

Face the facts:

GENDER EQUALITY • 2014



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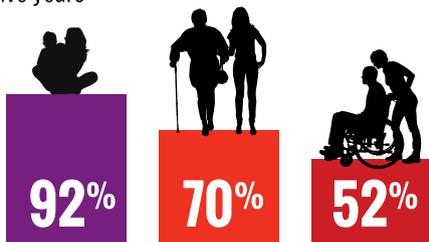
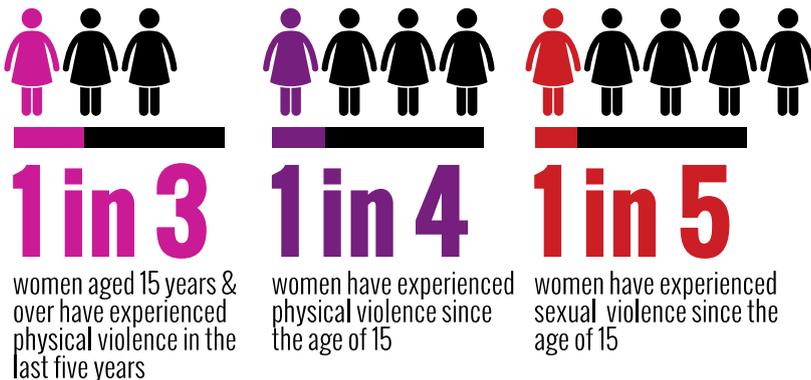
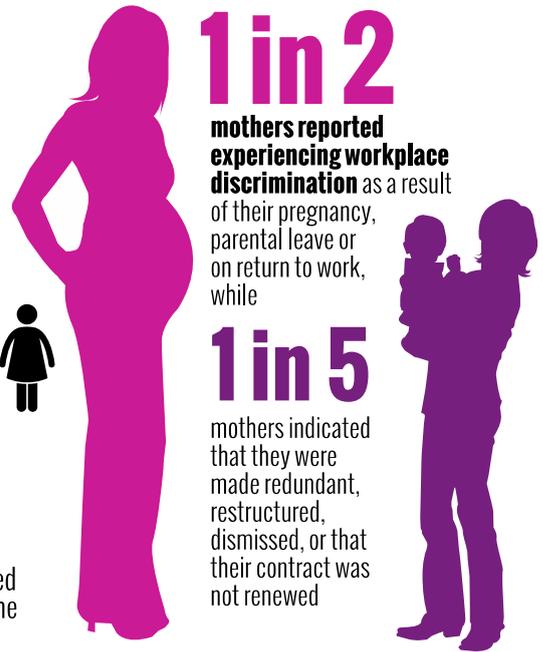
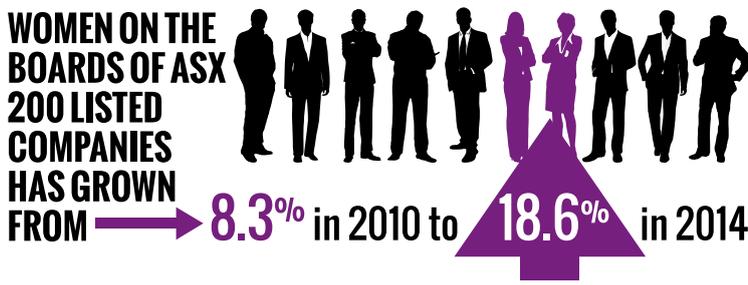
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Gender Equality



In 2009-2010, average superannuation payouts for women were **just over half (57%)** those of men.



Gender equality

In recent decades, women in Australia have made significant strides towards equality with men. At universities, in workplaces, in boardrooms and in government, a growing number of women have taken on leadership roles, forging pathways for other women and girls to follow.

In 1984, the [Sex Discrimination Act](#) came into force, making discrimination in different parts of public life against the law.

The Act, which gives effect to Australia's [international human rights obligations](#), has played an important role in changing community attitudes and helping advance gender equality in this country.

Despite this progress, women and girls continue to experience inequality and discrimination in many important parts of their lives, which can limit the choices and opportunities available to them.

About

- Women and girls make up just over half (50.2 per cent) of the Australian population.¹
- While women comprise roughly 46 per cent of all employees in Australia,² they take home \$262.50 less than men each week (full-time adult ordinary time earnings).³ The national gender “pay gap” is 17.1 per cent and it has remained stuck between 15 per cent and 18 per cent for the past two decades.⁴
- Australian women account for 92 per cent of primary carers for children with disabilities, 70 per cent of primary carers for parents and 52 per cent of primary carers for partners.⁵
- In 2013, Australia was ranked 24th on a global index measuring gender equality, slipping from a high point of 15th in 2006.⁶

Barriers to gender equality

- The Australian workforce is highly segregated by gender and female-dominated industries – such as aged care, child care and health and community services – have been historically undervalued.⁷ Australian women are over-represented as part-time workers in low-paid industries⁸ and in insecure work and continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles in the private and public sectors.⁹
- A quarter of women were sexually harassed in the workplace over the past five years.¹⁰ The harasser was most likely to be a co-worker (52 per cent) and the most common forms of sexual harassment included sexually suggestive comments/jokes (55 per cent), intrusive questions about private life or appearance (50 per cent) and inappropriate staring or leering (31 per cent).¹¹
- Women do two-thirds of the unpaid caring and domestic work in Australian households.¹² They spend almost three times as many hours each week looking after children compared to men.¹³
- In 2009-2010, Australian women reached retirement age with an average of 36 per cent – or \$87,532 – less superannuation than men.¹⁴ As a result, women are more likely to experience poverty in their retirement years and be far more reliant on the Age Pension.¹⁵
- One in three Australian women experiences physical violence in her lifetime¹⁶ and nearly one in five experiences sexual assault.¹⁷ It is estimated that violence against women and children will cost the Australian economy \$15.6 billion per year by 2021-2022 unless decisive action is taken to prevent it.¹⁸
- More than smoking or obesity, domestic and family violence is the leading preventable cause of death, disability and illness in women aged 15 to 44 years.¹⁹

