

10. GENDER EQUALITY BUDGET STATEMENT

NSW data snapshot

Population
as at September 2024¹



50.3%

female

49.7%

male

Gender pay gap



11.5%

Full-time average ordinary time earnings
(November 2024)³

Proportion of people with disability
as at 2021²



6.1%

female



5.4%

male

Public sector gender pay gap

8.0% (average)

\$9,059 in 2024
-1.3pp vs 2023⁴

7.2% (median)

\$7,674 in 2024
+1.0pp vs 2023⁵

Industry gender segregation (February 2025)⁶

Most female dominated industries



76.1%

females in Health
Care and Social
Assistance



69.4%

females in
Education
and Training

Most male dominated industries



87.2%

males in
Construction

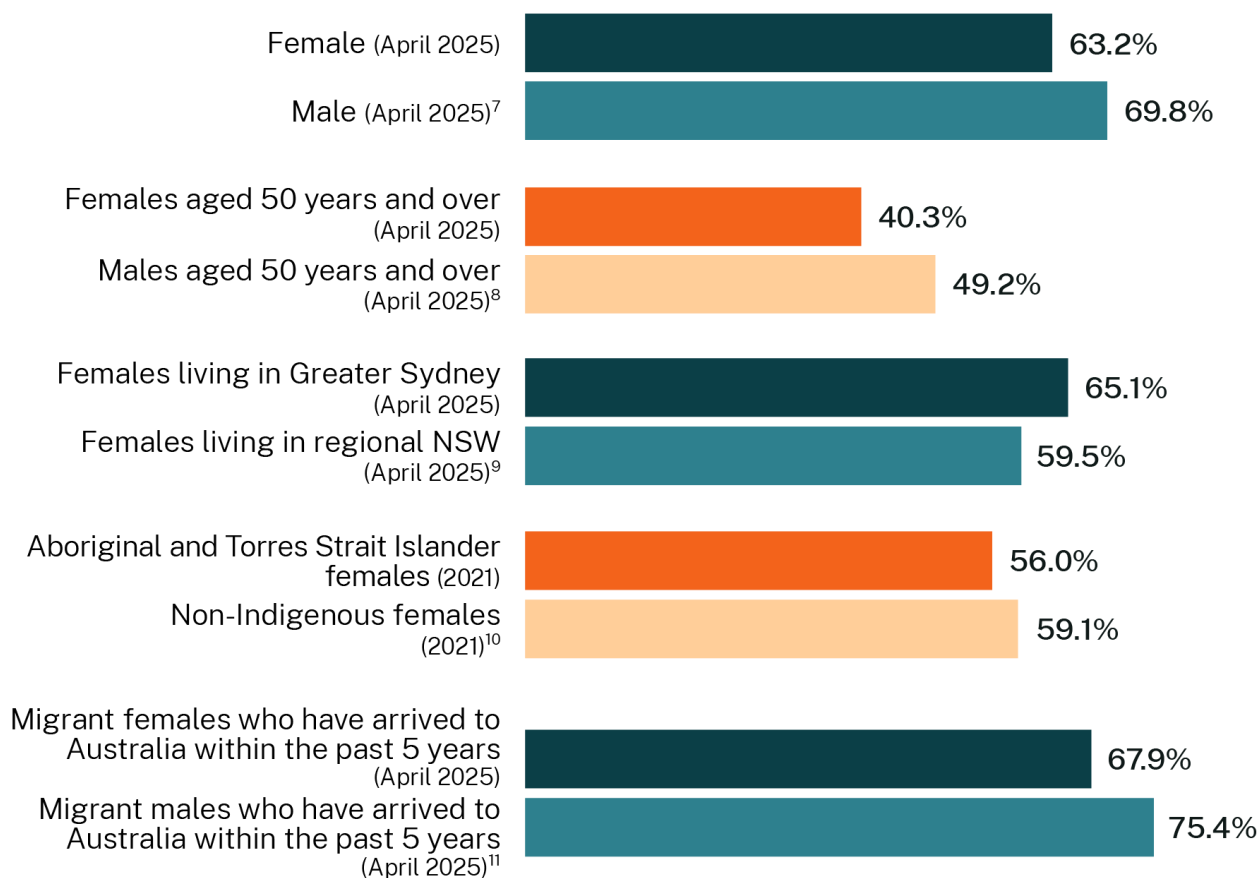


81.0%

males in Mining

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [National, state and territory population](#), Population – states and territories
² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, [TableBuilder: 2021 Census, Counting persons, place of usual residence](#)
³ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 2024](#)
⁴ NSW Premier's Department 2024, [NSW Public Sector Report 2024](#)
⁵ NSW Premier's Department 2024, [NSW Public Sector Report 2024](#)
⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

Workforce participation rate



Gender balance in Parliament and Cabinet (as at May 2025)

20

Female members in the Legislative Council (of 42 members)¹²

39

Female members in the Legislative Assembly (of 93 members)¹³

50.0%

Female ministers in NSW Cabinet (excluding the Premier)¹⁴

Gender balance on government boards (as at June 2025)¹⁵



45.5%

Women hold 45.5% of board positions in state-owned corporations and public financial corporations

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, [Census of Population and Housing TableBuilder: STATE \(UR\) and SEX](#)

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

¹² Parliament of New South Wales 2025, [All Members](#)

¹³ Parliament of New South Wales 2025, [All Members](#)

¹⁴ NSW Government 2023, [Increasing women in leadership roles](#)

¹⁵ NSW Treasury 2025, [Commercial Assets Boards Dashboard](#)

10.1 Gender equality in New South Wales

The NSW Government continues to invest in making New South Wales fairer and more inclusive, ensuring everyone can fulfill their potential – regardless of gender or background.

We are making progress on narrowing the gap between economic outcomes for women and men. Female labour force participation continues to rise, and the NSW gender pay gap has improved from 14.1 per cent in November 2019, decreasing 2.6 percentage points to 11.5 per cent in November 2024.¹⁶ In 2024, the NSW public sector gender pay gap (based on average remuneration) narrowed by 1.3 percentage points from 2023 to 8 per cent or \$9,059.¹⁷

However, there remain disparities between women and men across many economic outcomes, as well as across specific industries, occupations and positions of leadership in the NSW labour market. These disparities are reflected across Australia with gender segregation evident in many industries and occupations, influenced by embedded societal stereotypes and norms. This inhibits choice for individuals, results in gender gaps in earnings, reduces economic security for women and may result in a misalignment of skills and talents, all of which impede productivity and economic growth.¹⁸

This chapter showcases the NSW Government's continued commitment to progressing gender equality. This commitment ensures New South Wales is a place where all people are healthy, skilled, prosperous, secure, connected, housed and live in a connected and community-oriented society.

