

# Queensland Women

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2015

**Disclaimer**

This publication is designed to provide general unbiased information. Every care has been taken to ensure the correctness of the information in the publication as at October 2015.

*Queensland Women 2015* was prepared by the Office for Women, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Queensland Government.

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# Introduction

*Queensland Women 2015* provides an evidence base to report and assess equality of outcomes between women and men in Queensland.

Through an analysis of state-based, gender disaggregated statistics across a range of nationally and internationally recognised indicators for women, *Queensland Women 2015* examines the differences in the lives of Queensland women and men and offers an insight into the social, economic and physical status of Queensland women across seven topic areas:

1. Demographics
2. Safety
3. Education and training
4. Employment and economic security
5. Leadership
6. Housing
7. Health and wellbeing.

*Queensland Women 2015* illustrates and highlights key issues affecting the most vulnerable women in Queensland. It details the groups of women most likely to experience greater disadvantage by exploring contributing factors such as age, disability, locations of residence and cultural background.

Featuring a wealth of data about Queensland women and their life experiences, this document is a useful reference tool for policy makers, program designers and decision-makers across government, business and the community sector, as well as members of the general public.

Statistics are drawn from a wide variety of sources, and care has been taken to use the most recent, reliable and relevant statistics available. Much data is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics data sets, and many statistics date from the Australian Census (2011). Data taken before 2011 is generally the most recent data available in the field or subject matter at the time of preparing this publication. Additionally, some data come from one-off surveys, reports and investigations. Information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is limited because of difficulties associated with accessing reliable and recent statistics.

# 1. Demographics



## Introduction

Queensland has Australia's third-largest population, with about one-fifth (20.1 per cent or 4,740,927) of all Australian residents calling Queensland home as at 30 September 2014.<sup>1</sup> Queensland's population increased by 69,400 people (or 1.5 per cent) between 30 September 2013 and 30 September 2014 and was the same as the national average of 1.5 per cent.<sup>2</sup> During that time, Western Australia and Victoria had greater population growth (2.1 per cent and 1.8 per cent respectively).<sup>3</sup>

Women continue to be slightly more than half of the Queensland population and increasingly come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They enjoy longer life expectancy and are much more likely to live alone after 65 years of age, compared with men. However, life expectancy at birth for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is substantially lower than that of non-Indigenous women.

Queensland females are most likely to be living either in a registered marriage or as a dependent aged under 15 years. More women than men are lone parents. In recent decades, there has been a general trend that women are giving birth at a later age, but this trend has stabilised somewhat in recent years.

