF will be available via CD ROM or RADL. An Information Paper will be produced describing the content of the basic and expanded GSS CURFs.

50 Up-to-date information on ABS CURFs and the RADL service, including information on pricing, 'Applications & Undertakings', and a training manual outlining obligations and responsibilities when accessing ABS microdata, is available on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au — Products and Services — Access to ABS CURFs>.

51 Both the CURF and the RADL service are expected to be available in February 2004. Those wishing to access GSS microdata should contact the officer noted at the front of this publication.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Data available on request

52 Special tabulations of GSS data are available on request. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from the survey incorporating data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements. These can be provided in printed or electronic form.

Publication of supplementary topics

53 Detailed results from the supplementary topics included in the GSS (Household Use of Information Technology, Attendance at Selected Culture/Leisure Venues, Sports Attendance; and Participation in Sport and Physical Activities) have been released separately in the following publications:

- *Household Use of Information Technology, Australia* (cat. no. 8146.0)
- *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia* (cat. no. 4114.0)
- *Sports Attendance, Australia* (cat. no. 4174.0)
- *Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia* (cat. no. 4177.0).

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

54 Other ABS publications which may be of interest are shown below and are available on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>:

- Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0)
- Census of Population and Housing: Selected Social and Housing Characteristics, Australia, 2001* (cat. no. 2015.0)
- Australia's Children, 1999* (cat. no. 4119.0)
- Crime and Safety, Australia, April 2002* (cat. no. 4509.0)
- Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 1998* (cat. no. 4430.0)
- Education and Training Experience, Australia, 2001* (cat. no. 6278.0)
- Education and Training Indicators, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4230.0)
- Employment Arrangements and Superannuation, Australia, April to June 2000* (cat. no. 6361.0)
- Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 1998–1999* (cat. no. 6530.0)
- Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 6523.0)
- Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants, Australia, November 1999* (cat. no. 6250.0)
- Migration, Australia, 2000–01 and 2001–02* (cat. no. 3412.0)
- National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2001* (cat. no. 4364.0)
- Older People, Australia: A Social Report, 1999* (cat. no. 4109.0)
- Voluntary Work, Australia, 2000* (cat. no. 4441.0)

55 Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from any ABS office or the ABS web site. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

APPENDIX 1 COMPARISON OF DATA FROM GSS AND OTHER ABS SOURCES

A1 COMPARISON OF DATA FROM GSS AND OTHER ABS SOURCES (a)

<i>Other ABS source/Data item</i>		<i>Source of comparable statistics</i>	<i>2002 GSS</i>
2001 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING			
Marital status^{(b)(c)(d)(e)}			
Married in a registered marriage	%	54.9	54.7
Married in a de facto marriage	%	7.8	9.6
Not married	%	37.3	35.7
Country of birth^{(b)(c)(d)(e)}			
Australia	%	71.5	72.4
Main English-speaking countries	%	11.1	10.7
Other countries	%	17.4	16.9
NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY, 2001			
Self-assessed health status^(b)			
Excellent	%	17.7	25.6
Very good	%	32.6	33.6
Good	%	30.9	24.9
Fair	%	13.8	11.3
Poor	%	4.9	4.6
SURVEY OF DISABILITY, AGEING AND CARERS, 1998			
Whether has disability or long-term health condition^{(b)(e)}			
Has disability or long-term health condition	%	42.1	39.7
Has no disability or long-term health condition	%	57.9	60.3
LABOUR FORCE SURVEY, MARCH – JULY 2002			
Labour force status^{(b)(c)(e)}			
Employed full-time	%	45.6	45.5
Employed part-time	%	16.5	18.6
Unemployed	%	3.8	3.9
Not in labour force	%	34.1	32.0
SURVEY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, 2001			
Highest year of school completed^(f)			
Year 12	%	44.6	48.0
Year 11	%	11.7	11.5
Year 10	%	28.0	26.3
Year 9 or below	%	15.6	14.1
Level not determined/Never attended school	%	0.2	0.1
Level of highest non-school qualification^(f)			
Graduate diploma/Graduate certificate and above	%	6.3	5.1
Bachelor degree	%	11.9	13.4
Advanced diploma/Diploma	%	8.1	8.3
Certificate III/IV	%	16.5	16.2
Certificate I/II	%	8.5	8.3
No non-school qualification	%	45.8	46.8
Certificate not further defined/Level not determined	%	2.8	1.8

- (a) Percentages shown relate to the total population of persons unless otherwise indicated.
- (b) Data from other source has been restricted to persons 18 years or over to align with GSS data.
- (c) Data from other source includes persons living in sparsely settled areas.
- (d) Data from other source has been pro-rated to exclude 'Not stated'/'Not applicable' to align with GSS data.
- (e) Data from other source has been restricted to persons living in private dwellings to align with GSS data.
- (f) GSS data has been restricted to persons aged 18–64 years to align with one another.

