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## Media release

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# Australians Will Never Feel Prosperous: New report

Only five per cent of millionaires in Australia regard themselves as prosperous while more than half say their financial situation is only 'reasonably comfortable'.

This fact emerges in a new study by The Australia Institute of attitudes to income and wealth in Australia. The study is based on the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey of over 12,000 Australians.

Even among the very wealthy - those with household net worth in excess of \$3 million - only one in five regard themselves as prosperous while 7 per cent say they are 'poor' or 'just getting along'.

A similar reluctance to describe themselves as prosperous is apparent in households with high incomes, with only five per cent of those living in households with incomes above \$100,000 describing themselves as prosperous.

At the other end of the spectrum, when asked about their financial situation only nine per cent of those in the lowest income group (less than \$25,000) say they are 'totally satisfied'. But exactly the same proportion of those in the *highest* income group (over \$100,000) say they are totally satisfied.

"Far from the belief that higher incomes and more assets will create a prosperous nation, it seems that the relentless emphasis on higher incomes will in fact generate more dissatisfaction", said report co-author and Institute Executive Director Dr Clive Hamilton.

The report also examines the relationship between overall satisfaction with life and differences in income and wealth. The results show that the proportion of Australians who indicate they are totally satisfied with life overall *declines* as income increases; 21 per cent of those in the lowest income group say they are totally satisfied while only 13 per cent of those in the highest income group feel the same way. Overall life satisfaction is little affected by differences in wealth.

"The Government says it wants a prosperous nation, but as long as success is measured by money Australians will always feel deprived", said Dr Hamilton.

A new organisation called Downshifting Downunder will hold its inaugural conference in Sydney on 23<sup>rd</sup> July ([www.downshifting.net.au](http://www.downshifting.net.au)).

*The report can be read under What's New on the Australia Institute's website.*