Aligning gender equality reporting with the Performance and Wellbeing Framework

In this Budget, the Gender Equality Budget Statement has been aligned with the Performance and Wellbeing Framework to enable a gender lens to be applied to the wellbeing framing of the budget.

Gender responsive budgeting

Gender budgeting is used by 61 per cent of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries as of 2022.¹⁹ In New South Wales, gender responsive budgeting ensures gender equality considerations are embedded into policy design and government decision-making.

The first Budget to implement gender impact assessments

The NSW Government is advancing gender responsive budgeting through the introduction of the Gender Impact Assessment Policy.²⁰ In this Budget, all new eligible policy proposals over \$10 million were required to have a gender impact assessment.

Gender impact assessments support the NSW Government to make informed decisions when designing policies and allocating resources to meet the needs of the people it serves. Gender impact assessments can also improve the design of new policies to ensure the needs of different cohorts are not inadvertently overlooked.

¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 2024](#)

¹⁷ NSW Premier's Department 2024, [NSW Public Sector Report 2024](#)

¹⁸ Women's Economic Outcomes Senior Officials Working Group 2024, [Workforce Gender Segregation in Australia](#)

¹⁹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2023, [Gender Budgeting in OECD Countries 2023](#)

²⁰ NSW Treasury 2024, [TPG23-27 Gender Impact Assessment Policy](#)

10.2 Healthy

Gender has an impact on people's experience of and access to health care. The way health care services, including mental health services, are designed can impact people's ability to access information, support and care. Over 70 per cent of women experience gender bias or discrimination when seeking health care, including for sexual and reproductive health.²¹

This Budget invests in a range of measures that support a healthier New South Wales including expanding maternity services, boosting mental health support and delivering modern health infrastructure.

Key new budget measures

- \$83.8 million for a Maternity Care and First 2,000 Days package to grow and upskill the maternity workforce and increase midwifery continuity of care and parenting support in regional areas.
- \$90.0 million in additional state funding to provide a full range of maternity and birthing services as part of the new Rouse Hill Hospital, with a further \$120.0 million announced by the Australian Government.
- \$21.9 million over three years for the Aboriginal Families First 2,000 Days measure to provide culturally responsive care during pregnancy and the first five years of life.
- \$15.4 million in 2025-26 to boost the community mental health workforce and enhance mental health support for young people and regional communities.
- \$11.3 million for planning and interim works required at the Royal Hospital for Women Randwick precinct.
- \$4.7 million to support the expansion of the existing Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service by funding medication, clinical and quality safety enhancements and clinical leadership.
- \$2.4 million to maintain the digital tool (Pave) to support young people to quit vaping, track their progress and access a range of supports and information. This will particularly support males who have higher vaping rates than females.²²

The first 2,000 days of life are a critical time for physical, cognitive, social and emotional health and development and can have a lifelong impact on a child's wellbeing and quality of life. Early engagement by families with health care services in the first 2,000 days of life supports children to have the best possible start in life.²³

Box 10.1: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Maternity Care and First 2,000 Days

This Budget invests \$83.8 million to improve maternal and child outcomes during the first 2,000 days of life, a critical period for child development and wellbeing. This program will boost access to reproductive care, maternal immunisation, maternity care during pregnancy and regional parenting support.

The gender impact analysis highlights the need to empower women in reproductive decisions and expand access to midwifery care, abortion services, vaccines for pregnant women and family health and parenting support services in regional New South Wales. In a recent Australian study, 28 per cent of women in New South Wales reported experiencing trauma during their most recent birth.²⁴

These improvements aim to enhance women's health, wellbeing and economic opportunities, benefiting families and society more broadly.

²¹ Department of Health and Aged Care 2024, [#EndGenderBias Survey Summary Report](#), Australian Government

²² HealthStats NSW 2025, [Vaping rates \(daily or occasional\) by Sex](#)

²³ NSW Health 2019, [The First 2,000 Days Framework](#), NSW Government

²⁴ Western Sydney University 2023, [Submission into the NSW Inquiry into Birth Trauma](#)

The 2024-25 Budget invested \$130.9 million into the Family Start Package to continue the delivery of early intervention programs to boost lifelong maternal and child health. This investment was targeted towards vulnerable children, First Nations women and families, families living in rural and remote communities and those from lower socio-economic areas.

Box 10.2: PROGRESS UPDATE: Family Start Package

The Family Start Package has enhanced public paediatric health services, with an additional 18 paediatric allied health staff employed across New South Wales. Recruitment is in progress for an additional 14 roles, including dietitians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers and speech pathologists. This is reducing waitlists for paediatric allied health and improving access to services for children with developmental vulnerabilities.

The Package has supported a key partnership with Royal Far West to provide health services for children with developmental concerns who live outside the greater metropolitan areas of New South Wales. Royal Far West is working with Western NSW Local Health District to ensure that children continue to receive care locally and has provided the first in-community clinic in Dubbo. Already, eight children have received this service. Royal Far West is also providing supervision and support for new trainees and paediatricians in Dubbo.

The Package also included \$6.9 million to boost statewide paediatric rheumatology services, the largest investment in NSW history. Additional rheumatologists have been employed and current clinicians can now work additional hours. Recruitment is in progress for additional roles including nurse practitioner, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, psychologist and administration. The expansion of the multidisciplinary paediatric rheumatology team will provide faster access to highly specialised and comprehensive care for children with juvenile arthritis to treat acute episodes of the disease.

10.3 Skilled

The NSW Government is continuing to drive change and tackle gender inequality in workforce participation, education and training.

This Budget builds a skilled New South Wales through a range of measures that expand access to quality early learning and strengthen pathways into training and employment, including support for apprenticeships and traineeships in priority areas.

