

Comparative Study of Electoral Systems

Description of Sample and Data Collection -- Australia

I. Country: Australia

II. Type of Election: Parliamentary

III. Date of Election: 2 March 1996

IV. Organization that Conducted the Survey Field Work:
The Social Science Data Archives was responsible for organising the mailout of questionnaires, cover letters and reminders; Dr Pramod Adikiri for the collection of returned questionnaires, as well as for the initial checking and coding of responses prior to data entry; and Computer Centre Pty. Ltd. for data entry.

V. Investigators Responsible for Data Collection

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VI. Study Design: Post-Election Study

VII. Dates of Interviewing

Date Post-Election Interviewing Began: 2 March 1996
Date Post-Election Interviewing Ended: 24 June 1996

VIII. Mode of interview: Mail questionnaire

IX. Sample Design and Sampling Procedures

1. Eligibility Requirements
 - a) age: 18
 - b) citizenship: Yes
 - c) other:

The AES96 sample was drawn from the Australian Electoral Roll, which, for the purpose of AES96, defined the "eligible population", i.e. "persons on the Australian electoral roll at the close

of rolls, February 1996".

Enrolment is compulsory for all Australian citizens 18 years of age or over and have lived at their address for the last month. However, British subjects who are not Australian citizens are eligible to enrol if they were on the electoral roll on 25 January 1984. According to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), the following persons are not entitled to enrol and vote: "People of unsound mind who are incapable of understanding the nature and significance of enrolment and voting. People convicted and under sentence for an offence punishable by imprisonment for five years or longer, and people who have been convicted of treason and not pardoned " (www.aec.gov.au/enrolmnt.html#EnrolToVote). Finally, the AEC estimates that 94.5% of all individuals who are eligible to enrol, are correctly enrolled (of individuals 18-24 years of age, 84.7%, and of individuals 50 years of age or older, 98.9%).

2. Persons Excluded From the Sample Frame

- a) Were any regions of the country excluded from the sample frame? No
- b) Were institutionalised persons excluded from the sample? No
- c) Were military personnel excluded from the sample? No
- f) Other persons excluded from the sample frame: None
- g) Estimated total (a+b+c+d+e+f) percentage of the eligible population excluded from the sample frame: 0%

3.3 Sampling Method (if mail / self completion)

- a) Describe how the sample was drawn

The AES96 sample (N=3000) was drawn in two stages from the Australian electoral roll (N=11,740,568):

(1) Following the close of rolls for the 1996 election, the AEC (using a sampling interval of 3914) drew a systematic random sample of 2745 individuals from its roll (list) of enrolled voters for all states and territories, except for South Australia (N=10,739,562). The list previously had been stratified (proportional to enrolment) by state/territory and by electoral division. The names (with addresses and electoral division codes) supplied by the AEC were distributed by state as follows: New South Wales: N=1011; Victoria: N=760; Queensland: N=536; Western Australia: N=277; Tasmania: N=84; Australian Capital Territory: N=52; and Northern Territory: N=25.

(2) Using the same interval, a (systematic random) sample (N=255) of South Australian voters (N=1,001,006) was drawn manually from the alphabetic electoral roll supplied on microfiche by that state's Electoral Department (which shares responsibility with the AEC for maintaining the federal election roll for voters residing in the state).

- b) Was the sample a listed sample? Yes

c) Was a selection table used to select the respondent within the household? No, sample line was enrolled respondent.

d) Criteria for designating a sample line non-sample. Other, explain:

Questionnaires returned and stamped by Australia Post as "Return-to-Sender" were deemed "non-sample", as designated respondent had been incorrectly enrolled (i.e. his/her address was no

longer current).

e) Were non-sample replacement methods used? No

4. Compliance

a) Pre-Study Strategies: Prior to the study was:
a letter sent to respondent? No
payment sent to respondent? No
a token gift sent to respondent? No
any other incentives used? No

b) During the Field Period

Maximum number of contacts with the household before declaring it non-sample: 1 (see above)

Maximum number of contacts with the household before declaring it non-interview: 3 (see below)

c) Refusal Conversion

Was an effort made to persuade respondents who were reluctant to be interviewed?

Yes (see below)

Methods used to persuade respondents to be interviewed to take part:

"A thank-you / reminder postcard was sent to all respondents and non-respondents on 8 March 1996, 6 days after the original mail-out. A second questionnaire was sent to remaining non-respondents on 9 April 1996, one month after the original mail-out. A final reminder letter was sent two months after the original mail-out.

X. Response Rate (to first wave if a panel study)

a) Total number of sample lines issued: 3000
b) Total number of completed interviews: 1798
c) Number of refusals: 1110
d) Number never contacted (no-contact): 0
e) Other non-response: 0
f) Number of lines of non-sample: 95
g) Response Rate: $(b/(a-f))*100$: 61.9%

XII. Sample Weight

a) Are the data weighted? No

XIV. Comparison of Sample to Population

Characteristic	Population Est.	Sample Est. Unweighted
Age (1)		
18-25	16.2%	9.7%
26-40	31.0%	31.3%
41-65	37.3%	42.7%
66 & over	15.4%	16.3%

Education (2) Because the AES96 question on respondent's "No. years of tertiary education" (see variable H3) was not asked in the 1996 Census of Population and Housing, comparative estimates are provided for the cross-classification of H2 ("Highest qual obtained since leaving school") and H1 ("Age left school"). (SEE ATTACHED TABLE: "ausqual.txt")

Gender (3)

Male	48.8%	47.8%
Female	51.2%	52.2%

XV. Languages used in the interviews: Mail questionnaire was written in English

(1) Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 Census of Population and Housing, Table for Vance Merrill (AGEP Age for Australian citizens 18 years and over, Australia)- Attached

(2) Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 Census of Population and Housing, Table for Vance Merrill (QALLP Qual

- Level of Attain by ALSP Age Left School for Persons aged 18 years and over, Australian citizen, Australia)- Attached

(3) Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 Census of Population and Housing - Basic Community Profiles

(Australia), Table B01 Selected Characteristics (Australia)

(<http://www.abs.gov.au/>)- Attached