

# Gender segregation in the workplace and its impact on women's economic equality

NCOSS's Submission to the Finance and Public  
Administration References Committee Inquiry

3 March 2017

## About NCOSS

The NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) works with and for people experiencing poverty and disadvantage in NSW to make positive change in our communities.

As the peak body for health and community services in NSW for over 80 years we support the sector to deliver crucial services that make a difference.

We work directly with communities to identify the challenges they face and solutions that will allow them to overcome those challenges.

Through collaboration with communities, services and across government, the private sector and other civil society organisations we work to see these solutions become a reality.

Together we advocate for a NSW free from poverty and inequality.

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## INTRODUCTION

Women's economic equality is not only a women's issue, but a social and economic problem affecting us all. While enormous improvements have been made to the workplace and in our legal and social systems to advance women's participation and engagement in the workplace, many inequalities remain, such as industrial and occupation gender segregation.

Gender segregation is shaped by a multitude of factors that are complex and interconnected, and understanding their complexity is critical to designing interventions to address them. This submission will focus on the three key drivers for industrial and occupational gender segregation in Australia:

- **Education: Fields of study, career choices and pay gaps**
- **Women in Leadership: Discrimination and structural bias**
- **The gendered nature of work and caring responsibilities**

The recommendations made in this submission should not be viewed in isolation, and rather should form part of a consortium of solutions targeting education, government and business reforms.

Equally, underpinning all recommendations is the knowledge that not all women start on an equal footing. We know that discrimination and inequality faced by women is exacerbated by, and intersects with, other forms of disadvantage and this often has compounding impacts, leaving these women more financially and economically vulnerable. This is especially true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability, young and older women and women in regional, rural and remote communities. We need to recognise these intersecting forms of disadvantage and develop targeted solutions.

This submission brings together current research and the priorities, experience and expertise of our members and constituents. Launched in 2016, NCOSS's [New Year for Women](#) Campaign, brought together the community sector, government, business, unions and academia to work together to achieve women and girl's economic empowerment across their life cycle. NCOSS spoke with over 100 organisations and key stakeholders from across metropolitan, regional and remote parts of NSW (see organisation list in Appendix). We brought together women from diverse backgrounds and experiences, with first-hand and expert knowledge of what is needed in communities across the state to financially empower women and prevent economic hardship.

NCOSS has also drawn on the knowledge and expertise of our Seven Sisters (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's) Advisory Panel and our Young Women's Advisory Panel. Both groups are represented by committed and dedicated community leaders who are developing innovative and creative solutions for women's economic equality and security in their communities.

NCOSS has taken these lived experiences, innovative and creative solutions and strategies, and distilled them into the following recommendations to address gender segregation in the workplace.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Enhancing education:

**Recommendation 1:** Commonwealth and State governments work to ensure national and state career strategies are responsive to the needs of girls and women. We further recommend the commissioning of career guidance models, work rights materials and financial literacy programs for schools that are specific to the needs of girls.

**Recommendation 2:** All levels of government develop accessible career development and labor rights materials, including web-based materials, in community languages. Further, increase funding for organisations focused on promoting the employment rights and interest of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD women.

**Recommendation 3:** All governments fund out-reach programs for women re-entering the workforce.

**Recommendation 4:** Both Commonwealth and State governments ensure that any career development or gender bias training initiatives in schools and communities encourage the benefits of improving gender diversity for the workplace and society.

**Recommendation 5:** The Commonwealth government ensure that equal pay for work of equal value is achieved by improving the award rates in female-dominated industries such as education, nursing and healthcare.

### Promoting Women in Leadership Positions:

**Recommendation 6:** Commonwealth and State Governments take a lead and ensure that there is a gender equity office or advisor role in HR departments for all government departments and agencies.

**Recommendation 7:** To ensure public service and private sector recruitment targets and review, encourage businesses to carry out a gender audit (on pay, conditions, leave entitlements) and apply for an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation, to promote employer best practice.

**Recommendation 8:** The Commonwealth government and all state and territory governments should demonstrate leadership through a shared commitment to strengthen the representation of women at decision-making levels:

- Set a minimum target of 40% representation of each gender at all Government Boards.
- All publically listed companies providing goods and services to Federal and State Governments should be certified by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).
- Government departments and agencies should regularly and consistently audit and report on the total workforce, board composition, leadership and remuneration by gender, as well as other

gender equality indicators. Reports should track progress on workplace gender equality over time and be made publicly available.

- Implement gender neutral advertising and blind/ anonymous recruiting initiatives to remove unconscious bias.

**Recommendation 9:** The Commonwealth Government investigate the creation of a Government Business Alliance Network for cross industry relations, that models and awards best practice, for example the creation of successful and impactful female mentoring and sponsorship practices.

### Flexible Working Arrangements and Family and Caring responsibilities:

**Recommendation 10:** All levels of government work to ensure that flexible working arrangements are an accepted part of Australian workplace culture. Flexible arrangements need to cover all forms of caring responsibilities, and be actively available to both men and women. They should further be implemented alongside strategies for workplace education and career progression.

**Recommendation 11:** The Commonwealth Government implement measures to ensure that vulnerable workers are not adversely disadvantaged by the recent ruling on penalty rates, by the Fair Work Commission. For example, by encouraging and providing incentives for employers to not implement the cuts.

**Recommendation 12:** The Commonwealth Paid Parental Leave Scheme continues to be improved over time to allow for 26 weeks paid parental leave.

- A minimum of four weeks to be set aside for partner leave on a use it or lose it basis.
- Include mandatory superannuation contributions on the government paid parental leave scheme to ensure women are not disadvantaged later in life for taking parenting leave.

**Recommendation 13:** Allocate funding to conduct a regular national prevalence survey on discrimination related to pregnancy, parental leave and return to work after parental leave, as advocated for by the Australian Human Rights Commission in their 2014 report: Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review.

**Recommendation 14:** All levels of government ensure affordable early childhood education and care, particularly for low income families to encourage women's ongoing work force participation.

- The NSW Government should take a lead and adopt innovative solutions, including the [Early Childhood Education Fund](#)<sup>1</sup>.

**Recommendation 15:** Work to develop a model that places a financial value on unpaid caring roles at the time they are performed, as advocated for by the Australian Human Rights Commission in their 2013 Report: Investing in care.

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<sup>1</sup> As advocated for by [Investing in Communities: NCOSS Pre-Budget Submission 2017-18](#).

