



**Queensland  
Women's  
Strategy  
2016–21**



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## Premier's message

While the past few years have seen significant moves towards gender equality, there is still much work to be done as we move towards a society where gender equality truly exists.

That's why we have developed the Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–21.

It's a five-year plan to guide us closer to a future where people are treated equally regardless of gender.

The strategy recognises the valuable contribution women and girls make to Queensland's economy and to our social fabric.

For a long time, people have talked about the benefits when women are appointed to high-level roles, including in the traditionally male-dominated realm of politics.

I am proud to lead the first Cabinet in Australia's history with a majority of women ministers, but gender inequality persists in our community.

It is vital that we use this opportunity to improve the lives of all women and girls in Queensland by supporting them to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural opportunities our state has to offer.

This strategy addresses four priority areas to focus our efforts in achieving gender equality: participation and leadership; economic security; safety; and health and wellbeing.

Achieving gender equality requires strong government and community leadership and commitment.

My government is determined to work with community members, non-government organisations and the private sector to ensure we make a difference to the lives of women and girls living in Queensland.

Queensland women have every reason to feel optimistic about their own future.

We are already taking positive steps to achieve gender equality in our state.

If we continue to work together, we can move towards a future of gender equality.

### **Annastacia Palaszczuk MP**

Premier and Minister for the Arts

## Minister's message

The Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–21 celebrates what we have achieved and provides a plan for government, business and the community to work together to achieve gender equality in Queensland.

Women's status and roles in Queensland have changed significantly over the past century, with extraordinary progress in educational, economic, social and health spheres. Queensland women's labour force participation has steadily risen since the 1970s and more women hold leadership positions in business, politics and the community than ever before.

However, women continue to experience challenges in participation and leadership, economic security, safety, health and wellbeing, as we saw in the recently released statistical resource, Queensland Women 2015.

Some groups of Queensland women, particularly those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, experience significant disadvantage compared with others, which increases the impacts of gender inequality.

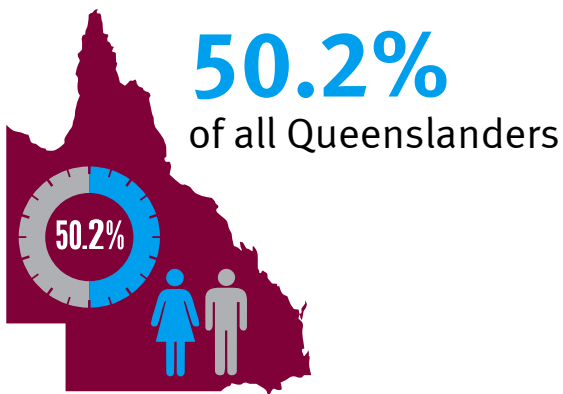
Community consultations were conducted across the state to make sure everyone had an opportunity to contribute to this strategy. Nine in 10 Queenslanders surveyed said gender equality is important to Queensland. With the support of the private and non-government sectors as well as the community, we can make gender equality a reality.

### **Shannon Fentiman MP**

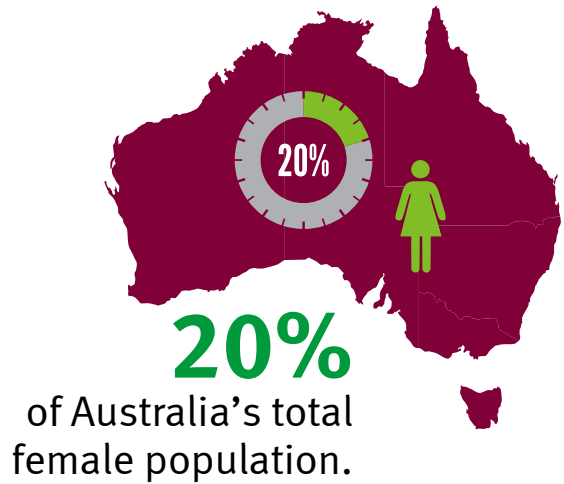
Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

# Queensland women at a glance

Queensland females make up:



and



**One in five**

Queensland women (20.8%) was born overseas.

Life expectancy at birth in 2011–13 was

**84.1 years**

for Queensland females – 4.5 years longer than for Queensland males.

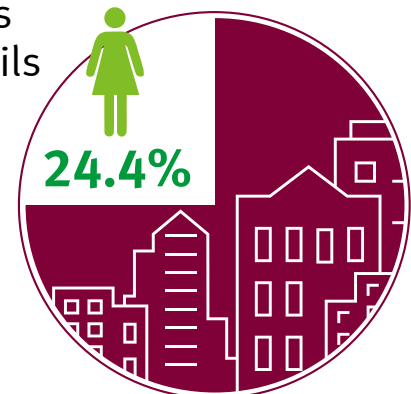


Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females make up

**3.6%**

of Queensland's total female population.

Almost **one-quarter** of Queensland females lived outside major cities and regional councils as at June 2014.<sup>1</sup>





The median age for childbirth in Queensland was **30.1 years** in 2014.



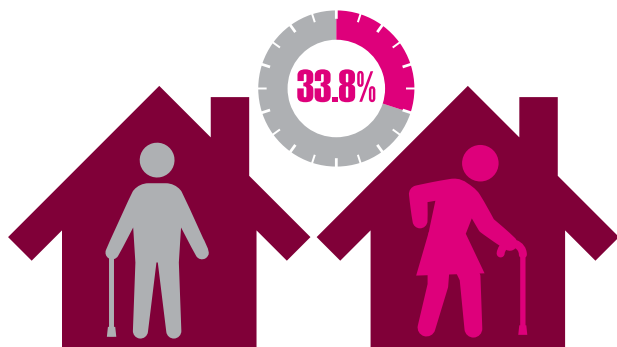
Queensland women headed **85.6%** of one-parent families in Queensland in 2011.



The median age for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Queensland was **21.9 years** in 2011 — compared to **37.6 years** for all Queensland females.



Women account for almost **two-thirds** of people in the 85 years and older age group in Queensland.



