



PM GLYNN  
INSTITUTE

**The PM Glynn  
survey on  
hope, trust  
and belonging**

**Series 1  
About the  
survey**

 **ACU**  
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

# About the PM Glynn Institute

Established by Australian Catholic University in 2016, the PM Glynn Institute is a think-tank committed to public policy for the common good. The common good is the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or

as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily. Its essential elements are respect for the human person, the wellbeing and development of the community, and a resilient social order characterised by peace, security and justice.

## The PM Glynn Survey

The PM Glynn Survey is a biennial survey on Australian attitudes to hope, trust and belonging. It is aimed at investigating the underlying attitudes and concerns that shape responses to current political, social and ethical issues and their implications for Australian society.

The Survey has eight major sections covering:

- current life circumstances and life goals
- influences and connectedness
- fears and concerns
- beliefs and values
- attitudes to changes in society
- human rights
- democracy
- religion.

The first wave of this longitudinal tracking survey commenced in December 2018. The survey design was conducted by SMR Global Pty. Ltd. under the guidance and supervision of its principal, Dr. Michael Sexton. SMR Global Pty. Ltd. is a specialist, independent social and market research company. The fieldwork was supported by its affiliate company, Action Market Research P/L, an ISO-20252 accredited fieldwork specialist.

The survey was conducted in accordance with accepted public opinion survey guidelines, including the following:

- ISO-2-252 Quality Standards
- The Australian Privacy Principles
- The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.

# Survey methodology

## SAMPLE SELECTION

There were 3,000 Australians aged 16 years and above who took part in the survey, selected at random. Each respondent was given an option to complete the survey either through a telephone/mobile phone interview or an online, self-completion survey.

It is important to note that the sample was selected to be representative of the national population, matching known national population characteristics such as the following:

- age
- gender
- state and territory populations
- capital city versus regional populations.

To ensure representativeness, statistical weighting was applied to address any variation in the sample from the known population parameters. Age, gender and geographic location were statistically weighted. The weighting process was as follows:

- setting of quotas based on known national population parameters
- a statistical analysis program called Quantum was used to generate an algorithm which weighted each individual case to adjust for over-representation or under-representation of an individual's characteristics in the raw data sample
- the individual case weights were then applied to produce the final weighted data.

The sample was sourced from electronic white pages landline directories, purchased mobile phone number lists from respected supply companies, and survey panels supplied by Australia's largest survey panel providers.

The sample were screened to meet these guidelines:

- voluntary participation
- one respondent per household
- all responses provided anonymously
- all responses treated confidentially.

## SAMPLING ERROR OF ESTIMATION

The 3,000 randomly selected sample yields a maximum error of estimation of +/- 1.8 per cent at 95 per cent level of confidence when generalising the results to the national population. This means that we are 95 per cent certain that the estimates from the sample would vary only by +/-1.8 per cent from the true values of the entire population. When generalising the findings to the sub-sample population, the following maximum error margins at 95 per cent level of confidence are noted:

Sub-sample size	Error of estimation (at 95% level of confidence)
50	+/- 14%
100	+/- 10%
200	+/- 7%
300	+/- 6%
400	+/- 5
500	+/-4.5%
750	+/-3.7
1,000	+/-3.2
1,500	+/-2.6
3,000	+/-1.8%

# Profile of respondents

## AGE

The largest number of respondents belong to the 35–49 years age range. This age profile parallels the age profile of the national population. Between 30 June 2017 and 30 June 2018, the median age of the Australian population has remained steady at 37 years.<sup>1</sup>

Although the survey age profile matches the median age of the national population, relatively older respondents, particularly those aged 65 years and above, comprise 20 per cent of the total. Nationally, older Australians make up a sizable proportion of the population. In Australia, more than 1 in 7 people were aged 65 years and over in 2017.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1. Age of respondents**

Age (years)	(n)	(%)
16–24	423	14%
25–34	546	18%
35–49	759	25%
50–64	687	23%
65 or over	585	20%
Total	3,000	100%