APPENDIX 1 COMPARISON OF DATA FROM GSS AND OTHER ABS SOURCES *continued*

A1 COMPARISON OF DATA FROM GSS AND OTHER ABS SOURCES(a) *continued*

<i>Other ABS source/Data item</i>		<i>Source of comparable statistics</i>	2002 GSS
NATIONAL CRIME AND SAFETY SURVEY, 2002			
Feelings of safety at home alone after dark(b)			
Very unsafe	%	2.6	2.2
Unsafe	%	6.9	6.2
Neither safe nor unsafe	%	16.3	8.3
Safe	%	44.3	40.1
Very safe	%	24.8	41.5
Never home alone after dark	%	4.7	1.7
Not stated	%	0.4	—
Victimisation rates(b)(c)			
Victim of assault/threatened or physical violence	%	4.5	9.0
Victim of break-in(d)	%	7.4	11.5
SURVEY OF VOLUNTARY WORK, 2000			
Voluntary work in last 12 months			
Volunteer rate	%	31.8	34.4
HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY, 1999			
Ability to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important(d)			
Could raise \$2,000 within a week	%	80.9	81.9
Could not raise \$2,000 within a week	%	19.1	15.3
Don't know	%	—	2.8
SURVEY OF INCOME AND HOUSING COSTS, 2000–01			
Tenure type(d)			
Owner without a mortgage	%	38.2	38.9
Owner with a mortgage	%	32.1	31.1
Renter	%	27.4	27.3
Other	%	2.3	2.7
Mean gross household income per week	\$	972	1 056

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Percentages shown relate to the total population of persons unless otherwise indicated.

(b) Data from other source has been restricted to persons 18 years or over to align with GSS data.

(c) For a comparison of different ABS measures of crime related data, including the 2002 GSS and the 2002

National Crime and Safety Survey results, refer to

Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimisation, Australia: The Impact of Different Methodologies

(cat. no. 4522.0.55.001) available on the ABS web site.

(d) GSS data has been household weighted to align with data from other ABS source.

APPENDIX 2 EQUIVALISED GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES

INTRODUCTION

1 The economic wellbeing of individuals reflects their command over economic resources. The amount of income to which they have access is an important component of these resources. While income is usually received by individuals, it is normally shared between partners in a couple relationship and with any dependent children. To a lesser degree, there may be sharing with other members of the household. Even when there is no transfer of income between members of a household, nor provision of free or cheap accommodation, members are still likely to benefit from the economies of scale that arise from the sharing of dwellings. Therefore the income measures shown in this publication relate to household income.

2 Gross household income can be used as an indicator of whether a person has a relatively high or low level of economic wellbeing. However, larger households normally require a greater level of income to maintain the same standard of living as smaller households, and the needs of adults are normally greater than the needs of children. Equivalised income estimates are estimates which have been adjusted by equivalence factors which standardise the income estimates with respect to household size and composition. Therefore estimates of equivalised gross household income are used in this publication as a more relevant indicator of relative economic wellbeing than non-equivalised income. Equivalised income is described in more detail in the next section of this Appendix.

3 In order to enable the comparison of groups of the population classified by their relative level of income, each person in the survey is allocated to an income quintile. More detail is provided in the last section of this note.

EQUIVALISED INCOME EQUIVALENCE SCALES

4 Equivalence scales have been devised to make adjustments to the actual incomes of households in a way that enables analysis of the relative wellbeing of households of different size and composition. For example, it would be expected that a household comprising two people would normally need more income than a lone person household if the two households are to enjoy the same standard of living.

5 One way of adjusting for this difference in household size might be simply to divide the income of the household by the number of people within the household so that all income is presented on a per capita basis. However, such an adjustment assumes that all individuals have the same resource needs if they are to enjoy the same standard of living and that there are no economies derived from living together.

6 Various calibrations, or scales, have been devised to make adjustments to the actual incomes of households in a way that recognises differences in the needs of individuals within those households and the economies that flow from sharing resources. The scales differ in their detail and complexity but commonly recognise that the extra level of resources required by larger groups of people living together is not directly proportional to the number of people in the group. They also typically recognise that children have fewer needs than adults.

7 When household income is adjusted according to an equivalence scale, the equivalised income can be viewed as an indicator of economic resources available to a standardised household. For a lone person household it is equal to household income. For a household comprising more than one person, it is an indicator of the household income that would need to be received by a lone person household to enjoy the same level of economic wellbeing as the household in question.

8 Alternatively, equivalised household income can be viewed as an indicator of economic resources available to each individual in a household. The latter view underpins the calculation of income distribution measures based on numbers of people, rather than numbers of households.