About **one-third** (33.8%) of Queensland women aged 65 years and older, who lived in private dwellings, lived alone in 2011, compared with 18.4% of men.





Photo credit: andresr1/Stockphoto

## Why we need gender equality

Despite the positive changes to women’s status and roles made over the past century, gender inequality persists in our community, restricting women’s full participation in the social, economic and cultural opportunities that Queensland offers.

The gender pay gap in Queensland is unacceptably high at 18 per cent. Women are vastly underrepresented in leadership positions, particularly on boards of management. Women are more likely to work in a narrow range of lower paying occupations, and continue to be underrepresented within traditionally male-dominated industries. Women take primary responsibility for unpaid domestic work and caring for dependants. This leaves women at greater risk of financial hardship than men, particularly in their retirement.

Women are vastly overrepresented as victims of sexual offences, stalking and domestic and family violence. Harmful community attitudes, such as victim blaming and minimising violence, contribute to gender inequality. These attitudes impact on women’s independence, safety and security for themselves and their families.

We need to challenge gender stereotypes and promote women’s independence and choice as well as equal and respectful relationships. Improving gender equality is fundamental if we are to see a reduction in violence against women.

Gender equality will benefit everyone. A gender equal society promotes and protects women’s rights, interests and wellbeing and ensures women’s maximum participation in all aspects of society, which in turn leads to better social and economic outcomes for all. Women and men across all parts of the community need to work together on gender equality, for the social and economic wellbeing of all Queenslanders.

“Without gender equality, only half the population receives the best opportunities and therefore only half the population can participate and contribute fully to society.”

*Woman, 63, Everton Hills*



# Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–21

## Vision

**The Queensland community respects women, embraces gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls.**

## Principles

- Queenslanders value diversity, equality and social inclusion.
- The Queensland economy is strongest and everyone benefits when women fully participate and contribute.
- Everyone has a role to play in achieving gender equality.
- All women and girls have the right to choice, safety and to live without fear.
- Every woman is different and valued for her uniqueness.

## Four priority areas



## Our shared goals

Queensland women and girls participate fully and equally in society and as leaders in the community, in politics and business.	Queensland women and girls achieve economic security across their life.	Queensland women and girls are safe and secure and have access to legal and justice services.	Queensland women and girls are healthy, well and active.
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## Achieving our shared goals

We can work together on actions under the four priority areas and:

- form strong partnerships across government, industry and the community to develop and implement a comprehensive plan to achieve gender equality in Queensland
- deliver a gender equality education and promotion campaign with an emphasis on engaging men and boys
- ensure gender analysis is a key component in the government's development of policies, legislation, programs and services and encourage private and community sectors to do the same
- provide a contemporary gender analysis toolkit and develop training materials to support all government and non-government organisations to progress gender equality
- develop a model gender equality action plan for implementation by government, private sector and community groups
- appoint gender equality champions to promote gender equality across all parts of the community
- use new digital solutions to better monitor the status of women and deliver women's information services to all Queensland women
- link with other government priorities and initiatives, such as those to Close the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls.









## Why we need a women's strategy

Our strategy provides a framework for government, the private sector and the wider Queensland community to take significant action to achieve gender equality in Queensland. Based on the best available evidence, it also reflects the views of a wide range of community members, and representatives from the non-government, government and private sectors.

Under each priority area we have identified what we can do together to achieve gender equality. This is our call to industry, business and the community to join us in taking responsibility and being part of the change. We will work with Queenslanders from across all sectors to prioritise activities and develop an implementation plan for this strategy. Not all actions will be driven or led by government. The implementation plan will outline what government agencies, businesses, industries, community organisations and the wider community will do to contribute to achieving the actions. This will be developed and finalised by the middle of 2016.

The strategy recognises Queensland women's diverse backgrounds, unique experiences and situations. Some groups of women experience multiple levels of disadvantage and are even more vulnerable to poverty. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women; women with disability; women living in rural or remote areas; women experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence; older women; women with diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity; women in prison; and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may need additional support to increase resilience and achieve their full potential. Groups with specific cultural backgrounds must also be able to maintain their cultural values and belief systems.

We also know that men are critical to the solution. We must engage men and boys and encourage them to work alongside women and girls in the promotion of gender equality.

When women achieve, Queensland succeeds.

### To monitor our progress and inform future actions, we will:

- work with Queenslanders to implement the strategy
- build our knowledge and evidence about gender equality
- develop and track performance indicators aligned to the priority areas
- publish annual report cards that provide statistics on the status of women and girls relevant to the priority areas (where available)
- develop a publicly available interactive online statistical database to present the facts on gender equality.

“Representation matters. If our leaders are all from the same social group (older white males) then the ideas presented and chosen will be skewed by their point of view and their limited experience. To ensure robust discussion is had, the point of view of multiple facets of society should be taken into consideration, and not just in a passing manner, but for ideas of women to be truly considered and accepted as valid and not just a ‘token’ female voice.”

Woman, 24, Albany Creek





Priority area

1

# Participation and leadership

## The big issues

Queensland women entering the workforce can, and should, dream big. Women are now leaders and innovators across a vast range of industries, including healthcare, business, government, finance and community services. Women are also taking up roles in increasing numbers in traditionally male-dominated fields. It appears there is nothing stopping modern women — but the evidence shows this is not the case.

Even today, women make up the vast majority of administrative and clerical workers yet remain underrepresented in traditionally male-dominated occupations and industries, particularly in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, building and construction. Some women still experience gender stereotyping, discrimination and a lack of support when entering these industries. This can stop women from developing their careers or obtaining leadership roles.

Women are more likely than men to take career breaks to raise children, usually at an age when promotions and pay increases are also likely. When women return to work, it is often on a part-time basis, especially in the 35 to 44 years age group (at 46.9 per cent for women compared with 7.2 per cent for men). Access to flexible working arrangements at this time is crucial for both men and women to balance their family and career commitments.


