



It's all about the economy - for now, but Australians look ahead to other major risks

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- **State of the economy is Australia's top worry**
- **8 in 10 are concerned about the future costs of ageing**
- **3 in 5 fear being hit by a natural disaster in next three years**
- **90% want the government to encourage efficient energy use**

Sydney, 1 October 2013 – Australians believe the number one risk facing the country right now is the economy. But when asked to look forward 20 years from now, people believe the major risks will be an increase in extreme catastrophes and the costs associated with ageing.

These are among the results from a [landmark survey](#) commissioned by Swiss Re for its 150 year anniversary and conducted by The Gallup Organisation – Europe, the consulting, polling and research organisation. People were asked what concerns them most now and in the future, including ageing, climate change, natural disasters, energy and food supplies.

Gallup spoke with nearly 22 000 citizens aged 15 and above across 19 markets on five continents. Under the theme of 'Open minds connecting generations', Swiss Re wants to foster a dialogue about risks and how society and generations are to tackle them in the future.

Asked to choose two risks from a list, people rated the economy as the number one risk currently facing the country with 45% of Australians selecting this option. Climate change, pollution and loss of species ranked second-equal alongside crime, terrorism and civil unrest (33%)

Funding longer lives

- The costs associated with a growing proportion of elderly people is seen by only 24% of Australians as a key risk for today. But 79% see this as a major financial concern in 20 years
- One in four would prefer to provide long-term care to a loved one themselves – even if it means quitting work or working less. This is when offered a straight choice of other options, such as paying through tax or savings.

Managing climate and natural disaster risk

- 80% of Australians think there will be more extreme natural catastrophes in the future, compared with a global average of 69%
- 77% believe there's a link between natural catastrophes and climate change
- Australians do not see natural catastrophes as 'one-off' events; 61% of respondents say they have been hit by a natural



catastrophe and 59% of them think they're at risk again within the next three years

- 63% believe their home and household goods are insured against damage by natural catastrophes.

Advancing sustainable energy solutions

- 73% are willing to, or are already using, renewable energy but 42% of them say they can't afford to pay more for it
- 90% say that the government should encourage more efficient energy use.

Swiss Re's Head of Australia and New Zealand, Mark Senkevics says: "These findings show that Australians are thinking about the future and are concerned about the major risks we're likely to face in the coming decades.

"Australians have a good grasp of the fact that the enormity of these critical risks – particularly natural catastrophes and ageing – requires planning and action now. They need strong support to enable them to do this – government and the private sector have vital roles to play."

Notes to editors

About the Risk perception survey

Swiss Re's *Risk perception survey* was carried out in April and May 2013 by The Gallup Organisation – Europe.

Results are based on telephone and online interviews with more than 1 000 people per country, aged 15 and older, conducted in 19 markets. The samples are representative of the total population aged 15 and older in most countries; in five countries, interviews were only conducted in urban areas. The 19 markets selected for this study were:

- Canada, the United States, Brazil (only urban areas) and Mexico
- France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and South Africa (only urban areas)
- Australia, China (only urban areas), Hong Kong, India (only urban areas), Indonesia (only urban areas), Japan, Singapore and South Korea

The results of Swiss Re's Risk Perception Survey can be explored online at riskwindow.swissre.com.

You can view the [media release for the global launch](#) of the survey on Swiss Re's website.

Swiss Re

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