



GENDER EQUALITY STATS 2009

Briefing Note

Sex and Age Discrimination Unit

Gender equality – the international perspective

- Women represent 50.3% of the Australian population.¹
- Australia is ranked 17 in the Global Gender Gap Index.²
- Australia is one of a group of countries ranked number 1 for women's educational attainment.³
- Australia is ranked 41 for women's participation in the workforce.⁴

Women in parliament

- Following the most recent Federal Election in 2007, women represent 29.6% of elected positions in the Australian Commonwealth Parliament. Women account for 35.5% of Australian Senators and 26.7% of the Members of the House of Representatives.⁵
- Australia is ranked 28 in the world for women's representation in Parliament.⁶

Women in leadership

- Women chair only 2% of ASX200 companies (four Boards); hold only 8.3% of Board Directorships; hold only four Chief Executive Officer positions (2% of ASX200 companies) and represent only 10.7% of Executive Management positions.⁷
- Women comprise 33% of the total membership of Australian Government boards and bodies.⁸
- Women remain under-represented at higher classifications of the Commonwealth Public Service. Women comprise 45% of Executive Level employees and only 37% of the Senior Executive Service. Women account for 57.6% of Commonwealth Public Service employees and outnumber men at all junior classifications.⁹
- Over the last 50 years only 11 women have been named Australian of the Year.¹⁰

Domestic and family violence

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Demographic Statistics, March 2008*, Catalogue No. 3101.0, ABS, Canberra, 2008.

2 World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2007](#).

3 World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2007](#).

4 World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2007](#).

5 Politics and Public Administration Group Parliamentary Library, *Composition of Australian Parliaments by Party and Gender*, as at 25 May 2009, available at www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/pol/currentwomen.pdf

6 World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2007](#).

7 EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership 2008

8 Office for Women, *Government Boards Report 2008*, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra, 2008.

9 State of the Service 2007/08, Australian Public Service Commission

10 <http://www.australianoftheyear.org.au/pages/page22.asp>

- One in three Australian women is affected by domestic and family violence.¹¹
- Domestic violence has been identified as the leading contributor to preventable death, disability and illness in women aged 15 to 44 in the state of Victoria.¹²
- Women are the biggest group of people using homelessness support services.¹³
- Domestic violence is the primary reason women seek assistance from homelessness support services.¹⁴

Sexual assault

- Nearly 1 in 5 Australian women has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15, compared to 1 in 20 men.¹⁶
- Women who have been exposed to violence have a greater risk of developing a range of health problems, including stress, anxiety, depression, pain, phobias and medical symptoms.¹⁷
- Internationally, around 1 in 3 women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.¹⁸

Sexual harassment

- Nearly 1 in 5 complaints received by the Australian Human Rights Commission under the SDA relate to sexual harassment. The vast majority of these take place in the workplace.¹⁹
- 22% of women and 5% of men have experienced sexual harassment. Women are four times as likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace compared to men.²⁰
- More than one in ten Australians has witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace in the last five years.²¹
- Only 16% of those who have been sexually harassed in the last five years in the workplace formally reported or made a complaint.²²

Women's participation in the workforce

- Women account for 45.1% of the total work force in Australia.²³

11 Jenny Mouzos and Toni Makkai, *Women's Experiences of Male Violence: Findings from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS)* (2004) p 3. Available at <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/56/RPP56.pdf> (viewed 29 May 2009).

12 VicHealth, *The Health Costs of Violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence* (2004) p 11. Available at www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/~media/ProgramsandProjects/MentalHealthandWellBeing/DiscriminationandViolence/IntimatePartnerViolence/ipv.ashx (viewed 29 May 2009).

13 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2006-07 Australia* (2008) p 35. Available at www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10523 (viewed 6 April 2009).

14 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2006-07 Australia* (2008) p 35. Available at www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10523 (viewed 6 April 2009).

15 Sexual violence includes sexual assault and sexual threats.

16 2005 ABS Personal Safety Survey

17 2006 VicHealth Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women

18 2002 International Violence Against Women Study

19 2005/2006 Complaints Data

20 Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) – *Sexual Harassment: Serious Business*

21 Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) – *Sexual Harassment: Serious Business*

22 Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) – *Sexual Harassment: Serious Business*

- 58.9% of women participate in the workforce compared with 72.1% of men.²⁴

Pay equity

- Women in Australia currently earn 84.3 cents in the male dollar (full time adult ordinary time earnings).²⁵
- The gender pay gap is even greater when we factor in women's part time earnings – overall women earn only 66 per cent of what men earn.²⁶
- The gender pay gap has widened slightly over the last three years.²⁷

Women's unpaid work

- Women undertake two thirds of the unpaid caring and domestic work in Australian households.²⁸
- Women spend almost three times as many hours per week looking after children as men.²⁹

Retirement savings

- In 2007, 2.8 million women and 1.6 million men aged 15 years and over reported not being covered by superannuation³⁰
- Half of all women aged between 45 and 59 have \$8 000 or less in superannuation.³¹
- Current superannuation payouts for women are one third of men's – 37K compared with 110K.³²

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23 ABS Labour Force Australia- June 2009

24 ABS Labour Force Australia- June 2009

25 ABS *Average Weekly Earnings* August 2008 trend data. Note this data is an average that does not take into account the occupational groupings within the industries it surveys. The ABS does collect data on differences in occupational groups and managerial/non-managerial employees – in *Employee Earnings and Hours* - but this is published every two years and it is difficult to assess trends over time using this data because it is not designed to be used on a longitudinal basis

26 Actual figure is 65.3 per cent, all employees' total earnings, i.e. full and part time work, which is slight increase in the gap from the last quarter

27 From a 15 per cent gap in February 2005 to 16.7 per cent in August 2008 (full time adult ordinary time earnings). The gap between overall part and full time earnings has remained steadier.

28 ABS, *How Australians Use Their Time, 2006* (cat. no. 4153.0)

29 ABS, *How Australians Use Their Time, 2006* (cat. no. 4153.0)

30 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, Australia, April to July 2007*, Catalogue No. 6361.0, ABS, Canberra, 2008, Table 19

31 Simon Kelly, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling – NATSEM, 2006)

32 Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia – ASFA – 2007