Women are underrepresented in decision-making and leadership roles. Many factors contribute to the ‘glass ceiling’ phenomenon, such as unconscious bias in recruitment and selection processes, lack of flexible working arrangements, stereotyping of gender roles, lack of female role models and childcare cost and availability.

Addressing these big issues will help Queensland women realise their dreams and will benefit society in general. At a broader level, making sure all women, particularly those facing extra challenges, can successfully participate in the workforce is essential to Queensland’s social and economic future. Having women in leadership positions in our community ensures that women’s voices are heard at senior, decision-making levels and increases opportunities for women to contribute to civic, business and community life. Organisations with gender-balanced leadership show better financial performance, access the widest talent and skill pool available to them, and are more responsive to clients and broader stakeholders.<sup>2, 3, 4</sup>

### In brief


- Women’s access to male-dominated occupations and industries, such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, building, construction, mining and agriculture
- Access to flexible work arrangements for everyone
- Women’s workforce participation
- Women in leadership positions


## Snapshot of what government is doing


 Implementing On Equal Footing: The Queensland Public Sector Gender Equity Strategy to ensure men and women have the same rights, opportunities and access to career success

 Delivering women’s leadership initiatives, including those to proactively increase the number of women on boards to achieve the Queensland Government’s 50 per cent target by 2020

 Delivering the Advance Queensland Women’s Academic Fund to support the retention, development and progression of female researchers within Queensland-based universities and publicly funded research institutes or organisations

 Delivering the Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow – Home-based Business Program to help stay-at-home parents establish or grow home-based businesses, while keeping a healthy balance between work and family life

 Developing and implementing Queensland: an age-friendly community strategy to promote and support older women to be active and engaged in their community

 Developing and implementing a Queensland youth strategy to support young women and girls to achieve their full potential





“Although I have worked longer at my place of employment than most, supervisory roles are always given to the men. I wish they would consider me.”

Woman, 21, Nundah

“I don't want to think I have to emulate men to be a good leader or to get on in leadership. We need to see lots of other women and girls in these roles to learn from them and to know that this is possible for all of us.”

Woman, 50, Albany Creek

“If we do not have a gender balance in leadership roles, how on earth can we expect gender equality in the rules made by those leaders?”

Male, 60, Alice River

## What we can do together

- Work with Queensland employers to develop gender diversity in their workforce at all levels and require each government department to develop a gender equality action plan
- Develop initiatives to support employment outcomes for women as part of the Queensland Government's Jobs Now, Jobs for the Future employment plan
- Promote economic development initiatives, such as market-led proposals through relevant networks, to help encourage high-quality proposals from women in business
- Encourage Queensland women to establish small businesses
- Improve female students' participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and building and construction subjects, and work with industry and organisations to provide career pathways and mentoring opportunities for young and mid-career women
- Develop education programs on effective leadership, challenging stereotypes, and unconscious bias, particularly in relation to recruitment and selection
- Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's economic and social participation, including leadership roles within their communities, government, non-government organisations and the private sector
- Continue to support women while in prison and after their release to reduce reoffending and support their successful reintegration into the community

“It has to start with the small kids so they grow up in a different culture. They need to know that women will be 50 per cent on boards, will take 50 per cent of leadership jobs — it needs to feel/be normal to them.”

Woman, 55, Taigum

“Gender limits my life choices because I couldn’t do manual arts at school because I was a girl. Now I’m a nurse not a carpenter.”

*Woman, 53, Central Queensland*

- Develop strategies and approaches to support women at all stages of life to enter and re-enter the workforce, and showcase flexible work success stories from the private, government and non-government sectors
- Partner with industry to support an increase in the percentage of women on corporate boards and other leadership roles
- Encourage sharing by all sectors of policies that are achieving success in increasing women’s participation and progression in leadership and senior management roles
- Build a culturally capable workforce within the public sector and funded non-government services to ensure effective engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse women
- Work to make government delivered or funded customer services accessible and responsive to women and girls

### Representation of Queensland females

**78%**



**of all clerical and administrative workers**

**14.2%**



**of all technicians and trades workers**



A celebration of colours and flavours — The Spice Exchange.  
Photo credit: Rachel Spence.



## Success stories The Spice Exchange

The Spice Exchange engages women from diverse cultural backgrounds to create spice blends and condiments reflective of the regions from where they come. The program helps culturally diverse women by building social connections, developing confidence and providing opportunities for women to overcome barriers to employment. The Spice Exchange is both a social enterprise and an employment and training pathway program that provides practical skills and workplace experience. It assists women to gain work experience in a culturally responsive workplace environment where they can learn employable skills and develop an understanding of Australian business practices. The Spice Exchange social enterprise has increased business savvy and small business aspirations among culturally diverse women as well as confidence of the participants, who recognise the value of food as a vehicle to promote and celebrate their culture and story (Access Community Services Ltd, Logan).

[www.spiceexchange.com.au](http://www.spiceexchange.com.au)





# Economic security

Priority area

## 2

### The big issues

The financial facts for women in the workforce are alarming — for example, women currently earn 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. Higher rates of part-time work and time spent out of the workforce drive women’s earnings down even further. These factors all contribute to lower lifetime earnings and significantly reduced superannuation.

“ *Whilst staying at home is more economically viable than childcare, women won’t have the opportunity to accrue superannuation. I think this should be the starting point of what government can do to better support women’s financial security in retirement.* ”

*Woman, 33, Cluden*

This means women experience more financial insecurity during retirement, and are less likely to achieve economic independence. Economic insecurity can also contribute to women being at greater risk of inadequate housing and homelessness.

Having a safe place to call home is critical to improving the safety and health and wellbeing of women; and to providing a platform for women to work, raise a family, be financially independent and participate equally in the community. To ensure that women have access to safe and affordable housing, we can examine options to better support vulnerable women, including elderly women and single mothers, to access and sustain appropriate housing, so that they may maintain economic security and remain connected and engaged in their communities.



Women's financial disadvantage and economic insecurity have far-reaching impacts that can span generations. As women continue to be the primary carers of children, it is important to consider the wider effects of women's poverty on their children.