### Strengthening agencies, and monitoring.

**Recommendation 16:** The Commonwealth Office for Women, State equivalents and advocacy bodies such as the National Women's Alliances need to be adequately resourced and funded so they can further support and strengthen the Government's commitments to gender equality.

**Recommendation 17:** Reintroduce the Women's Budget Statement enabling it to assess the implications of the budget for women and men, and to highlight policy measures and initiatives that address gender segregation and inequality in the workplace, and promote pay equity.

**Recommendation 18:** Fund and appropriately support independent agencies that contribute to gender equality and its progress to ensure they are strengthened and effective in their mandate, including the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

**Recommendation 19:** Ensure the availability of sufficient gender disaggregated, responsive and transformative data, by adequately funding the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Further expand their reach to explore other areas of segregation. For example: older women and women with disability, and how women and men spend time in care and paid work. This could be achieved through the regular reintroduction of the Work, Life and Family Survey: Work, Care and Family Balance (WoLFS).

# SECTION 1: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS GENDER SEGREGATION

## 1.1. NATURE AND EXTENT OF GENDER SEGREGATION IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia over the last 40 years women's workforce participation has increased dramatically and today women represent approximately 46% of employees in the general workforce<sup>2</sup>.

However, they remain clustered in lower paid occupations. A recent report by ANZ Bank found that nearly half of all women employed in Australia work in only three sectors: health and community services, retail and education<sup>3</sup>.

Conversely, the highest paying sectors of construction, mining, and utilities have workforces that are 86% and 81% male, respectively.<sup>4</sup> These male-dominated industries traditionally see underrepresentation of women in not only leadership and managerial roles (as they tend to occupy low paying roles within those industries), but representation more broadly across their organisations.

Moreover, Australian women continue to be over-represented in part-time employment (making up 71.6 percent of this workforce), constitute a higher proportion of casual workers, and are more likely to be working under minimum employment conditions<sup>5</sup>.

The extent of industrial and occupational gender segregation is also a significant issue facing women in rural and regional Australia. This is partly due to availability and access to employment opportunities. For example, women in regional and remote areas feature strongly in food production and are often the backbone of farm management, and yet these roles are traditionally underpaid or unpaid.

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*'There is a huge disparity in job opportunities between larger centers and smaller towns. In smaller places the jobs always seem to be given to the men, and women are expected to go and find work elsewhere, often in unstable, low paid jobs'*

**Participant, New Year for Women Regional Consultations**

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<sup>2</sup> Goldman Sachs JB Were Investment Research, *Australia's Hidden Resource: The Economic Case for Increasing Female Participation* (2009). At [www.womenonboards.org.au/pubs/reports/091130gsjbw.pdf](http://www.womenonboards.org.au/pubs/reports/091130gsjbw.pdf) (viewed 6 February 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2016) *Gender workplace statistics at a glance*, at: [https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats\\_at\\_a\\_Glance.pdf](https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats_at_a_Glance.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>4</sup> ANZ (2015), *ANZ Women's Report- Barriers to Achieving Financial Gender Equity*, at: <http://www.women.anz.com/content/dam/Women/Documents/pdf/ANZ-Womens-Report-July-2015.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>5</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2016) *Gender workplace statistics at a glance*, at: [https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats\\_at\\_a\\_Glance.pdf](https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats_at_a_Glance.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

### 1.2. BENEFITS OF ADDRESSING GENDER SEGREGATION IN THE WORKFORCE.

The segregation of the Australian workforce by occupation and industry affects not only gender equality, but also our national economy and industry performance, and addressing it will have a multitude of benefits.

#### **Gender Equality:**

The gender pay gap in Australia is currently 16.2% and has hovered between 15% and 19% for the past two decades. The average weekly shortfall is \$295 per week, meaning that over a typical 40-year career, women earn on average \$700,000 less than men.<sup>6</sup>

While the gender pay gap is influenced by a number of interrelated work, family and societal factors, workplace segregation accounts for almost one third of the gender pay gap.

This pay gap results in lower income across a women's lifecycle and means that statistically women have lower lifetime earnings, superannuation and savings. This increases their risk of experiencing poverty and further means that women are left with fewer resources to cope in times of crisis and this can limit their ability to escape from domestic violence, and other pressures. We know that women's economic empowerment is essential to ensuring their safety, security and well-being throughout their lives.

This inequality throughout a women's lifecycle further places them at increased risk of housing stress and homelessness. We have seen these figures increase, particularly in NSW, where there are more than 11,000 women who are homeless in the State<sup>7</sup>. Older, single women are particularly at risk as they often lack the financial resources to provide for themselves, and run the risk of homelessness.

Addressing gender segregation and improving the gender pay gap will have an overwhelming positive impact on the security, safety and wellbeing of women throughout their lives.



<sup>6</sup> ANZ (2015), *ANZ Women's Report- Barriers to Achieving Financial Gender Equity*, at: <http://www.women.anz.com/content/dam/Women/Documents/pdf/ANZ-Womens-Report-July-2015.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>7</sup> ABS, 2049.0 Census of population data and housing, estimating homelessness 2011.

## **Australia's Economy:**

Achieving gender economic equality is essential to the economic future of Australia. Goldman Sachs estimates that closing the gap between male and female employment rates in Australia could potentially boost Australia's GDP by 11%.<sup>i</sup> In addition, the Grattan Institute reports that an increase in female labour force participation rate from Australia's current level to that of Canada (62.4%) would increase Australia's economic growth in the next decade by \$25 billion. And if the gap was closed completely, it would be by about \$195 billion or 13% of Australia's GDP<sup>8</sup>.

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*...there is a strong correlation between the gender gap and national competitiveness...a nations competitiveness depends significantly on whether and how it educates and utilises its female talent'*

World Economic Forum, 2014

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In examining the gendered composition of the workforce, women may also be employed in roles where their productivity is not maximized. If the gender productivity gap was minimized by increasing the number of women in leadership positions, the level of economic activity in Australia could be boosted by 20%<sup>9</sup>.

## **Business and Organisational benefits:**

Current research demonstrates that gender equity and diversity in the workplace is linked to significant organisational benefits, for both big and small businesses.

A diverse workforce develops a wider set of skills, expertise, and knowledge, which is linked to improved organisational performance, effectiveness, innovation and profitability. According to Gallup Workplace Studies, organisations with inclusive cultures do better on several indicators than those that are not inclusive, with 39% higher customer satisfaction, 22% greater productivity and 27% higher profitability<sup>10</sup>.

