Curtin University

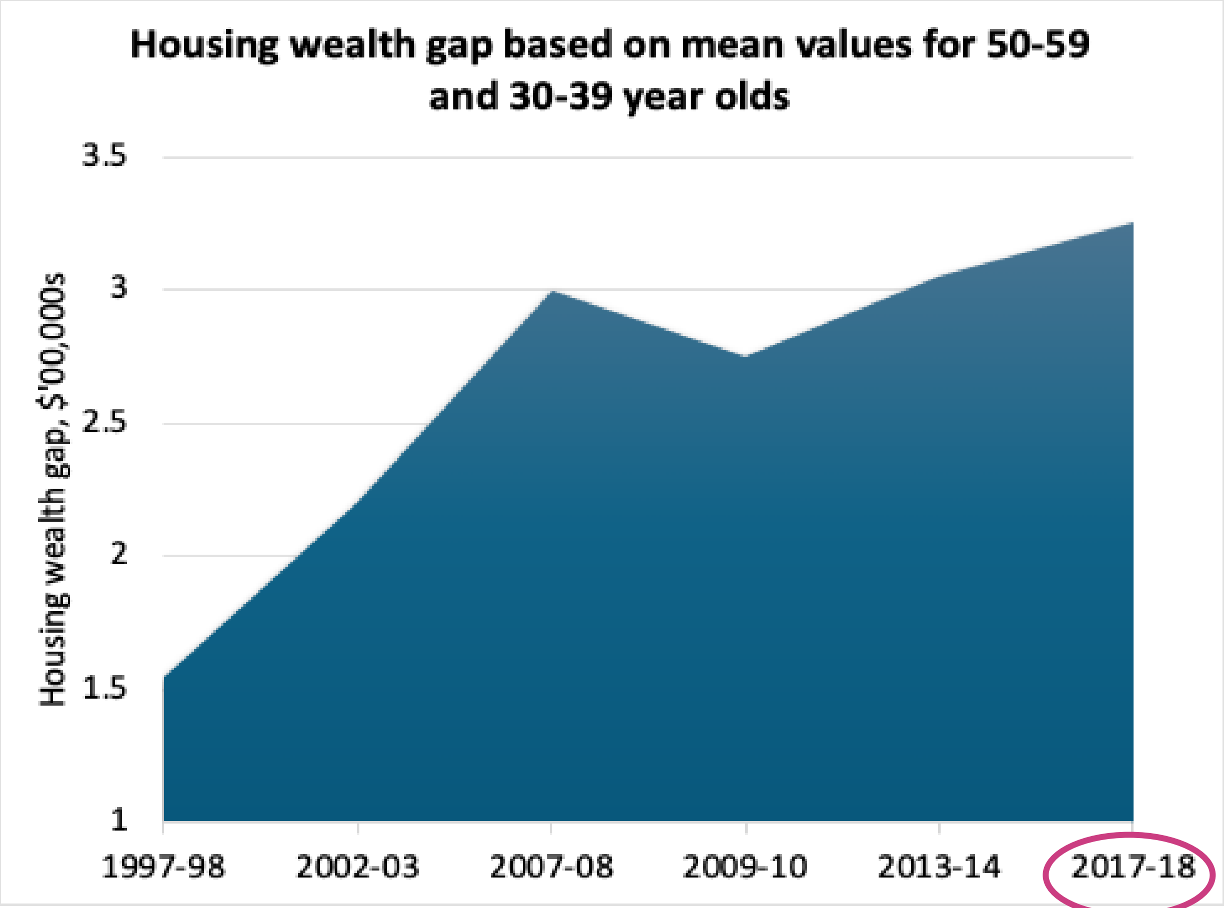
Policy Dialogue on Intergenerational Equity: Housing