Many factors influence women's ability to achieve economic security, that is, their ability to earn a regular income, meet their basic needs and improve their independence. Some are choices women make throughout their lives, such as what to study, what career to pursue, and whether to have a partner and/or children. Others are a result of external or social influences, such as inflexible workplaces, family dynamics, cultural pressures and gendered stereotypes.

Another factor is the undervaluing of traditionally female roles and industries, both paid and unpaid.

These factors are critical conditions for a gender equal society where women have access to a range of important services, entitlements and choices to build their economic security. Improving women's economic security is the key to improving gender equality in all aspects of our society including women's safety, security and wellbeing.

Recent initiatives across the private and public sectors to improve women's economic security are reaping great benefits. All this contributes to achieving the G20 goal of reducing the gender gap in workforce participation by 25 per cent by 2025. But there is more to be done.

## Snapshot of what government is doing



Implementing the Digital Careers – Girls in Technology program to increase women's participation in information technology



Providing housing and support for women at risk of insecure housing, including specialist homelessness services



Raising awareness of the importance of gender equity and equality of economic security through the Queensland Public Sector Inclusion Champions of Change



Increasing the participation of women and men in the public service workforce by embedding flexible work arrangements and other gender-friendly policies, such as domestic and family violence leave

### In brief

- Gender pay gap
- Women's financial literacy and capability
- The retirement income gap between women and men
- Women's and girls' participation in traditionally male-dominated fields of study
- Financial recognition of domestic work and traditionally female-dominated industries, including teaching, early childhood education and care, nursing and community services
- Women's vulnerability to inadequate or unaffordable housing and homelessness



## What we can do together

- Promote women's contributions and achievements in traditionally male-dominated occupations and industries and encourage more young women to enter and mid-career women to transition into these fields
- Research the true cost and drivers of the gender pay gap in Queensland
- Develop a self-audit tool to assess and address gender pay inequity for use by private, community and government sector organisations
- Host a dialogue on equal pay, including government, industry and community leaders, to share ideas and address barriers

*“ For industry, there needs to be a review of current pay scales for women and men and be genuinely committed to decreasing the gender pay gap. For government, implementing policy that actively supports industry and community decreasing gender pay gaps. For the community, conducting community outreach and engagement activities that aim to educate, advocate and support the cultural shift required for a decrease in gender pay gap. ”*

*Woman, 37, Kuraby*

*“ I think the biggest issue for Queensland women is the fact that we get paid less yet we pay more for things we need. ”*

*Woman, 19, Chambers Flat*

- Examine the impact of career interruptions on women's superannuation and economic security in retirement, and raise awareness of the retirement gender income gap
- Develop programs and tools to increase women's financial capability, including through superannuation providers
- Improve responses to support vulnerable women, including elderly women and single mothers, to access and sustain appropriate and affordable housing, to provide a platform for them to maintain economic security and participate equally in the community
- Implement the Financial Resilience and Inclusion Action Plan to better support Queenslanders, including women with significant financial issues
- Develop specific actions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women within existing and new programs to increase the economic participation and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including in the public and small business sectors
- Explore partnerships with private sector to establish a fund to support initiatives that improve women's access to non-traditional employment
- Examine options to provide further support to vulnerable young women with their education, training and employment, such as programs for pregnant or parenting young women, women with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

“Start by paying elite sports people the same and televising sports involving both men and women – one would think only men play sport in this country.”

Woman, 44, Aitkenvale

- Support and facilitate greater participation by men in parenting, caring and domestic responsibilities and encourage men to take parental leave
- Increase women’s knowledge and understanding of industrial relations, including employment terms and conditions and empower them to negotiate work arrangements, pay and other conditions

### Average earnings in full-time working week in May 2015



**\$1273.40**



**\$1552.60**



Photo credit: Peopleimages.com; iStockphoto



## Success stories Suncorp – leading workforce equality

Suncorp, one of Australia’s largest financial services organisations, is leading the way in developing a range of policies to achieve gender and economic equality in the workplace. In 2011, the organisation reviewed salary levels and addressed gender imbalances. In 2015, there were no cases of gender pay inequity. There have been no recurring cases of gender pay inequity since the reviews started. A dedicated intranet page that provides information, materials and resources is in place to better support employees with parenting and caring responsibilities transition to and from the workplace.

Suncorp also has a number of initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in the workplace, including targeted leadership development for high potential females, and ongoing upskilling to reduce unconscious bias in recruitment and promotions. Suncorp offers flexible work options to help employees to integrate their family obligations and work commitments.

These initiatives have supported growth in the number of females in senior leadership roles in Suncorp, currently 38.9 per cent against the 2017 (financial year) target of 40 per cent.





# Safety

Priority area

## 3

### The big issues

Queenslanders are increasingly outraged by violence against women and domestic homicide. There are human rights, health and wellbeing, and economic imperatives to respond to violence against women and girls and to ensure that they feel safe in their homes and communities. National and international studies have found that women who have experienced violence have a greater risk of developing a range of physical and mental health problems.<sup>5</sup> Violence against women and their children is also a significant cost to the Australian economy.<sup>6\*</sup>

Although the majority of Queensland women do not experience physical or sexual violence, one in three women, Australia-wide, has experienced physical violence in the past five years, and one in five has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.<sup>7</sup> Women's experience of violence is almost always at the hands of men, usually men they know.<sup>8</sup>

The safety of women and girls in Queensland is directly related to gender equality and attitudes towards women. Women are less likely to experience violence by men in a society where there is greater equality between women and men and where women's economic, social and political rights are adequately protected.<sup>9,10</sup>

Gendered violence is a complex issue. Some women can experience different forms of violence, throughout their lives, at the hands of different men. Certain groups of women, in particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

“*It is time for the good men to stand up and be counted — that means challenging their mates and challenging a sexist culture that condones and tolerates gender based violence in so many ways.*”

*Woman, 40, Underwood*

\*The estimated costs in 2014–15 are \$12.6 billion for partner violence against women (including physical violence, sexual violence or emotional abuse) and \$21.7 billion for all violence against women (including physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse, or stalking).

women, experience a greater incidence of violence. Women with disability and older women are particularly vulnerable.