APPENDIX 2 EQUIVALISED GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES

continued

CHOICE OF SCALE

9 While there has been considerable research by statistical and other agencies trying to estimate appropriate values for equivalence scales, no single standard has emerged. In theory, there are many factors which might be taken into account when devising equivalence scales, such as recognising that people in the labour force are likely to face transport and other costs that do not contribute to their standard of living. It might also be desirable to reflect the different needs of children at different ages, and the different cost levels faced by people living in different geographic areas. On the other hand, the tastes and preferences of people vary widely, resulting in markedly different expenditure patterns between households with similar income levels and similar composition. Furthermore, it is likely that equivalence scales that appropriately adjust incomes of low income households are not as appropriate for higher income households, and vice versa. This is because the proportion of total income spent on housing tends to fall as incomes rise, and cheaper per capita housing is a major source of economies of scale that flow from people living together.

10 It is therefore difficult to define, estimate and use equivalence scales which take all relevant factors into account. As a result, analysts tend to use simple equivalence scales which are chosen subjectively but are nevertheless consistent with the quantitative research that has been undertaken. A major advantage of simpler scales is that they are more transparent to the user, that is, it is easier to evaluate the assumptions being made in the equivalising process.

11 In this publication, the 'modified OECD' equivalence scale is used. It has been used in more recent research work undertaken for the OECD and has wide acceptance among Australian analysts of income distribution.

DERIVATION OF EQUIVALISED INCOME

12 Equivalised income is derived by calculating an equivalence factor according to the chosen equivalence scale, and then dividing income by the factor.

13 The equivalence factor derived using the 'modified OECD' equivalence scale is built up by allocating points to each person in a household. Taking the first adult in the household as having a weight of 1 point, each additional person who is 15 years or older is allocated 0.5 points, and each child under the age of 15 years is allocated 0.3 points. Equivalised household income is derived by dividing total household income by a factor equal to the sum of the equivalence points allocated to the household members. The equivalised income of a lone person household is the same as its unequivalised income. The equivalised income of a household comprising more than one person lies between the total value and the per capita value of its unequivalised income.

14 When unequivalised income is negative, such as when losses incurred in a household's unincorporated business or other investments are greater than any positive income from any other sources, equivalised income has been set to zero.

15 The following table shows the relationship between gross household income and equivalised gross household income for various household compositions shown elsewhere in this publication.

APPENDIX 2 EQUIVALISED GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES

continued

DERIVATION OF EQUIVALISED
INCOME *continued*

A2 IMPACT OF EQUIVALISING GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Mean gross household income per week	Mean equivalised gross household income per week	MEAN NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD		
			Aged 0 to 14 years	Aged 15 years or over	Total
	\$	\$	no.	no.	no.
Couple only, one family households	1 078	716	—	2.0	2.0
One family households with dependent child/ren					
Couple family	1 483	666	1.6	2.6	4.1
One parent family	588	357	1.3	1.5	2.9
Lone person households	521	521	—	1.0	1.0
Other households	1 385	686	0.2	2.9	3.1
All households	1 060	624	0.5	2.0	2.5

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

16 For lone person households, gross household income and equivalised gross household income are the same as each other. This is because the equivalising factor for such households is 1.0. For all other types of household composition however, equivalised gross household income is lower than gross household income, since income is adjusted for household size and composition.

INCOME QUINTILES

17 When persons (or any other units) are ranked from the lowest to the highest on the basis of some characteristic such as their household income, they can then be divided into equal sized groups. When the population is divided into five equally sized groups, the groups are called quintiles. The quintiles can be described in terms of the highest level of the characteristic that falls within each of the first four quintiles, that is, their upper boundaries.

18 Equivalised gross household income quintiles are used in this publication to compare groups of the population according to their relative income levels. The population used for this purpose includes all people living in private dwellings, including children and other persons under the age of 18 years. The upper boundaries set for each quintile for this population are shown in the table below. However, as the scope of this publication is restricted to only those persons 18 years of age and over living in private dwellings, the distribution of this smaller population across the quintiles is not necessarily the same as it is for all people living in private dwellings. The differences in these distributions are illustrated in the table below.

19 It should also be noted that household income is not known for about 8% of persons in the survey and those persons and their households are excluded from the calculation of equivalised gross household income and from the analysis of the population by income quintile. See the Data Interpretation section in the Explanatory Notes for more detail.

APPENDIX 2 EQUIVALISED GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES

continued

A3 DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION ACROSS EQUIVALISED GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES

		QUINTILE					
		<i>Lowest quintile</i>	<i>Second quintile</i>	<i>Third quintile</i>	<i>Fourth quintile</i>	<i>Highest quintile</i>	<i>Total(a)</i>
Equivalised gross household income per week at upper boundary of quintiles	\$	265	427	612	870	..	..
Persons from 0 years of age							
Number	'000	3 619	3 617	3 621	3 627	3 624	18 108
Proportion	%	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	100.0
Persons 18 years and over							
Number	'000	2 619	2 492	2 525	2 653	3 063	13 352
Proportion	%	19.6	18.7	18.9	19.9	22.9	100.0
Households							
Number	'000	1 755	1 285	1 217	1 228	1 461	6 946
Proportion	%	25.3	18.5	17.5	17.7	21.0	100.0

.. not applicable

(a) Total for whom household income is known. See Data Interpretation section in the Explanatory Notes.

APPENDIX 3 MEASURING SAMPLING VARIABILITY

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

1 Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample of persons, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those that would have been produced had all persons been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error (SE)*, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of persons was included. There are about two chances in three that the sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the number that would have been obtained if all persons had been surveyed, and about 19 chances in 20 that the difference will be less than two SEs.

2 Another measure of the likely difference is the *relative standard error (RSE)*, which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate.

$$RSE\% = \left(\frac{SE}{estimate} \right) \times 100$$

3 Space does not allow for the separate indication of the SEs and/or RSEs of all the estimates in this publication. However, RSEs for all these estimates are available free-of-charge on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>.

4 In the tables in this publication, only estimates (numbers, percentages, means and medians) with RSEs less than 25% are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates with larger RSEs have been included and are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *3.4) to indicate they are subject to high SEs and should be used with caution. Estimates with RSEs greater than 50% are preceded by a double asterisk (e.g. **2.1) to indicate that they are considered too unreliable for general use.

5 To assist users of this publication to ascertain the approximate levels of reliability of estimates throughout this publication, a table of SEs and RSEs for certain estimates of population counts appears at the end of this Appendix. These values do not give a precise measure of the SEs or RSEs for a particular estimate, but will provide an indication of their magnitude.

CALCULATING STANDARD ERRORS FOR POPULATION ESTIMATE

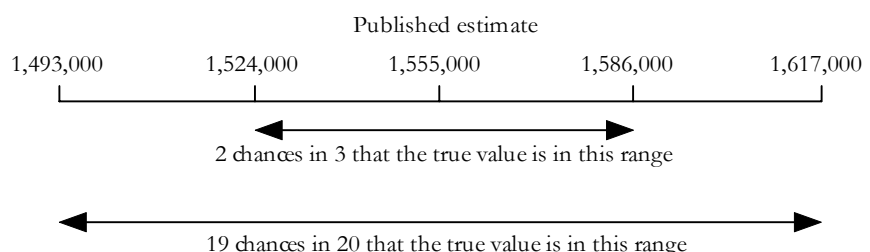
6 An example of the calculation and use of SEs in relation to estimates of numbers of persons is as follows. Consider the estimate of the number of persons (aged 18 years or over) who were born in main English-speaking countries, which is 1,555,000 (table 11). Since this estimate is between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000, the SE will be between 27,000 and 34,000 (as shown in the SE table), and can be approximated by interpolation using the following formula:

$$SE = \text{lower SE} + ((\text{size of estimate} - \text{lower size}) / (\text{upper size} - \text{lower size})) \times (\text{upper SE} - \text{lower SE})$$

$$SE = 27,000 + ((1,555,000 - 1,000,000) / (2,000,000 - 1,000,000)) \times (34,000 - 27,000)$$

$$SE = (\text{approximately}) 31,000$$

7 Therefore, there are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all persons had been included in the survey would have fallen within the range 1,524,000 to 1,586,000, and about 19 chances in 20 that the value would have fallen within the range 1,493,000 to 1,617,000. This example is illustrated in the diagram below.



APPENDIX 3 MEASURING SAMPLING VARIABILITY *continued*

CALCULATING STANDARD ERRORS FOR PROPORTIONS AND PERCENTAGES

8 Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling errors. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator. For proportions where the denominator is an estimate of the number of persons in a group and the numerator is the number of persons in a sub-group of the denominator group, the formula to approximate the RSE is given by:

$$RSE\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 - [RSE(y)]^2}$$

9 Consider the example given above of the number of persons who were born in main English-speaking countries (1,555,000). Of these, 24.1% (or approximately 375,000) assessed their health as good (table 11). As already noted, the SE of 1,555,000 is approximately 31,000, which equates to an RSE of 2.0%. The SE and RSE of 375,000 are approximately 19,000 and 5.1% respectively. Applying the formula above, the estimate of 24.1% will have an RSE of:

$$\begin{aligned} RSE\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) &= \sqrt{[RSE(375,000)]^2 - [RSE(1,555,000)]^2} \\ &= \sqrt{[5.1]^2 - [2.0]^2} \\ &= 4.7 \end{aligned}$$

10 This gives a SE for the proportion (24.1%) of approximately 1.1 percentage points (0.047 x 24.1). Therefore, if all persons had been included in the survey, there are two chances in three that the proportion that would have been obtained is between 23.0% and 25.2% and about 19 chances in 20 that the proportion is within the range 21.9% to 26.3%.