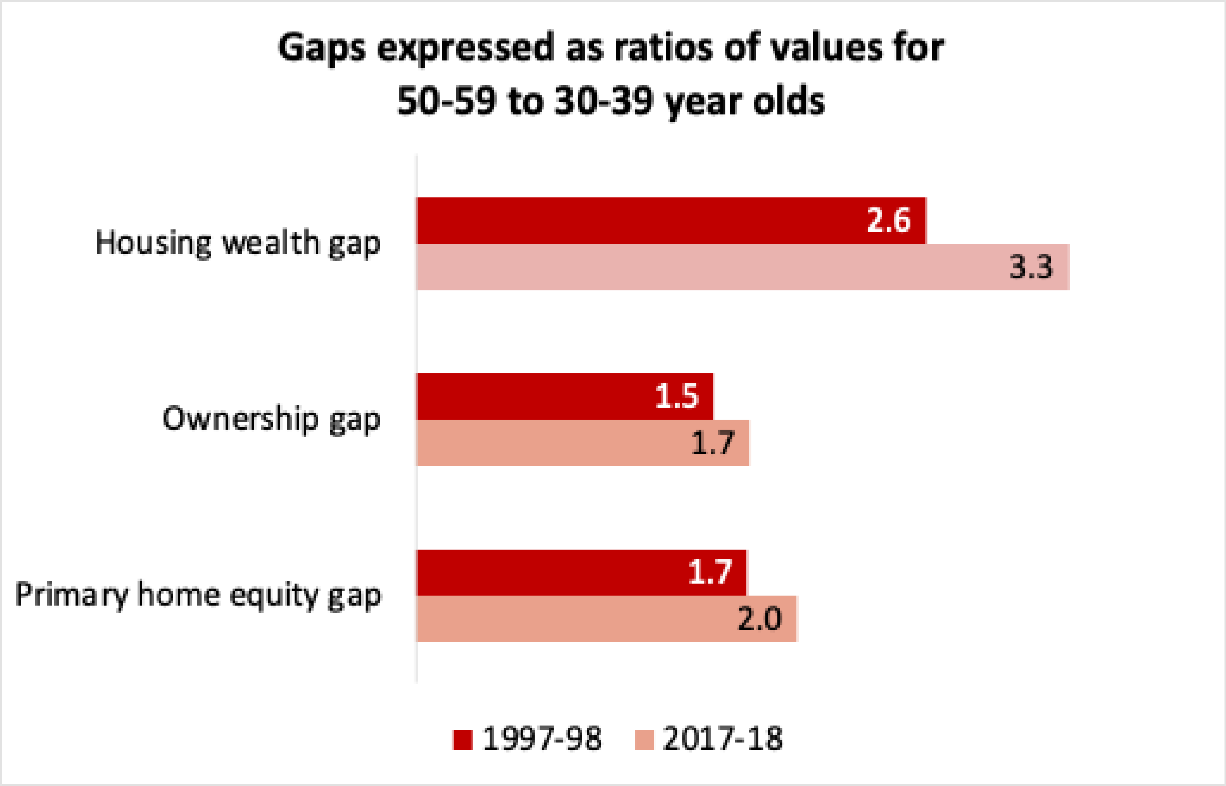
Rachel Ong ViforJ

20 July 2026

Long-run trends in housing wealth gaps: Equity considerations

Long-run trends in age-based housing wealth gaps



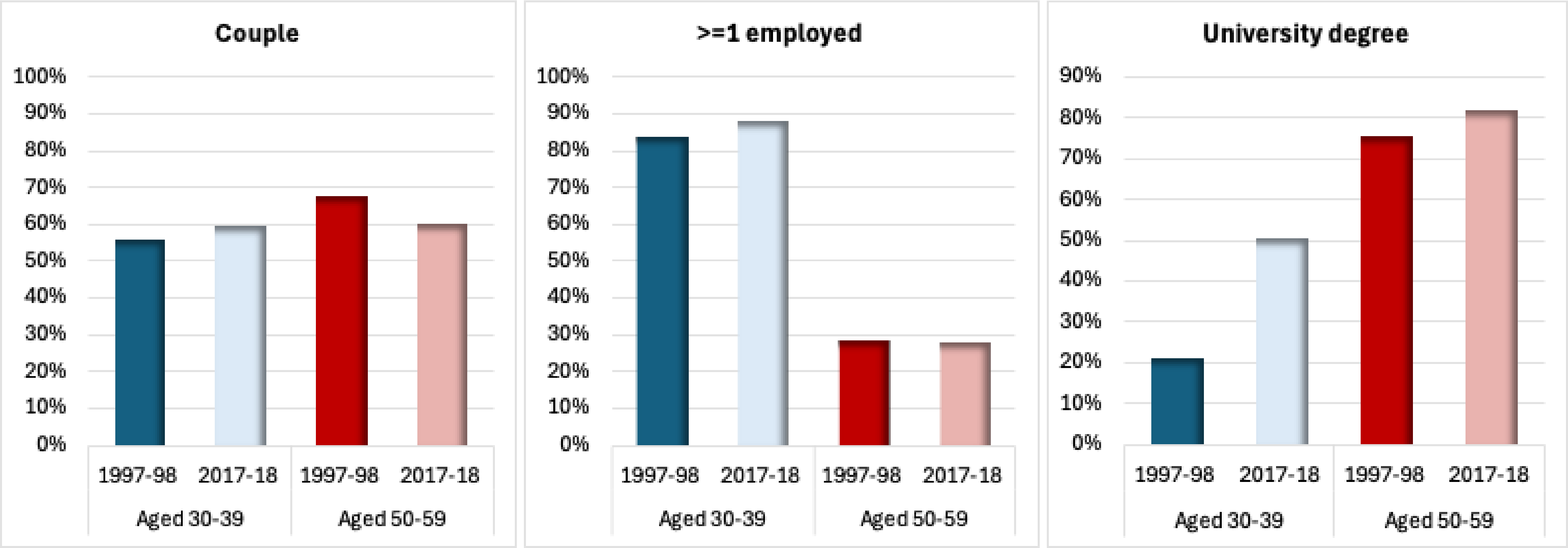


Source: Calculations from the ABS SIH as reported in Ong ViforJ & Phelps (2023) *Housing, Theory and Society*
Notes: Estimates are weighted and on an income unit basis. Dollar values are inflated to 2021 price levels.

Respondents in their 50s are BBs (born 1958-1967)
Respondent in their 30s are Gen X's (born 1978-1987)

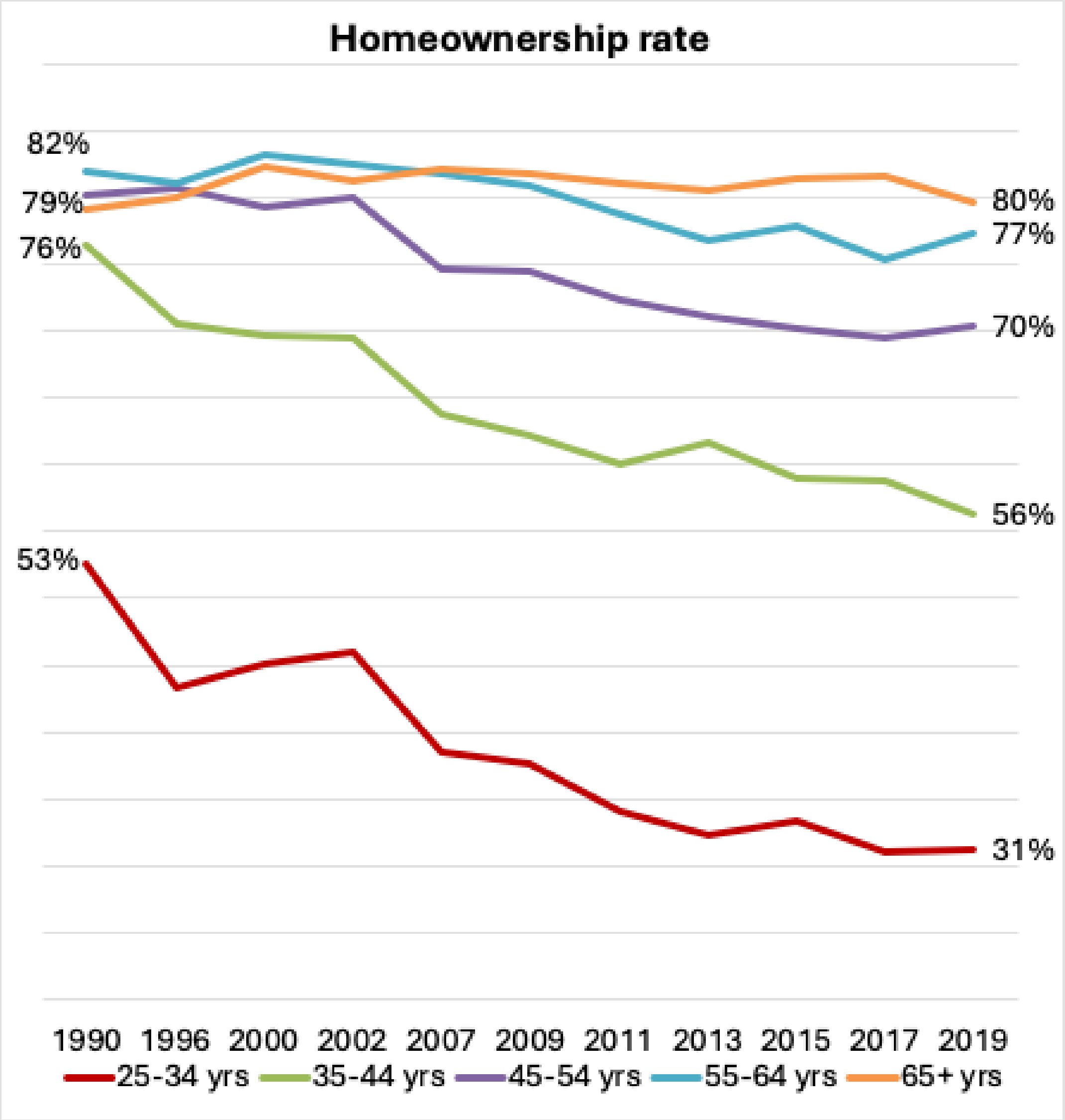
Curtin University

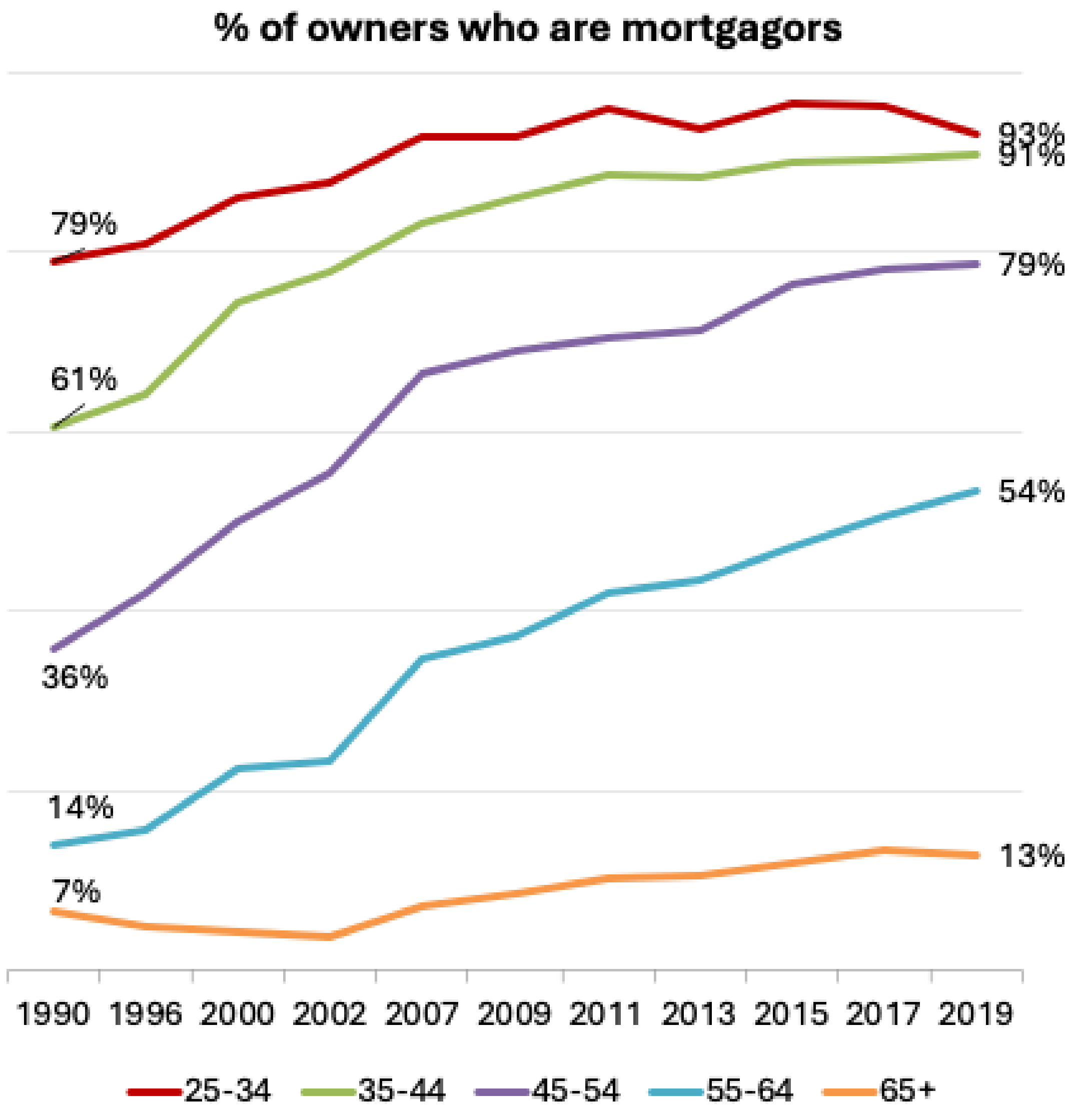
Differential changes in socio-demographic characteristics between young and old



Source: Calculations from the ABS SIH as reported in Ong ViforJ & Phelps (2023) *Housing, Theory and Society*
Note: Estimates are weighted and on an income unit basis.

Long-run trends in housing market





Source: Calculations from the ABS SIH as
Note: Estimates are weighted and on a person basis.

Curtin University

Primary and secondary sector dwellings

Growth in number of dwellings, by sector	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Households in ('000)	7,686	10,156	
Secondary sector dwellings ('000)	2,212	3,170	
Primary sector dwellings ('000)	5,580	6,905	

Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Phelps et al. (2026) *Critical Housing Analysis*

Primary and secondary sector dwellings

Growth in number of dwellings, by sector	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Households in (‘000)	7,686	10,156	**32%**
Secondary sector dwellings (‘000)	2,212	3,170	**43%**
Primary sector dwellings (‘000)	5,580	6,905	**24%**

Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Phelps et al. (2026) *Critical Housing Analysis*

Primary and secondary sector dwellings

Growth in number of dwellings, by sector	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Households in (‘000)	7,686	10,156	**32%**
Secondary sector dwellings (‘000)	2,212	3,170	**43%**
Primary sector dwellings (‘000)	5,580	6,905	**24%**

Growth in number of secondary sector dwellings	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Second & holiday homes, not rented out (‘000)	307	430	
Second & holiday homes, rented out (‘000)	191	400	
Residential investment properties (‘000)	1,714	2,340	
Total secondary dwellings (‘000)	2,212	3,170	

Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Phelps et al. (2026) *Critical Housing Analysis*

Primary and secondary sector dwellings

Growth in number of dwellings, by sector	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Households in (‘000)	7,686	10,156	32%
Secondary sector dwellings (‘000)	2,212	3,170	43%
Primary sector dwellings (‘000)	5,580	6,905	24%

Growth in number of secondary sector dwellings	2006	2022	% change 2006-22
Second & holiday homes, not rented out (‘000)	307	430	40%
Second & holiday homes, rented out (‘000)	191	400	109%
Residential investment properties (‘000)	1,714	2,340	37%
Total secondary dwellings (‘000)	2,212	3,170	43%

Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Phelps et al. (2026) *Critical Housing Analysis*

Barriers to home ownership: Opportunity or behaviour

Predictors of home purchase

- HILDA Survey 2006 – 2020
- Independent non-owners aged 25-44 at *t*
- Predictors at *t* matched to home owner (HO) status at *t*+1
- Random effects logit model

$$\mathbf{Pr}\,(\,HO_{i,\,t+1} = 1 \mid HO_{i,\,t} = 0\,) = \mathbf{fn}\,(Opportunity_{it}\,,\, Behaviour_{it}\,,\, Controls_{it}\,,\, Year_{it})$$

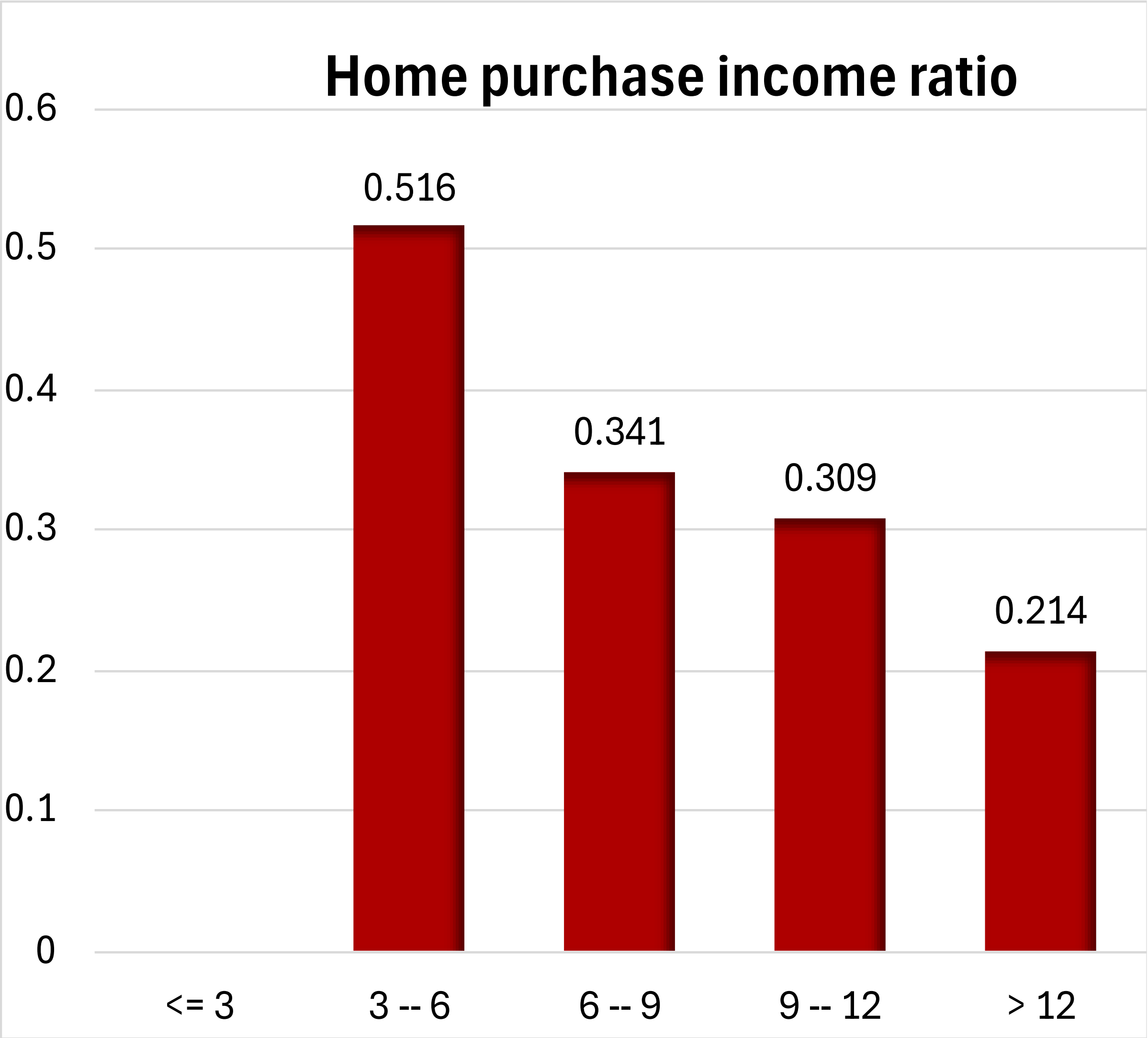
Opportunity

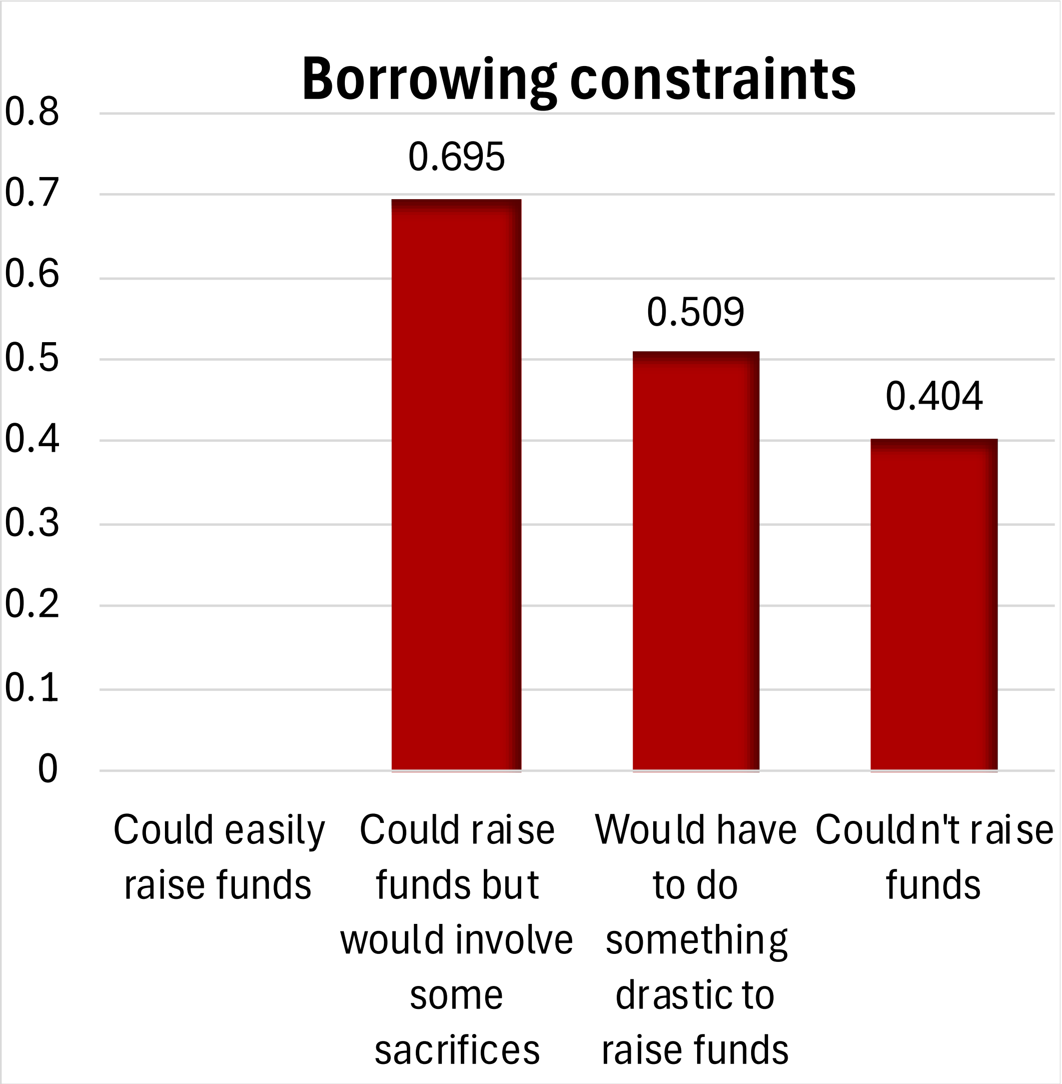
1. Home purchase affordability ratio
2. Borrowing constraints
3. Parental transfers

Savings and financial planning behaviour

1. ‘Planning self’ – makes decisions for lifetime utility gain
2. ‘Doing self’ – Driven by short-term utility gain

Opportunity – Odds ratios

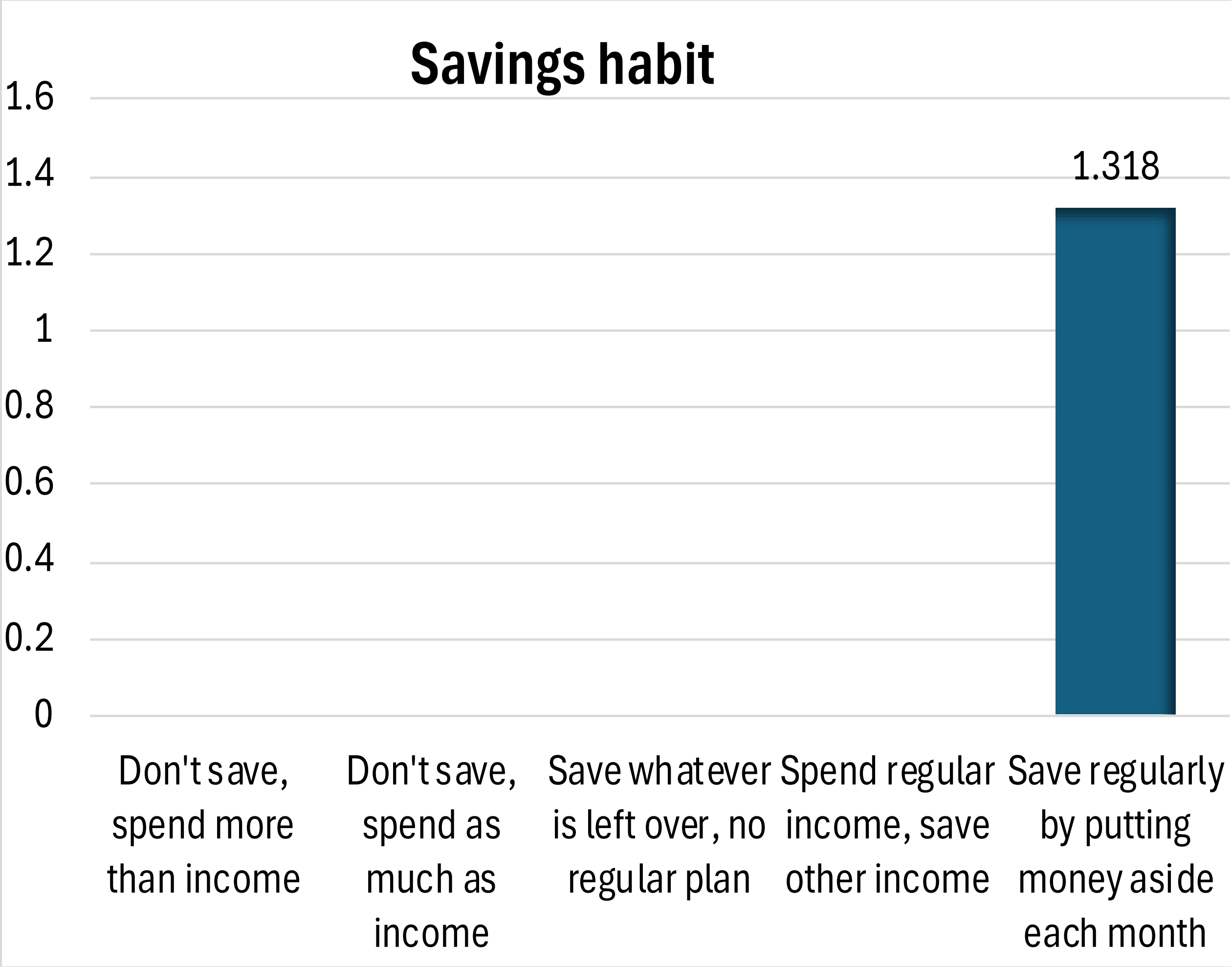


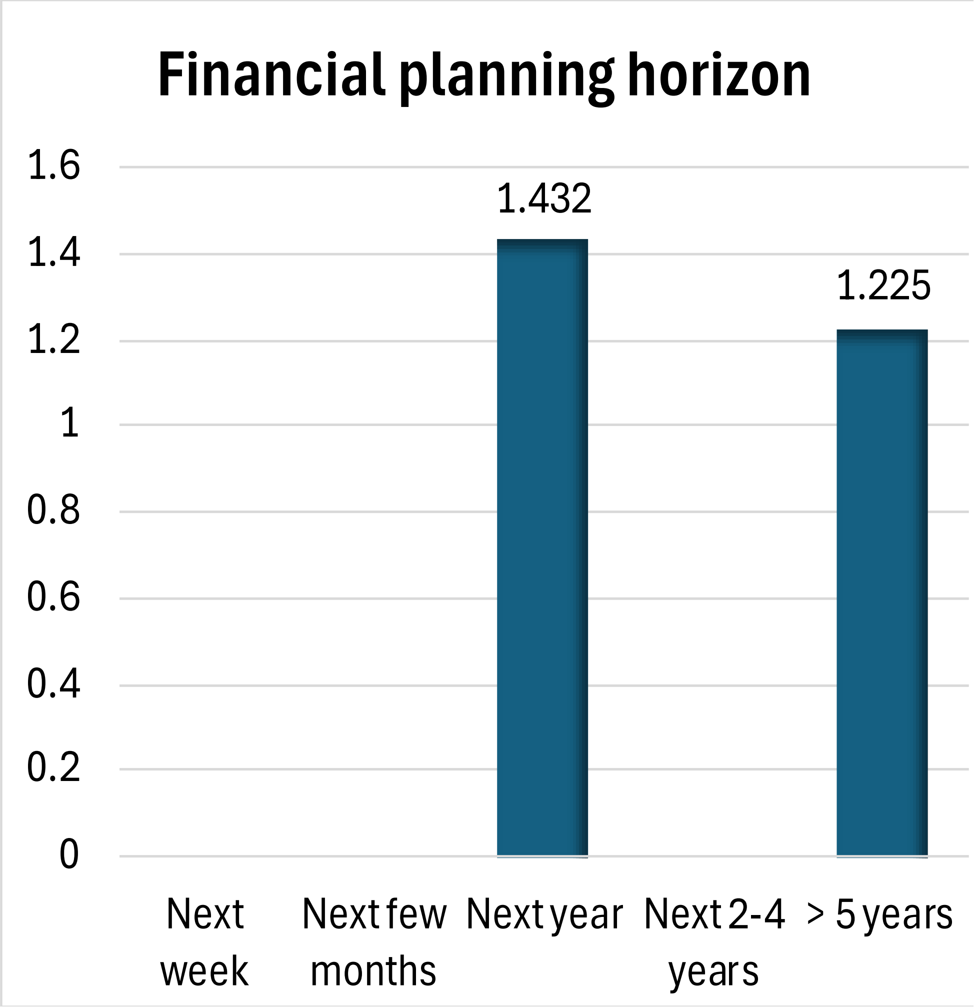


Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Ong ViforJ et al. (2025) *Population, Space and Place*

Curtin University

Behaviour – Odds ratios





Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Ong ViforJ et al. (2025) *Population, Space and Place*

Curtin University

Dominance analysis

Variable sets	Standardized dominance statistic
Set 1: Home purchase opportunity	37.3%
1a: Affordability constraints	18.8%
1b: Intergenerational transfers	18.6%
Set 2: Financial attitudes	6.4%
Set 3: Personality traits	1.8%
Set 4: Labour market precarity	3.7%
Control variables	50.8%
Overall fit statistic (McFadden pseudo-R^2)	0.1228
Control variables fit statistic	0.0624
Number of observations	19,374

Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Ong ViforJ et al. (2025) *Population, Space and Place*

Curtin University

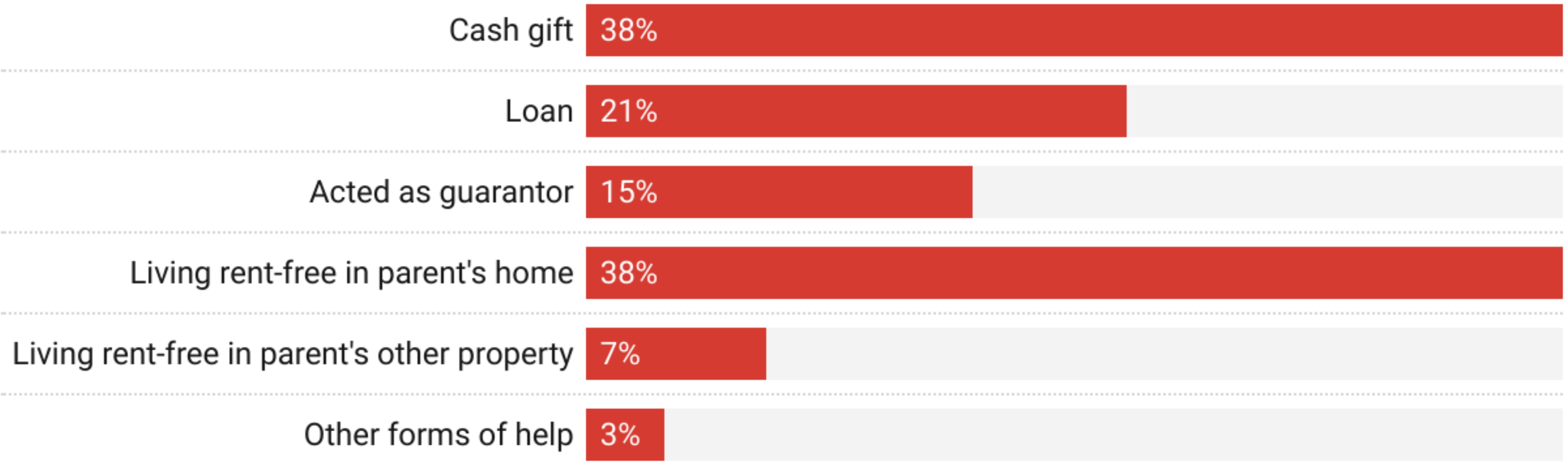
Intergenerational transfers and housing equity

Data and sample

- 2025 survey of Australian parents with at least one child who bought a home in the last 10 years
- 1,725 parents of which 994 helped at least one child

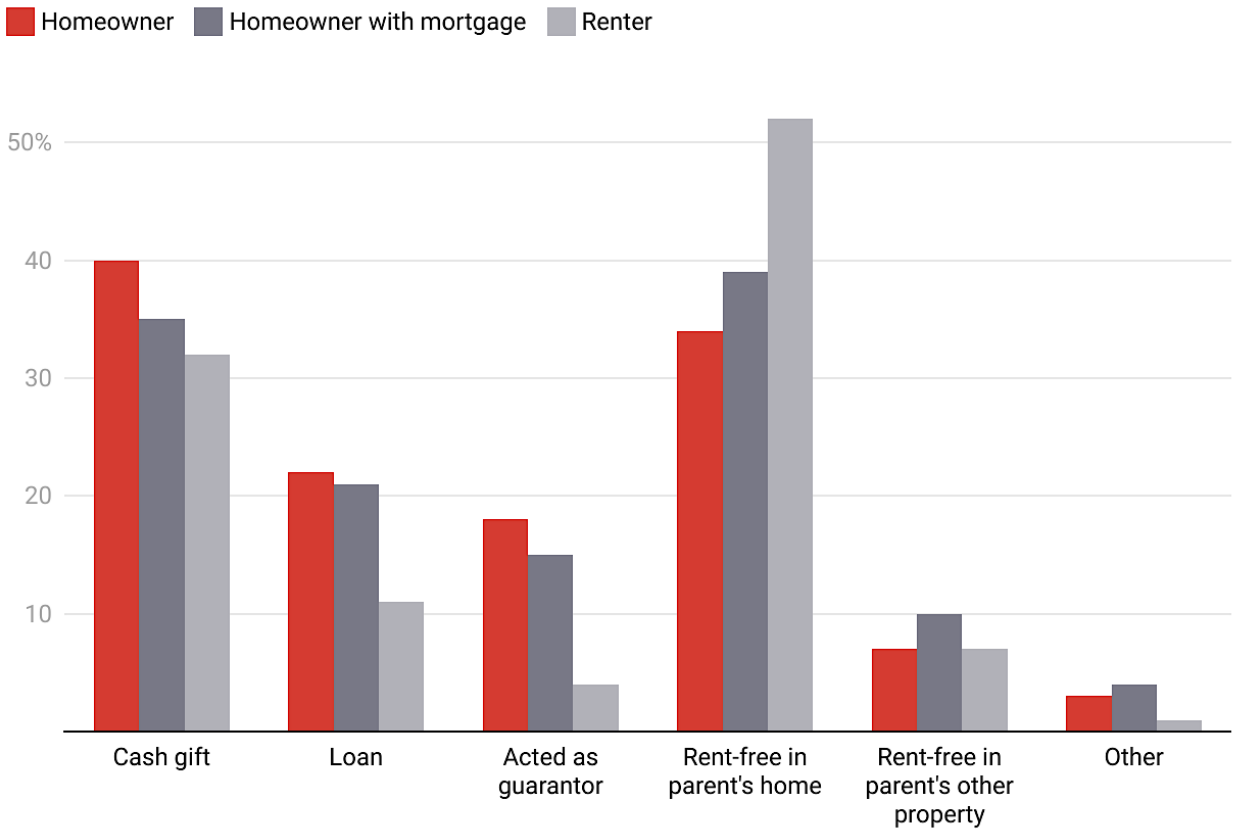
Timing of purchase by child	% helped by parents
<=5 years ago	58%
5 – 10 years ago	50%
10+ years ago	44%

How parents helped their children purchase a first home

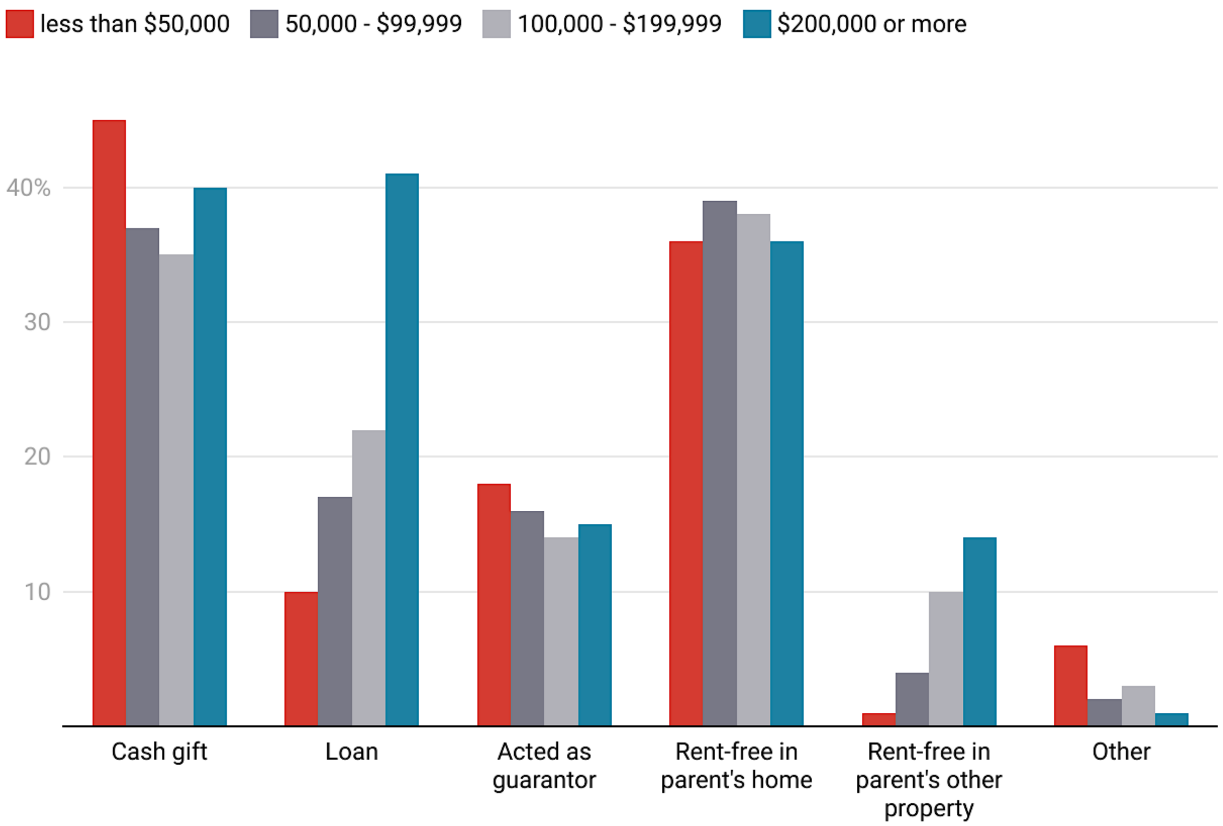


Parents are counted for each child they helped. Children could get help in several ways, so rows add to more than 100%. Percentages rounded to whole numbers.