Eliminating domestic and family violence is critical to ensuring women's and girls' safety, but it is not the only priority. Women are more likely than men to be the victims of sexual offences and stalking. Women also experience other serious forms of violence, such as female genital mutilation, trafficking, forced and servile marriage and online harassment and abuse. Unfortunately, we know that victim and offence statistics reflect only those crimes reported to the police, which means the true rate of crimes against women is much higher.

We need to learn more about all forms of violence experienced by women, so we can determine how the Queensland Government, the private sector and the community can prevent it. We can work together to:

- support women and girls in a way that meets their particular needs
- ensure client-centred services and sensitive justice responses are available, particularly for the most vulnerable groups of women and girls
- hold male perpetrators accountable.

### In brief

- Whole-of-community approach to prevention, including awareness of how gender inequality contributes to violence against women
- Understanding the incidence of and best responses to:
  - sexual violence
  - stalking
  - elder abuse
  - female genital mutilation
  - forced and servile marriage
  - trafficking
  - online harassment and abuse
- High rates of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Engagement of men and boys in actions to prevent violence against women and girls

## Snapshot of what government is doing

Implementing the 10-year Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy and the Not Now, Not Ever report, including specific actions to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and culturally and linguistically diverse women and review the impact on women with disability and the prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse

Continuing to implement legislative changes to strengthen protections for victims of domestic and family violence, hold perpetrators accountable and support broader systemic reforms

Delivering Queensland Government commitments under the Council of Australian Government's *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children (2010–2022)*

Delivering the Respectful Relationships curriculum developed for Prep to Year 12 students

Providing the elder abuse helpline to support victims and their family and friends

Encouraging the adoption of the Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Support package by local government, business and non-government organisations

Providing specialist, women only, services to support victims



## What we can do together

- Implement a violence against women prevention plan to eliminate all types of gendered violence
- Develop partnerships between government, non-government and private sector organisations to challenge and change the cultural attitudes towards women and girls that underpin violence

“All violence against women and girls needs to be addressed. Women should feel safe everywhere. I for one would love to feel safe to go for a run on my own.”

Woman, 33, Currajong

“All types of violence against women and girls need to be addressed, but there is a significant lack of funding for support and emergency services in this area, particularly in rural/remote areas.”

Man, 31, Hervey Range

- Partner with relevant communities to improve our knowledge of all forms of violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation, forced and servile marriage, trafficking and online harassment and abuse, to support future action on these issues
- Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men to develop strategies that address the high rates of violence against women
- Develop strategies to support women affected by violence to participate in education, training and employment and improve their financial security
- Empower men and boys to take action to prevent violence against women and girls
- Improve financial protections and build financial resilience and independence for vulnerable women
- Improve the experience of women and girls who are victims of crime in the legal and justice systems
- Recognise and respond to the specific needs of female offenders in the legal and justice systems
- Work to improve media standards, policies and practices for the reporting of violence against women
- Implement policies and procedures to support female employees in the private, community and government sectors who are affected by violence

“Greater awareness is needed of what the causes and drivers of violence against women are (gender inequality, normalcy of violence, etc.).”

Woman, 31, Indooroopilly

“What would help women in Queensland feel safer? Zero tolerance of violence and intimidation.”

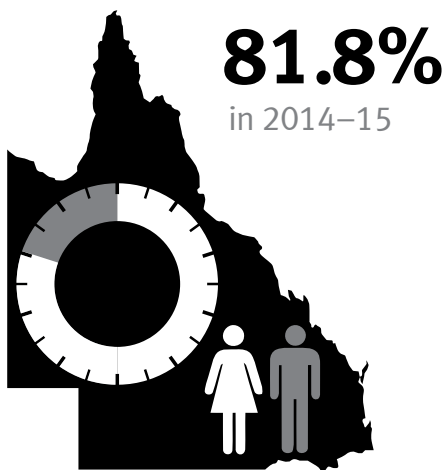
Woman, 58, Northgate



“ I think as a concept, women’s safety is important to men. However, I don’t think men understand and therefore appreciate safety from a woman’s point of view. For example, as a woman I am always conscious that a man can easily overpower me – something I may feel keenly if I am by myself and in proximity to a male; and if it’s dark and no one else is around, then that feeling is multiplied. Do men ever experience that kind of anxiety? Do they understand what it is like to know that you will be weaker, that you will lose out? That kind of vulnerability is awful and I think it is why we tend to avoid speaking out – because we might end up in even more trouble if we resist or bring attention to ourselves. ”

Woman, 43, Alexandra

### Female victims of sexual offences in Queensland



## Success stories Aurizon’s Domestic and Family Violence Policy and practices

Aurizon, Australia’s largest rail freight operator, has a deep and long standing commitment to tackling domestic and family violence, leading the ‘Wake Up and Walk’ campaign to raise awareness for domestic and family violence in 2009, and raising awareness through White Ribbon Day activities, including having large white ribbons on Aurizon’s locomotives. In 2015 Aurizon’s Male Champions of Change organised and supported a range of awareness and fundraising events in nearly every work location across Queensland. Aurizon has provided financial support through their Community Giving Fund to a range of organisations responding to those experiencing domestic and family violence.

In 2014 Aurizon introduced its first Domestic and Family Violence Policy. The policy has recently been updated to include 10 days of domestic and family violence leave, the provision of domestic and family violence resources for employees and domestic and family violence training for HR business partners.



# Health and wellbeing

Priority area

# 4

## The big issues

Queensland women are increasingly healthy and well and are living longer than men. The rates of breast and cervical cancer are decreasing, with fewer deaths from these diseases. Most Queensland women and girls participate in sport or physical activity but only 58 per cent meet the healthy activity guidelines, compared with 61 per cent of men.<sup>11</sup>

Strategies to improve women’s health must be tailored to the stages of women’s lives and address their specific needs. Strategies must also recognise the impact of women’s experience of violence and trauma on their health.