## GENDER

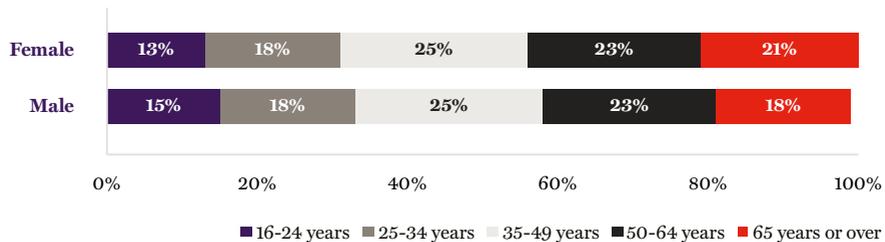
An almost similar proportion of males and females is observed in the survey sample (Table 2). Males are slightly younger than females. Two-thirds of both male and female respondents are aged 35 years and over (Figure 1).

This gender profile noted in the survey sample is representative of the Australian population. As at June 2018, there were 12.6 million females or just over half (51%) of the country's population.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 2. Gender of participants**

Gender	(n)	(%)
Male	1,460	49%
Female	1,540	51%
Total	3,000	100%

**Figure 1. Participants' age by gender (N=3,000)**



<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Population by age and sex, Australia, States and Territories, Australian Demographics Statistics, June 2018*, [www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/1CD2B1952AFC5E7ACA25729800F2E76?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/1CD2B1952AFC5E7ACA25729800F2E76?OpenDocument), accessed 10 October 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Older Australia at a glance, September 2018*, [www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/demographics-of-older-australians/australia-s-changing-age-and-gender-profile](http://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/demographics-of-older-australians/australia-s-changing-age-and-gender-profile), accessed 10 October 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *The Health of Australia's Females, December 2019*, [www.aihw.gov.au/reports/men-women/female-health/contents/who-are](http://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/men-women/female-health/contents/who-are), accessed 13 January 2020.

## MAIN PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Mirroring the Australian population, most of the respondents reside in New South Wales (32 per cent), Victoria (25 per cent) and Queensland (20 per cent) as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Participants' main plan of residence (N=3,000)



## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

More than half (55 per cent) of the respondents report an annual household income of less than \$80,000 before tax (Table 3). Again, this is representative of the Australian population. The median gross household income in Australia in 2017–2018 was \$1,701<sup>4</sup>. This equates to roughly \$88,000 annually.

The main source of income comes from paid full-time employment. Nearly half of the respondents (47 per cent) are employed full time. Only 15 per cent of the respondents work in part-time or casual paid employment.

Table 3. Gross household income

Gross household income	(n)	(%)
Under \$50,000	992	33%
\$50,000 – under \$80,000	654	22%
\$80,000 – under \$120,000	591	20%
\$120,000 – under \$200,000	481	16%
\$200,000 or above	114	4%
Unable to estimate	167	6%
Total	3,000	100%

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Household Income and Wealth, Australia, 2017–2018, <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/6523.0-2017-18-Main%20Features-Key%20Findings-1>, accessed 20 October 2019.

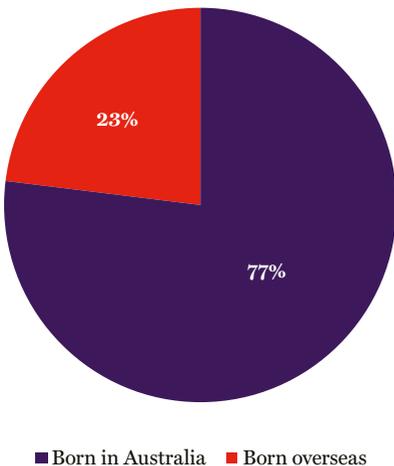
**Table 4. Main source of income**

Source	(%)
Paid employment – full-time	47%
Paid employment – part-time or casual	15%
Running a business	3%
Aged pension	12%
Some other form of government assistance	10%
Tertiary student allowance	1%
Superannuation pension	7%
Non-super investments or interest on savings	2%
Other	3%
Total	100%

**PLACE OF BIRTH**

Three quarters of the participants were born in Australia (Figure 3).