Moreover, currently there is a skills shortage in Australia and the traditional male dominated industries of trade, engineering and sales are struggling the most, and have remained at the top of the local skills shortage list since 2006. Attracting and retaining underutilised sources of talent, including women, is key to addressing this skills shortage.

Finally, organisations with women in senior management positions have also been linked to higher organisational performance. Through an examination of 180 publicly traded companies in France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, McKinsey has reported that companies with

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<sup>8</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission (2010), *Gender Equality Blueprint 2010*, at: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/gender-equality-blueprint-2010> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>9</sup> Goldman Sachs JB Were Investment Research (2009), *Australia's Hidden Resource: The Economic Case for Increasing Female Participation*, at [www.eowa.gov.au/Pay\\_Equity/Files/Australias\\_hidden\\_resource.pdf](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Pay_Equity/Files/Australias_hidden_resource.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>10</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2013) *Women in male-dominated industries: A toolkit of strategies*, at: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/women-male-dominated-industries-toolkit-strategies-2013> (viewed 9 February 2017)

diverse executive boards have significantly higher earnings and returns on equity than those in the bottom range.<sup>11</sup>

It is important that strategies employed to reap the clear benefits of diversity are inclusive of all women, especially those who experience intersecting forms of disadvantage such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, CALD women, young women and women with disability.

### 1.3 INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

Australia has made a demonstrated International commitment to address gender segregation, narrow the employment gap between men and women and close the gender pay gap.

In 2014, through the G20 leaders' summit, Australia made a commitment to reduce the gender gap in workforce participation by 25%, by 2025. Moreover, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy, is working to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are core parts of the foreign policy, economic diplomacy and aid work of DFAT.

Australia has taken an active role in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals, with Goal 5 being to achieve gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls<sup>12</sup>. Our support of this goal is driven by the recognition that empowering women is a strong contributor to economic growth and stability. This goal has now been applied to Australia's Aid programs, where Australia has made gender equality and women's empowerment one of six priority areas for investment in our aid programs. Notably Australia now requires that 80 per cent of our total aid investments go to programs that effectively address gender issues in their implementation.<sup>13</sup> For example, DFAT worked with local women's groups in Fiji, following Cyclone Winston in 2016, to identify issues that are of importance to them and used this information to guide the redevelopment process.

Australia has made a strong international commitment to address gender segregation and economic empowerment. It is important that we not only continue to meet these commitments, but also be an international leader for this agenda in what we model and implement at home.

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<sup>11</sup> McKinsey and Company (2012), *Is there a payoff from top-team diversity?* at: <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/is-there-a-payoff-from-top-team-diversity> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>12</sup> Australian Sustainable Development Goals Summit: *On the road to implementation* (2016), at: [http://ministers.dfat.gov.au/finravanti-wells/speeches/Pages/2016/cf\\_sp\\_160907.aspx?w=p2wUImE1t7kKl1%2BiOm3ggg%3D%3D](http://ministers.dfat.gov.au/finravanti-wells/speeches/Pages/2016/cf_sp_160907.aspx?w=p2wUImE1t7kKl1%2BiOm3ggg%3D%3D) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>13</sup> DFAT (2016), Australia's assistance for gender equality, at: <http://dfat.gov.au/aid/topics/investment-priorities/gender-equality-empowering-women-girls/gender-equality/Pages/australias-assistance-for-gender-equality.aspx> (viewed 9 February 2017)

## SECTION 2:

# FACTORS DRIVING GENDER SEGREGATION AND HOW TO ADDRESS THEM

**Gender segregation in the workplace is shaped by a multitude of factors that are complex and interconnected, and understanding their complexity is critical to designing interventions to address them.**

Feedback from our member consultations have shown that there are several causes and barriers that must be addressed to improve the participation of women in male-dominate occupations (and the workforce more broadly), to advance the conditions for women in these occupations, and promote pay equity across the board.

This submission will address the three key factors that impact on a women's decision to enter, stay and advance in the workforce, through the course of her lifecycle. These being:

- Education and chosen fields of study;
- Prevalence of women in leadership positions;
- Caring responsibilities and the gendered nature of work and working arrangements.

These factors should be viewed in a nexus where the factors that hinder the development of women in their career, may also impact on a women's perception of the workplace and entry into the position in the first place. Equally the solutions to address these factors should not be viewed in isolation, and rather should form part of a consortium of solutions targeting education, government and business reforms.

Furthermore, it must be recognised that the discrimination and inequality faced by women is exacerbated by, and intersects with, other forms of disadvantage and often has compounding impacts. This is particularly true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women, women from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability, young and older women and women in regional, rural and remote communities.

It is therefore important that efforts to reduce gender segregation in the workplace are addressed in the broader context of gender inequality, discrimination and vulnerability, and take an intersectional approach that address the root cause of gender inequality.

## 2.1 EDUCATION AND CHOSEN FIELDS OF STUDY

**Educational attainment and access to training is a key factor influencing women's pattern of paid work and work choices.**

Australian women are among the most highly educated in the world, and as a nation we are consistently ranked amongst the top in the world for women's educational attainment.

In primary school girls generally outperform boys in reading and writing, and by year 9 this gap broadens significantly. As young adults, 63% of working age women hold Year 12 qualifications, compared to fifty-eight per cent of men. And from secondary school, girls go on to enroll in university in greater numbers than boys.<sup>14</sup>

While education attainment is high, it is the subjects that women and men choose to study at high school and university that fundamentally influence the careers they enter and the incomes they achieve.

We continue to see women over-represented in areas of study linked to lower earning industries, while men continue to be over represented in study areas linked to higher earning industries<sup>15</sup>. For example, women outnumber men by 3:1 in health and education courses, and men outnumber women 5:1 in engineering courses.

There has been little change in this gendered pattern of education, ultimately translating into a gender segregated workforce where female-dominated industries continue to be undervalued, as represented by their lower pay scales. For example, as noted by the Australian Human Rights Commission, the level of skill and training to be a hairdresser is comparable to that of a mechanic, yet there is considerable difference in pay between these two professions<sup>16</sup>.