Key new budget measures

- \$194.0 million for the First Steps Strategy aimed at improving First Nations access to culturally safe, high-quality early childhood education and care to support long-term health, education and employment outcomes.
- \$40.2 million to continue the delivery of Fee Free Apprenticeships and Traineeships for priority qualifications. This alleviates the financial barriers associated with training opportunities particularly for young people and women facing economic insecurity. It also encourages women into qualifications traditionally taken up by men and men into qualifications traditionally taken up by women.

As at June 2024, 66.6 per cent of the 466,689 public sector employees were female, compared to 47.8 per cent of the broader NSW workforce. The proportion of females in the NSW public sector has been trending upwards for more than a decade.²⁵

²⁵ NSW Premier's Department 2024, [NSW Public Sector Report 2024](#)

The NSW public sector gender pay gap, based on the average remuneration of non-casual employees, was 8.0 per cent in 2024, narrowing 1.3 percentage points since 2023. Average female remuneration increased by 5.4 per cent in 2024, reflecting the pay increases for female dominated workforces.²⁶

The NSW Government has made great strides in improving workplaces for female employees by paying female dominated workforces in the public sector fairly and providing economic security, including:

- abolishing the public sector wages cap, and providing the highest pay increase in more than a decade in 2023-24
- delivering record pay increase for teachers, school psychologists and counsellors as the first step to supporting higher wages and rebuilding essential services
- converting over 16,000 teaching and school administrative roles from temporary to permanent positions, with the goal of improving educational outcomes for students in the State's public schools, majority of whom are women
- reducing teacher vacancies in New South Wales by 40 per cent since 2023
- increasing female senior executive representation in the government sector to 49 per cent as at June 2024, a 0.7 percentage point increase since 2023.

The most recent teaching award agreement also prioritises job-share arrangements, particularly important for the predominantly female teaching workforce. This is starting to have an impact particularly for promotions and career progression through the workforce. These changes have improved job stability and economic security for female dominated workforces across the NSW public sector.

In Australia, a major impediment for women not being able to work or take on more hours is that they are caring for children. Subsidised childcare plays a significant role in supporting parents to return to work after having children.²⁷ Over the past 50 years, the Australian Government's childcare subsidy has steadily increased, contributing to increased female workforce participation. Despite the current subsidy levels, some women face very difficult decisions regarding whether to return to work or to continue to care for their children at home.

Investing in the early childhood education and care sector gives children the best educational start to life but it can also increase female workforce participation and economic security. These are key drivers of economic growth and are essential to supporting the long-term prosperity of New South Wales.²⁸ Removing barriers that prevent women from participating equally in work will improve gender equality and benefit our economy.

To support families with the cost of living, the NSW Government is continuing to provide support for parents and carers of three-to-five-year-olds in community and mobile preschools and those attending eligible preschool programs in long day care centres in 2025. It is estimated that over 200,000 enrolments will be eligible for NSW Government fee relief in 2025. This Budget also invests \$6.9 million in 2025-26 in cultural responsiveness programs to address barriers to access, enrolment and attendance of First Nations children in public preschools.

²⁶ NSW Premier's Department 2024, [NSW Public Sector Report 2024](#)

²⁷ Tan, A, Brown, E-L, Wood, N, and Sathanapally, A, 2022, [Women's economic opportunities in the NSW labour market and the impact of early childhood education and care](#), NSW Treasury

²⁸ NSW Treasury 2022, [2021-22 NSW Intergenerational Report](#), NSW Government

Box 10.3: PROGRESS UPDATE: 100 Public Preschools program

The 2023-24 Budget took the first steps towards universal preschool across New South Wales by committing to build 100 new public preschools on public school sites by 2027.

School sites have been selected based on child development and socio-economic data, projected demand for preschool, an infrastructure analysis and valuable insights gained through local feedback during the decision-making process.

As part of the biggest expansion of public preschools in NSW history, the first new public preschool opened at Gulyangarri Public Preschool in Liverpool in October 2024, accommodating up to 80 preschoolers each week. The preschool addresses the needs of the local community in Liverpool, providing affordable early learning for vulnerable children in an area where there is a high demand for early childhood education and care services.

The preschool is co-located with Gulyangarri Public School, enabling students to transition into kindergarten and full-time schooling with ease, while assisting pick up and drop off for parents with older students at the same school.

A further four preschools are expected to open in 2025-26. Infrastructure works will also begin across a further 92 schools, with most sites located in Western Sydney and regional New South Wales.

In the Performance and Wellbeing Framework, the NSW Outcome that supports the development of a skilled community is ensuring that all children benefit from quality early childhood education and care. One of the outcome indicators is the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in preschool. This aligns to the Closing the Gap measure, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thriving in their early years.

Box 10.4: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT: First Steps Strategy refresh

Caring responsibilities continue to disproportionately affect female workforce participation. In New South Wales, 23.7 per cent of females who were not actively looking for work — but were available to start within four weeks — cited caring for children as the main reason, compared to just 3.5 per cent of males.²⁹

The NSW Government is committed to delivering equitable access to high-quality and culturally-safe early childhood education and care for Aboriginal children and families by investing \$194.0 million in a refreshed First Steps Strategy. The Strategy refresh was co-designed with Aboriginal community members and representatives from Aboriginal early childhood education organisations. It provides culturally responsive services, Aboriginal language programs, increases in the number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO)-led early childhood education and care services, an Aboriginal workforce pipeline and wrap around initiatives.

The gender impact assessment highlighted that First Nations women are likely to benefit more from greater access to early childhood education and care due to their caring responsibilities which are more likely to extend beyond their own children to other family or community members.

The gender impact assessment found that the refreshed First Steps Strategy will promote access to culturally safe early childhood education and care, increasing attendance and participation among Aboriginal children. It will help reduce barriers to employment, particularly for women, and enable women's workforce participation thereby improving socio-economic outcomes for families.

²⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Potential workers, February 2024](#)

Jobs of the future will require a highly skilled workforce as the skills mix shifts away from more manual and routine tasks towards non-routine and analytical activities.³⁰ Addressing gender inequality in segregated sectors begins in education and training. This involves encouraging women to participate in male dominated industries and men to participate in traditionally female dominated sectors, beginning with their educational choices.³¹

Apprenticeships and traineeships are proven pathways to well-paid jobs in a diverse range of careers. Ensuring that vocational education delivers the skills that people and businesses need is a NSW Outcome in the Performance and Wellbeing Framework.

The 2024-25 Budget invested an additional \$8.9 million in the Fee Free Apprenticeships and Traineeships program, which supports uptake by removing student fees (\$2,000 for apprentices and \$1,000 for trainees) that may deter participation in training opportunities and impact employment and skills shortages.

Box 10.5: PROGRESS UPDATE: Fee Free Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Since July 2024, this program has supported over 7,086 women and 12,213 men to complete a fee free apprenticeship or traineeship, with a further 9,147 women and 18,040 men currently completing training. The program has saved 10,772 women a total of \$12.7 million and 18,429 men up to \$32.9 million in apprenticeship and traineeship fees. The median uplift in employee annual income for all people who completed an apprenticeship or traineeship was \$25,800.

Since July 2024, 1,109 men have commenced apprenticeships and traineeships in qualifications and occupations that are predominately taken up by women, including in the care and community services sector, hairdressing and business administration.

Since July 2024, 2,162 women have commenced apprenticeships and traineeships in qualifications and occupations predominantly taken up by men, including construction, automotive repair, mining, agriculture, engineering and information technology.

The 2025-26 Budget invests a further \$40.2 million, dedicated to continuing the delivery of Fee Free Apprenticeships and Traineeships for priority qualifications. This ensures that vocational education delivers the skills that people and businesses need.

Females represent 12.8 per cent of the construction workforce in New South Wales.³² The NSW Women in Construction Program aims to attract and retain more women into the male dominated construction industry, with a focus on increasing the number of women in trade and non-traditional roles.

³⁰ NSW Treasury 2022, [2021-22 NSW Intergenerational Report](#), NSW Government

³¹ Women's Economic Outcomes Senior Officials Working Group 2024, [Workforce Gender Segregation in Australia](#)

³² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, March 2025](#)

Box 10.6: PROGRESS UPDATE: Women in Construction

Led by Infrastructure NSW, in partnership with the NSW Department of Education, the Women in Construction program aims to:

- increase the number of women working in the construction sector, ideally in trade and non-traditional roles
- create a pipeline of women educating/training to meet demand
- increase workplace flexibility in the construction sector
- improve culture on construction sites
- partner with industry to achieve this goal.

As part of the Women in Construction Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program, the NSW Government has embedded 19 project officers across 23 infrastructure project sites. The project officers work with industry to achieve increased targets for women in trade (4 per cent) and women in non-traditional roles (7 per cent). As of December 2024, the pilot projects are tracking at 4 per cent for women in trade and 5.7 per cent for women in non-traditional roles.

The Industry Innovation Program has awarded \$5.9 million in grants across 34 industry initiatives that support and encourage the participation and retention of women in the construction industry.

The Hard Work Knows No Gender campaign³³ is featured on construction sites across New South Wales. The campaign promotes awareness and highlights the importance of gender diversity and inclusivity in construction.

The NSW Government is committed to fostering a construction industry that is sustainable, resilient and diverse and will continue to partner with industry participants to improve the culture and wellbeing of the workforce.

10.4 Prosperous

This Budget lays the foundation for a more prosperous New South Wales by strengthening building and workplace safety, supporting emergency services and improving return-to-work outcomes.

Key new budget measures

- \$262.0 million as part of a \$344.0 million overall package to better support injured workers, including to restore the independence of SafeWork NSW, ensuring it is resourced to protect workers from harm, including psychosocial hazards.

This is the largest investment in workplace safety in decades. SafeWork is the first Australian work health and safety regulator to establish a dedicated team focused on addressing gender-based harmful workplace behaviour. The Respect at Work team leads the implementation of a four-year strategy to prevent harmful, gender-based behaviours across NSW workplaces, with an initial focus on sexual harassment.

- \$4.0 million to establish the Diversity Pre-accelerator Program to support founders from diverse backgrounds to develop their business models and secure seed investment, as part of the Government's Innovation Blueprint package. This will support underrepresented groups in the innovation ecosystem, including women and First Nations founders.

³³ NSW Government 2025, [Hard Work Knows No Gender](#)

There are 870,000 small businesses in New South Wales, comprising 97 per cent of all NSW businesses.³⁴ Approximately 34 per cent of NSW small businesses are female-owned or run.³⁵

The Supporting Women in Business Grants continue to address barriers and support women to start or grow a micro or small business. In 2025-26, the grants will fund projects which increase women's skills and confidence and support them to achieve their business goals.

The Office of Social Impact Investment has commissioned two social impact intermediaries – Social Enterprise Finance Australia (Sefa) and Social Impact Hub – to provide tailored capability building support to help women-focused social enterprises develop, grow and maximise their social impact for women facing disadvantage in New South Wales.

Box 10.7: PROGRESS UPDATE: Social Enterprise Capability Building Program

Over the past two years, 15 early-stage and 24 established women-focused social enterprises have been directly supported through the \$1.3 million Capability Building Program. The 39 enterprises are located across the State with support focused on achieving improved outcomes for women in a diversity of areas, including supporting women facing domestic and family violence, women who are in male dominated industries and women who are migrants and refugees.

The support provided by the Capability Building Program was tailored to each enterprise's needs, with many reporting they left the program with the tools, confidence and connections required to enable their growth and future sustainability. To date, supported enterprises have secured \$230,000 through White Box's Social Enterprise Loan Fund, the AMP Foundation's Tomorrow Makers Spark Program and the Australian Government's Local Jobs Program.

NSW Procurement recognises 'verified gender-equitable enterprises' on buy NSW. These are suppliers awarded the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation from the Australian Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency. To gain the citation, employers with 100 or more employees must demonstrate an active commitment to workplace gender equality. Suppliers with the citation are automatically tagged on the buy NSW Supplier Hub.

The NSW Government's 'If not, why not' direction came into effect on 1 January 2025. This mandates that agencies must identify capable NSW-based suppliers before going to market for government contracts worth \$7.5 million or more and provide local suppliers a full and fair opportunity to compete for contracts. Agencies must explain, on an 'if not, why not' basis, why the contract is awarded to a non-NSW supplier if one is available. These changes increase agency engagement with NSW-based suppliers from the procurement planning stage onwards and provide valuable insights to the Government on the capabilities and availability of local suppliers in the market. This can help support small and medium enterprises, First Nations businesses, social enterprises and verified gender-equitable suppliers.

Supporting a prosperous society also includes ensuring that workplaces are safe and respectful. Recruitment, retention and staff morale are enhanced when workers feel secure and valued. Workplaces play a critical role in preventing sexual harassment by shaping culture, practices and expectations. The economic cost of workplace sexual harassment in Australia is estimated at \$3.5 billion annually.³⁶

³⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits](#); Small Business Commissioner 2023, [Small Business Landscape](#)

³⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *Census 2021*; Small Business Commissioner 2023, [Small Business Landscape](#)

³⁶ Deloitte Access Economics 2020, [The economic costs of sexual harassment in the workplace](#)

Workplace sexual harassment occurs in all industries and at all levels. In the last five years to 2022, one in three Australians experienced workplace sexual harassment with women facing higher rates of sexual harassment (41 per cent) than men (26 per cent), often negatively impacting their health and workplace participation.³⁷

Box 10.8: PROGRESS UPDATE: Respect at Work Taskforce

The inaugural SafeWork NSW Respect at Work Strategy 2023-27 calls on employers to end sexual harassment in their workplaces. The four-year Strategy identifies three focus industries – health care, hospitality and retail.

In 2024-25, the hospitality industry was part of the first statewide inspection program led by the SafeWork NSW Respect at Work Taskforce. From December 2024 to February 2025, 38 metropolitan and regional hospitality venues including bars, pubs and clubs were visited. SafeWork NSW inspectors assessed whether employers were proactively managing work health and safety (WHS) risks to prevent sexual harassment. As part of these compliance activities, SafeWork NSW inspectors issued over 15 improvement notices to non-compliant businesses and provided practical guidance to employers on taking preventative approaches to managing sexual harassment WHS risks.

While sexual harassment can occur in any industry, the hospitality industry can pose a significant risk with known risk factors including close interaction with customers, high rates of alcohol consumption, late-night shift work and busy and confined workspaces. The sector is also typically made up of workers who may face a higher risk of sexual harassment, including workers who are women, young, casually employed and culturally and linguistically diverse. In February 2025, SafeWork NSW launched tailored guidance for the hospitality industry to meet their WHS obligations, developed in consultation with workers representatives, WHS experts and industry.³⁸

10.5 Secure

This Budget builds a more secure New South Wales by investing in safer communities and better outcomes for children, young people and families, supporting victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, improving care for those in out-of-home care, expanding youth justice and diversion programs and providing safe, appropriate housing.

Key new budget measures

- \$272.7 million for domestic, family and sexual violence services to continue work on reducing violence against women and children and supporting victim-survivors.
- \$226.8 million for the Victims Support Scheme to ensure continued access to counselling and financial support for victims of violent crime and modern slavery.
- \$20.0 million for the Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Implementation to increase the availability of culturally appropriate support for First Nations children and adults experiencing incarceration. This will seek to support improved outcomes and reduce future contact with the criminal justice system.
- \$12.8 million for the Child Sexual Offence Evidence Program, to employ child-friendly practices and avoid delays to give evidence, that aim to reduce the stress, distress and trauma of child sexual offence complainants and child witnesses who go through the criminal justice system.

³⁷ Australian Human Rights Commission 2022, [Time for respect: Fifth national workplace sexual harassment survey](#)

³⁸ NSW Government 2025, [Respect at work resource library](#)

Domestic and family violence affects everyone, resulting in significant economic, social and health costs for victim-survivors as well as the community more broadly. One in four women over the age of 15 in New South Wales experience violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by a cohabiting partner.³⁹ The escalation in domestic and family violence during the pandemic is estimated to have a direct cost of \$3.3 billion to the NSW economy and total economic costs of \$24.6 billion over the period 2020 to 2025.⁴⁰

The NSW Government is committed to creating a safer New South Wales for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

As of June 2024, there were 15,152 applicant households in urgent need on the NSW Housing Register. Of these applicant households, 61.2 per cent had a female main applicant. In the 2024-25 Budget, the NSW Government announced a multibillion dollar package to develop new and replacement social housing stock. At least half of the new homes built will be prioritised for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

The Performance and Wellbeing Framework measures the number of households in urgent need on the NSW Housing Register and their average wait time. The average wait time where the head of the household was female was 29.9 months in 2023-24, compared to 26.3 months where the head of the household was male. The multibillion dollar investment is a major step to help those suffering from domestic and family violence and is expected to increase the supply of social housing, reduce wait times and re-build the social housing system.

New South Wales' first dedicated Primary Prevention Strategy *Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028* was launched in September 2024. The Strategy was developed in consultation with over 200 individuals and organisations and is aimed at addressing the root causes of violence against women and children through community-based initiatives, First Nations-led prevention (where relevant) and centralised support.

Primary prevention is about stopping violence before it starts. It focuses on programs which, over the long-term, help shift the dial on community attitudes and behaviours underlying these types of violence. The 2024-25 Budget committed \$38.3 million to implement the Strategy. The Strategy sits alongside other critical activity that spans early intervention, crisis responses, recovery and healing.

The NSW and Australian Governments are working together to continue delivering frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services in New South Wales. The 2025-26 Budget invests \$272.7 million for domestic, family and sexual violence services. This includes:

- \$9.3 million to implement Serious Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders. These orders mean high-risk domestic violence offenders will be subject to strict monitoring and supervision, with courts able to impose any condition it considers appropriate
- \$11.2 million to make sure we can intervene earlier and build a stronger workforce that can continue doing crucial work. This includes:
 - \$3.6 million for a new Common Approach to Risk Assessment and Safety to ensure victim-survivors are at the forefront of receiving a consistent and safe response to domestic and family violence, alongside earlier intervention to prevent violence from escalating
 - \$2.5 million to begin delivery of a Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Strategy to provide essential support and training to the domestic and family violence sector. The Workforce Strategy is a key commitment of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan

³⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, [Personal Safety, Australia](#), 2021-22 financial year

⁴⁰ Impact Economics and Policy 2022, [Aftershock: Addressing the Economic and Social Costs of the Pandemic and Natural Disasters - Report Two - Domestic and Family Violence](#)

- \$3.1 million to begin delivery of a Data Strategy to build the domestic, family and sexual violence evidence base to understand whether the system is effective in supporting the vision that all NSW communities are free from domestic, family and sexual violence
- \$2.0 million to start rolling out an Aboriginal Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence plan, a dedicated Plan to address violence against Aboriginal women and children, families and communities across the state. The plan will also support the Government's commitment to Closing the Gap, Target 13.

As part of the 2024-25 Budget, \$45.0 million was announced to improve bail laws and justice system responses to make it more difficult for serious domestic violence offenders to get bail. Following the criminalisation of coercive control in 2024, the NSW Government has recently passed new laws to better protect victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, including tougher penalties for breaching an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) in certain circumstances.

The stronger domestic violence bail laws have seen record numbers of alleged offenders held on remand. This Budget invests an additional \$100.5 million to address rising demand in the correctional system, driven by an increase in alleged offenders (predominantly for domestic violence offences) both in custody and in the community. This funding will also sustain Corrective Services NSW supervision and service delivery to support rehabilitation and community safety.

The investment also supports the implementation of recent reforms to the NSW Victims Registers with \$2.3 million in new funding. The Victims Registers Reform ensures victim-survivors of serious crimes receive a notification about their right to register to receive critical information about an offender. Those who choose to opt-in will receive timely, accurate and trauma-informed updates regarding the perpetrator's progress through the custodial system.

Addressing and ending domestic and family violence is not the work of a single budget. It requires a shared vision and collaborative effort across government, businesses and the broader community over the short, medium and long-term.

Box 10.9: PROGRESS UPDATE: Specialist Workers for Children and Young People

The Specialist Workers for Children and Young People program provides a path to recovery for children and young people from zero to 18 years of age, staying in refuges with their mothers after escaping domestic and family violence.

The 2024-25 Budget invested \$48.1 million to expand the program across more areas of the State. This enhancement meant children and young people accompanying their mothers in refuges across regional and metro New South Wales have access to support from more than 55 specialist workers, benefiting up to 1,800 children and young people each year.

The NSW Government is taking a whole-of-community approach to addressing domestic and family violence. The NSW Multicultural Centre for Women's and Family Safety supports victim-survivors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Box 10.10: PROGRESS UPDATE: NSW Multicultural Centre for Women's and Family Safety (Adira Centre)

Opening its doors in May 2024, the Adira Centre delivers a wide range of culturally responsive and in-language domestic and family violence services across primary prevention, early intervention, crisis support and recovery. In the first year of operation, the Adira Centre has:

- delivered more than 50 community information sessions in 15 different languages on healthy relationships and domestic and family violence attended by more than 1,000 people
- provided direct support in more than 20 languages to hundreds of women and children from multicultural backgrounds who are experiencing, or at risk of, domestic and family violence
- delivered 13 capacity-building workshops on understanding, identifying and responding to domestic and family violence in multicultural communities to organisations
- convened Learning Circles and delivered capacity building activities for women in migrant and refugee communities who are often the 'first responders' to domestic and family violence in their communities.

Box 10.11: PROGRESS UPDATE: Men's Behavioural Change Programs

The 2024-25 Budget included \$10.0 million to increase the availability of Men's Behaviour Change Programs across an additional seven locations.

Men's Behavioural Change Programs are evidence-based group programs and services that focus on working with perpetrators of domestic and family violence to reduce or prevent the recurrence of abusive behaviour by a perpetrator towards a partner or family member. Between 2022 and 2024, 1,800 men participated in Men's Behavioural Change Programs in New South Wales. Following this expansion, the programs will now be available across 35 locations through 17 providers.

Those fleeing domestic and family violence often face significant financial barriers. The Rentstart Bond Loan scheme which was expanded in October 2023 has enabled 247 victim-survivors of domestic and family violence to access loans covering up to 100 per cent of their rental bonds. This has helped victim-survivors secure safe accommodation.

Financial abuse is often an element of coercive control within intimate partner settings. It can involve restricting or blocking a person's access to money, manipulating their financial decisions or using their money without consent. Redfern Legal Centre's Financial Abuse Service was established in 2019 to provide free statewide, holistic, trauma-informed legal and non-legal assistance to victim-survivors of intimate partner financial abuse.

Box 10.12: PROGRESS UPDATE: Redfern Legal Centre's Financial Abuse Service

In 2023-24, the NSW Government committed \$8.1 million to expand Redfern Legal Centre's free service statewide. The Financial Abuse Service provides legal assistance, financial counselling and social work support to victim-survivors to assist them to address legal and financial issues caused by financial abuse.

Since January 2024, the program has assisted over 350 clients and provided more than 950 services.

In 2023-24, victim-survivors of financial abuse were supported by the Financial Abuse Service with:

- \$479,241 in debts waived
- \$9,951 in fines withdrawn or waived
- \$8,400 in compensation received
- \$687 in defaults removed from credit reports
- \$25,182 refunded to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

The Performance and Wellbeing Framework measures the number of children and young people in out-of-home care. Intensive Therapeutic Care is a type of residential care provided to children in out-of-home care and supports children who are recovering from the most severe forms of trauma, neglect, abuse or adversity. Intensive Therapeutic Care is for children over 12 years of age with complex needs who are either unable to be supported in foster care or require specialised and intensive supports to maintain stability in their care arrangements.

Box 10.13: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Investing in purpose-built housing to deliver Intensive Therapeutic Care

This Budget invests \$49.2 million in the construction of a number of fit-for-purpose Intensive Therapeutic Care homes for children and young people in out-of-home care and upgrading a number of homes for residential out-of-home care. These homes will enable children in out-of-home care who have experienced severe trauma, neglect or abuse to be safely cared for in a home that supports the delivery of therapeutic care and recovery from trauma.

A gender impact assessment of this program identified the distinct challenges faced by young people in Intensive Therapeutic Care based on gender. It also identified that the Intensive Therapeutic Care workforce is predominantly female and vulnerable to occupational violence, affecting their safety and wellbeing. The design of the homes will incorporate safety features which create a safer environment for children and young people as well as workers. Staff will also be provided training on gender sensitivity and trauma-informed care, ensuring that everyone regardless of gender receives appropriate and respectful support.

10.6 Housed

This Budget continues to respond to the housing crisis by accelerating supply, unlocking infrastructure investment and supporting innovation to improve access and affordability across the State.

This Budget continues to rollout the NSW Government's commitment made last year to expand social homes, investing \$4.0 billion over four years and building to \$10.0 billion over 10 years.

Homes NSW has also completed upgrades on 5,955 social homes and a further 2,325 homes managed by the Aboriginal Housing Office.

The 2025-26 Budget invests a further \$20.0 million on homelessness support services. It aims to give services additional capacity to support people in a time of need, while the longer-term Building Homes for NSW Program is delivered.

The NSW Government is committed to making renting fairer in New South Wales. Some renters such as single-parent families, people in lower socio-economic brackets, people with a disability and older people experience increased financial pressure and limited financial flexibility. Research shows women are over-represented in these categories.⁴¹ Delivering on a key election commitment to the State's 2.3 million renters, the NSW Government has:

- ended no-grounds evictions without a valid legal reason providing security and transparency for renters
- prohibited rental increases more than once in any 12-month period
- prohibited potential tenants from being charged for background checks
- required fee-free payment methods for rent, ensuring there are convenient methods available without extra cost
- provided a structured process for allowing pets in rentals.

The NSW Government continues to address the housing crisis to ensure additional accommodation is made available to people who need it, including key health workers.

The NSW Government is working to ensure more of our essential workers, some of whom work in highly feminised professions such as nursing, paramedicine, allied health care and teaching, have access to housing in areas close to their places of employment.

⁴¹ AHURi 2024, [What are the real costs of Australia's housing crisis for women?](#); Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2024, [People with disability in Australia](#); NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing 2024, [Homelessness and Housing Stress: A Position Paper](#); National Housing Supply and Affordability Council 2025, [State of the Housing System](#)

Box 10.14: PROGRESS UPDATE: Essential worker rental housing and key worker accommodation

Essential worker rental housing

The 2024-25 Budget invested \$450.0 million for an essential worker build-to-rent program delivered by Landcom across metropolitan areas of New South Wales. The first Essential Worker Build-to-Rent project site in Camperdown has been selected and will deliver approximately 500 new apartments, with at least 200 being build-to-rent units offered to essential workers. These will be available to rent at a discounted rate in areas closer to the city, essential worker jobs and services. Landcom is currently undertaking concept design and planning with construction expected to start in 2026 and the first essential workers expected to move in around late 2028. Landcom is investigating further sites for the delivery of approximately 200 additional essential worker build-to-rent homes.

Key health worker accommodation

As part of the NSW Government's commitment of an additional \$200.1 million for the Key Health Worker Accommodation Program, NSW Health has undertaken an assessment of key health worker housing priorities across regional New South Wales. Successful funding allocations have been announced for Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Bega, Broken Hill, Buronga, Coffs Harbour, Crookwell, Dareton, Deniliquin, Dubbo, Dungog, Eurobodalla, Grafton, Griffith, Kyogle, Lake Cargelligo, Lismore, Nowra, Orange, Tibooburra, Tweed, Wentworth and Wyong.

10.7 Community

This Budget invests in a range of measures that foster stronger, more vibrant communities, to support creative expression, sports participation, community harmony and cultural diversity.

Key new budget measures

- \$20.0 million for Sound NSW to implement the NSW Contemporary Music Strategy through grants programs, capacity-building initiatives and regulatory reform to strengthen the New South Wales music industry. This will promote a more inclusive and diverse music sector.
- \$14.5 million for Multicultural NSW to support community cohesion and the State's diverse multicultural communities.

The Rural Women's Network is a statewide government program of Women NSW which focuses on linking women in regional, rural and remote New South Wales to information and services and creates opportunities that build personal and business resilience. The Rural Women's Network aims to strengthen regional, rural and remote communities.

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that women and girls benefit from participating in community sporting life. Initiatives include funding for community programs that celebrate cultural diversity and support gender equality, ensuring everyone feels a sense of belonging.

The State's first standalone Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028 aims to address the drivers of domestic, family and sexual violence by working with communities, schools, workplaces and sporting clubs and local organisations.

The NSW Government is investing more than \$500,000 over the next three years and has joined forces with sporting organisations to announce the formation of a new whole-of-sport partnership that unites the sports community in the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence. This Multi-Sport Coalition brings together professional sports clubs, State Sporting Organisations, industry stakeholders and the NSW Government to address the drivers of domestic, family and sexual violence and progress gender equality through sport. This investment will support a suite of initiatives to be delivered by sports organisations to raise awareness and change community perceptions towards domestic, family and sexual violence.

The NSW Government is investing \$20.0 million to grow the NSW contemporary music sector. This investment follows from the NSW Government's election commitment that established Sound NSW, the development of a 10-year contemporary music strategy and the delivery of targeted initiatives to grow the sector. This further investment will support a range of programs to nurture creative careers and drive positive outcomes for artists, professionals, music businesses and audiences.

Box 10.15: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Sound NSW Contemporary Music Strategy implementation

Women face significant disadvantage in key creative and leadership roles in the music industry and more broadly across the arts.⁴² The gender impact assessment identified several barriers for women's career progression and representation in the music industry, with women holding fewer senior and strategic roles in key industry organisations. Women have reported challenges including having to work harder and longer to prove themselves and a legacy of outdated 'boys' club' workplace cultures.⁴³

The gender impact assessment identified that the Strategy will promote a more diverse and inclusive music sector. Sound NSW grant recipients will be required to outline how their work contributes to a diverse contemporary music sector in New South Wales. Recipients of awarded contracts will be required to provide information on their gender equality performance. A venue and audience safety toolkit will support better experiences for women and gender-diverse people.

The community services sector encompasses a range of roles including disability support, homelessness services, migrant and multicultural services, community housing, legal and financial counselling and youth support. This sector is critical to assisting some of the most vulnerable people in our community. The community sector is a major employer with a highly female dominated workforce.⁴⁴ Employing more than 240,000 workers in New South Wales, with 80 per cent women and a quarter over 55 years old. By 2030, the sector is estimated to grow by 60,000 jobs.⁴⁵

Since the 2024-25 Budget, the NSW Government has progressed with its plan to deliver secure jobs, long-term funding and portable long service leave for the State's community services sector. The Community Services Industry portable long service leave scheme will commence from 1 July 2025. Additionally, in April 2025, the NSW Government unveiled the Secure Jobs and Funding Certainty Roadmap.

⁴² Cooper, R, Coles, A, and Hanna-Osborne, S, 2017, [Skipping a Beat: Assessing the State of Gender Equality in the Australian Music Industry](#), University of Sydney

⁴³ MAPN Consulting 2022, [Raising Their Voices](#), Report into Sexual Harm, Sexual Harassment and Systemic Discrimination in the Contemporary Music Industry

⁴⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, April 2025](#)

⁴⁵ Department of Communities and Justice 2025, [Secure Jobs and Funding Certainty Roadmap](#), NSW Government

Box 10.16: PROGRESS UPDATE: Community Services Sector enhancements**Portable long service leave**

Long service leave is an additional period of paid leave that workers may be entitled to after working for a company for a certain number of years. Many workers in the community services industry work for different employers and may not complete a long enough period of service with one employer to qualify for traditional long service leave, due to insecure employment resulting from short-term funding and service contracts.

Under the new scheme, workers will be entitled to long service leave benefits regardless of how many employers they have worked for, or the duration of each individual role. Instead of being tied to one employer, long service leave will now recognise the total time spent working across the sector.

The new scheme will be mandatory for eligible employers in New South Wales. Employers and contractors will be required to pay a quarterly levy into a fund administered by the Long Service Corporation based on a percentage of wages or remuneration. The fund is used to pay workers when they qualify for a long service benefit claim. Early estimates suggest this could benefit up to 240,000 community sector workers. A 'gift of service' in the form of a 12-month service credit will be granted to eligible workers who apply for registration within the first six months of the scheme's commencement.

The portable long service leave scheme will offer greater employment security and serve as an incentive to retain dedicated staff in the community services industry, which provides essential support to individuals and families across the State.

The NSW Government is investing \$30.2 million over three years to build a new, modernised digital platform that will support the delivery of the scheme for the community services industry.

Delivering secure jobs and long-term funding

The Secure Jobs and Funding Certainty Roadmap⁴⁶ sets out a vision for a strong, stable and sustainable community sector — one where funding certainty and job security empower service providers to plan, support their staff and deliver outcomes for the communities who need them most.

The Roadmap will create greater stability in the sector with less red tape, more secure jobs and a focus on long-term employment pathways.

Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds can face additional barriers to participation in public life and accessing government services. These barriers can include varying levels of trust in mainstream services, a lack of awareness of available services and a lack of culturally appropriate and in-language supports.

The NSW Government has supported accessibility through a range of targeted and tailored programs that address these barriers to ensure that all people regardless of gender are supported to connect and participate in society.

The 2024-25 Budget invested \$7.5 million to support whole-of-government language services by increasing the translation and interpretation of essential government messages and launching the Multilingual NSW Academy to support multilingual people to become qualified language professionals. This has supported the translation of over 3,000 NSW Government resources in up to 60 languages, raising awareness across communities of key government information, programs and services. The Multilingual NSW Academy also provides courses and scholarships for interpreters, providing skills development and employment opportunities for newly arrived migrants in the predominately female dominated workforce. The 2025-26 Budget invests a further \$2.0 million in Multilingual NSW.

⁴⁶ NSW Department of Communities and Justice 2025, [Secure Jobs and Funding Certainty Roadmap](#), NSW Government

10.8 Connected

This Budget addresses gender-specific barriers to connectivity ensuring that everyone has access to safe and reliable transport, digital services and effective government services.

Key new budget measures

- \$369.9 million to maintain and uplift bus services, including improved connections to train and metros and increased school services.
- \$82.3 million for 75 new buses.
- \$70.0 million for a 35-metre ferry wharf and upgrading the Wentworth Park Light Rail stop at the new Sydney Fish Market.

This will help ensure public transport is safe, inclusive and easy to use, especially for people with disability, older people, people with prams or luggage and others who may be experiencing mobility problems.

This Budget also continues significant investment into road safety with \$731.7 million in 2025-26 in conjunction with the Australian Government. This critical investment will provide thousands of kilometres of audio-tactile line markings, wide centre lines, school safety infrastructure works, crash barriers in regional New South Wales and other life-saving initiatives. Road toll data shows that males have significantly higher rates of fatality than females.⁴⁷

Improving the safety of women in public spaces and on the transport network is a key focus of the NSW Government. Feeling and being safe, welcome and comfortable in the public domain is essential for social and economic participation and contributes to overall wellbeing and quality of life.

Box 10.17: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Bus Service Uplift

The gender impact assessment identified that women are more likely to ‘trip-chain,’ where their journey requires multiple stops.⁴⁸ Of the people who travel by bus to work, more than half were female.⁴⁹ Additionally, 30.8 per cent of women participate in travel associated with domestic activities such as housework, shopping, food preparation and household management, compared to 25.3 per cent of men.⁵⁰ Women also have different perceptions of safety in public spaces and on public transport, particularly feeling unsafe in public spaces after dark.⁵¹

The gender impact assessment identified that improving the frequency and coverage of bus services would benefit women who make multiple stops across their journey. Improvement to services that support travel to and from school will support women who undertake the majority of unpaid care and domestic work, by alleviating the need for women to drive their children to school.

Ensuring that people and businesses have access to digital services is a NSW Outcome in the Performance and Wellbeing Framework. Within the NSW Government, many critical platforms and services are made possible by the Government Technology Platform which manages and maintains key platforms relating to customer payments, licensing and virtual contact centres.

The 2025-26 Budget invests \$104.1 million over five years to maintain the Government Technology Platform ensuring secure services for New South Wales.

⁴⁷ Transport for NSW 2025, [NSW Road Toll – Daily](#)

⁴⁸ City of Sydney 2020, [On the Go: How women travel around our city](#)

⁴⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, [TableBuilder: 2021 Census, Method of Travel to Work by State](#)

⁵⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Gender indicators](#)

⁵¹ Transport for NSW 2023, [Safer Cities Survey Report](#)

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that communication and engagement channels between the NSW Government and community are effective and accessible. Public participation in consultations and timely communications are critical to the community. This Budget invests in All of Government Communication Services to support timely and targeted communications to people and businesses. This whole-of-government approach to digital capability enables world-class services to the people of New South Wales.

This Gender Equality Budget Statement showcases our commitment to gender responsive budgeting. By applying a gender lens to decision-making and the budgetary process, we ensure policy and programs are designed to meet the needs of everyone across New South Wales.