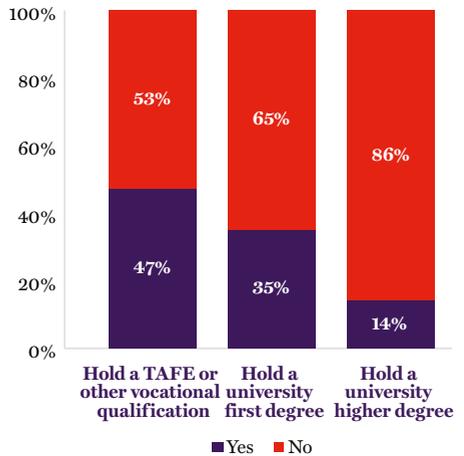
**Figure 3. Where respondents were born**



**EDUCATION**

Nearly half of the respondents (47 per cent) have a TAFE/vocational qualification while another thirty-five percent (35 per cent) hold a university first degree. Only 14 per cent of the respondents hold a university higher degree (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Higher education completed by participants (N=3,000)**



### RELATIONSHIP STATUS

Figure 5 shows that nearly half (45 per cent) of the respondents are married. A quarter (25 per cent) have never been married or in a de facto or cohabiting relationship.

### NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Most of the respondents (58 per cent) have one or more children while 42 per cent do not have any. See Figure 6.

Figure 5. Relationship status (N=3,000)

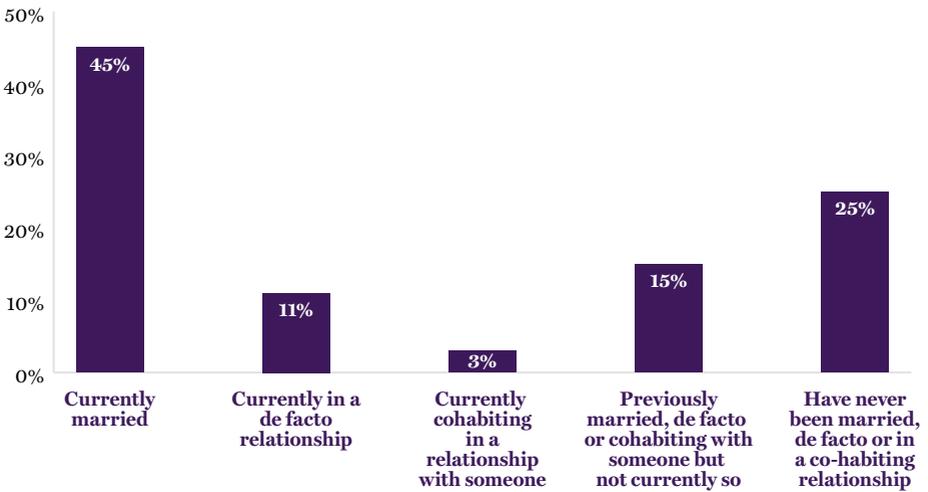
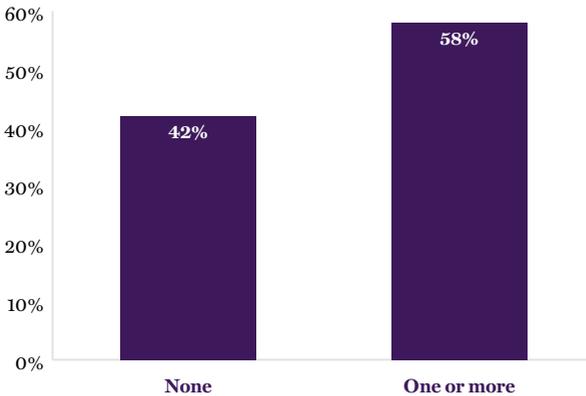


Figure 6. Number of children



# Appendix:

## Survey questions

The tables, charts and graphs in Series 1 to 5 contain the shortened version of the following survey questions:

### **SERIES 1 – ABOUT THE SURVEY**

**Q1. Current age and gender**

**Q2. Where is your main place of residence?**

**Q4. Which of the following best describes your relationship status?**

- Currently married
- Currently in a de facto relationship
- Currently co-habiting in a relationship with someone
- Previously married, de facto or co-habiting with someone but not currently so
- Have never been married, de facto or in a co-habiting relationship.

**Q8. How many children do you have?**

**Q9. Please indicate your total household income from all sources in a year before taxes are taken out – just an estimate is fine:**

- Under \$50,000 p.a.
- \$50,000 – under \$80,000 p.a.
- \$80,000 – under \$120,000 p.a.
- \$120,000 – under \$200,000 p.a.
- \$200,000 p.a. or above
- Unable to estimate

**Q10. What is the main source of income for your household?**

- Paid employment-full time
- Paid employment – part time or casual
- Running a business
- Aged pension

- Some other form of government assistance
- Tertiary student allowance
- Superannuation pension
- Non-super investments or interests on savings
- Other (specify)

**Q12. Have you completed any of the following after leaving school?**

- A TAFE certificate or other vocational course
- A university first degree or undergraduate degree
- A university higher degree or postgraduate degree

**Q13. Were you born in Australia or overseas?**

- Born in Australia
- Born overseas
- Don't know

### **SERIES 2 – HUMAN RIGHTS: AN UNCERTAIN COMMITMENT**

**Q26. Where do you stand on the following human rights issues?**

**(Response options: I strongly support this; I somewhat support this; I'm neutral on this; I somewhat oppose this; I strongly oppose this; Can't say)**

- Protecting the rights of ordinary Australians to freely express their opinions on any issue, without being bullied or intimidated
- Protecting the rights of people to exercise freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and to be able to act according to their conscience and religious beliefs without being intimidated or penalised

- Protecting the rights of parents to say no to their school teaching radical gender theory such as teaching young children they can choose their own gender, if that goes against the parents' beliefs
- Treating those who contribute less to society through disadvantage equally to those who are more advantaged and contribute more
- Protecting the rights of terminally ill people to receive high quality palliative care and pain control, in preference to legalising assisted suicide or a "right to die"
- Giving children the right to seek treatment and surgery to change their gender with or without parental approval
- Protecting people from racial or religious vilification
- Protecting the rights of people not to be forced by law to act against their beliefs
- Protecting people from discrimination, and from the views of others that they find offensive, even if it means restricting the rights of others
- Giving Indigenous Australians the Constitutional right to have a say on laws that directly affect Indigenous communities

**Q32. Which of the following statements best describes you?**

- I have firm religious beliefs and practice those beliefs in my daily life
- I have firm religious beliefs but I don't practice them as much as I could
- I believe in God but I'm not what you'd call a religious person
- I am a spiritual person, but I don't follow any organised religion
- I'm a doubter about whether God exists or not, and I don't follow any religion
- I'm an agnostic – I don't know whether God exists or not
- I'm an atheist – I don't believe there is a God

**SERIES 3 – TRADING OFF HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Q27. If it came to trade-offs between rights and other social objectives, to what extent are you willing to accept trade-offs?**

**(Response options: I support this trade-off; I'm neutral/undecided on this; I oppose this trade-off; Can't say)**

- Restricting the right to strike if the strike will cause significant economic loss or disruption
- Restricting the right to hold a protest march if there is a risk of violence breaking out among protesters
- Giving government stronger powers and controls, ahead of human rights and personal freedoms, if this delivers strong economic growth and a higher standard of living
- Banning the celebration of Christmas and Easter by schools and local councils, because non-Christians might find them offensive
- Banning the commemoration of Anzac Day because some see it as a celebration of war, not a celebration of fighting for peace
- Shifting Australia Day to a new date to better include Indigenous Australians

**Q32. Which of the following statements best describes you?**

- I have firm religious beliefs and practice those beliefs in my daily life
- I have firm religious beliefs, but I don't practice them as much as I could
- I believe in God but I'm not what you'd call a religious person
- I am a spiritual person, but I don't follow any organised religion
- I'm a doubter about whether God exists or not, and I don't follow any religion
- I'm an agnostic – I don't know whether God exists or not
- I'm an atheist – I don't believe there is a God

**SERIES 4 – TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS: AUSTRALIA'S SYSTEM OF DEMOCRACY**

Among the statements in Q28, Series 4 focuses on Australia's system of democracy.