*“ The major pressing health issue for many Queensland women is the impact on their health by family violence and societal oppression. Many health issues stem from the resulting lack of self-worth. ”*

*Woman, 44, Aitkenvale*

Queensland women have high rates of obesity, and more women than men experience depression and anxiety. The rates of smoking among pregnant women are concerning as is the high rate of alcohol consumption, including among teenage girls. Body image is an issue in Queensland, especially for young women and girls, which can lead to mental and physical health problems.

Maternal healthcare, including pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding, is an important issue for many Queensland women, with around three-quarters of Australian women becoming mothers in their lifetime.



As many Queensland women are primary carers of children and dependant or older family members, it often means that their health needs are sidelined. When the health of women suffers, there can be major impacts on entire families and communities.


Heart disease is the biggest killer of women — and men — in Queensland. More work is needed to raise awareness of this issue among women, and to support women to identify symptoms of heart disease and heart attack that females are more likely than males to experience.


Older women face specific challenges to their health and wellbeing, including mental health issues, in particular depression and loneliness, and falls-related injuries and deaths.


Unfortunately, the advancements in health and wellbeing that many Queensland women enjoy are not experienced equally by all. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are generally in poorer health, and women living in disadvantaged areas are less likely to have the time and resources to do enough physical activity to obtain significant health benefits. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women also experience high rates of teenage pregnancy.


Culturally and linguistically diverse women, including refugees, may have significant health requirements that require specialised care. Women experiencing disadvantage, including women with disability and women living in rural, regional and remote areas, may experience difficulty accessing health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, with a subsequent negative impact on their health outcomes.


## Snapshot of what government is doing


 Delivering women's health services through hospital and health services and a network of statewide non-government service providers

 Trialling the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Day Program to support women with perinatal mental health difficulties in the first year after birth

 Implementing the Start Playing Stay Playing strategy to increase women's participation in sport and physical activity

 Implementing targeted initiatives to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse women's health and wellbeing

 Providing preventative health strategies that specifically address women's health issues, including cancer screening and support for new mothers

 Implementing child and family reforms to better support families with parenting their children, including universal access to the Triple P Positive Parenting Program

### In brief

- Support for women in pregnancy, childbirth and infant feeding
- Rates of smoking during pregnancy
- Women's mental health and wellbeing
- Rates of women's heart disease and cancer
- Challenges faced by rural, regional and remote women accessing appropriate health services
- Women's participation in sport and physical activity, especially among women experiencing disadvantage





## What we can do together

- Work to ensure women have access to appropriate health care throughout the different stages of their lives
- Improve access to appropriate information on planned parenthood options and reproductive and maternal health services, particularly for rural, remote and regional women
- Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men to address the high rates of teenage pregnancy
- Support rural and regional women to access non-discriminatory and confidential women's health services
- Promote women's leadership and participation in sport and physical activity
- Work to reduce inequity between women's and men's sport, including media coverage and conditions

*“A lot of women, especially those who were raised that you ‘have to look after your husband’, are still expected to provide care for their partner even while their own health has severely deteriorated.”*

*Woman, 25, North Queensland*

*“I do participate in sport and physical activity, not only bones and muscles need constant movement, but mind cells do too.”*

*Woman, 77, Tolga*

*“Some older women do not have the resources to ensure their own health and wellbeing (reduced access to healthcare services, less choice in housing, and care) and in many ways may be left without support systems such as family and friendship networks.”*

*Woman, 28, Northgate*

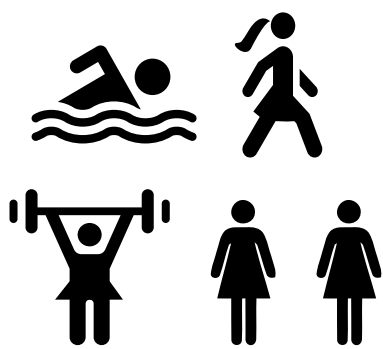
- Develop and implement a Queensland sexual health strategy to address the sexual and reproductive health of all Queenslanders, including women
- Continue to improve support services for women experiencing mental health conditions
- Provide awareness raising and education programs targeting girls and their mothers or mentors, such as aunts, grandmothers or female friends, which provide information and support for healthy body image, body confidence and self-esteem
- Work to eliminate advertising that promotes a negative body image or denigrates women
- Raise awareness of the female symptoms of serious health conditions, including heart disease and heart attack that females are more likely than males to experience
- Improve access to health services for groups with specific needs, including women with diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity, culturally and linguistically diverse women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women with disability

“ I do participate in sport and physical activity for stress relief and general wellbeing. It is an important part of my life. ”

Female, 33, Currajong

### Physical activity

3 in 5 women



meet physical activity requirements



Josie Janz-Dawson, Program Coordinator, Deadly Sistas, Wirrpanda Foundation Western Australia (front left), Karla McGrady, Program Coordinator, Deadly Sistas, Wirrpanda Foundation Queensland (front, second from left) and Deadly Sistas mentors.

Photo credit: Institute for Urban Indigenous Health



## Success stories Deadly Sistas — Wirrpanda Foundation and Institute for Urban Indigenous Health

The Deadly Sistas program, developed by the Wirrpanda Foundation, aims to build proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls. The program builds self-esteem and encourages positive social interactions and healthy choices. It also helps girls to expand their thinking, and become active members and leaders in their communities. The program focuses on building self-esteem and confidence, pride in cultural identity, making practical cultural contributions in the community, building relationships based on mutual respect, encouraging active self-development, and yarning about sexual and women’s health, drug and alcohol abuse, road safety, healthy nutrition, financial literacy and healthy relationships. Importantly, the program uses strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander role models to support girls in discussing issues they may be facing. Implemented in 12 locations across Australia, the program was launched in five South-East Queensland high schools in 2015, in partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health.