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS FOR MEANS

11 Estimates of means shown throughout this publication are also subject to sampling error. RSEs for these estimates are also available free-of-charge on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>.

NON-SAMPLING ERROR

12 The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the SE, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and recording by interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling error, and they occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient operating procedures.

APPENDIX 3 MEASURING SAMPLING VARIABILITY *continued*

A4 STANDARD ERRORS OF NUMBER OF PERSONS ESTIMATES

Size of estimate	STANDARD ERROR								AUST.	
	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Standard error	Relative standard error
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	%
100	190	160	260	140	150	130	90	70	170	166
200	320	280	400	230	250	190	140	110	280	140
300	440	380	520	300	330	230	180	140	380	126
500	630	550	700	430	470	300	240	200	540	109
700	800	700	860	540	590	360	290	240	690	98
1,000	1 020	900	1 050	680	740	430	350	300	870	87
1,500	1 340	1 190	1 330	880	960	530	430	380	1 140	76
2,000	1 620	1 440	1 570	1 050	1 140	610	490	440	1 370	68
2,500	1 870	1 660	1 770	1 200	1 310	680	540	490	1 570	63
3,000	2 090	1 870	1 960	1 340	1 460	740	590	540	1 760	59
3,500	2 310	2 060	2 140	1 460	1 590	800	620	580	1 930	55
4,000	2 500	2 240	2 300	1 580	1 720	850	660	620	2 100	52
5,000	2 870	2 570	2 600	1 790	1 950	950	720	690	2 390	48
7,000	3 510	3 150	3 120	2 150	2 350	1 110	820	810	2 910	42
10,000	4 320	3 890	3 770	2 590	2 840	1 300	930	940	3 550	36
15,000	5 430	4 910	4 670	3 180	3 500	1 560	1 070	1 110	4 430	30
20,000	6 340	5 760	5 400	3 680	4 040	1 780	1 160	1 240	5 160	26
30,000	7 860	7 200	6 660	4 440	4 890	2 130	1 290	1 440	6 330	21
40,000	9 120	8 360	7 680	5 080	5 560	2 400	1 400	1 600	7 320	18
50,000	10 200	9 400	8 600	5 600	6 150	2 650	1 500	1 700	8 150	16
100,000	14 300	13 200	12 000	7 500	8 300	3 500	1 700	2 100	11 200	11
150,000	17 100	16 050	14 550	8 700	9 750	4 050	1 800	2 400	13 350	9
200,000	19 400	18 200	16 600	9 800	10 800	4 600	1 800	2 600	15 000	8
300,000	23 100	21 900	20 100	11 100	12 600	5 400	..	2 700	17 700	6
400,000	26 000	24 800	22 800	12 400	13 600	6 000	..	..	19 600	5
500,000	28 500	27 000	25 500	13 500	15 000	..	..	..	21 500	4
1,000,000	37 000	35 000	34 000	16 000	18 000	..	..	..	27 000	3
2,000,000	46 000	46 000	46 000	20 000	22 000	..	..	..	34 000	2
5,000,000	60 000	60 000	65 000	..	..	..	..	..	45 000	1
10,000,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50 000	1

.. not applicable

A5 NUMBER OF PERSONS, Estimates with relative standard errors of 25% and 50%

Size of estimate	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
Estimates with RSEs of 25%	33 178	27 379	23 500	10 784	13 014	2 925	1 913	1 502	21 300
Estimates with RSEs of 50%	7 043	5 368	5 441	2 261	2 798	736	461	269	4 483

GLOSSARY

Ability to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important	A person's perception of whether they or other members of the household could obtain \$2,000 for something important within a week.
Access to motor vehicle(s) to drive	Access that a person has to any motor vehicle to drive. Such motor vehicles include vehicle(s) which they wholly or jointly own, vehicle(s) belonging to another member of the household, and company or government vehicle(s) which they have access to for personal use.
Age	The age of a person on their last birthday.
Attendance rate	For any group, this is calculated by expressing the number of persons who attended a venue or event at least once in the last 12 months as a percentage of the population aged 18 years or over in the same group.
Cash flow problems	<p>Any of the following events or actions experienced by members of the household in the last 12 months because they were short of money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ unable to pay electricity, gas or telephone bills on time ■ unable to pay mortgage or rent payments on time ■ unable to pay for car registration or insurance on time ■ unable to make minimum payment on credit card ■ pawned or sold something because cash was needed ■ unable to heat the home ■ went without meals ■ sought financial assistance from friends or family ■ sought assistance from welfare or community organisations. <p>The frequency of the occurrence of each event or action was not collected.</p>
Child	A person of any age who is a natural, adopted, step, or foster son or daughter of a couple or lone parent, usually resident in the same household, and who does not have a child or partner of his/her own usually resident in the household.
Consumer debt	Debt or liabilities usually associated with the purchase of consumables, such as clothing, electrical goods or cars, incurred by way of credit or store card which are not completely paid off, car or personal loans, interest free purchases and hire purchase agreements. Investment loans, lines of credit, overdue bills for telephone/electricity etc, outstanding fines or Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) debts are excluded.
Contact with family or friends living outside the household	Refers to face to face contact, or other types of contact such as telephone, mail and email, which a person has had with family or friends who do not live with them.
Couple	Two people in a registered or de facto marriage, who usually live in the same household.
Dependent child/ren/Dependants	All persons aged under 15 years; and people aged 15—24 years who are full-time students, have a parent in the household and do not have a partner or child of their own in the household.
Disability or long-term health condition	<p>A disability or long-term health condition exists if a limitation, restriction, impairment, disease or disorder, had lasted, or was likely to last for at least six months, and which restricted everyday activities.</p> <p>It is classified by whether or not a person has a specific limitation or restriction. Specific limitation or restriction is further classified by whether the limitation or restriction is a limitation in core activities or a schooling/employment restriction only.</p> <p>There are four levels of core activity limitation (profound, severe, moderate, and mild) which are based on whether a person needs help, has difficulty, or uses aids or equipment with any of the core activities (self care, mobility or communication). A person's overall level of core activity limitation is determined by their highest level of limitation in these activities.</p> <p>The four levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ profound — always needs help/supervision with core activities ■ severe — does not always need help with core activities

GLOSSARY *continued*

Disability or long-term health condition <i>continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ moderate — has difficulty with core activities■ mild — uses aids to assist with core activities. <p>Persons are classified as having only a schooling/employment restriction if they have no core activity limitation and are aged 18 to 20 years and have difficulties with education, or are less than 65 years and have difficulties with employment.</p>
Dissaving actions	<p>Any of the following actions taken in the last 12 months where assets were used, or debts incurred or increased, to pay for basic living expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ reduced home loan repayments■ drew on accumulated savings or term deposits■ increased the balance owing on credit cards by \$1,000 or more■ entered into a loan agreement with family or friends■ took out a personal loan■ sold household goods or jewellery■ sold shares, stocks or bonds.
Equity in dwelling	<p>Calculated as the value of the dwelling less the amount owing on mortgages or secured loans against the dwelling.</p>
Equivalised gross household income	<p>Gross household income adjusted using an equivalence scale. For a lone person household it is equal to gross household income. For a household comprising more than one person, it is an indicator of the gross household income that would need to be received by a lone person household to enjoy the same level of economic wellbeing as the household in question. For further information see Appendix 2: Equivalised gross household income quintiles.</p>
Equivalised gross household income quintiles	<p>These are groupings of 20% of the total population when ranked in ascending order according to equivalised gross household income. The population used for this purpose includes all people living in private dwellings, including children and other persons under the age of 18 years. As the scope of this publication is restricted to only those persons aged 18 years and over, the distribution of this smaller population across the quintiles is not necessarily the same as it is for persons of all ages, i.e. the percentage of persons aged 18 years and over in each of these quintiles may be larger or smaller than 20%. For further information see Appendix 2: Equivalised gross household income quintiles.</p>
Family	<p>Two or more people, one of whom is at least 18 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who usually live in the same household. A separate family is formed for each married couple, or for each set of parent-child relationships where only one parent is present.</p>
Feelings of safety at home alone	<p>How safe a person feels when alone at home, both during the day and after dark. Feelings are reported on a five point scale, from very safe to very unsafe. If they indicated that they are never home alone this response was recorded.</p>
Financial stress	<p>Three measures aimed at identifying households that may have been constrained in their activities because of shortage of money. The measures are the ability to raise 'emergency money', whether had cash flow problems and whether had taken dissaving actions. One person in the household was asked to provide these assessments of the household's financial situation.</p>
Gross income	<p>Regular and recurring cash receipts including monies received from wages and salaries, government pensions and allowances, and other regular receipts such as superannuation, workers' compensation, child support, scholarships, profit or loss from own unincorporated business or partnership and property income. Gross income is the sum of the income from all these sources before income tax or the Medicare levy are deducted.</p>
Government support	<p>Cash support from the government in the form of pensions, benefits or allowances.</p>