Positive developments

- The number of women on the Boards of ASX-listed companies has grown from 8.3 per cent in 2010 to 15.4 per cent in 2013,²⁰ due in part to a diversity policy implemented by the ASX Corporate Governance Council in 2010. Increasing the number of women in corporate leadership positions has the potential to boost the level of economic activity in Australia by up to 20 per cent.²¹
- Australian men and women overwhelmingly believe (90 per cent) that men should be as involved in parenting as women.²² Men are also more likely than women to want greater employment flexibility to care for their children (46 per cent compared with 40 per cent).²³
- From 2013, over one million Australian workers are able to take leave and enjoy other protections because of domestic violence clauses in their workplace agreement or award conditions.²⁴

Did you know?

- The average Australian woman has to work an extra 66 days a year to earn the same pay as the average man.²⁵

Find out more

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Caring in the Community, 2009* (updated October 2011)
- Australian Human Rights Commission, *Working without fear: Results of the Sexual Harassment National Telephone Survey* (2012)
- Australian Human Rights Commission, *Gender Equality Blueprint 2010* (2010)
- Australian Human Rights Commission, *Australian study tour report: Visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women* (2012)
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Gender pay gap statistics* (March 2014)
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Gender workplace statistics at a glance* (October 2013)
- World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2013* (2013)

Our role

The Commission helps people resolve complaints of unfair treatment under the [Sex Discrimination Act](#), including discrimination on the basis of sex, marital (or relationship) status and pregnancy. The Act also protects workers with family responsibilities and makes sexual harassment against the law.

The [Sex Discrimination Commissioner](#) works in partnership with a broad range of groups to promote gender equality and counter discrimination, sexual harassment, violence against women and other barriers to equality. She also undertakes major research projects and provides policy advice to government and others to bring about positive change.

Find out more about [our work](#) in this area.

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics, [3201.0-Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories, June 2009](#), (December 2009).
- 2 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender workplace statistics at a glance](#) (April 2013).
- 3 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender pay gap statistics](#) (March 2014) p 2.
- 4 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, above.
- 5 Australian Bureau of Statistics, [4153.0-How Australians Use Their Time, 2006](#) (February 2008).
- 6 World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2013](#) (2013).
- 7 Australian Human Rights Commission, [Women in male-dominated industries: A toolkit of strategies](#) (2013), p 3.
- 8 For example approximately 45 per cent of women in the workforce are employed part-time compared with around 16 per cent of men. See: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [6202.0-Labour Force, Australia, Table 03: Labour force status by sex](#) (September 2009).
- 9 For example, women hold only four CEO positions and make up only 10.7 per cent of executive management positions in ASX 200 companies (see: www.eowa.gov.au/Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census.asp) and, despite making up more than half of all Commonwealth public servants, they comprise only 37% of the Senior Executive Service (see: www.apsc.gov.au/stateoftheservice/index.html).
- 10 Australian Human Rights Commission, [Working without fear: Results of the Sexual Harassment National Telephone Survey](#) (2012).
- 11 Australian Human Rights Commission, above.
- 12 Australian Bureau of Statistics, note 5.
- 13 Australian Bureau of Statistics, note 5.
- 14 Council of Australia Governments (COAG) Reform Council, [Tracking equity: Comparing outcomes from women and girls across Australia](#) (2012).
- 15 R Tanton, Y Vidyattama, J McNamara, Q Ngu Vu & A Harding, [Old Single and Poor: Using Microsimulation and Microdata to Analyse Poverty and the Impact of Policy Change Among Older Australians](#) (2008) p 15.
- 16 Australian Bureau of Statistics, [4906.0 – Personal Safety, Australia, 2005 \(Reissue\)](#) (August 2006).
- 17 Australian Bureau of Statistics, above.
- 18 The National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, [The cost of violence against women and their children](#) (March 2009), p 4.
- 19 Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), [The health costs of violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence](#) (2004), p 8.
- 20 Australian Institute of Company Directors, [Appointments to ASX200 Boards](#) (updated online resource).
- 21 Goldman Sachs JB Were Investment Research, [Australia's Hidden Resource: The Economic Case for Increasing Female Participation](#) (2009).
- 22 A Evans and E Gray, 'What makes an Australian family?' in SWilson, G Meagher, R Gibson, D Denemark & M Western (eds), [Australian Social Attitudes: The first report](#) (2005), pp 12–29, p 27.
- 23 Newspoll Market Research, [Out of School Hours Care Study](#) (2008).
- 24 L McFerran, Safe at Home, Safe At Work Project, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House, UNSW, 'When domestic violence becomes a workplace problem', ABC The Drum Opinion 13 February 2013.
- 25 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender Pay Gap Statistics 2014](#) note 3, p 4.