[www.wf.org.au](http://www.wf.org.au)

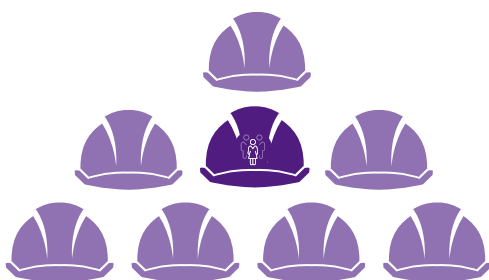




Priority area

# 1 Women's participation and leadership

## Queensland females:



**12.6%** make up 1 in 8 workers in the construction industry



**17.4%** make up 1 in 6 workers in the mining industry

- have a labour force participation rate of 59.9% in April 2015, compared with 70.8% for males
- are more than twice as likely as men to work part-time at 44.3% of all female employees in April 2015, compared with 16.6% of all male employees — nationally 46.6% and 18.0%
- experience labour underutilisation: 14.8% women in the labour force are either (1) unemployed, or (2) preferred and are available to work more hours, compared with 11.5% of males in 2013
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin are almost four times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be unemployed at 19.6% compared with 5.4% in 2011 — nationally 16.2% and 5.2%
- represent 78.0% of clerical and administrative workers but 14.2% of technicians and trades workers in February 2015 — nationally 74.4% and 14.3%
- aged 15 years and older are 2.5 times more likely than males to spend 15 hours or more every week on unpaid domestic activities — 43.6% of females compared with 17.6% of males in 2011
- are likely to provide unpaid child care in all age groups, with the 25–34 and 35–44 years age groups showing the greatest gender gap, with women accounting for 61.3% and 56.3% respectively in 2011
- are much more likely than males to structure their work arrangements to meet family needs, with 38.4% of working mothers using part-time work to care for a child in 2014, compared with 3.1% of working fathers using this arrangement
- comprise 70.4% of all primary carers and 89.0% of all parents who were primary carers of people with a disability in 2012
- comprise:
  - 28.1% (25 of 89 seats) of Queensland parliamentarians in June 2015
  - 30.4% of all serving judges and magistrates in June 2015 — nationally 34.5% of Commonwealth judges/justices as at March 2015
  - 33.1% of senior executive service officers and above and 49.1% of senior officers in the public service in June 2014
  - 37% of positions on Queensland Government boards as at 27 January 2016.

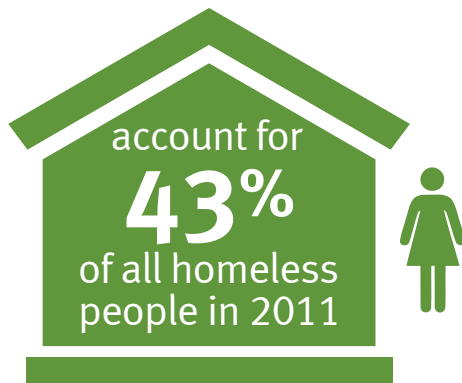




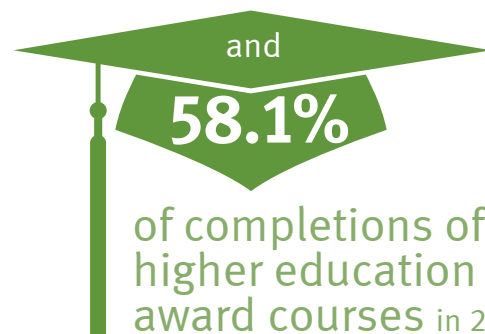
Priority area

## 2 Women's economic security

### Queensland females:



represent **56.6%** of commencements



- on average, earned \$1273.40 in a full-time working week in May 2015, compared to \$1552.60 for males, resulting in the 18.0% gender pay gap
- are more likely than males to have government pensions and allowances as a main source of household income in the previous two years at 21.7% compared to 14.7% in 2010 — nationally 23.4% and 16.3%
- head 85.1% of one-parent families with children under 15 years in 2011. 83.6% of jobless one-parent family households with children under 15 years could not raise \$2000 within a week for an emergency in 2010
- aged 65 years and older are more likely to have no superannuation coverage than any other age group, female or male
- account for:
  - 65% of public rental housing tenants and 73.7% of state-owned and managed Indigenous housing in June 2015
  - 54.8% of people accessing government-funded specialist homelessness services in 2013–14
- are consistently more likely than males to continue onto Years 11 and 12, with higher retention rates (89.4%) compared to males (84.9%) in 2014 — nationally 87.4% and 80.0%
- make up 9 in 10 home economics students but 1 in 10 engineering technology students in Year 12 in 2014
- constitute 92.1% of carers and aides trainees but 2.8% of electrotechnology and telecommunications trade apprentices in 2014
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin are more than twice (2212) as likely as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males (1005) to hold a bachelor's degree in 2011
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin are more likely than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males to finish Year 12 at 71.6% compared with 66.3% in 2014 — nationally 63.8% compared with 55.1%.





Priority area

# 3 Women's safety

## Queensland females:



account for  
**67.7%**  
 of all alleged victims  
 of elder abuse  
 reported to the  
 Elder Abuse Helpline  
 in 2014–15

- largely do not experience physical or sexual assault or threat (94.1% in 2012) and feel safe at home alone after dark (79.3% in 2010)
- are almost equally likely to be the victims of offences against the person (49.3% as males (50.5%) in 2014–15
- aged 15–19 years are most likely to be victims of offences in all age groups for females and males, at the rate of 1762 victims per 100,000 of the female 15–19 years population in 2011–12
- constitute 81.8% of sexual offences victims in 2014–15. Nationally 83% of sexual assault victims are female in 2014
- in the 10–19 years age group are almost 6 times more likely than males of the same age to be victims of sexual offences in 2014–15
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin comprise 11.4% of total female victims of sexual assault in 2014. Comparable statistics available for other

are almost

**4X** more likely than males  
 to be killed by a partner



- states and territories are 7.4% in New South Wales, 8.1% in South Australia and 47.6% in the Northern Territory
- make up 74.3% of victims of stalking in 2014–15, with males constituting 81.8% of all stalking offenders in 2014–15
- are much more likely than males to be killed by a family member — 53.3% of female victims of homicides were killed by a family member, compared with 31.8% of male victims of homicides in 2014. Comparable statistics available for other states and territories for victims killed by a family member are 64.4% of female victims and 17.1% of male victims in New South Wales, 47.2% of female victims and 23.1% of male victims in Victoria, and 42.9% of female victims and 10.3% of male victims in South Australia
- comprise 76.4% of all Queensland clients seeking government-funded specialist homelessness services due to domestic and family violence in 2013–14 — nationally 83.6%.