GLOSSARY *continued*

Highest year of school completed	The highest level of primary or secondary education which a person has completed, irrespective of the type of institution or location where that education was undertaken.
Household	A household may comprise one person living alone or a group of people who usually reside and eat together. It includes boarders but excludes lodgers, who form a separate household within the dwelling.
Household composition	<p>This publication presents information for a selection of household composition categories which are based on various family and household compositions, and sometimes, the age of the selected person (the survey respondent). Categories presented are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ couple only, one family household — a household consisting of a couple with no other related or unrelated persons usually resident■ couple family with dependent children — a household consisting of a couple and at least one dependent child usually resident in the household. Related non-dependent children may also be present in the household. Households which also have other related or unrelated residents are not included■ other couple, one family households — all couple households not included in the two previous categories. It includes for example, households consisting of a couple and non-dependent children■ one parent family with dependent child/ren — a household consisting of a lone parent and at least one dependent child usually resident in the household. Non-dependent children may also be present in the household. Households which also have other related or unrelated usual residents are not included■ lone person household — a household consisting of a person living alone■ other households — comprises all other households, including multi-family households, and households consisting of unrelated adults.
Household tenure type	<p>The nature of a household's legal right to occupy the dwelling in which they usually reside. In this publication, households are grouped into one of four broad tenure categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ owner without a mortgage — the dwelling is owned by a resident of the household and there are no outstanding mortgages or loans secured against the dwelling■ owner with a mortgage — a household where an outstanding mortgage or loan amount secured against the dwelling, for the purposes of housing, is greater than zero■ renter — a household who pays rent to reside in the dwelling. In this publication, renters are further classified into one of three broad types according to whom rent is paid:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ state or territory housing authority■ private landlord — a real estate agent, parent or other relative not in the same household, or another person not in the same household■ other renter — a parent or other relative in the same household, the owner/manager of a caravan park, an employer (including a government authority), a housing cooperative, community or church group, or any other landlord not included elsewhere■ other tenure — includes households which are participants of a life tenure scheme, participants in a rent/buy (or shared equity) scheme, living rent-free, or are in a tenure arrangement not included elsewhere (e.g. house-sitting, payment in kind for a specific service).

GLOSSARY *continued*

Index or relative socio-economic disadvantage	One of five of the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFAs) compiled by the ABS following each population census. Each of the indexes summarise different aspects of the socioeconomic condition of areas; the index of relative socioeconomic disadvantage includes attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations. The index refers to the area (the Census Collector's District) in which a person lives, not to the socioeconomic situation of the particular individual. The index used in this publication was compiled following the 1996 census. For further information about the SEIFAs see <i>Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing — Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, Australia</i> (cat. no. 2039.0).
Jobless households	A jobless household is one in which no usual resident of the household aged 15 years or over is currently employed.
Labour force status	Refers to the situation of respondents in relation to the labour force at the time of the survey. Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ employed — had a job or business, or undertook work without pay in a family business in the week prior to the survey, including being absent from a job or business they had<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ full-time — persons who usually work 35 hours or more per week■ part-time — persons who usually work at least one hour, but less than 35 hours, per week■ unemployed — not employed and actively looked for work in the four weeks prior to the survey and available to start work in the week prior to the survey■ not in the labour force<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ retired from work — persons over the age of 45 years who were no longer working and did not intend to work in the future■ other — other persons who were neither employed nor unemployed. Such persons may have never worked and never intend to work, persons keeping house (unpaid), voluntarily inactive and permanently unable to work.
Main English-speaking countries	Refers to the main countries from which Australia receives, or has received, significant numbers of overseas settlers who are likely to speak English. These countries comprise the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, the United States of America and South Africa.
Marital status	The marital status of couples within households. This item includes Married in a registered marriage, Married in a de facto marriage, and Not married.
Mean	The sum of values divided by the number of values.
Mortgage	A mortgage is a loan which is secured against a dwelling.
Non-dependent child/ren	All persons aged 15 years or over (except those aged 15–24 years who are full-time students) who have a parent in the household and do not have a partner or child of their own in the household.
Non-school qualifications	Non-school qualifications are awarded for educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education. They include qualifications at the Post graduate degree level, Master degree level, Graduate diploma and Graduate certificate level, Bachelor degree level, Advanced diploma and Diploma level, and Certificates I, II, III and IV levels. Non-school qualifications may be attained concurrently with school qualifications.
Organised sport or physical recreational activities	Those sport and physical recreational activities which were organised by a club, association or other organisation. The organisation did not need to be a sporting body; for example, it may have been a work social club, church group or gymnasium.

