

National Social Housing Survey, 2016; Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

Description

The 2016 National Social Housing Survey (NSHS) collects information from tenants of three social housing programs—public housing (PH) (also referred to as ‘public rental housing’), community housing (CH) (also referred to as ‘mainstream community housing’), and state owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH).

Summary

- The NSHS provides information on characteristics of tenants, information about their housing histories, their satisfaction with their housing, and information about their household's use of other health and community services.
- The response rate for the 2016 survey was 33.6% and differs by mode. Some non-response bias is expected, but this bias has not been measured.
- Both sampling and non-sampling errors should be considered when interpreting results.
- There are major methodological differences between cycles of the NSHS affecting comparability over time.

Institutional environment:

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is a national agency set up by the Australian Government under the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987](#) to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity established in 1987, governed by a [management Board](#), and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, and mental health, to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The AIHW also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The AIHW works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national data sets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse these data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

The [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987](#), in conjunction with compliance to the [Privacy Act 1988](#), (Cth) ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au.

Timeliness:	<p>Data are not collected annually. Surveys for PH and CH were conducted in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016. Surveys for SOMIH were conducted in 2005, 2007, 2012, 2014 and 2016. For SOMIH tenants in 2016, surveys were completed via mail-out for two jurisdictions (South Australia and Tasmania) and face-to-face interview in the other two jurisdictions (New South Wales and Queensland).</p> <p>The fieldwork for 2016 was conducted from 20 April–30 June for the Australian Capital Territory. For all other jurisdictions, fieldwork was conducted from 21 April–30 June.</p> <p>Fieldwork for the SOMIH face-to-face component was undertaken in New South Wales from 20 May–17 June and in Queensland from 14 March–30 June.</p> <p>Data on the characteristics of the household and its members relate to the time of the survey. Data on tenant satisfaction relate to the 12 months up to the time of the survey.</p>
Accessibility:	<p>Published results from the 2016 NSHS will be available on the AIHW website, (see National Social Housing Survey) and the Productivity Commission's annual Report on government services. Access to the confidentialised unit record file may be requested through the AIHW Ethics Committee.</p> <p>Users can request additional disaggregations of data which are not available online or in reports (subject to the AIHW's confidentiality policy and other conditions) via the AIHW's online customised data request system at https://datarequest.aihw.gov.au. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may also incur costs or require approval from the AIHW Ethics Committee and states and territories.</p> <p>General enquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Digital & Media Communications Unit on (02) 6244 1026 or via email to info@aihw.gov.au.</p>
Interpretability:	<p>Information to aid in interpretation of 2016 NSHS results will be available on the AIHW website including the 2016 NSHS methodological report, code book and other supporting documentation.</p>
Relevance:	<p>The 2016 NSHS includes tenants from PH, CH and SOMIH. The Indigenous Community Housing (ICH) sector was excluded from the survey. All states and territories participated in the survey if the relevant program operated in their jurisdiction. The data were collected via a combination of mail-out self-completed paper questionnaires, online self-completed questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. All remoteness areas were included in the sample. For the postal component of the survey, the speed of delivery to, and returns from, more remote locations may have affected the number of responses received from tenants in these areas.</p>
Accuracy:	<p>Missing data</p> <p>Some survey respondents did not answer all questions, either because they were unable or unwilling to provide a response. The survey responses for these people were retained in the sample, and the missing values were recorded as not answered. Cleaning rules resulted in the imputation of responses for some missing values.</p> <p>Response rates and contact rates</p> <p>The accuracy of the outputs from the 2016 NSHS is affected by the response rates across the jurisdictions and at the national level (see response rate table below).</p> <p>Overall, 26,607 questionnaires were sent to tenants in PH, CH and SOMIH (South Australia and Tasmania only), of which 8,720 questionnaires were categorised as being complete and useable, representing a response rate for the 2016 survey of 33.6%; closely resembling the response rate of 32.4% for 2014.</p> <p>For the two SOMIH jurisdictions where the respondents completed the survey face-to-face (New South Wales and Queensland), a total of 1,796 interviews were attempted and 1,018 interviews were completed with an overall response rate of 58.6%.</p> <p>A low response rate does not necessarily mean that the results are biased. As long as the non-respondents are not systematically different in terms of how they would have answered the questions, there is no bias. Given the relatively low response</p>

rates for this survey, it is likely there is some bias in the estimates. No adjustments have been made to any potential non-response bias.

Jurisdiction	Total responses	Response rate
Public housing		
NSW	560	41.3%
Vic	554	25.2%
Qld	630	44.2%
WA	785	41.8%
SA	519	46.2%
Tas	704	40.2%
ACT	732	36.0%
NT	679	31.9%
Community housing		
NSW	597	31.9%
Vic	417	30.4%
Qld	387	32.1%
WA	390	25.0%
SA	583	36.8%
Tas	568	31.1%
ACT	211	27.7%
State owned and managed Indigenous housing		
NSW	505	56.6%
Qld	513	60.6%
SA	341	21.0%
Tas	63	29.0%

Scope and coverage

The 2016 NSHS was designed to meet minimum reliability objectives for key variables for each housing program.

Sample design

Stratified sampling was undertaken in order to maximise the chance of obtaining minimum sample size requirements for each area.

To produce reliable estimates, minimum sample sizes were set for each housing collection: PH (500), CH (350) and SOMIH (500). An additional overall 873 booster sample was included comprising of New South Wales PH (22), Victoria PH (613) and Victoria CH (238).

The over-sampling of lesser populated states and territories produced a sample that was not proportional to the jurisdiction/housing programs distribution of the social housing population. Weighting was applied to adjust for imbalances arising from execution of the sampling and differential response rates, and to ensure that the results relate to the social housing population.

The weighting for the 2016 survey was calculated as the number of households in each jurisdiction (population) divided by the number of usable surveys (responses). All population counts were provided by jurisdictions directly to the fieldwork contractor.

Sampling error

The measure used to indicate reliability of individual estimates reported in 2016 is the relative standard error (RSE). Only estimates with RSEs of less than 25% are

considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. Results subject to RSEs of between 25% and 50% should be considered with caution and those with relative standard errors greater than 50% should be considered as unreliable for most practical purposes.

Non-sampling error

In addition to sampling errors, the estimates are subject to non-sampling errors. These can arise from errors in reporting of responses (for example, failure of respondents' memories and incorrect completion of the survey form), the unwillingness of respondents to reveal their true responses and higher levels of non-response from certain subgroups of the population.

The survey findings are based on self-reported data.

Coherence:

For the 2016 NSHS, caution should be used when comparing trend data or data between jurisdictions due to differences in response rates and non-sampling error.

The 2016 NSHS sampling and stratification methods were similar to the 2014 survey, that is, a sample was randomly selected of each jurisdiction's PH, SOMIH and CH tenants.

In 2016, the data collected for SOMIH was sourced using two methodologies (via mail-out in two jurisdictions and via face-to-face interview in two jurisdictions). Trend data and comparisons between jurisdictions should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Surveys in this series commenced in 2001. Over time, modifications have been made to the survey's methodology and questionnaire design. As noted above, the sample design and the questionnaire of the 2016 survey differ in a number of important respects from previous versions of the survey.

Please refer to data quality statements and technical reports for the relevant historical surveys before comparing data across surveys.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [National Social Housing Survey, 2014; Data Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 06/01/2017

Has been superseded by [National Social Housing Survey, 2018; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 13/01/2022