In 2006-7 the Flinders Social Monitor is using the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) to monitor changes in social life and examine their impact on everyday lives in South Australia. In 2005, the Flinders Social Monitoring and Policy Futures Network commissioned a special sample of South Australians.

About the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA)

Dr Debra King
Flinders Social Monitoring and Policy Futures Network

Associate Professor Carol A. Tilt
School of Commerce, Flinders University

The Survey

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) is a mail survey which began in 2003 and takes place every 2 years. The survey is conducted through the ACSPRI Centre for Social Research at the ANU with survey modules and questions being developed with the co-operation of social scientists around Australia, including Professor Bill Martin, Leader of the Flinders Social Monitoring and Policy Futures Network. AuSSA provides authoritative data on the social attitudes and behaviour of Australians and is the official source of the International Social Survey Program’s data for Australia. Full information about AuSSA can be accessed via their website: [http://aussa.anu.edu.au/](http://aussa.anu.edu.au/).

There are two versions of AuSSA, with each version containing core questions that are common to both plus extra questions on specific issues. This helps to link the surveys to worldwide research on social attitudes. In 2005, Version A contained questions related to the International Social Science Program on Work Orientations, while Version B contained questions on Citizenship. For the base survey (without the SA oversample) AuSSA surveyed 10,000 people aged 18 years or over and received 3,902 responses. There were 1,988 respondents to Version A and 1,914 respondents to Version B.

Nationally, the respondents to the survey were predominantly Australian born (75%) and lived in the city or suburbs (62%). Their mean income was around $AU26,000 - $AU30,000 and the median around $AU25,000 per annum. Most respondents identified themselves as being either middle class (49.6%) or working class (41%). Approximately equal numbers of males and females responded and the average length of education was around 12 years. The mean and median age of respondents was just over 50 years.
In 2005, the Flinders Social Monitoring and Policy Futures Network commissioned AuSSA to over-sample South Australian (SA) residents. An additional 1,500 South Australians were surveyed, resulting in a total of 1,019 SA respondents (352 in the original national sample plus 667 in the over-sample). This brings the total number of respondents across the nation to 4,569 (see Diagram 1). The demographics are similar to the national sample, with the SA respondents again being predominantly Australian born (75%) and living in the city or suburbs (70%). Most identified themselves as being either middle class (50%) or working class (42%). Just over half were females (53%) and the average length of education was around 12 years. The mean age of SA respondents was around 52 years.

Suggestions for Further Reading


All data from this publication is sourced from: