

# NSW BUDGET 2023-24

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**Gender Equality  
Budget Statement**

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia, and the oldest continuing culture in human history.

We pay respect to Elders past and present and commit to respecting the lands we walk on, and the communities we walk with.

We celebrate the deep and enduring connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country and acknowledge their continuing custodianship of the land, seas and sky.

We acknowledge the ongoing stewardship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the important contribution they make to our communities and economies.

We reflect on the continuing impact of government policies and practices, and recognise our responsibility to work together with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities, towards improved economic, social and cultural outcomes.



Artwork:  
*Regeneration* by Josie Rose

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## A note on data

Due to limitations in data collection, data reported in this Statement generally relates to sex rather than gender. The terms female and male are used when presenting data collected on the basis of biological sex.

Labour force data used within this Statement is based on July 2023 data.

## Support information

This document may contain sensitive content relating to discrimination, inequality, and domestic and family violence. If you are affected, support is available.

Lifeline provides nationwide 24-hour support for those experiencing a personal crisis and can be contacted by calling 13 11 14 or visiting [lifeline.org.au](https://lifeline.org.au). 1800RESPECT is available to support people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence. The NSW Mental Health Line (1800 011 511) is NSW Health’s 24/7 statewide free phone service which links people with NSW Health mental health services.



# Foreword



A society where everyone is treated equally and has access to the same opportunities is better for individuals and our overall social and economic outcomes. The task of improving gender equality is one this Budget takes up across its programs.

This Gender Equality Budget Statement is the first step towards a broader set of wellbeing and performance measures. It lays the foundation for a better and more secure future for women and girls in New South Wales. By removing barriers that prevent women from realising their full potential we are paving the way for a happier and healthier society and a more resilient economy.

For the first time in NSW history, the NSW Cabinet is 50 per cent women. This Government believes that gender balance in the workplace leads to better outcomes, diversity of perspectives and a more representative Government.

Making sure women are empowered to participate in the workforce is fundamental to their independence. Our Budget supports women to gain more secure and sustainable employment to determine their own futures.

We want to ensure that women feel safe in society. Whether it is about safe spaces or helping them escape from domestic

and family violence, this Budget delivers initiatives that support the safety and wellbeing of women.

As at June 2022, the gender pay gap in median remuneration between men and women in the public sector was 4.5 per cent. Increasing the number of women in leadership positions is critical to closing the gender pay gap.

We have abolished the public sector wages cap, delivering the largest public sector pay increase in over a decade that will support more than 400,000 workers, of which 66.3 per cent are women. Our investments will improve pay and conditions in female-dominated essential workforces like nursing, teaching and community services.

In order for women to thrive, we are making important investments in women's health. We know women experiencing domestic and family violence, from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and in regional and remote locations experience barriers to accessing quality healthcare. This Budget addresses these significant service gaps.

There is a long way to go to achieve gender equality across our State, but our ambition and plan of action, from the gender-equal Cabinet to the measures in this Budget, will help us take huge strides in that journey.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

**The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC**  
NSW Treasurer

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a prominent loop and a long horizontal stroke.

**The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP**  
Minister for Women  
Minister for Seniors  
Minister for the Prevention of  
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

# Budget highlights



**4.5%**  
(incl. super)

pay increase  
supports a  
female-dominated  
workforce



**100**

new Government  
preschools



**16,000**

teachers and  
school-based  
support staff  
made permanent



**2,312**

more nurses  
and midwives



**>\$100.0  
million**

for a women's  
health package



**\$39.1  
million**

to prevent domestic,  
family and sexual  
violence and support  
victim safety



**\$300.0  
million**

to improve the  
safety and accessibility  
of train stations



**\$30.0  
million**

to the Level the  
Playing Field Female  
Facilities Fund

# Overview



1

## A gender-equal society will lead to a stronger economy

Gender equality matters. As gender equality improves, economic and social outcomes improve. International evidence shows that greater gender equality would generate more jobs and positively impact gross domestic product per capita.<sup>1</sup> In high-income countries, gender equality is generally also associated with better health outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

Despite progress towards gender equality in New South Wales, significant differences in economic outcomes for men and women remain. Women's workforce participation in New South Wales is lower than men's (61.4 per cent for women aged 15 years and over, compared to 70.4 per cent for men aged 15 years and over) and women are more likely than men to be in part-time or casual roles.<sup>3</sup> Women in New South Wales are paid 11.8 per cent less than men on average.<sup>4</sup> Throughout Australia, women also hold fewer senior leadership positions than men.<sup>5</sup>

To improve gender equality in New South Wales, we need to remove the barriers that prevent women from realising their potential, and we need to better value the economic and social contributions women make. While gender equality is everyone's responsibility, the NSW Government is committed to leading the way. It is the largest employer in Australia and has responsibility for policy, programs and services that improve the lives of the people of New South Wales.

This 2023-24 Gender Equality Budget Statement ('the Statement') outlines how the NSW Government's first Budget will impact gender equality. It is an interim step as the Government considers its broader gender equality plan and budget reporting framework. Consistent with the 2023-24 Budget themes, it focuses on support for essential workforces and on alleviating cost-of-living pressures that disproportionately affect women.

This Statement applies a gender lens to the Budget and details measures that address gender inequality across three key themes.

### Economic opportunity

- Valuing 'women's work'
- Increasing women in leadership roles
- Making early childhood education and care more accessible

### Participation and empowerment

- Improving employment opportunities and skills development
- Creating safer and accessible public spaces
- Celebrating women in sport

### Health and wellbeing

- Improving wellbeing by alleviating cost-of-living pressures
- Making it easier to access essential health care
- Reducing domestic, family and sexual violence in New South Wales



## The NSW Government has abolished the wages cap and will support feminised workforces

The gender pay gap reflects gender inequality in society and contributes to women's lower lifetime economic security compared to men. The gender pay gap can partly be explained by industry and occupational segregation, with men disproportionately represented in higher-paid industries and occupations, as well as positions of leadership.

Feminised industries are female-dominated and often associated with caring roles. These industries provide essential social infrastructure to individuals and communities. They also support economic growth, including by helping people providing unpaid care to engage in more paid work.<sup>6</sup> Yet work in feminised industries has been historically undervalued.<sup>7</sup> The NSW Government employs large workforces in these industries, including nurses, teachers, and school-based support staff, and is committed to strengthening them.

The NSW Government has abolished the public sector wages cap. In June 2023, this Government took the first steps towards recognising the valuable work of our essential workers with the largest pay rise in more than a decade. The 4.5 per cent pay increase (including a 0.5 per cent increase to superannuation) for more than 400,000 public sector employees, 66.3 per cent of whom are women, was just the beginning of a long-term plan to support higher wage rises and rebuild essential services.

A historic pay rise will see teachers go from being among the worst to the best paid in the country. Starting salaries for teachers will increase from \$75,791 to \$85,000, and salaries for those at the top of the scale will increase from \$113,042 to \$122,100.

A flat rate pay rise of \$3,500 for more than 50,000 healthcare workers will lead to lower-paid staff receiving a pay increase as high as 8 per cent.

The NSW Government will also establish a new \$3.6 billion Essential Services Fund to expand our workforce and support wage growth by provisioning funds to recognise improvements in services.

The NSW Government remains committed to closing the gender pay gap in the NSW public sector. As at June 2022, the gap in median remuneration between men and women in the public sector was 4.5 per cent, compared to 4.1 per cent in 2021.<sup>8</sup>

As at June 2022 the gap in median remuneration between men and women in the public sector was 4.5 per cent.

## The NSW Government will support teachers and nurses to deliver better outcomes

The NSW Government recognises the importance of attracting and retaining teachers, nurses and other essential workers.

This Budget will reduce the administrative burden on teachers by at least five hours a week, create an additional 250 school counsellor roles, and make other investments to improve student outcomes. It also invests \$20 million in an Innovative Teacher Training Fund to support new and innovative pathways into teaching. To provide better job security and conditions, permanent roles have been offered to 16,000 temporary teachers and school-based support staff.

To support a strong health workforce, the NSW Government is investing \$121.9 million over five years to support 12,000 healthcare students with

study subsidies. New students will receive scholarships of \$4,000 per year. Existing students will receive one-off payments of \$8,000.

This Budget invests \$419.1 million for an additional 1,200 nurses. It also commits \$572.3 million over three years to enable 1,112 full-time equivalent nurses and midwives whose positions were funded temporarily to June 2024 to be made permanent. These commitments will improve the experience of nurses, midwives, and patients in the NSW health system.

### **More women in leadership will help close the gender pay gap**

Increasing the representation of women in leadership positions is critical to closing the gender pay gap. For the first time in NSW history, the NSW Cabinet comprises 50 per cent women.

However, there is still work to do to reach gender parity in NSW public sector leadership positions, where women hold 44.0 per cent of senior leadership positions, despite making up 66.3 per cent of the total workforce.<sup>9</sup> This is a focus for the NSW Government.

### **Access to childcare will create economic opportunities for women**

Access to childcare is a significant enabler of women's workforce participation, as women take on a disproportionate share of unpaid childcare work. The cost of early childhood education and care (ECEC) is a barrier for many households.<sup>10</sup> Other barriers include a lack of choice of providers, inflexible care arrangements and problems securing a childcare place.<sup>11</sup>

The NSW Government is committed to boosting access to preschool for every child in New South Wales. This Budget invests \$769.3 million for 100 new preschools on public school sites where they are needed most, and \$60.0 million to fund new and upgraded non-government preschools.

The NSW Government will also trial preschool fee relief of \$500 per child over two years for 3-year-olds in eligible long day care settings from January 2024. This measure will support up to 64,000 children and their families.



Investment in the ECEC workforce is critical to boost the supply of ECEC services across the State. The NSW Government is investing up to \$28.5 million over five years to help address ECEC workforce shortages and support business capability development.

### **Skills development will support women's workforce participation**

The NSW Government is focused on empowering women to enter or re-enter the workforce through skills development and work-readiness initiatives.

This Budget commits \$5.8 million to create a Future Women's Jobs Academy to support women to become job ready and boost participation. With the support of the Australian Government, a new Working Women's Centre will also be established to support women to navigate workplace issues, including sexual harassment, underpayment, wage theft and parental leave.

### **Action will empower women to participate in sport**

The NSW Government will build on the momentum of the Matildas' record-breaking performance at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup™ by investing in programs and facilities to enable more women and girls to participate in sport. This Budget commits \$30.0 million to the Level the Playing Field Female Facilities Fund to deliver new or upgraded facilities, new playing areas, and lighting to allow increased safety and playing capacity.

### **Safe and accessible public spaces enable participation in work, sport and social activities**

A recent survey showed that women are much more likely than men to feel unsafe in public spaces after dark.<sup>12</sup> When women feel unsafe, they may alter their behaviour. They may, for example, avoid travelling at night or avoid public transport altogether, potentially reducing economic and social participation. This Budget commits an additional \$300.0 million to expand the Transport Access Program to upgrade train stations and commuter car parks to make them more accessible, safe and secure.

### **Alleviating cost-of-living pressures will support women's wellbeing**

In December 2022, New South Wales and Australia experienced the highest inflation in more than 30 years.<sup>13</sup> Sydney's inflation rate was 6.6 per cent over the 12 months to June 2023.<sup>14</sup> While rising prices impact everyone, women as a cohort are disproportionately affected because on average they earn less than men.

To help ease the impact of rising electricity costs, this Budget will provide eligible low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, families, and carers with up to \$500 towards their electricity bills. Eligible small businesses will also receive a payment of up to \$650 towards their bills. Further relief will be provided for eligible families, seniors and low-income households in 2024-25.

This Budget commits \$170.8 million to improve salary packaging arrangements for more than 50,000 healthcare workers, the majority of whom are female. This measure is intended to boost take-home pay and improve retention rates.

The NSW Government is also establishing Homes NSW and a \$224.0 million Essential Housing Package to deliver better outcomes for public and social housing tenants.

### **Improving women’s access to health and social services will lead to better outcomes**

The NSW Government is committed to making it easier for women to access essential health care. This Budget commits \$34.3 million in increased support for 20 Women’s Health Centres across the State, which provide primary health care to women, including those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

A further \$7.3 million is committed to support participating pharmacists to provide treatment for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs) and manage supply of the oral contraceptive pill, which will improve access for women seeking these services. This Budget also commits \$18.6 million for 29 new and eight existing McGrath Foundation breast care nurses to provide patients and their families with support from the time of diagnosis and throughout treatment.

It is estimated that one in four women in Australia have experienced violence by a family member or intimate partner since the age of 15.<sup>15</sup> The rate of domestic violence-related assault incidents in New South Wales increased by 3 per cent annually over the five years to December 2022.<sup>16</sup>

Domestic and family violence has no place in our community. This Budget commits \$4.4 million over three years to establish a new specialist multicultural domestic and family violence centre in southwest

Sydney. The NSW Government will also invest \$52.7 million in NSW Health Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and the broader medical and forensic workforce, and \$8.1 million for the Redfern Legal Centre Financial Abuse Service.

To improve their long-term housing outcomes, the NSW Government has committed \$13.0 million to expand access to the Shared Equity Home Buyer Helper trial to include domestic and family violence victim-survivors.

### **Gender equality is central to government decision-making**

Reaching gender equality requires changing the way government has traditionally considered policy development and resource allocation.

NSW Treasury is piloting gender impact assessments for selected new policy proposals, with learnings to inform the State’s future approach to both its gender equality plan and budget framework. The NSW Government is also piloting Gender Equality Action Plans which require agencies to actively champion gender equality in their workforce strategies and when developing policies, programs, services and legislation.

There is no quick fix to addressing gender inequality. However, the initiatives included in the 2023-24 Budget are an important step in the right direction.

The NSW Government looks forward to working in partnership with other governments, businesses, industry and the community to advance gender equality in New South Wales.

# Gender equality in key economic indicators

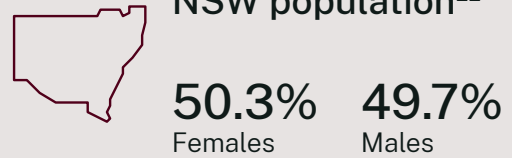


# NSW Data Snapshot

## NSW median age<sup>17</sup>



## NSW population<sup>22</sup>



## Members of Parliament in the NSW Government<sup>18</sup>

(both Houses)



Females: **43.0 per cent**  
Males: **57.0 per cent**

## Proportion of people with disability<sup>23</sup>



# 11.8%<sup>19</sup>

## Gender Pay Gap (May 2023)

Average Weekly Earnings



## Workforce Participation Rate

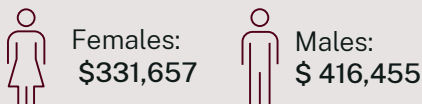
Females (July 2023)<sup>24</sup>

**61.4%**

Males (July 2023)<sup>25</sup>

**70.4%**

## Average superannuation balance at 60-64 years<sup>20</sup>



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (2021)<sup>26</sup>

**56.0%**

Females that speak a language other than English at home (2021)<sup>27</sup>

**55.0%**

Females in regional NSW (July 2023)<sup>28</sup>

**57.5%**

## Time spent on unpaid labour per week<sup>21</sup>



Females: **30.3 hours**  
Males: **17.9 hours**

Females aged 15-24 years (July 2023)<sup>29</sup>

**69.5%**

Females aged 50 years and over (July 2023)<sup>30</sup>

**38.9%**

The NSW Government closely monitors gender equality in economic outcomes. A tight labour market has created opportunities for women. However, significant disparities between men and women in both work patterns and pay remain.

## Women’s labour force participation is rising but the gap in workforce participation remains

The NSW labour force participation rate for females aged 15 years and over was 61.4 per cent as at July 2023, slightly lower than 61.8 per cent in July 2022 but higher than pre-pandemic levels of 60.0 per cent in February 2020.<sup>31</sup> As at July 2023, the male participation rate was 70.4 per cent, resulting in a participation gap between men and women of 9.0 percentage points.

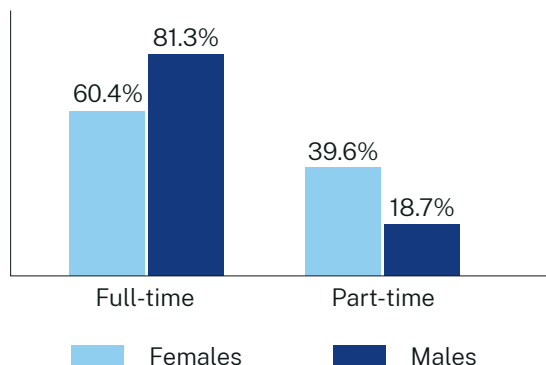
Job vacancies remain high compared to the start of the pandemic, reflecting strong demand for labour in most industries. As at May 2023, NSW vacancies were 61.5 per cent higher than they were in February 2020.<sup>32</sup> An increase in employers providing flexible hours and working conditions has likely enabled more women, particularly those with caring responsibilities, to enter and stay in the labour market.<sup>33</sup>

Despite these opportunities, long-term challenges remain. Women who experience intersectional disadvantage face greater barriers to economic participation. According to the 2021 Census, the workforce participation rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in New South Wales was 56.0 per cent, lower than the rate of 59.1 per cent for non-Indigenous women.<sup>34</sup> The participation rate for women who speak a language other than English at home was 55.0 per cent.<sup>35</sup>

Unemployment remains low for women in New South Wales at 3.4 per cent in July 2023. This is comparable with other state, territory and national unemployment figures.<sup>36</sup> However, underemployment is rising and remains a persistent issue for women. Underemployment captures people who would prefer and are available to work more hours. In July 2023, the underemployment rate for women in New South Wales was 7.5 per cent compared to 5.3 per cent for men.<sup>37</sup> Women who work part-time and are underemployed cite limited suitable hours and difficulties with childcare and family considerations as the main barriers to securing more hours, compared to men who cite lack of jobs in their line of work and lack of necessary skills as the main barriers.<sup>38</sup>

Working women in New South Wales are more than twice as likely to be in part-time work (39.6 per cent of employed women at July 2023) than working men (18.7 per cent for the same period) and are more likely to be in casual employment.<sup>39</sup> Part-time and casual work often provide women with the flexibility required to manage care responsibilities. However, these roles can also be less secure, lower-paid, and provide fewer opportunities for career advancement.<sup>40</sup>

**Chart 2.1: Full-time and part-time work by gender**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Labour Force Australia*, July 2023. Based on original data.

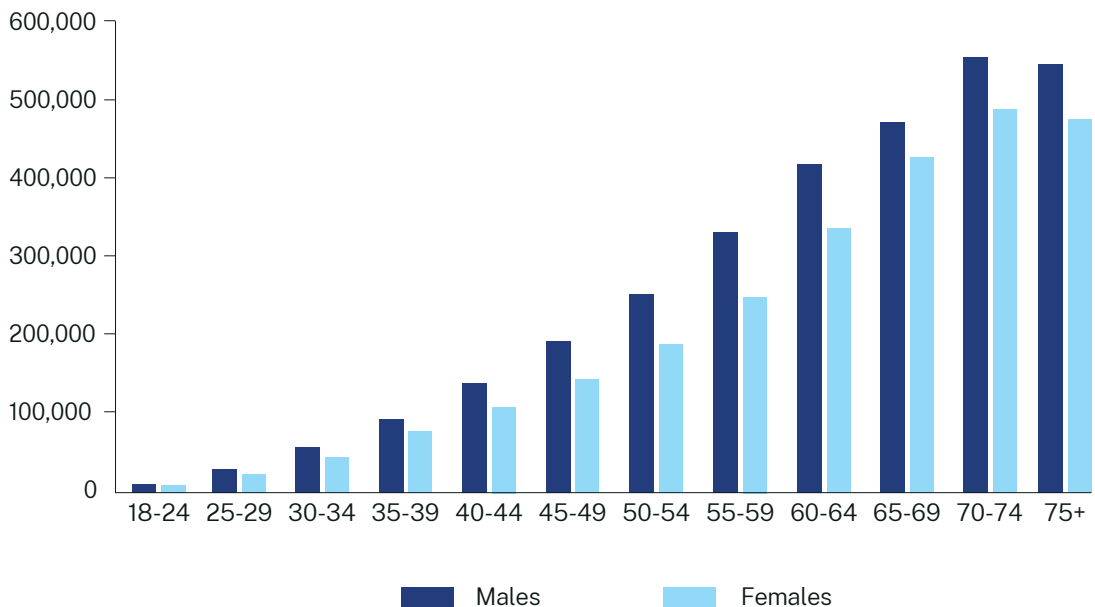
## The gender pay gap reflects gender inequality and contributes to women’s lower lifetime economic security

The gender pay gap refers to the difference between women’s and men’s average weekly full-time earnings. It is not the difference between two people being paid differently for work of the same or comparable value.<sup>41</sup> In New South Wales, women are paid on average 11.8 per cent less than men, or \$227.80 less per week, up from 11.0 per cent in November 2022.<sup>42</sup>

This figure, however, likely understates the gender pay gap, as it is based on full-time workers and excludes overtime, bonuses, superannuation and other payments.

Across a lifetime, the gender pay gap substantially disadvantages women. Data from the Australian Taxation Office shows that, in 2020-21, men on average had a larger superannuation balance than women, and that a superannuation gap exists for all age groups above 18 years old (see Chart 2.2).<sup>43</sup> Women in New South Wales aged 60 to 64 have on average 20.4 per cent less superannuation than men, a gap of approximately \$85,000.<sup>44</sup>

**Chart 2.2 Average superannuation account balances (\$), 2020–21**



Source: Australian Taxation Office 2023, *Taxation statistics 2020–21 financial year – Table 24A: Super contributions, by state/territory, sex and age range*. Based on average superannuation account balances of NSW females and males.





The drivers of the gender pay gap involve the interplay of gender discrimination, caring and family responsibilities, and gender segregation within different industries and occupations.<sup>45</sup>

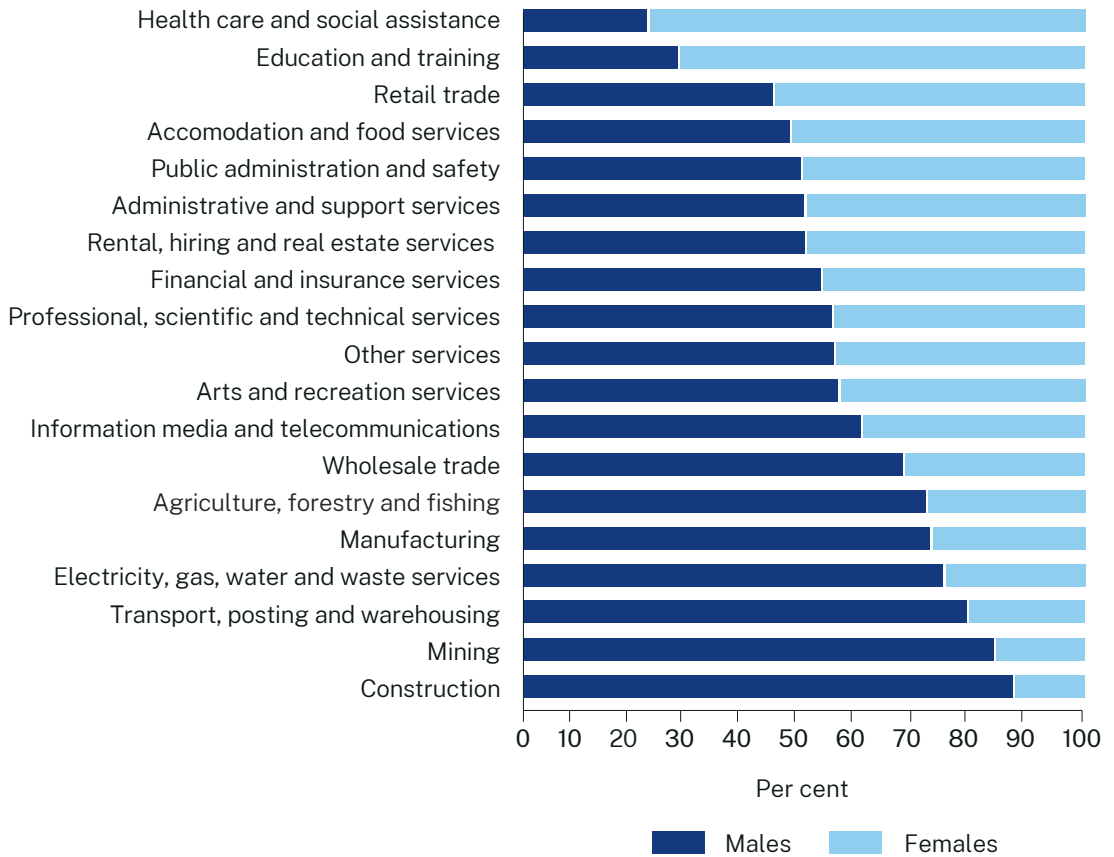
Across the NSW labour market, women and men have been segregated across industries, occupations and positions of leadership. It is estimated this segregation accounts for 24 per cent of Australia's gender pay gap.<sup>46</sup> Currently, the five highest-paid industries nationally have a higher representation of males, including mining, information media and telecommunications, and electricity, gas, water and waste services.<sup>47</sup> In all industries, men are paid more than women on average.<sup>48</sup>

### **Industry and occupational segregation have not materially improved in decades**

As at May 2023, the most female-dominated industries were health care and social assistance (77.9 per cent female) and education and training (72.4 per cent female), whereas the most male-dominated industries were construction (87.4 per cent male) and mining (84.1 per cent male) (see Chart 2.3).

At an occupational level, females make up 71.8 per cent of clerical and administrative workers and 68.6 per cent of community and personal service workers. Males make up 89.4 per cent of machinery operators and drivers and 83.6 per cent of technicians and trade workers.<sup>49</sup>

**Chart 2.3: Gender composition of NSW industries, May 2023**



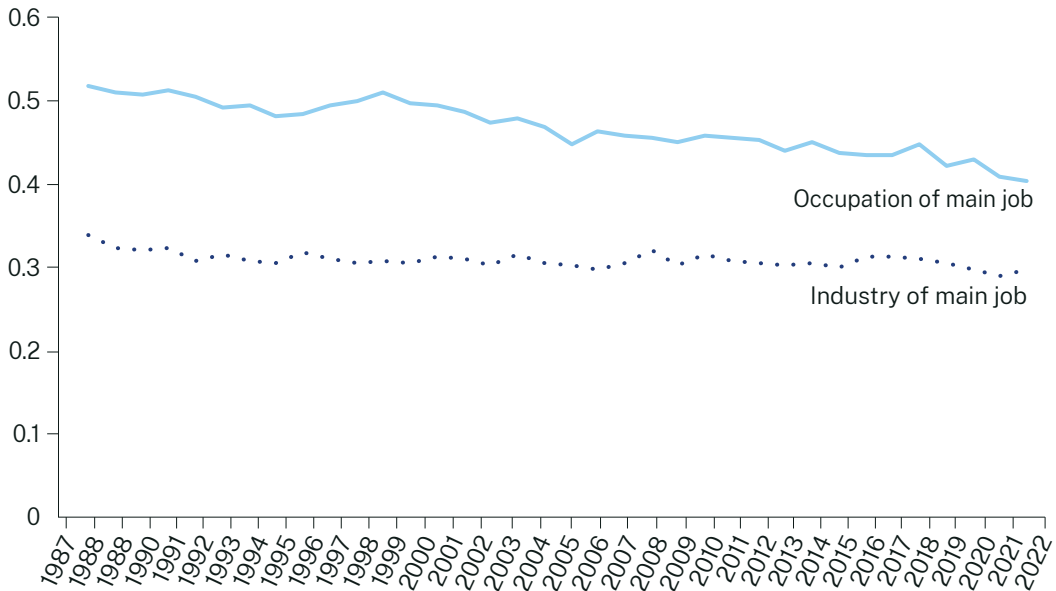
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Labour Force Detailed*, May 2023.

This disparity in the gender composition across NSW industries has not materially improved in the past four decades. The health care, education and retail sectors have become increasingly female-dominated, which can be attributed to more women entering the labour force into these industries.<sup>50</sup> The mining, construction and electricity sectors have made only minor gains in increasing the number of women in these industries.<sup>51</sup>

The Index of Dissimilarity is the most common measure of segregation and identifies the percentage of employed

women (or men) who would have to change occupations/industries for the distribution of men and women to be equal. The dissimilarity index varies between 0 and 1, with 0 being perfectly gender-integrated and 1 being completely gender-segregated. Using this index, industry segregation has remained consistent in New South Wales, only decreasing from 0.34 in 1987 to 0.30 in 2022. Though remaining high, occupational segregation has declined across New South Wales as more women enter managerial and technical roles, from an index of dissimilarity of 0.52 in 1987 to 0.41 in 2022 (see Chart 2.4).

**Chart 2.4: Index of dissimilarity in NSW based on industry and occupation of main job<sup>52</sup>**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Labour Force Detailed*, May 2023.

Vertical segregation (the concentration of women and men in different levels of responsibility or positions) is also prominent within occupations, with women making up only 27.4 per cent of chief executives, general managers and legislators in New South Wales.<sup>53</sup>

### Cost of living disproportionately affects women

Women as a cohort are more likely to be negatively affected by increases to cost of living as, on average, they are paid less and have less financial security than men.

Australia's inflation rate was 6.0 per cent over the twelve months to June 2023, down from the peak of 7.8 per cent in the December 2022 quarter.<sup>54</sup> Sydney's Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 6.6 per cent for the year to June 2023.<sup>55</sup>

The cost of housing is particularly challenging. As at June 2023, according to the Sydney CPI, rents are 7.3 per cent higher than the year prior, while new dwelling prices are 9.1 per cent higher.<sup>56</sup>

# Economic opportunity



## 3.1 Valuing ‘women’s work’

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- The public sector wages cap has been abolished.
- NSW public sector employees have been offered the biggest pay increase in over a decade.
- NSW teachers will be the best paid teachers in Australia.
- An Industrial Relations Taskforce is considering how to implement a cooperative interest-based bargaining approach which would give feminised workforces greater opportunity to negotiate pay and conditions.

### The NSW Government values feminised industries

Work that has traditionally been considered ‘women’s work’ contributes significantly to employment, economic growth and broader wellbeing across New South Wales.

Feminised industries are industries that are female-dominated and often associated with caring. The feminised health, social assistance and education industries provide essential social infrastructure to individuals and communities. They also support women, who disproportionately provide unpaid care, to engage in paid work.<sup>57</sup>

Feminised industries have, however, been historically undervalued.<sup>58</sup> Analysis by Impact Economics and Policy found that employees with a bachelor’s degree or higher working in female-dominated industries earn 30 per cent less per hour than equivalently qualified employees in male-dominated industries.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, employees with a Certificate III/IV working in female-dominated industries earn 36 per cent less per hour.<sup>60</sup>

The Fair Work Commission has accepted that undervaluation in the aged care sector stems from social norms that have impacted the assessment of work value.<sup>61</sup> Specifically, it noted that women’s disproportionate engagement in unpaid care has contributed to the invisibility and underrecognition of skills described as creative, nurturing, facilitating or caring in paid labour.<sup>62</sup>

The Fair Work Commission recently found that existing minimum award wage rates do not properly compensate care workers in either residential or in-home aged care settings for the value of the work performed.<sup>63</sup> The Commission decided to increase minimum wages by 15 per cent from 30 June 2023 for direct care employees working in aged care.<sup>64</sup>



# 4.5%

pay increase for more than 400,000 public sector employees (incl. super)

The undervaluation of feminised industries should not be an accepted element of the economy. It entrenches gender inequality within the labour force and society more broadly. The NSW Government is the largest employer in Australia, and women make up 66.3 per cent of the NSW public sector workforce.<sup>65</sup> The Government is committed to leading by example in supporting feminised industries.

The NSW Government has abolished the public sector wages cap and is bringing a new approach to wage negotiations. The Industrial Relations Taskforce, led by former Deputy President of the Fair Work Commission, Anna Booth, and former President of the Industrial Relations Commission, Roger Boland, has been established to fulfil the Government’s commitment to a new interest-based bargaining framework.

In June 2023, the NSW Government took the first steps towards recognising the valuable work of our essential workers with the largest pay rise in more than a decade. The 4.5 per cent pay increase (including a 0.5 per cent increase to superannuation)

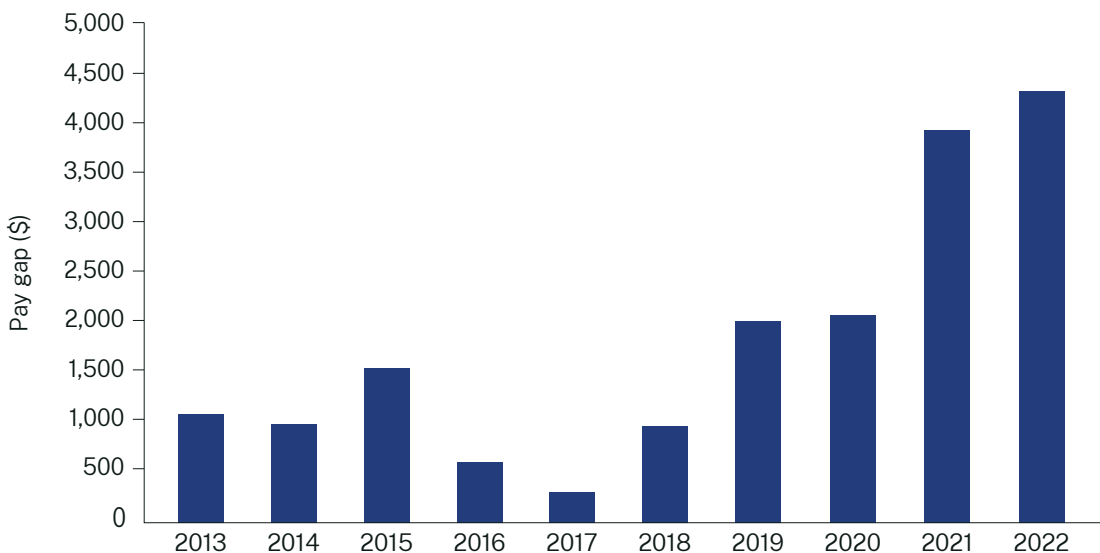
for more than 400,000 public sector employees was just the beginning of a long-term plan to support higher wage rises and rebuild essential services.

A historic pay rise will see teachers go from being among the worst to the best paid in the country. Starting salaries for teachers will increase from \$75,791 to \$85,000, and salaries for those at the top of the scale will increase from \$113,042 to \$122,100. All teachers will benefit from the restructuring of the pay scale.

A flat rate pay increase of \$3,500 for more than 50,000 healthcare workers, of which a majority are women, will lead to lower paid staff receiving a pay increase as high as 8 per cent.

A focus for the NSW Government will be how to reduce the gender pay gap in the NSW public sector. In June 2022, the gap in median remuneration between men and women in the NSW public sector was 4.5 per cent, compared to 4.1 per cent in 2021.<sup>66</sup> This is the highest median gender pay gap in the past decade for the NSW public sector (Chart 3.1).<sup>67</sup>

**Chart 3.1: Difference in remuneration between males and females in the public sector**



Source: NSW Public Service Commission 2022, *Workforce Profile Report 2022*, NSW Government.

# Investing in teachers will support a highly feminised workforce and improve education outcomes of NSW students

## NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- 10,000 temporary teaching roles and 6,000 temporary school-based support staff roles have been made permanent.
- \$20.0 million for the Innovative Teacher Training Fund to attract the best teachers.
- An additional 250 school counsellor roles will be created.
- The time teachers spend on administrative tasks will be reduced by five hours per week.

The education sector is the largest contributor to female employment in the NSW public sector. In 2022, women made up 76.8 per cent of the NSW education workforce and 77.8 per cent of school teachers.<sup>68</sup> By supporting teachers, the NSW Government is supporting thousands of women across the State.

Investing in teacher quality and effectiveness will support teachers to improve student outcomes. The evidence shows that, within schools, teaching practice is the most significant driver of student outcomes.<sup>69</sup> Improved student performance can lead to improved labour force productivity and economic growth.<sup>70</sup> Better education also contributes to broader wellbeing, improved health and reduced crime rates.<sup>71</sup>

An increasing administrative workload is reshaping the work of NSW teachers and pressures they face.<sup>72</sup> The NSW Government has committed to reduce teachers' administrative workloads by at least five hours per week, enabling teachers to focus on teaching and ultimately on delivering better outcomes for NSW students.

The NSW Government has offered permanent roles to 16,000 temporary teachers and school-based support staff, the majority of whom are women. All of these offers have been accepted. This initiative will provide greater job stability and financial security, including helping women to secure finance. It will also support job retention.



5

hour reduction  
per week  
in teachers'  
administrative  
workloads

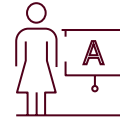


76.8%

of the NSW education  
workforce are female

A \$20.0 million Innovative Teacher Training Fund will develop new and innovative pathways into teaching by providing additional support to pre-service teachers and ensuring access to in-class training and support.

Women hold the majority of teaching positions, but are underrepresented in school leadership roles. While 77.8 per cent of teachers are women,<sup>73</sup> only 70.8 per cent of primary school principal positions and 52.5 per cent of secondary school principal positions are held by women. The NSW Government is considering how to address this gender disparity.



**77.8%**

of school teachers are women

## Valuing nurses and encouraging more diversity in the health profession will support gender equality and lead to better health outcomes

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$572.3 million over three years to enable 1,112 full-time equivalent nurses and midwives employed on a temporary basis to be made permanent.
- \$419.1 million for an additional 1,200 nurses and midwives to begin the introduction of Safe Staffing Levels in NSW public hospitals.
- \$121.9 million over five years to support 12,000 healthcare students with study subsidies.

Midwifery and nursing professionals make up almost half of all health professionals in New South Wales.<sup>74</sup> Like teaching, the profession is heavily gender segregated. Women currently comprise approximately 89.8 per cent of all NSW midwifery and nursing professionals.<sup>75</sup>

Health workforce supply is an ongoing challenge, largely driven by evolving population health needs, consumer expectations, technological advancements, and changing workforce and workplace expectations.<sup>76</sup> According to the 2022 Skills Priority List, registered nurse, enrolled nurse and nurse practitioner occupations are in shortage in New South Wales, and at a national level have been assessed as facing strong future demand.<sup>77</sup>



**89.8%**

of all NSW midwifery and nursing professionals are female



This demand, however, comes at a time of increased competition in the labour market and health workforce fatigue following the COVID-19 pandemic. While the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of nursing, like other care professions, nursing has historically tended to be undervalued and seen as ‘women’s work’.

This gender bias negatively impacts women but also makes it challenging to recruit men into the profession.<sup>78</sup> Only 10.2 per cent of midwifery and nursing professionals are men.<sup>79</sup> Men currently make up 18.3 per cent of Vocational Education and Training student program enrolments in the nursing field of education<sup>80</sup> and 13.6 per cent of university commencements in special nursing courses.<sup>81</sup> The nursing profession should reflect the diversity of our State, because an inclusive nursing workforce produces better health outcomes.<sup>82</sup>

The NSW Government is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse nursing workforce. This Budget commits \$121.9 million over five years to support 12,000 healthcare students with study subsidies. New students from 1 January 2024 will receive scholarships of \$4,000 per year. Existing students will receive one-off payments of \$8,000. Students must make a five-year commitment to the NSW public health system. The intent of this policy is to incentivise students of all genders to enter the health workforce.

The NSW Government will invest \$419.1 million for an additional 1,200 full-time equivalent nurses and midwives to support the implementation of Safe Staffing Levels in NSW public hospitals. This Budget also commits \$572.3 million over three years to enable 1,112 full-time equivalent nurses and midwives employed on a temporary basis to be made permanent. These measures are intended to achieve better health outcomes for patients and improve the experience of nurses, midwives and patients in the NSW health system.

While recruiting more men into nursing is a priority, consideration will need to be given to the progression of men and women in the profession. A global study of leadership in nursing describes a ‘glass elevator’ for men who hold a disproportionately high number of senior nursing roles worldwide.<sup>83</sup> In New South Wales, men make up 30.3 per cent of nurse managers despite only making up 10.2 per cent of midwifery and nursing professionals.<sup>84</sup>



# 12,000

healthcare students supported with scholarships



# 1,200

new nurses and midwives



# 1,112

full-time equivalent nurses and midwives funded on a temporary basis to be made permanent

## Better funding arrangements for the community services sector could improve job security for its female-dominated workforce and the delivery of critical services

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- A taskforce will be established to deliver more job security and funding certainty for the NSW community services sector.
- Consultation will commence on extending portable entitlements, including long service leave, to community service workers.

The social and community sector refers to the section of the labour market focused on assisting people with their everyday functioning and care needs. It includes aged care, early childhood education and care, community mental health, disability care, child protection, housing and homelessness services, and domestic violence support services.<sup>85</sup>

Approximately 75 per cent of the social and community service workforce are women.<sup>86</sup> Average wages are low compared to other sectors, and it is estimated that 50 per cent of the workforce are employed as casual or fixed-term staff rather than as permanent, ongoing staff.<sup>87</sup> In a recent survey, 53 per cent of NSW social sector employees surveyed cited low pay and/or insecure work as career impediments.<sup>88</sup> Half of surveyed employees reported they were either planning to leave the sector or were not sure if they will still be in the sector in five years' time.<sup>89</sup>

The NSW Government will establish a taskforce to deliver job security and funding certainty for the NSW community services sector. Specifically, the taskforce will consider four intersecting priorities:

- Long-term funding arrangements: implementing five-year contract terms for community services across government agencies where appropriate.

- Funding Framework: considering refinements to funding arrangements.
- Jobs Compact: designing a workforce strategy for the female-dominated community services sector to ensure an appropriately skilled and qualified workforce to meet future sector need.
- All-of-government pre-qualification scheme: establishing pre-qualification for the community services sector to simplify procurement practices.

The NSW Government is increasing grant payments to non-government organisations by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Health. Payments will be indexed at 5.75 per cent for 2023-24 following the Fair Work Commission's decision to increase award minimum wages by 5.75 per cent from 1 July 2023. This increase will enable non-government organisations to increase pay for staff while maintaining service levels.

The NSW Government will also engage with stakeholders, including unions and employers, about the best way to extend portable entitlements, including long service leave, to community service workers.

## 3.2 Increasing women in leadership roles

In addition to valuing ‘women’s work’, increasing the representation of women in leadership is critical to closing the gender pay gap. While progress has been made, vertical segregation (the concentration of women and men in different levels of responsibility or positions) remains significant across industries, with women making up only 27.4 per cent of chief executives, general managers and legislators in New South Wales.<sup>90</sup>

For the first time in New South Wales history, the NSW Cabinet comprises 50 per cent women, with female ministers for the first time holding the Energy, Police, Regional NSW, Finance and Regional Transport portfolios.

There is, however, still work to do to achieve gender parity in leadership positions across the NSW public sector, where women comprise 44.0 per cent of senior leadership despite making up 66.3 per cent of the total workforce.<sup>91</sup> Addressing this disparity is a focus for the NSW Government.

Gender diversity on NSW Government boards has improved. Across all government boards, women made up 47 per cent of board members as at June 2023.<sup>92</sup>

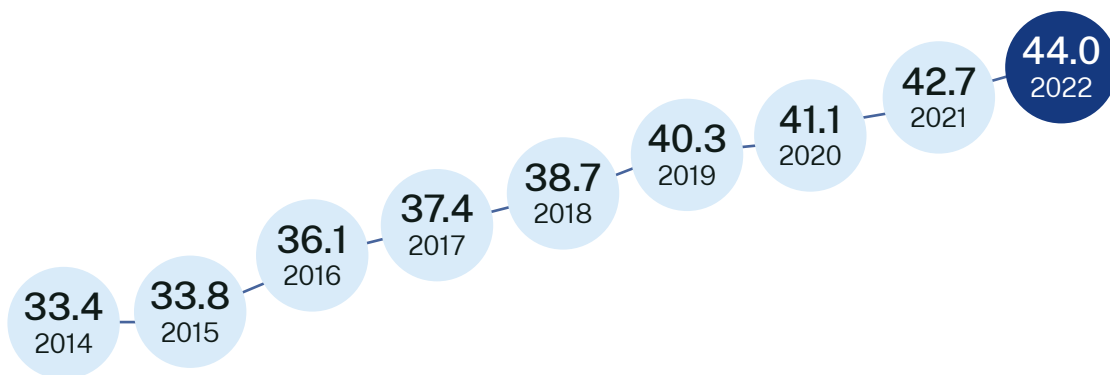
In April 2022, gender diversity targets for NSW State Owned Corporations and Public Financial Corporations were introduced, requiring:

- no fewer than 40 per cent of board director positions to be filled by women on each State Owned Corporation and Public Financial Corporation board
- overall, 50 per cent of all State Owned Corporation and Public Financial Corporation board director positions combined, to be filled by women.

As at June 2023, women held 45 per cent of State Owned Corporation and Public Financial Corporation board director positions,<sup>93</sup> failing to meet our target.

The gender balance on boards in the private sector is lower, with women making up 36.4 per cent of ASX 200 directorships as at June 2023.<sup>94</sup> While this is a significant improvement from 23.8 per cent in 2016, there is still progress to be made.<sup>95</sup>

**Chart 3.2: Percentage of female senior leaders in the NSW Public Sector**



Source: NSW Public Service Commission 2022, *Workforce Profile Report 2022*, NSW Government.

## 3.3 Making early childhood education and care more accessible

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$769.3 million for 100 new preschools on public school sites where they are needed most and \$60.0 million to fund new and upgraded non-government preschools.
- Up to \$64.0 million over two years to provide \$500 preschool fee relief for 3-year-olds in eligible long day care settings.
- Up to \$28.5 million over five years to help address workforce shortages and support business capability in the early childhood education and care sector.

While women's workforce participation is at a record high, it continues to lag behind men's workforce participation. Women are also more likely to be underemployed, work part-time or work fewer hours. Women's lower levels of workforce participation mean many in New South Wales are missing out on the benefits of working at their full capacity, including the financial resilience, sense of purpose and independence that paid work can provide.

The barriers to women's workforce participation are well known. They include the disproportionate female share of unpaid work in the home, gender norms and stereotypes, childcare affordability and accessibility, and challenges re-entering the workforce.

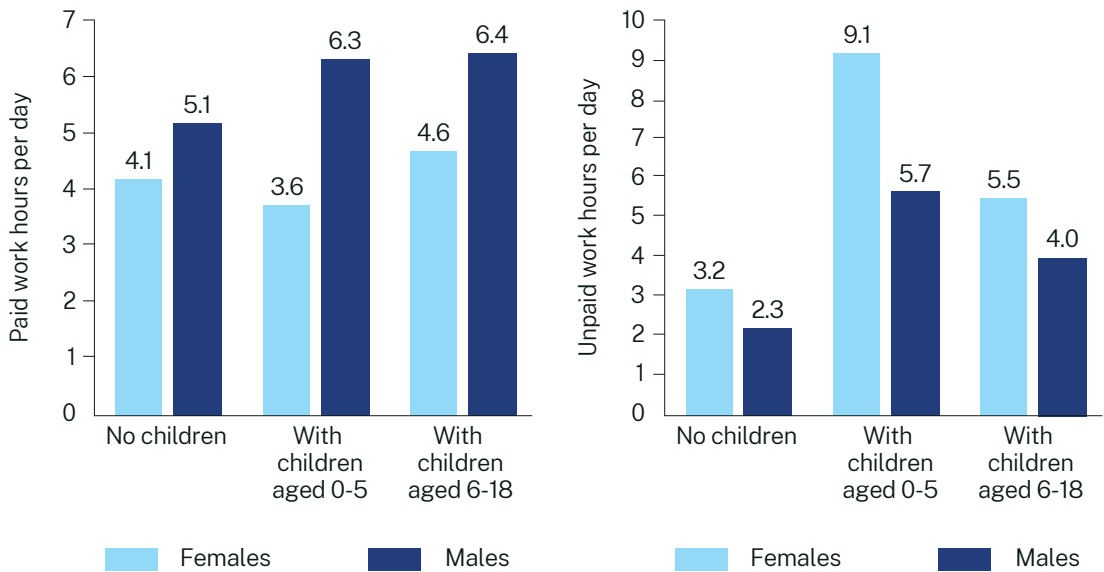
### Unequal sharing of unpaid work and care limits women's workforce participation

Research suggests women's careers and lives can change dramatically when they become parents. This is evidenced by an increase in maternal part-time employment, unlike paternal employment patterns which remain virtually unchanged.<sup>96</sup>

In 2021, women spent on average 30.3 hours per week doing unpaid work, compared to only 17.9 hours per week for men.<sup>97</sup> This gap has been consistent since the survey began in 2002.

The largest divide is in hours of unpaid work for men and women in New South Wales with children aged 0-5 years, where women on average complete around three hours more unpaid work per day than men.<sup>98</sup> This demonstrates how unpaid work 'crowds out' paid work for women with young children.

**Chart 3.3: Average hours per day in paid and unpaid work, NSW, 2019**



Source: NSW Treasury analysis of Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA).<sup>99</sup>

This dynamic reinforces gender stereotypes, reduces opportunities for women to develop their careers, contributes to the gender pay gap and impacts wellbeing.

### Accessible childcare enables women’s workforce participation

Access to childcare enables parents to participate in the workforce. As women take on an unequal share of caring and domestic responsibilities, policies that facilitate access to childcare are a significant enabler of women’s workforce participation.

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector is complex, with a mixed market of preschool, long day care, occasional care, family day care and before and after school care services delivered by a range of for-profit, not-for-profit and government providers.

The NSW and Australian governments share responsibility for the sector, which adds to this complexity.

Recent research by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission suggests that affordability is the most important consideration for households when deciding how much formal ECEC to use. After cost is considered, parents focus on other considerations including location, availability, safety and security, and connections with educators.<sup>100</sup>

Separately, research by the NSW Productivity Commission identifies several barriers to the increased uptake of ECEC services including a lack of choice of providers, inflexible care arrangements, problems securing a childcare place, high out-of-pocket costs and uncertainty about out-of-pocket costs.<sup>101</sup> The proportion of New South Wales ECEC centres offering flexible hours (outside standard

work hours, including evenings) is less than 20 per cent, compared to more than 50 per cent for other comparable jurisdictions including Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.<sup>102</sup>

The NSW Government is committed to boosting access to preschool for every child in New South Wales.

The NSW Government is doubling the number of public preschools, with \$769.3 million committed for 100 new preschools on public school sites where they are needed most. It is also investing \$60.0 million to fund new and upgraded non-government preschools.

Up to \$20.0 million will be invested in the Flexible Initiatives Trial to support ECEC services to expand their existing offering to increase available ECEC hours and places to better meet the needs of families.

The NSW Government will also trial \$500 preschool fee relief for 3-year-olds in eligible long day care settings effective January 2024. This measure will support up to 64,000 children and their families. It will complement existing NSW preschool fee relief of \$4,220 per year for 3-to-5-year-olds in community and mobile preschools, and \$2,110 per year for children aged 4 and above in eligible long day care settings.

ECEC workforce shortages are creating a barrier to future expansion of the sector. The National Skills Commission forecasts 21.6 per cent more early childhood teachers will be required nationally in 2026, compared to 2021.<sup>103</sup> Separately, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority forecast that a 20 per cent increase in the ECEC workforce would be needed nationally over 2018 to 2023.<sup>104</sup>

The literature identifies comparatively poor pay and conditions, a lack of professional recognition, and few progression opportunities as factors contributing to the ECEC sector's struggle to attract and retain staff.<sup>105</sup>

Supporting the ECEC workforce is a key priority for the NSW Government. The Government is investing up to \$28.5 million over five years to help address workforce shortages and support business capability.



# 100

preschools on public school sites where they are needed the most



# \$500

preschool fee relief for 3-year-olds in eligible long day care settings



# \$28.5 million

over five years to help address ECEC workforce shortages and support business capability



This includes: \$9.0 million in scholarships for ECEC professionals to upskill to a diploma or degree; \$10.0 million for professional development to reduce burnout and workforce attrition; \$3.0 million for ECEC research to investigate delivery models and strengthen the workforce pipeline; and up to \$6.5 million for leadership, management and financial capability development in ECEC.

The NSW Government will also consult with the sector on financial incentives to support the workforce, including a trial to provide free or low-cost ECEC for the children of teachers and educators in the ECEC services in which they work.

There are several major reviews relating to ECEC underway. The Australian Government is currently developing a national Early Years Strategy. Alongside this, the Australian Productivity Commission is undertaking an inquiry into the ECEC sector, and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is conducting an inquiry into the market for the supply of childcare services. The NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal is also reviewing the NSW ECEC sector to better understand affordability, accessibility, and consumer choice.

Findings from these reviews will inform ongoing investment in, and reform of, the NSW ECEC sector to ensure the sector delivers positive outcomes for children and provides more opportunities for parents, particularly women, to participate in the workforce.

# Participation and empowerment



4



## 4.1 Improving employment opportunities and skills development

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$8.0 million to establish a new Working Women’s Centre to help women navigate workplace issues including sexual harassment, underpayment, wage theft, and parental leave.
- \$5.8 million in 2023-24 to establish a Future Women’s Jobs Academy to support women to become job ready and boost women’s workforce participation.

Increasing women’s participation in all aspects of society is fundamental to gender equality. Equal representation means women and girls have the opportunity to be heard, influence decisions that affect them, and contribute to the economy.

Increasing women’s participation at all levels will also contribute to reducing the gender pay gap, improving workplace cultures, and addressing workforce shortages.

### Increasing female representation in traditionally male-dominated industries continues to be challenging

The NSW Government has an important role to play in increasing employment opportunities and skills development for women, particularly in male-dominated industries. As an employer, the Government can boost female representation through apprenticeships and traineeships. This Budget commits \$93.5 million to hire 1,000 additional apprentices and trainees across the New South Wales public sector by 2026. In addition, the Government will set targets for on-the-job training in agencies such as Sydney Water, Essential Energy, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Homes NSW and NSW Energy Security Corporation.



**\$5.8  
million**

to establish the Future Women’s Jobs Academy



**\$8.0  
million**

to establish a new Working Women’s Centre to help women navigate workplace issues

## Case study: NSW Women in Construction Program

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The NSW Women in Construction Program (the Program) aims to improve diversity and culture in the construction industry and attract more women into the sector in trade and non-traditional roles.<sup>106</sup>

This is important as more women in the male-dominated construction industry will help to reduce industry segregation and enhance gender equality.

In partnership with the Department of Education, Infrastructure NSW is responsible for delivering the Program and is working collaboratively with the construction industry to achieve program aims.

Currently, women make up approximately 13 per cent of the construction sector<sup>107</sup> with only 2 per cent of trade-based roles held by women.<sup>108</sup> The Program is trialling a target of 4 per cent women in trade roles and 7 per cent women in non-traditional roles on select government infrastructure projects for 2023-24.<sup>109</sup> Early reporting indicates that these targets are on track to be met.

The NSW Government is increasing reporting on the participation of women in construction. From 1 September 2023, all new NSW Government construction projects valued more than \$10 million will be required to report on the number of women working in trade and non-traditional roles.<sup>110</sup>

Infrastructure NSW has progressed other key actions under the Program:

- partnering with the Culture in Construction Taskforce to improve industry culture and workplace flexibility, including piloting the 5-day work week on select major government infrastructure projects
- launching the Women in Construction Industry Innovation Program, a grants program which will allocate up to \$10 million over three years to support industry initiatives that encourage female participation and retention in the construction industry
- launching the Women in Construction website which outlines career path information for students and parents, and is a key resource hub for industry and employers
- developing a behaviour change campaign to influence positive behaviours on construction sites.



## Targeted support can help women to overcome barriers and boost participation

Targeted support can help women to enter or re-enter the workforce, particularly following a career break. The NSW Government will invest \$5.8 million in 2023-24 to establish the Future Women's Jobs Academy to help boost women's workforce participation. The Academy will support women to become job ready through an online resource hub, professional development, coaching and mentoring.

In addition, the NSW Government, with the support of the Australian Government, will establish a new Working Women's Centre. This centre will support women to navigate workplace issues including sexual harassment, underpayment, wage theft, and parental leave.

The NSW Government remains committed to creating safer workplaces that reflect recommendations from the Australian Human Rights Commission's 'Respect@ Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report'.<sup>111</sup> The SafeWork NSW Respect at Work Taskforce will target the prevention and elimination of workplace gender-based harms, with the inaugural SafeWork NSW Respect at Work Strategy to be released shortly.

The SafeWork NSW Respect at Work Taskforce will target the prevention and elimination of workplace gender-based harms.

## Case study: Skills and training boost for women facing disadvantage

An innovative government initiative is investing in job-focused social enterprises that advance the economic wellbeing of women facing disadvantage.

Social enterprises that provide employment, or pathways to employment, are a growing model both locally and globally for supporting those most disadvantaged in the labour market. These businesses are making a significant contribution to their communities and economy.

After an open and competitive selection process, five social enterprises have been selected to deliver this initiative to support around 650 women, equipping them with the skills needed to achieve sustained employment or start their own business.

These programs are targeted towards women, including single mothers on parenting payments, female ex-offenders, unemployed young women, female refugees and victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

These programs were designed with and for women. Outcomes of the social impact investment are rigorously measured, and payments are linked to the achievement of outcomes.



## Case study: Pathways to Prosperity: First Nations Women’s Economic Participation Review



According to the 2021 Census, 56.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women participate in the workforce, compared to 59.1 per cent for non-Indigenous women.<sup>112</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women face distinct barriers, such as discrimination and racism, intergenerational trauma, a lack of intergenerational wealth and remoteness.

[\*The Pathways to Prosperity:  
First Nations Women’s  
Economic Participation Review\*](#)

is the first step in identifying how the NSW Government can better support First Nations women to access and participate in the economy in ways that align with their aspirations.

Released in August 2023, the Review provides a policy framework and problem definition to guide the NSW Government to build effective policy responses that will meet the current and future needs of First Nations women. Informed by an independent First Nations Women’s Expert Advisory Panel, the Review acknowledges that to support First Nations women to participate in the economy, we must first understand what economic prosperity means to First Nations people.

The Review provides a baseline of First Nations women’s current economic participation and identifies five areas that could help elevate their economic potential:

1. Put First Nations women at the centre of decision-making and delivery of programs targeted at increasing their economic participation.
2. Support First Nations women to be homeowners, improve access to culturally appropriate childcare services and domestic and family violence support.
3. Enable First Nations girls to achieve their full learning potential with culturally safe and flexible education options and community-led mentoring programs.
4. Evaluate current anti-discrimination policies and regulation, in consultation with the First Nations community.
5. Foster a supportive environment for First Nations female entrepreneurs and social enterprises with targeted procurement, business and mentoring initiatives.

## 4.2. Creating safer and accessible public spaces

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$300.0 million to expand the Transport Access Program to upgrade train stations and commuter car parks to make them more accessible, safe, and secure.

Being able to access public spaces and public transport is fundamental to participation in the economy and society. The design of public spaces is often considered gender-neutral, however, evidence highlights women and girls have different needs. It is essential to understand and address these needs through the planning and design of public spaces.

### Safety is a key concern for women and girls in public spaces and when using public transport

Research and engagement have shown that women, girls and gender diverse people tend to feel less safe in public spaces and when moving to, through and within transport hubs. Their perception of safety can impact their mobility.<sup>113</sup>

The NSW Government's Safer Cities Survey conducted from December 2022 to February 2023 revealed seven key insights about the perceptions of safety in NSW public spaces and transport hubs:

1. Most women do not feel safe in public spaces after dark, with 42 per cent of women surveyed responding that they felt unsafe after dark 'most' or 'all of the time'.
2. Women are twice as likely to feel unsafe after dark (59 per cent) as men (31 per cent).
3. A sense of safety influences the routes people choose, with 92 per cent of women and 75 per cent of men reporting that a sense of safety impacted their chosen transport routes.
4. People reported that if they felt safer, they would walk, catch public transport and go out more during the day and at night.
5. Both women and men felt safest in public spaces where there were plenty of people around.
6. Certain groups have different perceptions of safety in public spaces and transport hubs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, LGBTQIA+ women, women and men with disability, women under 25, and women over 75.
7. After dark, 68 per cent of women in regional New South Wales reported feeling unsafe in public spaces compared to 57 per cent of women in metropolitan areas.<sup>114</sup>

Community members, particularly women and gender-diverse people, who feel unsafe when using public spaces may alter their behaviour. They may avoid travelling alone at night, avoid using public transport or avoid public spaces altogether.<sup>115</sup> Safety concerns can impact their employment and education opportunities as well as access to health care and other services, which can then negatively impact their long-term economic outcomes.

In addition to safety concerns, women may face access challenges as some public spaces, including some train stations, do not provide adequate access to sanitary facilities, baby change rooms and lifts to accommodate parents with prams and children.

### **The NSW Government is committed to ensuring public spaces are safe and accessible**

This Budget commits an extra \$300.0 million to expand the Transport Access Program to upgrade train stations and commuter car parks to make them more accessible, safe, and secure, as well as improve their amenities. The delivery of the current

tranche of the Transport Access Program is due for completion in 2024. This will make public transport more accessible for people with disability or limited mobility, and parents with prams. This will also support a more integrated network across all modes of transport.

This Budget continues investment in the Safer Cities Program. Transport for NSW is working with delivery partners and ten local councils to trial interventions to improve safety in NSW cities and towns, especially for women, girls and gender diverse people. Transport for NSW is also developing a public education campaign to focus on improving safety and reducing harassment.

The NSW Government has allocated \$3.9 million to support the former Darlinghurst Police Station to be transformed into a permanent home for the LGBTQIA+ museum, Qtopia Sydney. The museum will present exhibitions that explore the LGBTQIA+ community through the lens of history, culture and art. The museum is intended to be a safe space for people to explore their identity.



## Case study: Safer Cities Program

Led by Transport for NSW, the \$30.0 million Safer Cities program aims to:

- increase women and girls' safety and access to public spaces
- enable women and girls to move independently in their community
- increase women and girls' engagement with how the spaces around them are designed and managed.

The Safer Cities program is engaging with women, girls and gender diverse people to understand their perspectives and co-design place-based approaches to create safer, more welcoming experiences when walking to, through and within public spaces.



One intervention under the program involved temporary lighting and wayfinding installations in the Moore Park Precinct during the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup™. The lighting installations were co-designed with a group of students from Sydney Girls High School.

## 4.3 Celebrating women in sport

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$30.0 million for the Level the Playing Field Female Facilities Fund to provide grants of between \$200,000 and \$2.0 million for new or upgraded sports facilities.
- \$17.7 million over three years to increase support to State Sporting Organisations.
- \$250,000 to support the ongoing delivery and expansion of Sport NSW's Fast Track for Female Coaches and other female sporting leadership programs.
- A Stadium Australia stand will be named after a female sporting icon.



In recent years, engagement in women's sport has increased markedly with dominance of Australian women's teams and athletes, record crowds, and unprecedented broadcast deals and television audiences.<sup>116</sup> Alongside increased engagement with women's sport, Australian women have been participating more in physical activity over the past two decades.<sup>117</sup> Notwithstanding this progress, more is needed to ensure more women and girls enjoy the benefits of sports participation and an active lifestyle.

### **The profile of women's sport is rapidly rising but a lack of pay equity remains**

The increase in prominence of women's sport over recent years has been remarkable. This was clear at the record-breaking 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup™ hosted in Australia and New Zealand, which set a new attendance record for the tournament and was watched by millions around the world.

Elite female athletes are increasingly being recognised for their skill and dedication, but they continue to be paid significantly less than their male counterparts.<sup>118</sup> The lack of pay equity in sport reflects historical and current undervaluation and underinvestment in women's sport, as well as limited elite level opportunities for women in their chosen sport.<sup>119</sup>

This is exemplified by netball, which despite being one of Australia's most played sports, still faces persistent undervaluation of its elite players, as highlighted by the Australian Diamonds receiving zero prize money for winning the 2023 Netball World Cup.

Pay equity for athletes is a focus of the Australian Champions of Change Coalition Sport Group which was established in 2015 and includes representatives from

major sporting organisations, including the National Rugby League, Football Australia, Tennis Australia, and Cricket Australia.

The latest progress report released by the Australian Champions of Change Coalition Sport Group showed that only 12.5 per cent of member organisations had achieved pay equity at the elite level,<sup>120</sup> highlighting that in the absence of significant action, pay equity is unlikely to be achieved in the short term.

### **More girls are participating in regular physical activity**

Participation in regular physical activity and sport, particularly team-based sport, contributes to positive social, health and mental health outcomes.<sup>121</sup>

While recent data shows the sport participation gap between girls and boys is closing, it also highlights that only 23.0 per cent of girls aged 5-14 years in New South Wales are regularly participating in sport.<sup>122</sup> Participation rates are lower for girls from some culturally and linguistically diverse groups, and from lower income households.<sup>123</sup>



## Case study: 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup™

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From 20 July to 20 August 2023, Australia and New Zealand co-hosted the largest FIFA Women's World Cup™ on record. Sydney hosted 603,957 football fans across 11 matches and 250,084 visitors to the FIFA Fan Festival™ site in Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour. These results are the largest of the nine host cities and represent more than one third of the total attendance at the record-breaking tournament.

Stadium Australia's semi-final match between Australia and England was the most-watched television program in Australia in more than two decades, with an average audience of 7.2 million and a reach of 11.15 million.

According to financial infrastructure platform Airwallex, there was a \$2.98 billion rise in travel and retail spending in New South Wales directly linked to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup™.

The NSW Government's commitment to commissioning a giant mural at Stadium Australia to celebrate the Matildas' success and the legacy funding delivered by the Office of Sport reflects the momentum of this significant global event for Sydney and New South Wales.

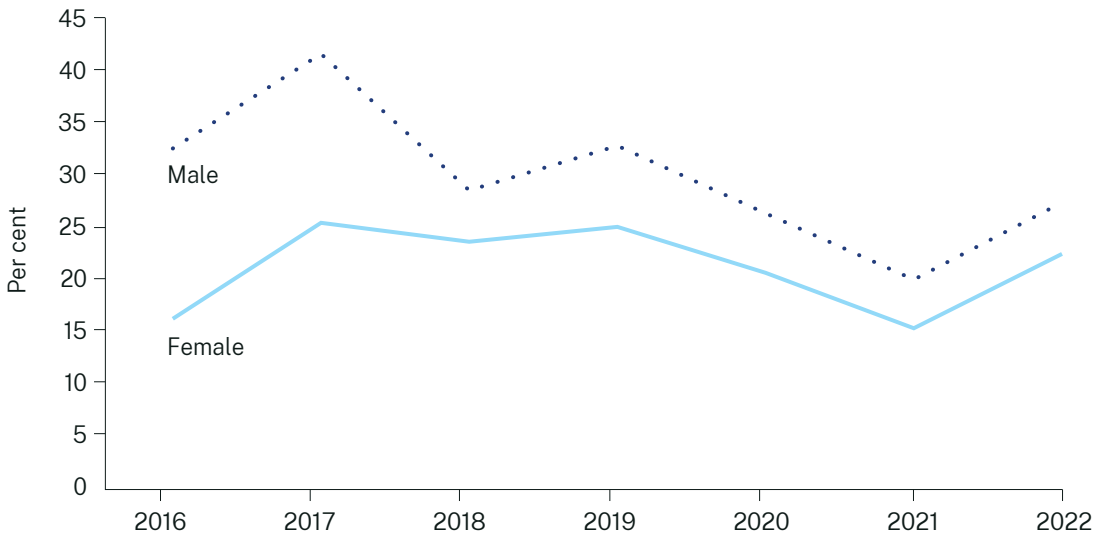
The NSW Football Legacy Fund ensures the benefits of New South Wales hosting the tournament will continue. This Fund aims to improve football facilities and support infrastructure, increase participation opportunities, and improve female player pathways.

Round 2 of the NSW Football Legacy Fund will support projects under two streams, Infrastructure and Participation:

- \$2,671,000 is available for infrastructure projects, including upgrading existing or constructing new football facilities that demonstrate inclusive and accessible design and maximise community participation.
- \$560,000 is available for participation projects, including programs to support increased football participation and leadership. Priority will be given to projects that contribute to greater gender equity in football or the applicant organisation.

Projects under Round 2 of the Fund are expected to commence in November 2023.

**Chart 4.1: Proportion of NSW children aged 5-14 participating in sport at least three times per week over time**



Source: Australian Sports Commission 2023, *Sport-related participation – Frequency of participation (NSW children aged 5-14), Calendar Years 2016 – 2022*. AusPlay Data Portal.

In 2022, 62.8 per cent of NSW women aged 15 years or older participated in physical activity at least three times per week, slightly more than the 59.4 per cent figure for men.<sup>124</sup> However, as with girls, women are less likely than men to participate in organised sport.<sup>125</sup>

Facilitators of participation in organised sport include parental and family support, peer interaction and social engagement, positive, safe, and accessible facilities, and a desire to maintain physical health and fitness.<sup>126</sup> Cost, other commitments, lack of confidence and a fear of being judged are barriers for women and girls.<sup>127</sup>

As part of the NSW Government’s commitment to increasing participation in sport by women and girls, this Budget invests \$30.0 million to establish the Level the Playing Field Female Facilities Fund. This will fund sporting organisations to deliver new and upgraded facilities including change rooms and bathrooms, new playing areas and lighting to allow increased safety and playing capacity.



**\$30.0  
million**

to establish the Level the Playing Field Female Facilities Fund



This Budget also invests a further \$17.7 million over three years in the Organisation Support Program. This program assists sporting bodies to build capacity, invest in governance and deliver sport and recreation activities at all levels in New South Wales. In addition to their current outcomes, the Office of Sport will agree on new outcomes with State Sporting Organisations on how funded programs will increase women and girls' participation in sport.

### Despite progress, women continue to be underrepresented in coaching and leadership roles at all levels of sport

Despite increased participation and engagement with women's sport, roles in leadership, coaching and officiating continue to be male-dominated.<sup>128</sup>

Shifting biases and providing more pathways for women to fill leadership roles in sport is critical to improving gender equality. In addition, there is increasing evidence that greater gender diversity in leadership and governance improves organisational performance.<sup>129</sup>

Despite some progress over recent years, in New South Wales, only 37.1 per cent of State Sporting Organisations have 50 per cent or more female representation on their board and only one third have a female Chief Executive Officer.<sup>130</sup>

Shifting biases and providing more pathways for women to fill leadership roles in sport is critical to improving gender equality.



**37.1%**

of State Sporting Organisations have 50 per cent or more female representation on their board

Coaches have a significant role within every sporting organisation to promote participation, influence culture, and improve individual and team performance. However, due to a range of factors, including perceptions that women are not ‘tough enough’ for elite sport, coaching is another role where women are under-represented.<sup>131</sup>

In New South Wales, 38 per cent of volunteer coach, instructor or trainer roles were held by women in 2021.<sup>132</sup> At the high-performance coaching level, 33 per cent of coaches employed by the NSW Institute of Sport are female, and 24 per cent of coaches in combined codes of W-League, Women’s Big Bash League, Women’s Basketball League and National Rugby League Women are female.<sup>133</sup>

Enabling more women to be coaches from grassroots to elite levels recognises the valuable skills and experiences that female coaches can bring and will create a more inclusive and diverse sports culture.

The NSW Government is investing a further \$250,000 to support the ongoing delivery and expansion of Sport NSW’s Fast Track for Female Coaches and other female sporting leadership programs. These targeted programs aim to build capability, provide mentoring, and further develop the leadership and coaching capabilities of women in sport.

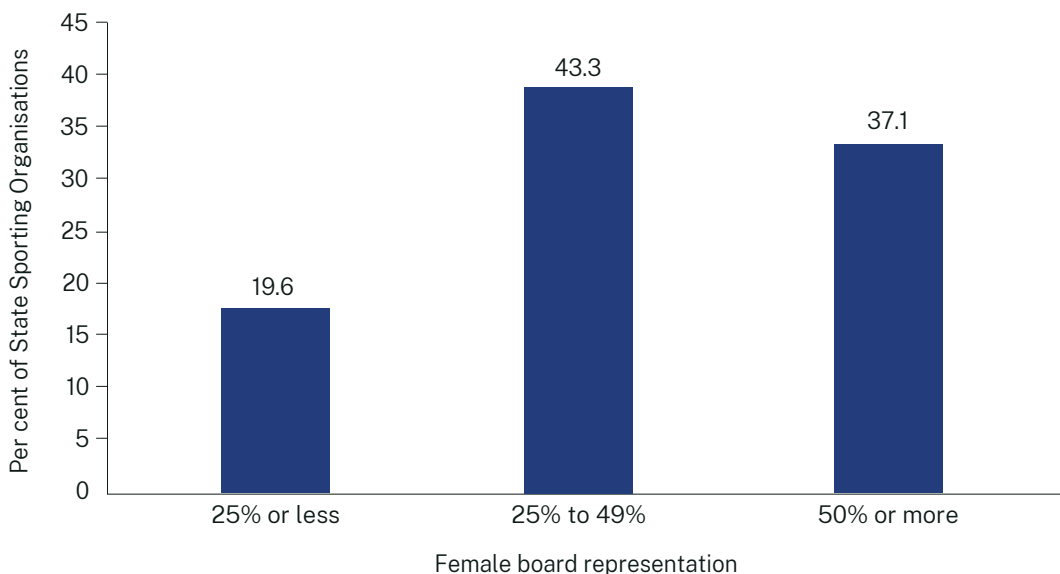
Coaches have a significant role within every sporting organisation.



33%

of coaches employed by the NSW Institute of Sport are female

**Chart 4.2: Female representation on NSW State Sporting Organisation boards 2021-22**



Source: NSW Office of Sport 2022, *State Sporting Organisational Health Survey – Results 2017/18 – 2021/22*.

# Health and wellbeing



5

## 5.1 Improving wellbeing by alleviating cost-of-living pressures

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$481.0 million to the National Energy Bill Relief Fund to help ease the impact of rising electricity costs for eligible households and small businesses.
- \$224.0 million Essential Housing Package to deliver better housing outcomes including for public and social housing tenants.
- \$170.8 million in salary packaging benefits for more than 50,000 healthcare workers to boost take-home pay and improve retention rates.

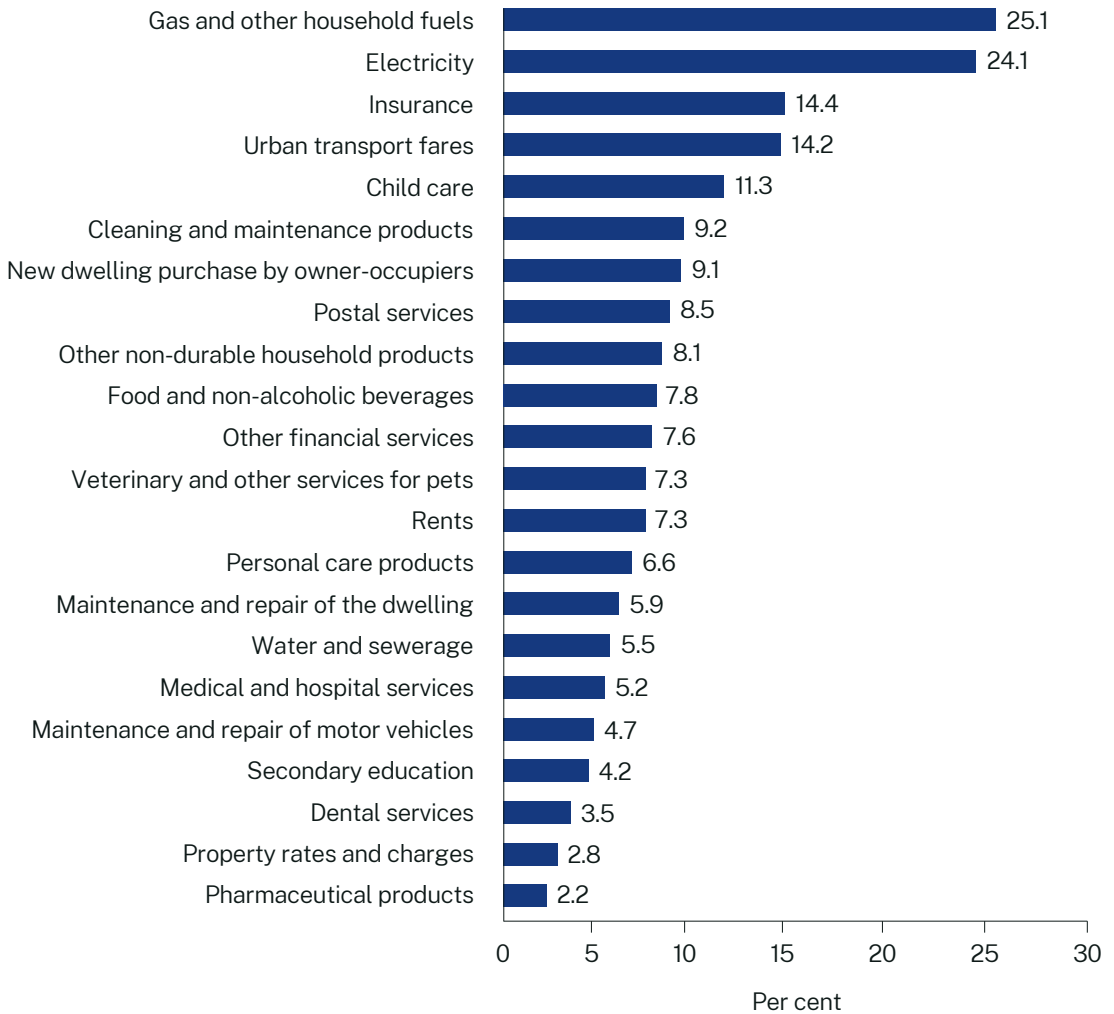
### The rising cost of living is impacting women's financial security and mental health

In December 2022, New South Wales and Australia experienced the highest inflation in the last 30 years. Over the 12 months to June 2023, the costs of essential goods and services increased by 6.9 per cent in Sydney,<sup>134</sup> with the cost of gas, electricity, insurance, travel fares, childcare and food increasing significantly (see Chart 5.1).<sup>135</sup> The cost of essential spending accounted for 58.5 per cent of household expenditure nationally in 2022.<sup>136</sup>

Although the rising cost of living impacts everyone, women as a cohort are likely to be more impacted than men because they are paid 11.8 per cent less than men on average.<sup>137</sup> Rising prices, especially for essential items, mean women spend a greater proportion of their income on everyday living expenses, thereby reducing their disposable income and savings. This can negatively impact their immediate and long-term financial security and broader quality of life.



**Chart 5.1: Percentage change from previous year, selected items, Sydney**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Consumer Price Index*, June Quarter 2023

In a 2023 survey of 7,000 women, 59 per cent reported that their mental health had worsened due to rising costs of living, with young and middle-aged women living in regional areas particularly impacted.<sup>138</sup> Almost one in three women (31 per cent) reported not seeking help for their worsening mental health because they could not afford it.<sup>139</sup>

The NSW Government is committed to providing targeted cost-of-living support to the people of New South Wales. To help ease the impact of rising electricity costs, this Budget will provide eligible low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, families, and carers with up to \$500 towards their electricity bills. Eligible small businesses will also receive a payment of up to \$650 towards their bills. Further relief will be provided for eligible families, seniors and low-income households in 2024-25.





This Budget commits \$170.8 million to increase the employee share of tax savings derived from salary packaging arrangements from 50 to 70 per cent for more than 50,000 healthcare workers (who are disproportionately women). This measure is intended to boost take-home pay and improve retention rates.

To support families with the cost of ECEC, the NSW Government will continue to provide \$4,220 per year in preschool fee relief for 3-to-5-year-olds in community and mobile preschools, and \$2,110 per year for children aged 4 and above in eligible long day care settings.

In addition, the NSW Government will trial \$500 preschool fee relief for 3-year-olds in eligible long day care centres effective January 2024, which will support up to 64,000 children and their families.

### **The rising cost of housing is particularly challenging for single women, single mothers and women experiencing domestic and family violence**

Over the year to June 2023, according to Sydney CPI, rents increased by 7.3 per cent and new dwelling prices increased by 9.1 per cent.<sup>140</sup>

As at May 2023, the median weekly rent was \$723 for Sydney and \$549 for regional New South Wales.<sup>141</sup> A woman living in Sydney earning the average female full-time weekly pay of \$1,697.00 would need to spend 42.6 per cent of her gross weekly pay on rent,<sup>142</sup> if she is able to find a rental given the vacancy rate is 1.4 per cent.<sup>143</sup> A man in Sydney earning the average male full-time weekly pay of \$1,924.80 would need to spend 37.6 per cent of weekly pay on rent.<sup>144</sup>

Data from CoreLogic’s analysis on the gendered pattern of home ownership shows that in New South Wales, sole-female ownership accounted for 30.6 per cent of the sampled housing stock and sole-male ownership accounted for 33.7 per cent, highlighting a 3.1 percentage point gap.<sup>145</sup>

Table 5.1 below highlights the gender disparities in the time taken to save for a 20 per cent deposit on a unit or a house in Sydney and New South Wales.

**Table 5.1: Time to save for housing deposit for females and males**

Dwelling types	Median Price	20% Deposit	Years to save for deposit	
			(Females)*	(Males)*
Median House, Sydney	\$1,360,000	\$272,000	15.4	13.6
Median House, rest of NSW	\$726,000	\$145,200	8.2	7.3
Median Units, Sydney	\$822,000	\$164,400	9.3	8.2
Median Units, rest of NSW	\$571,000	\$114,200	6.5	5.7

Source: CoreLogic 2023, *Hedonic Home Value Index*, September 2023.

\*Note: This figure is calculated based on the assumptions of an individual saving 20 per cent of his/her weekly pre-tax income, using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Average Weekly Earnings Australia*, May 2023. Since the earning figure is before-tax, the actual time taken to save for a deposit will likely be higher.

The rising cost of housing is particularly challenging for single women, single mothers and people experiencing domestic and family violence (67.2 per cent of whom are women<sup>146</sup>). Higher rents and lack of affordable housing can lead to women becoming homeless.<sup>147</sup> It can also result in some domestic and family violence victim-survivors remaining with abusive partners.<sup>148</sup>

The NSW Government is establishing Homes NSW and a \$224.0 million Essential Housing Package to deliver better housing outcomes for public and social housing tenants. The Package will deliver more affordable and social housing, and support people experiencing homelessness in New South Wales.

The NSW Government will appoint a state-first NSW Rental Commissioner to examine how to make renting in New South Wales fairer, more affordable and more secure. It will also implement a Portable Rental Bonds Scheme.

Supporting access to home ownership is a priority. The expanded First Home Buyers Assistance Scheme will support first home buyers with a transfer duty exemption for purchases up to \$800,000, and a concessional rate for purchases above \$800,000 and less than \$1 million.

## 5.2 Making it easier to access essential health care

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

- \$34.3 million to support 20 Women's Health Centres to continue delivering essential health, mental health and social support services to NSW women.
- \$18.6 million for 29 new and eight existing McGrath Foundation breast care nurses.
- \$7.3 million to support participating pharmacists to provide treatment for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs) and manage supply of the oral contraceptive pill.
- \$3.5 million to improve women's access to reproductive health services, including in regional New South Wales.

Good health is fundamental to women's economic and social participation, but accessing quality and affordable health care can be challenging, especially for women from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those in regional and remote locations. The NSW Government will continue to invest in essential health services to ensure the people of New South Wales can access quality care in their community.

### Women spend more on health care compared to men

Research by the Grattan Institute indicates that women carry a higher health care cost burden and spend more out-of-pocket on health than men, with younger women in particular spending more compared to men their age. This is attributed to a number of factors, including maternal health care costs and higher rates of multiple chronic conditions for women.<sup>149</sup>

Cost can be a significant barrier to accessing health services. As NSW women on average are paid 11.8 per cent less than

men, women face additional challenges in affording the cost of care.<sup>150</sup> More women than men report cost as a reason for delaying or not getting prescription medication when needed.<sup>151</sup> Women are also more likely than men to delay or not see general practitioners, specialists and dentists due to cost.<sup>152</sup>

A 2022 survey of over 14,000 women in Australia found that 44 per cent of respondents could not afford to see a doctor or other health professional when they needed to.<sup>153</sup> This issue was more prevalent among women from non-English speaking backgrounds (70 per cent), women with disability (62 per cent), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (53 per cent), and LGBTI<sup>154</sup> women (57 per cent).<sup>155</sup>

Access to general practitioners often requires a waiting period, particularly for people living in regional or rural areas.<sup>156</sup> This can lead to delays in accessing prescription medication and treatments, and increased pressure on hospital emergency departments.

This Budget invests \$7.3 million towards improving access to early treatment and prescription medications (if appropriate) by supporting participating pharmacists to provide treatment for uncomplicated UTIs and manage supply of the oral contraceptive pill. This measure will be particularly beneficial for women. Around one in two women will get a UTI in their lifetime, compared to one in 20 men.<sup>157</sup>

## **Women's health centres provide essential services to women across the State**

Women's Health Centres play an important role in providing primary health care to women, supporting an average of 50,000 women of all ages each year in New South Wales. The centres have a focus on supporting disadvantaged groups in the community, including women from lower socio-economic backgrounds.<sup>158</sup>

The centres aim to blend medical and clinical services and a range of counselling, health promotion, education, self-help and consumer advocacy services for women who may have otherwise only received care and support via the tertiary emergency system.

Services are generally free, heavily discounted, donation-based or charged on a sliding scale.<sup>159</sup> A survey of referrers to Women's Health Centres found two-thirds of respondents reported that 75 per cent or more of their clients would be unable to access the services they require if the centres were not available.<sup>160</sup>

The NSW Government is committed to improving women's health. This Budget invests \$34.3 million to support 20 Women's Health Centres to continue delivering a range of health and support services to NSW women.

## **Specialist support for people experiencing breast cancer can lead to better patient outcomes**

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer for women in Australia.<sup>161</sup> Approximately one in eight women in New South Wales will be diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85.<sup>162</sup> While men can and do experience breast cancer it disproportionately affects women, representing 27.7 per cent of female cancer cases in New South Wales, compared to 0.2 per cent of male cases.<sup>163</sup>

Breast screening is recommended to detect breast cancer early, with women aged between 50 and 74 years encouraged to have a free screening mammogram every two years. A screening takes approximately 20 minutes and does not require a doctor's referral.

The NSW Government is committed to supporting breast cancer patients, investing \$18.6 million in this Budget for 29 new and eight existing McGrath Foundation breast care nurses. These nurses provide patients and their families with physical, emotional, and psychological support and coordinate care from the time of diagnosis and throughout treatment. Positions will be located across Greater Sydney and regional New South Wales, with the objective that every person experiencing breast cancer in the State can receive free care and support from a breast cancer nurse.

Funding for Women's Health Centres, McGrath Foundation breastcare nurses, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and medical and forensic officers (see section 5.3) form part of the \$100 million women's health package.

## Access to reproductive and sexual health care is critical to women's health

Better reproductive and sexual health care is integral to improving women's health outcomes. This care encompasses contraception, testing and treatment for sexually transmissible infections, cervical cancer screening, management of menstrual and gynaecological issues, and pregnancy planning and options counselling. It also includes safe access to abortion care, following the *Abortion Law Reform Act 2019*, which ensures abortion is treated as a health issue.

Reproductive and sexual health care mainly takes place in the primary care setting through general practitioners, non-government organisations and private

providers, including family planning clinics and Aboriginal Medical Services. It can be difficult for women to locate reproductive and sexual health services, particularly in regional and rural areas of New South Wales. Access to abortion services is particularly challenging for women in regional and rural areas, with some having to travel long distances to access this service.<sup>164</sup>

Research suggests there is still unmet need for family planning in Australia.<sup>165</sup> Access to safe and affordable contraception is critical to women's health, as unintended pregnancies can result in poorer pregnancy outcomes than planned pregnancies.<sup>166</sup>

This Budget commits \$3.5 million to improve women's access to reproductive health services, including in regional New South Wales.



## 5.3 Reducing domestic, family and sexual violence in New South Wales

### NSW Budget 2023-24 highlights

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- \$52.7 million for 48 new Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and medical and forensic officers.
- \$39.1 million to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence and support victim safety, including:
  - \$8.1 million to continue and expand the Redfern Legal Centre Financial Abuse Service NSW
  - \$6.6 million in 2023-24 for specialist children and young people workers in 20 refuges
  - \$6.1 million to extend and expand the Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service Hearing Support pilot
  - \$4.4 million over three years to establish a new specialist multicultural domestic and family violence centre in southwest Sydney
  - \$4.3 million in 2023-24 to extend the service delivery of 12 community-based prevention, early intervention and crisis projects
  - \$4.2 million to increase the capacity of the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline
  - \$2.1 million over two years to fund a pilot program of Sexual Violence Liaison Officers in five Police Area Commands to work with survivors of sexual violence
  - \$2.0 million to refurbish the Illawarra Women’s Trauma Recovery Centre
  - \$1.4 million for co-location of Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service workers in police stations.
- \$3.5 million to enable thorough examination of substantial evidence and finalisation of the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes.
- Victim-survivors will be provided with access to the Rentstart Bond Loan program without having to meet existing income eligibility criteria.

## Domestic, family and sexual violence has significant social and economic costs

Approximately 37 per cent of women in New South Wales have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15.<sup>167</sup> Women are more likely than men to experience violence by someone known to them, with one in four women experiencing violence by a family member or intimate partner.<sup>168</sup>

The rate of domestic violence assault incidents in New South Wales has increased by 3 per cent annually over the past five years.<sup>169</sup> Notably, research shows significant increases in violence against women in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, including 60,000 NSW women experiencing family and domestic violence for the first time and 46,000 women experiencing an escalation in violence.<sup>170</sup>

In addition to the personal cost, it is estimated that the escalation in domestic and family violence during 2020 will cost New South Wales \$3.3 billion between 2020 and 2025, through reduced participation and productivity, private and public health costs, and increased consumption costs such as costs associated with property damage.<sup>171</sup>

A recent study found women with a history of intimate partner violence have higher lifetime health costs than women who do not experience intimate partner violence.<sup>172</sup> The health impacts of intimate partner violence include short-term physical injuries and long-term effects such as increased rates of chronic conditions, sexually transmissible infections, alcohol disorders and mental health conditions.<sup>173</sup>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are three times more likely to experience domestic and family violence, compared to non-Indigenous women.<sup>174</sup> The severity of this violence is significantly higher, with hospitalisations for domestic and family violence seven times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women than non-Indigenous women in New South Wales.<sup>175</sup> The NSW Government is developing an Aboriginal Family and Sexual Violence Plan to help achieve Target 13 of Closing the Gap, to reduce all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children by at least 50 per cent by 2031.

A recent national survey of 1,392 migrant and refugee women across Australia found that approximately one in three have experienced some form of domestic and family violence.<sup>176</sup> In particular, temporary visa holders report higher levels of violence, including migration-specific controlling behaviours such as threatening deportation or withdrawal of sponsorship.<sup>177</sup> Migrant and refugee women are less likely than non-migrant women to seek help in response to domestic and family violence for a range of reasons, including limited knowledge of available services and language barriers.<sup>178</sup>

Among a suite of domestic and family violence measures, this Budget commits \$4.4 million over three years to establish a new specialist multicultural domestic and family violence centre in southwest Sydney. The centre will provide a holistic and culturally appropriate response to domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence victim-survivors will be able to access the Rentstart Bond Loan program without having to meet existing income eligibility criteria. The program provides interest-free loans to assist with the cost of setting up a new private rental. This measure will make bond loan payments available to clients escaping domestic and family violence, regardless of their income, and may also include a grant of two weeks advanced rent which is required to establish a tenancy.

The NSW Government is also expanding access to the Shared Equity Home Buyer Helper trial to include domestic and family violence victim-survivors. This follows recommendations to improve victim-survivor long-term housing outcomes made by the Domestic and Family Violence Shared Equity Scheme Taskforce.

The NSW Government is committed to increasing the capacity of support services to respond to people impacted by sexual violence. It will invest \$4.2 million to increase the capacity of the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline, which is operated by Full

Stop Australia. This includes a one-off funding increase of \$500,000 in 2023-24 to increase service accessibility to priority populations. Currently, Full Stop Australia reports that a marked increase in calls to the helpline has resulted in almost one-in-three calls not being answered.<sup>179</sup> The increase in funding will enable Full Stop Australia to be sufficiently staffed to answer all calls to the hotline.

Violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression persists for members of the LGBTQIA+ community and needs to be addressed and prevented. The NSW Government has allocated \$3.5 million to extend the reporting deadline of the Special Commission of Inquiry on LGBTIQ hate crimes to 15 December 2023.<sup>180</sup> The Inquiry is examining the manner and cause of death in all unsolved suspected hate crime deaths in New South Wales that occurred between 1970 and 2010 where the victim was a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. The decision to extend the deadline is a response to the substantial evidence submitted to the Inquiry.





# Gender equality in government decision-making



## Gender-responsive budgeting is increasingly used to promote gender equality

Gender-responsive budgeting involves applying a gender lens to decision-making and the budget process in order to progress gender equality. Various practices sit under the umbrella of 'gender-responsive budgeting' including gender budget statements and gender impact assessments. Approximately half of OECD countries have adopted some form of gender-responsive budgeting, as have most Australian jurisdictions.<sup>181</sup>

This is the second NSW budget statement focused on women and gender issues. Gender budget statements are a useful tool to promote accountability and transparency in resource allocation.

## NSW Treasury is piloting gender impact assessments on new policy proposals

Gender impact assessments examine how a proposed policy, program or project may have different impacts on people based on their gender; this includes women, men and gender-diverse people. Gender impact assessments can improve government interventions by embedding gender equality considerations into policy design and implementation.



## NSW Treasury Gender Impact Assessment Pilot

As part of the NSW Government's commitment to gender-responsive budgeting, NSW Treasury applied a gender lens to a small number of new policy proposals. The primary aim of this gender impact assessment pilot was to consider the most appropriate way of embedding a gender lens in the NSW budget process.

Reflections from this pilot will inform future approaches to gender-responsive budgeting in New South Wales.

### Fast Track for Female Coaches Program

The funding boost for the Fast Track for Female Coaches program is an important step to addressing the under-representation of women in sports coaching roles. This benefits not only the women participating in the program, but also the women and girls who will benefit from more female coaching role models.

By building confidence and capability of female coaches in a tailored environment, Fast Track for Female Coaches seeks to increase the number of women who are sufficiently prepared and qualified to take on coaching opportunities when they arise.



Notwithstanding the merit of Fast Track for Female Coaches, a gender impact assessment shows that further interventions are needed to address fundamental barriers including, stereotypes, ingrained biases, sexism, and bullying which prevent women from becoming coaches, particularly at the high-performance level.

Applying a gender lens highlights that without addressing these critical issues, which are the result of entrenched social norms and organisational cultures, the impact of upskilling individual female coaches may be limited.

## Secure jobs and funding certainty for community services

Applying a gender lens to a proposal for a taskforce to address job security and funding certainty in the community sector reveals the gender composition of two groups likely to be impacted by this initiative:

- **Community sector workforce:** Women make up the majority of the NSW community sector workforce, half of which is estimated to be in insecure employment (casual or fixed term employment).<sup>182</sup> This group of women is likely to benefit from any improvements to job security, pay, conditions or career progression opportunities that flow from this proposal.

- **Community service users:** People of all genders access community services, with rates of usage varying depending on the specific service. Any improvements to support a stable community services workforce will likely also improve service sustainability. This will have flow-on benefits to service users, including women, men and gender diverse people.

Applying a gender lens helps the NSW Government to identify impacted cohorts, so that their needs can be considered and addressed in the design and implementation of policy interventions.



## The roll-out of Gender Equality Action Plans for NSW Government agencies has commenced

Gender Equality Action Plans are being piloted by some NSW Government agencies including NSW Treasury. Gender Equality Action Plans aim to address gender inequality by ensuring NSW Government agencies proactively champion gender equality in their workforce strategies, and when developing and delivering policies, programs, services and legislation.

Together, Gender Equality Action Plans and gender impact assessments can help shift the way policymakers think about policy design and service delivery to better address the needs of all people in New South Wales.

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GPO Box 5469  
Sydney NSW 2001