**Q28. Which of the following institutions in Australian society do you feel are working well at the moment and playing an effective role, and which ones are not working well and failing to contribute to our society as well as they should?**

**(Response options: Working very well; Working generally well; Very mixed at the moment; Not working very well; Working poorly/failing; Can't say)**

- Australia's system of democracy which involves the people voting at elections to choose a government
- The police, justice and courts systems in Australia

- The Australian welfare system
- Australia's public health and public hospital system
- Australia's public education system
- Big business in Australia generally
- The main charity groups in Australia
- Banks and other financial institutions
- The media (TV, newspapers, radio)
- The Christian churches
- Other religious communities
- Unions in Australia

**Q31. What are the influences that challenge the hope, trust, and sense of belonging in Australian society?**

**(Response options: Very prevalent and a big negative impact; Prevalent and a moderate negative impact; Prevalent and a small negative impact; Prevalent but no negative impact; Not very prevalent and no real impact; Can't say)**

- Illicit drug use and alcohol abuse
- Family breakdowns, domestic disharmony
- Decline of volunteering and lower community participation
- Social media influences
- Political populism
- Being complacent about the need to protect the good things about Australian society
- Political correctness stifling debate
- Growing rich-poor divide
- Lack of strong leadership
- Decline of the role of religion in Australian society

- People putting self-interest ahead of the common good
- Wrong-doing and cover-ups by important institutions

**Q32. Which of the following statements best describes you?**

- I have firm religious beliefs and practice those beliefs in my daily life
- I have firm religious beliefs, but I don't practice them as much as I could
- I believe in God but I'm not what you'd call a religious person
- I am a spiritual person, but I don't follow any organised religion
- I'm a doubter about whether God exists or not, and I don't follow any religion
- I'm an agnostic – I don't know whether God exists or not
- I'm an atheist – I don't believe there is a God

**SERIES 5 – TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS: POLICE, JUSTICE AND COURTS SYSTEMS**

Among the statements in Q28, Series 5 focuses on the police, justice and courts systems.

**Q28. Which of the following institutions in Australian society do you feel are working well at the moment and playing an effective role, and which ones are not working well and failing to contribute to our society as well as they should?**

**(Response options: Working very well; Working generally well; Very mixed at the moment; Not working very well; Working poorly/failing; Can't say)**

- Australia's system of democracy which involves the people voting at elections to choose a government

- The police, justice and courts systems in Australia
- The Australian welfare system
- Australia's public health and public hospital system
- Australia's public education system
- Big business in Australia generally
- The main charity groups in Australia
- Banks and other financial institutions
- The media (TV, newspapers, radio)
- The Christian churches
- Other religious communities
- Unions in Australia

**Q32. Which of the following statements best describes you?**

- I have firm religious beliefs and practice those beliefs in my daily life
- I have firm religious beliefs, but I don't practice them as much as I could
- I believe in God but I'm not what you'd call a religious person
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This PM Glynn Survey Series 1 has been developed as part of the institute's work on three major work streams:

- democracy in a religious world
- the end of human rights?
- strengthening hope, renewing confidence.

The aim is to provide an evidence-based survey of the political and sociological landscape, and the opportunities and challenges this highlights for the years ahead.

Series 1 has been prepared by Dr. Cris Abbu in collaboration with Dr. Michael Casey.

#### **Cover image**

Robert Moore, Boronia Road 2016  
Oil and enamel on board  
Australian Catholic University  
Art Collection

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