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*'At school there's an expectation on what girls should study and what boys should study...and young women will make their choices regarding subjects by Year 8 based on pressures from their school teachers, peers and what their parents encourage and/or enforce they study....By the time they have reached year 9 young women have already been unconsciously funneled into particular subjects....they are counting themselves out of particular careers simply because of the social pressures imposed upon them during these years.'*

**Young Women's Advisory Panel Member**

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<sup>14</sup> ANZ (2015), *ANZ Women's Report- Barriers to Achieving Financial Gender Equity*, at:

<http://www.women.anz.com/content/dam/Women/Documents/pdf/ANZ-Womens-Report-July-2015.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>15</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) *Accumulating Poverty: Women's Experience of Inequality Over their Life Cycle*, at:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/accumulating-poverty-women-s-experiences-inequality-over> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>16</sup> Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (2001), *Worth Valuing: A Report of the Pay Equity Inquiry*.

at <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/pdf/ir/worthvaluingf.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017).

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*'Gender differences in the workplace are coloring how I imagine my future and my opportunities'*

**Young Women's Advisory Panel Member**

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A large part of this is due to the stereotypes and unconscious bias that begins at school around broader attitudes and expectations of gender roles and abilities. The Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT), which tested half a million people, has shown that more than 70% of test takers associated 'males' with science and women with 'the arts'. Such implicit beliefs directly influence parents (and family and community members) decisions to encourage or discourage young girls from pursuing particular subjects and careers.

Our Young Women's Advisory panel reports that, for young women, this gender bias is worsened by a lack of gender education in schools around employment opportunities, and that teachers and counsellors can have unconscious biases around gendered roles which unconsciously flow onto their advice and program development.

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*'Schools have a visible divide; male teachers educate boys about leadership, while female teachers don't do the same for girls'*

**Young Women's Advisory Panel Member**

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This gender bias also begins early in their career. The Panel reports that in casual work at supermarkets and cafes, women are commonly placed in the front of the shop to work with customers, and the boys are placed at the back to work on finances and stocking.

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*'Girls get the front of house, and customer service, where there is an emphasis placed on looks and you experience harassment...I didn't want to be put at the front of house, I wanted to be out the back of house doing storage and financing...all career progression comes from the back of house... when I raised this with the manager I was told 'to settle down''.*

**Young Women's Advisory Panel Member**

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Research by the University of Sydney has supported these findings, in a study looking at the experiences of young (18-25) waitresses, shop assistants, bartenders and cashiers working in Sydney. The study found that customer-perpetrated sexual harassment is alarmingly common and that employee's feel quite restricted in their ability to respond to it. Alarmingly, up to 67 per cent of female retail workers have been victims of harassment.<sup>17</sup> The study found that while legal protection against customer-perpetrated harassment exists in Australia, there is limited understanding of this legislation on the workplace and individual level.

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<sup>17</sup> Good, L & Cooper, R (2016) 'But It's Your Job To Be Friendly': Employees Coping With and Contesting Sexual Harassment from Customers in the Service Sector) *Gender, Work & Organization*, 23:447-469. doi: [10.1111/gwao.12117](https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12117).

A National Career Development Strategy has been developed in Australia, which recognises that career development is life-long. However, it needs to be better resourced to tackle the life-long consequences that gender stereotypes have for children at school. At present, it lacks a gender lense and currently does not reference 'girls, gender or female' in the text.

If we look elsewhere we can see a number of initiatives that are encouraging this gender lense in career development at school. In the UK in 2007, a career-related learning project for primary schools was introduced with one of its aims being "to inhibit stereotyped and self-limiting thinking" of careers. The program review reported some success:

*'Pupil survey results showed that over the course of the evaluation, Pathfinder pupils showed a greater decrease in stereotypical thinking and greater improvements in their perceptions of the effectiveness of career-related learning in their school than comparison pupils'<sup>18</sup>*



Furthermore, in the UK, a guide for teachers on how to challenge gender stereotypes through existing classroom activities has been developed. These activities do not require curriculum changes and could be implemented in Australia.<sup>1920</sup>

Gendered differences in financial literacy is also a significant problem, which develops during the formative years in school, and results in women experiencing financial disadvantage throughout their lives. Financial literacy enables greater economic participation, and is important throughout a women's life, especially when her circumstance changes such as starting a career, changing jobs and reentering the workforce. We need school based financial literacy programs that have a gendered lense. These programs should also ensure a targeted approach for Aboriginal women, CALD women, women with disability, and women in regional, rural and remote communities.

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<sup>18</sup> National Foundation for Educational Research (2011), *Key Stage 2 career-related learning pathfinder evaluation*, at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/193602/DFE-RB116.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193602/DFE-RB116.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>19</sup> National Union of Teachers (2017) *Breaking the Mould: challenging gender stereotypes*, at: <https://www.teachers.org.uk/equality/equality-matters/breaking-mould> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>20</sup> National Union of Teachers (2013), *Boy Things and Girl Things* at: <https://www.teachers.org.uk/files/boys-things-revise-8875.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

**RECOMMENDATION 1:**

Commonwealth and State governments work to ensure national and state career strategies are responsive to the needs of girls and women. We further recommend the commissioning of career guidance models, work rights materials and financial literacy programs for schools that are specific to the needs of girls.

It is important to acknowledge that for many groups of women, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women, CALD women, older women and women with disabilities; they experience barriers to education and training at the most basic level. Our consultations established this as a key concern in improving participation in the paid workforce for these groups.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** All levels of government develop accessible career development and labor rights materials, including web-based materials, in community languages. Further increase funding for organisations focused on promoting the employment rights and interest of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD women.

CALD participants commented on the importance of access to training and education material in languages other than English. Older women commented on the lack of access to training and return to work preparation programs, as a barrier which impacts on their ability to engage in paid work.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:**

All governments fund out-reach programs for women re-entering the workforce.



Equally important to note, is that the dialogue on improving and addressing gender bias in education attainment for women needs to acknowledge the gender bias against men. Notably, between 1995 and 2015, we saw a decline in the proportion of men in Australia's two female-dominated industries of health care and social assistance, and education and training.

In moving forward we need to consider and elevate the participation and role of men in entering non-traditional male roles and ensure that any gender education rollout in schools and communities explores this gender bias. We further need to ensure that gender equality targets are introduced in female-dominated industries such as primary school teaching, nursing and healthcare.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Commonwealth and State governments ensure that any career development or gender bias training initiatives in schools and communities encourage the benefits of improving gender diversity for the workplace and society.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:**

The Commonwealth government ensure that equal pay for work of equal value is achieved by improving the award rates in female-dominated industries such as education, nursing and healthcare.



## 2.2 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

**Although women comprise 46% of the Australian workforce, they remain underrepresented in leadership and management positions across all sectors and industries.**

Across Australia, the representation of women declines steadily with seniority. Women make up 40 per cent of 'other managers' – the lowest level of management – and only 15.4 per cent of Chief Executive Officers or Heads of Business<sup>21</sup>.

These statistics however are not representative of women's interest or availability. Rather they reflect entrenched unconscious gender biases that are deeply embedded in Australian society and are faced by all working women. This disparity between women and men in leadership roles only serves to perpetuate these existing stereotypes.

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*'Women have to start low, men have the confidence and the networks early on so they can shoot straight to the top'*

**Seven Sisters Advisory Panel member**

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Improving the rates of women in leadership roles must start early and proceed across all part of a women's career. This is particularly important as we know that there are several critical points where a women's advancement in the workforce is affected, for example:

- **Prior to entering the workforce:** Women entering their first paid job after university graduation earn on average four per cent less than men, for no obvious reason. This gender pay gap progressively widens throughout their careers, and is most prominent in senior leadership positions.<sup>22</sup>
- **While employed,** often as a result of unconscious gender bias, women are funnelled into less advantageous roles; roles that are lower paid, with less responsibility or areas with little avenues for training and growth. Moreover, the onset of caring responsibilities, or potential of caring responsibilities further exacerbates this due to negative assumptions and stereotypes about women and their commitment to their career. Of concern, almost half (49%) of mothers reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace relating to pregnancy, parental leave and or returning to work.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2015) *Australia's gender equality scorecard*, at: [https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2014-15-WGEA\\_SCORECARD.pdf](https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2014-15-WGEA_SCORECARD.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>22</sup> ANZ (2015), *ANZ Women's Report- Barriers to Achieving Financial Gender Equity*, at: <http://www.women.anz.com/content/dam/Women/Documents/pdf/ANZ-Womens-Report-July-2015.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>23</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) *Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and return to work National Review- Report*, at [https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SWP\\_Report\\_2014.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SWP_Report_2014.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

Increasing the representation of women at decision making levels reduces the prevalence of discriminatory behaviors and forces their workplaces to adapt to their female employees' needs and demands, by ensuring that women can contribute and have authority to decide and negotiate on issues that affect them.

It is important to ensure that there is representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (and other groups experiencing intersecting disadvantage) in leadership positions. We know that discrimination is compounded for Aboriginal Women, who have a vastly different experience in the labor market than non-Aboriginal women. For instance, they are 67% less likely to be in the labor force to begin with, and are 16.1% more likely to be unemployed<sup>24</sup>.

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*'Having women in leadership positions is aspirational, but it is also equally important to get mentors, and sponsors, at all levels and from the beginning....It needs to feel achievable and within reach'*

**Young Women's Advisory Panel member**

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*'Aboriginal women need to own the voice of their issues, not have white women speak for them... There needs to be truth in the support of emerging Aboriginal leaders, rather than just ticking a box.... They need to take the grass roots community with them'*

**Seven Sisters Advisory Panel member**

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Furthermore, recent evidence shows that an increased representation of women in leadership positions decreases biases against women in the population as a whole, while expanding young girls' educational opportunities and career aspirations.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6:**

Commonwealth and State Governments take a lead and ensure that there is a gender equity office or advisor role in HR departments for all government departments and agencies.

### **RECOMMENDATION 7:**

To ensure public service and private sector recruitment targets and review, encourage businesses to carry out a gender audit (on pay, conditions, leave entitlements) and apply for an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation, to promote employer best practice.

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<sup>24</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) *Accumulating Poverty: Women's Experience of Inequality Over their Life Cycle*, at: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/accumulating-poverty-women-s-experiences-inequality-over> (viewed 9 February 2017)

Notably, in the federal government and across all state and territory governments', women are underrepresented at senior levels. It's commendable to see governments across Australia seeking to improve this, for example, the NSW Government is working to increase the proportion of women in senior leadership roles in the NSW government sector from 33 to 50 per cent in the next 10 years and double the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in senior leadership roles in the NSW government sector in the next 10 years<sup>25</sup>. However, the gap is still significant and not all jurisdictions have targets.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8:**

The Commonwealth government and all state and territory governments should demonstrate leadership through a shared commitment to strengthen the representation of women at decision-making levels:

- Set a minimum target of 40% representation of each gender at all Government Boards.
- All publically listed companies providing goods and services to Federal and State Governments should be certified by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)
- Government departments and agencies should regularly and consistently audit and report on the total workforce, board composition, leadership and remuneration by gender, as well as other gender equality indicators. Reports should track progress on workplace gender equality over time and be made publicly available.
- Implement gender neutral advertising and blind/ anonymous recruiting initiatives to remove unconscious bias.

### **RECOMMENDATION 9:**

The Commonwealth Government investigate the creation of a Government Business Alliance Network for cross industry relations, that models and awards best practice, for example the creation of successful and impactful female mentoring and sponsorship practices.



<sup>25</sup> NSW Government (2017) Driving public sector diversity, at: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/premiers-priorities/driving-public-sector-diversity/> (viewed 20 February 2017)

### 2.3 CARING RESPONSIBILITIES, NATURE OF WORK AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

**The nature of work (including workplace culture and working arrangements) remains one of the most inhibiting factors to a women's entry into the workforce and certain industries, their career advancement and pay equity.**

Women largely shoulder most caring responsibilities for children, family members or friends with disability, or chronic illness. We consistently hear from our members that these caring responsibilities- childcare and other- impact on their advancement in the workforce.

Additionally, we know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women are more likely to be carers, compared to non-indigenous women. As carers, they have lower rates of paid workforce participation and significantly lower earnings, compounding their disadvantaged position in the paid workforce.

In many workforces, there is not adequate support for employees in caring roles with employees experiencing harassment and discrimination, demotions, redundancies and terminations. According to the 2015 ANZ Women's Report, 49 per cent of mothers report experiencing discrimination in the workplace at some point during pregnancy, parental leave or on return to work<sup>26</sup>.

The lack of structural support for employees with caring responsibilities, such as the limited availability of flexible work arrangements and quality, and affordable child care, presents a significant barrier for women's participation in the paid workforce.

In these situations, women will often attempt to find new work that will accommodate their caring responsibilities, and we see these women more likely to be employed in lower paying jobs and in more insecure employment such as part-time, casual or labour-hire employment. Otherwise women will simply leave rather than fight the unfair practices.<sup>27</sup>

#### **Workplace Flexibility:**

Quality flexible working arrangements are still not common in Australian workplaces. And while NCOSS advocates for flexible working arrangements to be an accepted part of all Australian workplaces, we acknowledge that these arrangements can also result in further entrenching discriminatory practices and structural bias against those who have primary caregiver responsibility. As the 2015 Professionals Australia/ ACS ICT Remuneration Survey found, utilising part time work and flexible work practices could result in the narrowing of choice, limiting opportunities and the enhancement of discriminatory practices

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<sup>26</sup> ANZ (2015), *ANZ Women's Report- Barriers to Achieving Financial Gender Equity*, at:

<http://www.women.anz.com/content/dam/Women/Documents/pdf/ANZ-Womens-Report-July-2015.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>27</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) *Accumulating Poverty: Women's Experience of Inequality Over their Life Cycle*, at:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/accumulating-poverty-women-s-experiences-inequality-over> (viewed 9 February 2017)

that continue to concentrate women in roles and occupations with less responsibility and seniority<sup>28</sup>. For example, 61.5% of survey respondents reported that they believed that working part time had negatively impacted their career, and 23.6% said they were seen as not pulling their weight because they used flexible work arrangements.

Flexible arrangements are important, however they need to be implemented with a consortium of strategies that develop greater awareness among both employers and employees regarding employee rights to access flexible work arrangements, arrangements which keep employees connected to incomes while caring, as well as management strategies to enable career progression and development.

Our members see flexible work practices becoming more increasingly available, but they also experience resistant management and workplace culture which prevents them being taken up and mean many workers are reluctant to use them as they often come at the expense of job quality, pay, career progression.

**RECOMMENDATION 10:**

All levels of government work to ensure that flexible working arrangements are an accepted part of Australian workplace culture. Flexible arrangements need to cover all forms of caring responsibilities, and be actively available to both men and women. They should further be implemented alongside strategies for workplace education and career progression.

The recent ruling by the Fair Work Commission to reduce penalty rates for full-time and part-time workers in the hospitality, retail and fast-food industries, disproportionately impacts women. Women are substantially more likely to be employed on a part time or a casual basis within these particular industries, receive minimum award wages and are more likely to rely on penalty rates to meet household payments.<sup>29</sup>. For many women, working on weekends is their only viable option because conventional work on weekdays is too inflexible, as evident by the fact that 16 per cent of the retail workforce is made up of single parents<sup>30</sup>. The Commonwealth Government's needs to ensure that women and other vulnerable workers are not adversely disadvantaged by this ruling.

**RECOMMENDATION 11:**

The Commonwealth Government implement measures to ensure that vulnerable workers are not adversely disadvantaged by the recent ruling on penalty rates, by the Fair Work Commission. For example, by encouraging and providing incentives for employers to not implement the cuts.

<sup>28</sup> Professional Australia/ ACS ICT (2015), *Professionals Australia/ Australian Computer Society ICT Remuneration Surveys Summary Report* at: [http://www.professionalsaustralia.org.au/information-technology/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2015/09/SUMMARY\\_REPORT\\_v3.pdf](http://www.professionalsaustralia.org.au/information-technology/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2015/09/SUMMARY_REPORT_v3.pdf) (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>29</sup> Fitzsimmons, C (2017) 'How the penalty rates decision hurts women' at: <http://www.smh.com.au/money/how-the-penalty-rates-decision-hurts-women-20170223-guk5hm.html> (viewed 28 February 2017)

<sup>30</sup> Perry, A (2017) 'Sunday penalty rates: Women to bear the brunt of cuts, experts say', at: <http://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace-relations/sunday-penalty-rates-women-to-bare-the-brunt-of-cuts-experts-say-20170224-gukj9u.html> (viewed 1 March 2017)

## **Maternity and Paid Parental Leave**

Paid maternity leave and paid parental leave have implications for women's workforce participation and it's encouraging to see data from the WGEA show that a number of male dominated industries are offering higher than average paid maternity and paternity leave entitlements in addition to the government funded paid parental leave scheme.<sup>31</sup>

While all employees in Australia are entitled to paid parental leave, subject to meeting certain requirements, we are one of only two OECD countries that does not pay leave based on a replacement wage. As such, the minimum period of paid parental leave should be 26 weeks at no less than the national minimum wage.

Given recent debates over paid parental leave, it's important to consider the role of both government and business in supplying paid parental leave. A progressive example of a paid parental leave system is provided by the NSW Local Government (State) Award. In this example, the parental leave clause tops up the wages of female and male employees who receive paid parental leave under the federal scheme, to their full rate of pay, and provides 18 weeks parental leave at full pay to both mothers and fathers as an Award Entitlement<sup>32</sup>. An approach such as this could be transferred to all state award structures.

Furthermore, all governments and businesses should work to encourage men to take parental leave so the practice is normalised and childcare responsibly is less gendered.

### **RECOMMENDATION 12:**

The Commonwealth Paid Parental Leave Scheme continues to be improved over time to allow for 26 weeks paid parental leave.

- A minimum of four weeks to be set aside for partner leave on a use it or lose it basis.
- Include mandatory superannuation contributions on the government paid parental leave scheme to ensure women are not disadvantaged later in life for taking parenting leave.

### **RECOMMENDATION 13:**

Allocate funding to conduct a regular national prevalence survey on discrimination related to pregnancy, parental leave and return to work after parental leave, as advocated for by the Australian Human Rights Commission in their 2014 report: Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review

<sup>31</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Male dominated industries lead the way on parental leave*, at: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/media-releases/male-dominated-industries-lead-way-parental-leave> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>32</sup> cl. 21 [Local Government \(State\) Award](#).

## Childcare

The Productivity Commission's 2014 report on childcare and early childhood learning found that women's workforce participation could be increased through access to affordable childcare<sup>33</sup>.

Cost and access to appropriate childcare facilities continue to be barrier for women to remain and return to the workforce. Our members have highlighted that childcare is increasingly more expensive, access and space is limited, and/ or the quality is not appropriate for their needs. Therefore, even when employers are flexible with caring responsibilities, women are often not able to continue with paid work because of the financial expense associated with childcare.

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*Childcare is just impossible. In addition to food, clothing, rent, electricity, health needs, transport and all other expenses, we can't afford childcare on top of that.... it makes more sense for me to stay at home*

**Participant, New Year for Women Consultation**

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Childcare is even harder to access for women and families experiencing poverty, and in regional and remote communities. NCOSS has called on the NSW Government to establish a \$250 million [Early Childhood Education Investment Fund](#) to complement existing measures. The fund would incubate cross-sectoral partnerships – such as between any combination of early childhood services, children and family services, Aboriginal services, employment services, educational institutions, housing providers and employers – that will draw on diverse expertise in improving access to early education and achieving outcomes for vulnerable families across a range of domains. This model could be adopted by other states and territories, and would ensure that Australia's most vulnerable women can have access to childcare services, and in turn employment choices and opportunities.

### **RECOMMENDATION 14:**

All levels of government ensure affordable early childhood education and care, particularly for low income families to encourage women's ongoing work force participation.

- The NSW Government should take a lead and adopt innovative solutions, including the [Early Childhood Education Fund](#)<sup>1</sup>.

## Social and economic value placed on unpaid caring work

The overarching lack of social and economic value attributed to unpaid work, such as caring, further contributes to lowering women's engagement in the workforce, particularly in male dominated industries.

The value placed on caring does not adequately reward the considerable benefit care provides to communities and the economy, nor does it compensate for the serious financial penalties that result

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<sup>33</sup> Productivity Commission (2014) *Inquiry Report : Childcare and Early Childhood Learning*, at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/childcare/report/childcare-overview.pdf> (viewed 9 February 2017)

from these responsibilities. It is estimated that in 2005, informal care provided approximately 1.2 billion hours of care at an estimated replacement value of \$30.5 billion. Furthermore, in 2010, the amount of unpaid care provided for people with disabilities was estimated to be around 1.32 billion hours per year— which would cost \$40.9b to replace with paid carers in the home. Yet, this work is not recognised or rewarded<sup>34</sup>.

**RECOMMENDATION 15:**

Work to develop a model that places a financial value on unpaid caring roles at the time they are performed, as advocated for by the Australian Human Rights Commission in their 2013 Report: Investing in care.

## 2.4 GENDER EQUITY LAWS, AGENCIES AND POLICIES

The Office for Women, and state equivalents such as Women NSW, are the central mechanisms to ensure that gender equality and women's issues are taken into consideration in policy, program development and implementation at state and federal levels.

While the Australian Government has increased commitment to gender equality, the Budget does not provide any substantial new funding for the Office for Women. In addition, forward estimates show a decrease in budget allocations in 2017-18 and 2018-19 from 2016-17.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, the five National Women's Alliances play a key role in bringing forward the views, voices and issues of Australian women, particularly women from marginalised and disadvantaged groups, in to the national agenda.

**RECOMMENDATION 16:**

The Commonwealth Office for Women, State equivalents, and advocacy bodies such as the National Women's Alliances need to be adequately resourced and funded so they can further support and strengthen the Government's commitments to gender equality.

We need analysis and data on government policy and the different impacts public policy has on women and men to evaluate and assess our improvement in gender economic equality. Government policies aimed at increasing workforce participation, early childhood development, supporting particular industries or regions, sport, or caring for the disabled or aged, all have gender implications which are currently not assessed.

<sup>34</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) *Accumulating Poverty: Women's Experience of Inequality Over their Life Cycle*, at: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/accumulating-poverty-women-s-experiences-inequality-over> (viewed 9 February 2017)

<sup>35</sup> Parliament of Australia (2015) Domestic violence: Budget Review 2015–16 Index, at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201516/DV](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201516/DV) (viewed 9 February 2016)

From 1983 to 2013, the federal government produced a Women's Budget. However, in recent years this has not happened. In a 2014 OECD study, the Australian Government compared poorly on gender analysis. The study found that Australia had no systematic process to assess the impact on women and men of taxing, spending or government programs, either before or after the government enacts legislation, appropriates funds or initiates policy<sup>36</sup>.

**RECOMMENDATION 17:**

Reintroduce the Women's Budget Statement enabling it to assess the implications of the budget for women and men, and to highlight policy measures and initiatives that address gender segregation and inequality in the workplace and promote pay equity.

Other agencies are instrumental in collating data, and evaluating improvements in gender equality, (such as workplace segregation), and advocating for gender equality in Australian workplaces. These agencies include the Workplace and Gender Equality Agency and the Australia Bureau of Statistics.

Given our international commitments and leadership at the G20 and in developing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (as outlined in section 1.3) it is even more paramount that Australia remains committed to strengthening the provision of gender analysis, advice and mainstreaming across Government.

**RECOMMENDATION 18:**

Fund and appropriately support independent agencies that contribute to gender equality and its progress to ensure they are strengthened and effective in their mandate, including the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

**RECOMMENDATION 19:**

Ensure the availability of sufficient gender disaggregated, responsive and transformative data, by adequately funding the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Further expand their reach to explore other areas of segregation. For example: older women and women disability, and how women and men spend time in care and paid work. This could be achieved through the regular reintroduction of the Work, Life and Family Survey: Work, Care and Family Balance (WoLFS).

<sup>36</sup> OECD (2014) Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD Countries: Fostering Diversity at: <https://uweboard.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/women-government-and-policy-making.pdf> (accessed 9 February 2017)

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### SECTION 3: CONCLUSION

This submission has set out the key recommendations that are priorities for our country if we are to address industrial and occupational workplace segregation. Some of these recommendations are already underway, and there is promising progress being made. However, more work needs to be done.

If we are to achieve genuine progress, we need to see reforms in the education sector, with the introduction of gender bias programs, career strategies and financial literacy programs that have a gendered lense, and highlight the importance and benefits of improving gender diversity in the workplace and society.

We need more women in leadership to ensure women can contribute and have the authority to decide and negotiate on issues that affect them.

We need reforms to workplace cultures, child care and Australia's paid parental leave scheme.

We need strong and responsive authorities to advocate for these positions and strong independent monitoring mechanisms that provide sufficient gender desegregated, responsive and transformative data to hold us accountable, and to our monitor progress domestically, and on the international stage.

Finally, unpinning all these recommendations, and all our work moving forward is the knowledge of different women's experience and the barriers they face. All recommendations and strategies developed and adopted from this inquiry need to take an intersectional approach that addresses the root cause of gender inequality but also other forms of discrimination. They need to support and target groups who experience this the hardest: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability, young and older women and women in regional, rural and remote communities. We know that these communities have their own solutions and if they are empowered to deliver on these solutions, together we can make real change for gender equity.