How parents helped, by parents' homeownership



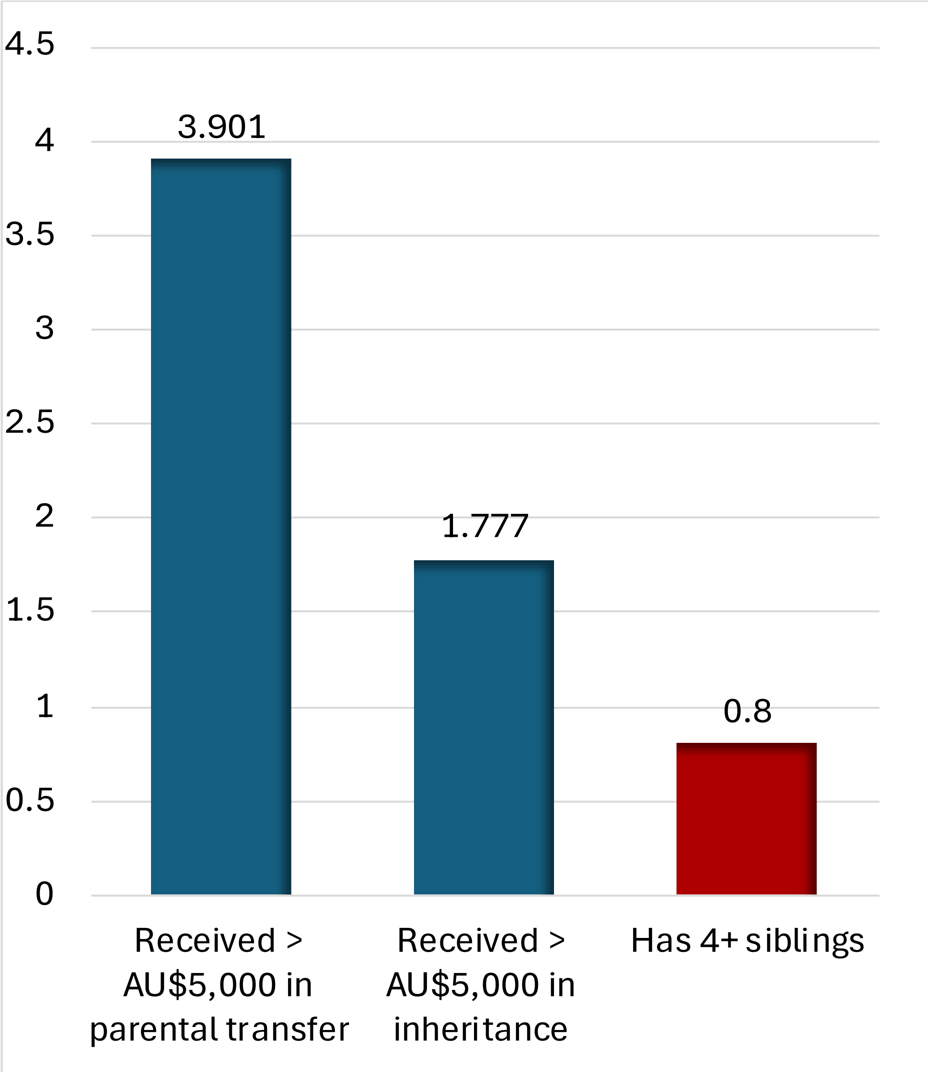
How parents helped, by parents' income

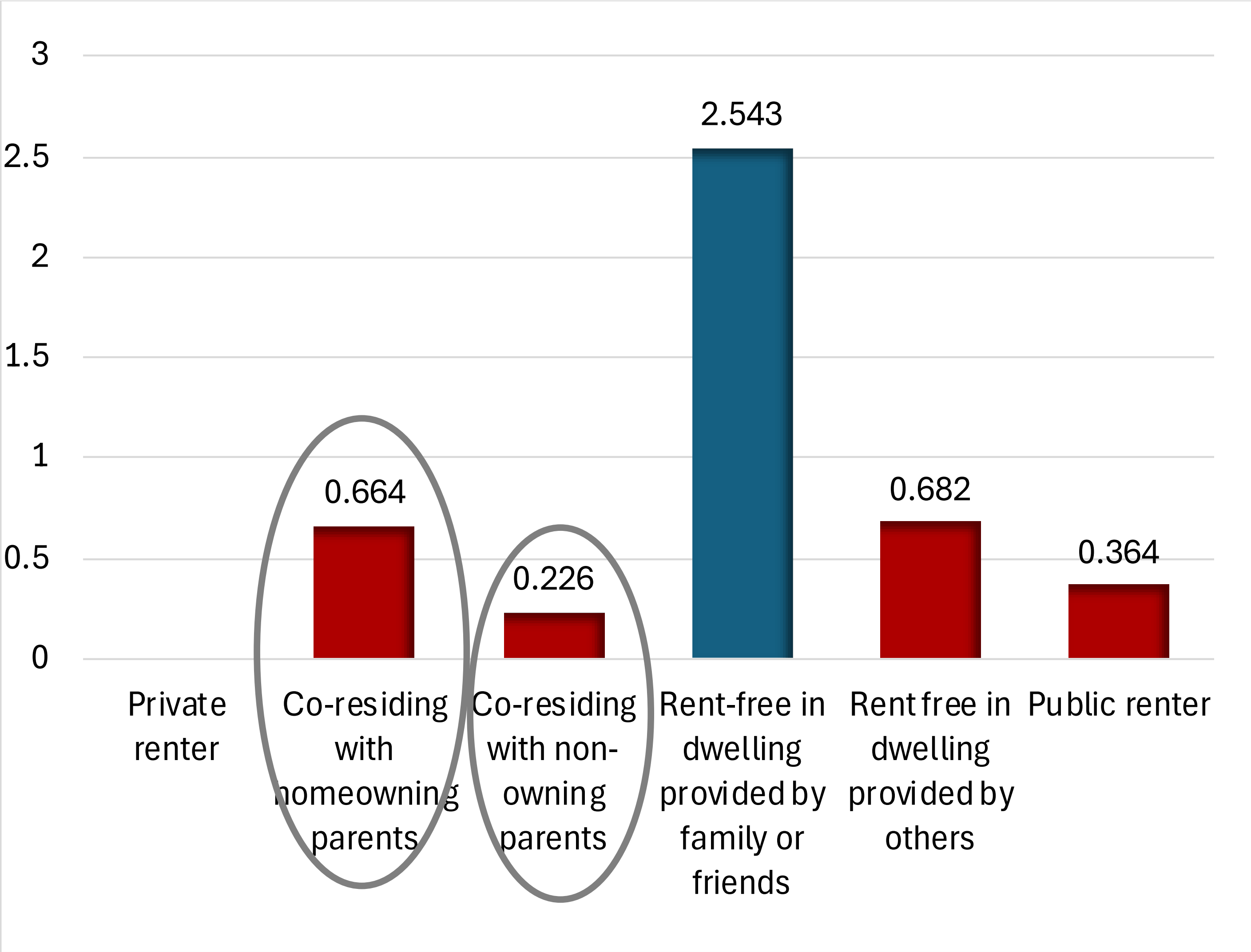


Parents are counted for each child they helped. Children could get help in several ways, so rows add to more than 100%. Percentages rounded to whole numbers.

Curtin University

Odds of home purchase with parental assistance





Source: Calculations using the HILDA Survey as reported in Ong ViforJ et al. (2025) *Population, Space and Place*

Curtin University

Concluding remarks

- **The intergenerational housing wealth gap has widened**
  - Sharper decline in home ownership among younger groups than older groups
  - Younger groups accumulate equity at slower rate than older groups

- **Odds of home purchase among young people driven strongly by**
  - Lack of home purchase affordability
  - Borrowing constraints
  - Intergenerational transfers

- **Growing importance of parental transfers** – both cash and in-kind – sets the stage for further entrenchment of intergenerational transmission of housing wealth.


Thank you