GLOSSARY *continued*

Participants in sport and physical recreational activities	Participants comprise those people who physically undertook a sport or physical recreational activity in the last 12 months, as well as people involved in 'non-playing roles', such as coaches, officials, umpires and administrators.
Participation rate	For any group, the number of participants in the last 12 months, expressed as a percentage of the population of that group.
Personal stressors	Any of the following events or circumstances which the person considers have been a problem for themselves or someone close to them in the last 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ serious illness ■ serious accident ■ mental illness ■ serious disability ■ death of family member or close friend ■ divorce or separation ■ not able to get a job ■ involuntary loss of job ■ alcohol or drug related problems ■ gambling problem ■ abuse or violent crime ■ witness to violence ■ trouble with the police.
Principal source of household income	The source of income from which the most positive income for the household is received. If total income is nil or negative the principal source is undefined. The household's principal source of income comes from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ employee income — cash income received as an employee i.e. person who works for a public or private employer and receives remuneration in wages or salary, or is paid a retainer fee by his/her employer and works on a commission basis, or works for an employer for tips, piece-rates or payment in kind; or, is a person who operates his or her own incorporated enterprise with or without hiring employees ■ unincorporated business income — the profit or loss from own unincorporated enterprise in the previous financial year. Profit or loss consists of the value of the gross output of the enterprise after the deduction of operating expenses (including depreciation). Losses occur when operating expenses are greater than gross receipts and are treated as negative income ■ government cash pensions and allowances — regular payments from government to persons under social security and related government programs. Included are pensions and allowances received by aged, disabled, unemployed and sick persons, families and children, veterans or their survivors, and study allowances for students ■ other pension — income received from superannuation and annuity funds ■ property income — income received from renting out properties or income received from interest or dividends ■ other sources of household income — income received from sources such as child support and workers' compensation.
Proficiency in spoken English	A self assessment by persons who speak a language other than English at home, of whether they speak English very well, well, not well, or not at all.
Remoteness areas	Broad geographical regions which share common characteristics of remoteness based on the Remoteness Structure of the ABS's <i>Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)</i> . In this publication the categories Major Cities of Australia, and Inner Regional Australia from the Remoteness Structure are presented along with a residual category labelled 'Other areas'. As the GSS did not cover sparse areas of Australia, 'Other Areas', encompasses most of Outer Regional Australia, part of Remote Australia, and only a small proportion of Very Remote Australia.
Rent	A payment made periodically by a tenant to an owner or landlord in return for lodgement.

GLOSSARY *continued*

Selected assets	<p>Any of the following type of assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ over \$1,000 in cash or deposited in financial institutions■ own incorporated business■ shares, stocks and bonds■ investment property (i.e. land and buildings other than the dwelling in which the household resides).
Selected person	<p>In the GSS only one adult (aged 18 years or over) in each dwelling was selected for the survey. This person was randomly chosen after all usual residents of the household were listed.</p>
Self-assessed health status	<p>The selected person's general assessment of their own health, against a five point scale from excellent through to poor.</p>
Small favours	<p>Assistance which a person may seek from other people in their day to day lives. Examples of small favours include looking after pets or watering the garden, collecting mail or checking the house, minding a child for a brief period, helping with moving or lifting objects, and borrowing equipment.</p>
Social attachment	<p>'Social attachment' refers to the nature and strength of relationships that people have with each other. It includes the more intimate relationships with family and friends as well as people's associations with individuals and organisations in the wider community.</p>
Support in time of crisis	<p>Refers to whether there is someone outside the person's household that could be asked for support in a time of crisis. Support could be in the form of emotional, physical or financial help. Potential sources of support could be family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and various community, government and professional organisations.</p>
Support for children living outside the household	<p>Support provided by a person or their partner to their children (under the age of 25 years) who do not live with them. Support may be provided to the other parent/carer for the child(ren), or to the child themselves. Types of support may be financial, such as child support payments, paying for educational costs, or providing pocket money or an allowance, or non-financial, such as driving them places, letting them borrow the car, or providing food or clothing.</p>
Support for other relatives living outside the household	<p>Any of the following types of support provided to relatives, such as elderly parents, children aged 25 years or over, or grandchildren who live outside the household:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ give money to pay rent and/or other housing costs■ give money to pay bills or meet debt■ provide or pay for food■ provide or pay for clothing■ let them borrow the car■ drive them places■ pay for educational costs or textbooks■ provide pocket money or an allowance■ buy or give them money to buy big cost items such as a car, computer, sound system etc.
Transport difficulties	<p>The person's assessment of how difficult it is for them to travel to places they may need to go to in normal circumstances. Four options were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ can easily get to the places needed■ sometimes have difficulty getting to the places needed■ often have difficulty getting to the places needed■ can't get to the places needed. <p>If they indicated that they never go out or are housebound this response was recorded. Difficulties which may have been taken into account are traffic problems, parking and distances, as well as those difficulties not directly related to transport such as poor health or lack of finances.</p>

GLOSSARY *continued*

Victim of actual or attempted break-in	A person who had experienced a break-in or attempted break-in at any place they had lived in the last 12 months. Break-ins to homes, garages or sheds are included. However, break-ins to cars or gardens are excluded.
Victim of physical or threatened violence	A person who in the last 12 months had physical force or violence used against them or threatened in person to be used against them. It includes violence or threats made by persons known to the person.
Voluntary work	<p>The provision of unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, through any of the following types of organisations or groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ sport/recreation/hobby■ welfare/community■ health■ emergency services■ education/training/youth development■ religious■ environmental/animal welfare■ business/professional/union■ law/justice/political■ arts/culture■ foreign/international (excluding work done overseas).

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