# SECTION 4: APPENDIX

## New Year for Women

In 2016 NCOSS launched a [New Year for Women](#), a campaign focused on building and developing partnerships between leaders and thinkers from the community sector, business, government, unions and academia, to develop targeted solutions for women's empowerment throughout their lives

NCOSS facilitated a series of roundtables and consultations in metropolitan, regional and remote parts of NSW. We heard from over 100 organisations and key stakeholders, including CALD women, older women, young women and girls, women with disability, Aboriginal women, representatives from LGBTIQ communities, and women from regions across the State. We spoke with academics, union representatives, and domestic violence specialists, housing experts, financial counsellors, faith groups and community organisations.

NCOSS further met with business leaders and leading industry bodies to find common ground on what action we can take together to see the economic empowerment of women. We heard of effective and innovative practices employers are adopting to progress gender equity and improve women's participation in the workforce.

Together we identified the fundamental obstacles to women's economic empowerment in the four key areas of financial literacy, employment, housing and superannuation.

From here NCOSS developed a plan for action [A New Plan, A New Moment, a New Year for Women](#), establishing 7 Guiding Principles, beginning with Four Starting Actions to achieve over 2016-2019.

In August 2016, NCOSS held the [New Year for Women Summit](#) which brought together 100 key leaders from the civil society, business and government to build and develop partnerships for this plan for action. At this summit leaders committed themselves to be brave, collaborative, and inclusive and be an active movement for change.

## NCOSS Women Advisory Panels

### Seven Sisters- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Panel

The Seven Sisters Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Panel consists of 14 indigenous women who are leaders and advocates in their communities. They are committed to giving Aboriginal women a voice and finding ways to empower them to network, advocate and create solutions for their communities.

They are an advisory point for policy change within government and the social services sector, ensuring that the voice of Aboriginal women is heard by key decision makers.

### Young Women's Advisory Panel

The Young Women's Advisory Panel consists of 23 young women aged 12-25 years old. Each are leaders in their community and together they embody a broad range of expertise, perspectives and lived experience. They represent young women from regional, rural and remote communities, young women with disabilities and young women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and LGBTIQ communities.



## New Year for Women Consultation List

NCOSS heard from over 100 organisations and key leaders and thinkers across government, business, industry bodies, trade unions, academia and the community sector.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 ThousandGirl</li> <li>• ACON NSW</li> <li>• AbSec</li> <li>• Address Housing</li> <li>• Apolitical, Berlin</li> <li>• Asian Women at Work</li> <li>• Australian Human Rights Commission</li> <li>• Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman</li> <li>• Australian Women's Health Network</li> <li>• Blue Mountains Women's Health Centre</li> <li>• Central Coast Community Council</li> <li>• Coast Shelter</li> <li>• Community Legal Centres NSW</li> <li>• Consult Australia</li> <li>• Corrective Services NSW</li> <li>• Council on the Ageing</li> <li>• Country Women's Association of NSW</li> <li>• Domestic Violence NSW</li> <li>• Domestic Violence NSW Service Management</li> <li>• Dressed for Success Sydney</li> <li>• Dubbo Interagency</li> <li>• Energy &amp; Water Ombudsman</li> <li>• Family Law Pathways Network</li> <li>• Family Planning NSW</li> <li>• Far West Community Legal Centre</li> <li>• Gender Matters</li> <li>• Girl Guides Australia</li> <li>• Good Shepherd Microfinance</li> <li>• HESTA</li> <li>• Interrelate</li> <li>• Illawarra Forum</li> <li>• Illawarra Management Taskforc</li> <li>• Illawarra Women's Health Centre</li> <li>• Immigrant Women's Speakout of NSW</li> <li>• Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, University of Technology</li> <li>• Justice Connect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newcastle Women's Alliance</li> <li>• Northern Rivers Social Development Council</li> <li>• Northern Rivers Women and Children's Services</li> <li>• Nova for Women and Children</li> <li>• Noverak</li> <li>• NSW Jewish Board of Deputies</li> <li>• NSW Teachers Federation</li> <li>• NSW Women's Alliance</li> <li>• Older Women's Network</li> <li>• PAYCE</li> <li>• People With Disability Australia</li> <li>• Playgroup NSW</li> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• Sector Connect</li> <li>• Seniors Rights Service</li> <li>• Settlement Services International</li> <li>• Shelter NSW</li> <li>• Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association</li> <li>• St Benedicts Centre, Queanbeyan</li> <li>• St Vincent de Paul NSW</li> <li>• Staying Home Leaving Violence Broken Hill</li> <li>• Sydney Business Chamber</li> <li>• The Family Centre, Tweed</li> <li>• The Women's Centre for Health and Wellbeing, Albury</li> <li>• Tenants Union NSW</li> <li>• UN Women National Committee Australia</li> <li>• United Voice</li> <li>• Uniting</li> <li>• Uniting Orana Far West</li> <li>• University of Sydney Business School</li> <li>• University of Technology</li> <li>• University of Western Sydney</li> <li>• Urban Growth NSW</li> <li>• VibeWire</li> <li>• Western Sydney Community Forum</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEEP</li> <li>• Lismore Women's Health &amp; Resource Centre</li> <li>• Macquarie University</li> <li>• Mercy Foundation</li> <li>• Mid Coast Communities</li> <li>• Mission Australia</li> <li>• Moreton Consulting</li> <li>• Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation for Women</li> <li>• Multicultural Advocacy Association of NSW</li> <li>• Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network</li> <li>• Muslim Women's Association</li> <li>• National Women's Alliances</li> <li>• Australian Women Against Violence Alliance</li> <li>○ Economic Security 4 Women</li> <li>○ Equality Rights Alliance</li> <li>○ National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance</li> <li>○ National Rural Women's Alliance</li> <li>• NCOSS Young Women's Roundtable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Sydney Women</li> <li>• Wilcannia Safehouse</li> <li>• Women &amp; Family Policy Roundtable</li> <li>• Women Chiefs of Enterprise International</li> <li>• Women in Prison Advocacy Network</li> <li>• Women in Super</li> <li>• Women NSW</li> <li>• Women's Health Centre Central Coast</li> <li>• Women's Health NSW</li> <li>• Women's Housing Company</li> <li>• Women's Electoral Lobby</li> <li>• Women's Leadership Institute Australia</li> <li>• Workplace Gender Equality Agency</li> <li>• World Federation of Engineering Organisations</li> <li>• YES Youth &amp; Family Services, Albury</li> <li>• Youth Advisory Council</li> <li>• Youth Action</li> <li>• YWCA</li> <li>• YWCA Northern Rivers</li> <li>• Zonta Club of Central Coast</li> </ul>
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