Priority area

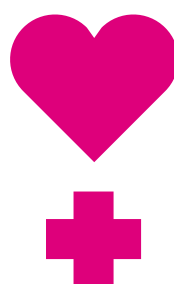
# 4 Women's health and wellbeing

## Queensland females:

have an average  
**1.9**  
babies  
(2014)



- have life expectancy of 84.1 years at birth compared with 79.6 years for males in 2011–13
- mostly consider themselves to be in 'good' or 'very good to excellent' health, with little difference between females (83.5%) and males (82.5%) in 2012
- have a median age for childbirth of 30.1 years in 2014
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin are more likely to smoke at some time during pregnancy than non-Indigenous women (48% compared with 13% in 2012)
- of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin comprise 51.8% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths caused by diabetes in 2013
- aged 65 years and older comprise the majority of falls-related hospitalisations (68% in 2011–12) and falls-related deaths (61.3% in 2010) in this age group
- are more likely to experience mental and behavioural health problems at 16.1% compared to males (12.6%) in 2011–12
- are more likely to experience high to very high level of psychological distress at 13.6% compared with males (7.7%) in 2011–12



**Heart disease** is the leading cause of death

followed by cerebrovascular disease (including stroke) and dementia and Alzheimer's disease in 2013

- are less likely to:
  - smoke daily at 11.8% compared to males (16.2%) in 2014
  - drink alcohol at the riskiest levels at 8% compared to males (26.5%) in 2014
  - meet physical activity recommendations at 58%, compared with 61% of males in 2014
- are more likely to be in the healthy weight range at 44.2% compared with 35.0% of males in 2014
- in the target age groups for cancer screening programs participate in cervical screening (56% of those aged 20–69 years in 2013–14) and breast screening (57.6% of those aged 50–69 years in 2013–14)
- are more likely than men to delay obtaining medical services (22.5% compared with 18.3%) and medications (19.2% compared with 11.9%) due to cost in 2010 — nationally 16.1% of women and 12.7% of men for delaying medical consultation and 13.6% of women and 8.7% of men for delaying the purchase of medication.





# Community consultation

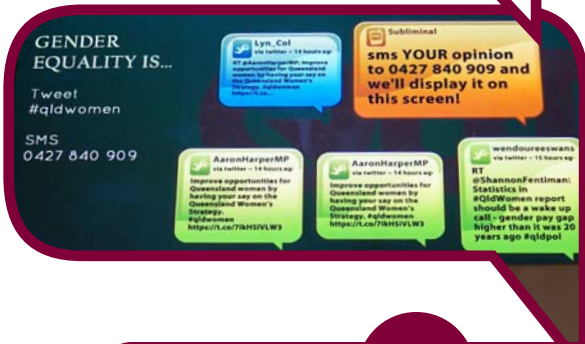
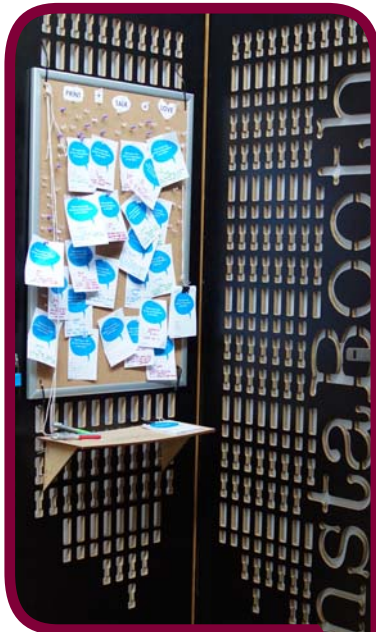
We conducted extensive statewide consultation seeking the community's views on gender equality and how to address barriers and challenges to achieving it in Queensland.

## Instabooth (an interactive pop-up information-sharing booth)

**Key statistics:** 10 days 17 questions 500 responses



*Gender equality is key to a stronger, fairer world. Women reaching their potential benefits the economy, families and society #qldwomen*



### Online survey

#### Key statistics:

27 questions 594 submissions  
14 written submissions

“Gender balance in leadership roles is important because women are 50% of our population, and have varying needs to men. If leadership is not balanced, needs aren't met.”

Woman, 33, Butchers Creek



### Facebook

#### Key statistics:

19 posts 130 comments

“One thing I would like to see change for women and girls in Queensland is to move away from just paying lip service to flexible working arrangements, so that both men and women can play an equal role caring for children without negative impacts on career and work opportunities.”

Woman, 35, Toowoomba

Photo credit: all photographs on this page provided by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

## Glossary

**Sex** identifies the biological differences between females and males.

**Gender** refers to the social identities of women and men, which are learned and supported by social systems, cultural beliefs and attitudes. Gender also refers to the relations between women and men, the different expectations and values placed on their identities, roles and relations, and the consequent differences in experience and outcomes for women and men. These social differences are learned, changeable over time and vary within and between contexts and cultures.

**Gender equality** means women and men enjoying the same status; for both women and men the same opportunities are available to realise their full human rights and potential.

**Gender equity** recognises that to be fair, because of the differences in women's and men's lives as well as historical disadvantages, different steps may need to be taken to create fair and equal outcomes.

**Sex-role stereotyping** is ingrained and rigid expectations and beliefs about the roles of women and men such as 'women care for the home and children', while men are the 'breadwinners'.

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Unless otherwise referenced, the statistical data presented in the Queensland Women's Strategy draws on statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and *Queensland Women 2015*.  
[www.communities.qld.gov.au/communityservices/women/queensland-women-2015](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/communityservices/women/queensland-women-2015)

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