## Population

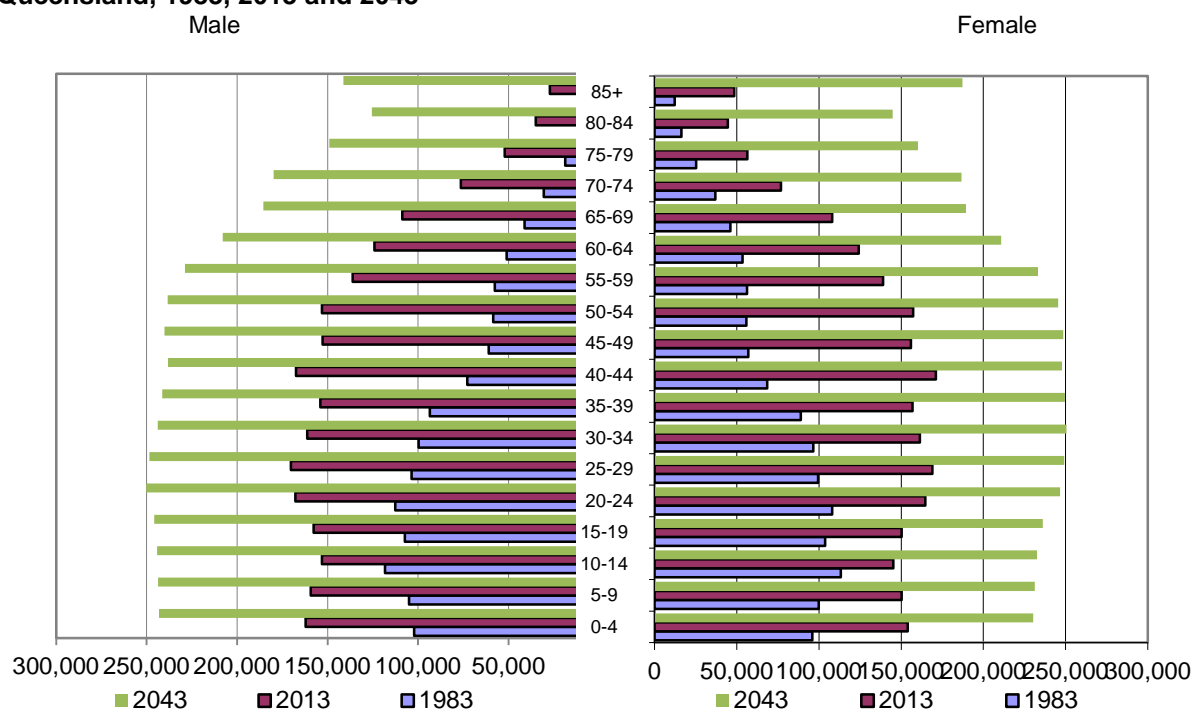
Queensland females made up slightly more than half (50.2 per cent) of all Queenslanders, and 20 per cent of Australia's total female population as at 30 September 2014.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, there were more females (50.8 per cent) than males among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland and those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females made up 3.6 per cent of Queensland's total female population.<sup>5</sup>

At the time of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, the number of females compared with males varied across Queensland. Females accounted for 51.6 per cent of the population in Toowoomba and Sunshine Coast, while less than half of the population were female in Outback Queensland (47.1 per cent), Mackay (47.6 per cent), Fitzroy (48.8 per cent), Darling Downs — Maranoa (49.6 per cent), and Brisbane — Inner City (49.9 per cent).<sup>6, 7</sup>

Since the late 19th century there have been significant improvements in life expectancy at birth for both female and male Queenslanders. In 1881–90, life expectancy at birth was 49.8 years for females and 41.3 years for males.<sup>8</sup> These had increased significantly to 74.7 years for females and 67.8 years for males by 1971, and 84.1 years and 79.6 years respectively in 2011–13.<sup>9, 10</sup>

The current life expectancy at birth for Queensland females is 4.5 years longer than for males. Due to this difference being sustained over a long period of time, there is a greater number of women than men in the older age groups (see Figure 1.1). The median age (that is, the age at which half the population is older and half is younger) of Queensland women in 2013 was 37.3 years, more than a year older than Queensland men (35.9 years).<sup>11</sup> More than half (52.7 per cent) of Queenslanders older than 65 years were women.<sup>12</sup> That is, there were 111 women for every 100 men in that age group. The greatest difference was with people aged 85 years and older, where almost two-thirds (63.8 per cent) were women.

**Figure 1.1**  
**Age structure of the estimated and projected female and male population in Queensland, 1983, 2013 and 2043**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Demographic Statistics, cat. no. 3101.0; Queensland Government Population Projections (2013 edition).

The large population bulge evident in the 2013 estimated population for the 35 to 54 years age group will progressively move into older age groups during the next 30 years (see Figure 1.1). This trend will have significant implications for government, community and business services in the future, such as an increasing proportion of the population who are not in the labour force, and the subsequent smaller tax base to provide services and sustain economic growth.

Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have a lower median age and considerably shorter life span when compared with non-Indigenous women. Life expectancy for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in 2010–12 was 74.4 years.<sup>13</sup> The median age for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Queensland was 21.9 years in 2011.<sup>14</sup> This represents an increase since 2006<sup>15</sup> but it is 15.7 fewer years than the median age of Queensland's entire female population in 2011.<sup>16, 17</sup>

Women contribute to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of Queensland. In 2011, one in five Queensland women (20.8 per cent) was born overseas, up from 19.4 per cent in 2006.<sup>18</sup> The most common country of birth outside of Australia was the United Kingdom, followed by New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa and China.<sup>19</sup>

In 2011, 10.2 per cent of Queensland's total female population spoke a language other than English at home.<sup>20</sup> The five most commonly spoken languages other than English included Chinese languages (Cantonese and Mandarin), Indo-Aryan Languages (Hindi and Punjabi), Vietnamese, Italian and German.<sup>21</sup>

#### Did you know?

*In 1881–90, life expectancy at birth was 49.8 years for Queensland females and 41.3 years for males, compared with 84.1 years and 79.6 years respectively in 2011–13.*

*Life expectancy at birth for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females is 74.4 years in 2010–12, approximately 10 years fewer than that of the Queensland female population as a whole.*

*One in five Queensland women was born overseas with the most common countries of birth being the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa and China.*

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

## Relationships

Queensland had the second-highest marriage rate in Australia (closely following New South Wales) with 5.4 marriages per 1000 people in 2013 — slightly higher than the national rate of 5.1 marriages per 1000 population.<sup>22</sup> In 2013, there were 25,015 marriages registered and the median age for women marrying for the first time was 28.1 years — almost two years younger than for men (29.8 years).<sup>23</sup>

In 2011, almost half (47.6 per cent) of Queensland females aged 15 years and older reported being in a registered marriage<sup>24</sup> and a further 11.0 per cent were in a de facto (including same-sex) relationship<sup>25</sup>. During the past decade, the proportion of Queensland women in a registered marriage decreased from 50.5 per cent in 2001 to 47.6 per cent in 2011, while the proportion in a de facto relationship increased from 8.2 per cent to 11.0 per cent.<sup>26</sup> There were slightly more female same-sex couples compared with male same-sex couples in 2011.<sup>27</sup>

Younger Queensland women were most likely to be in a de facto relationship. Nearly one-quarter (22.8 per cent) of women aged 20 to 24 years, and a similar proportion (22.1 per cent) of women aged 25 to 34 years, were in a de facto relationship in 2011.<sup>28</sup>

Queensland recorded the nation's highest divorce rate in 2013 with 2.3 divorces per 1000 people, which is comparable with the national divorce rate of 2.1 divorces per 1000 population.<sup>29, 30</sup> Queensland showed a slightly longer length of marriage to separation (9.1 years) and divorce (12.7 years) compared to the national average of 8.5 years and 12.1 years respectively.<sup>31</sup> The median age of Queensland females at the time of divorce was 42.6 years, while the median age for their male counterparts was 45.2 years.<sup>32</sup> Of all couples divorcing, about half (49.9 per cent) cared for at least one unmarried child under 18 years of age.<sup>33</sup>

#### Did you know?

*Queensland had the second-highest marriage rate in Australia and the nation's highest rate of divorce in 2013.*

*Almost three in five Queensland females lived with a partner either in a registered marriage or de facto relationship in 2011.*

## Children and parenting

Queenslanders accounted for about one in five Australian births (20.6 per cent or 63,354) registered in 2013.<sup>34</sup> Just more than half (51.7 per cent) of Queensland births were male babies, resulting in a ratio of 107.1 male births per 100 female births.<sup>35</sup> This was slightly higher than the national ratio of 106.3. In that same year, 8.2 per cent of all births in Queensland were registered as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.<sup>36</sup>

Women in Queensland are having more children than a decade ago. Fertility rates — expressed as the average number of babies a female could expect to bear — have increased in Queensland in recent years after decades of decline. In 2003, the fertility rate reached a record low of 1.80 babies per woman, before increasing in 2009 to 2.17 babies per woman.<sup>37, 38</sup> Rates have fallen slightly in recent years, though the fertility rate for Queensland women (1.94) in 2013 was above the national average of 1.88 babies per woman.<sup>39</sup>

During the past few decades there has been a general trend in Queensland women giving birth at a later age, however, this has stabilised somewhat in recent years. The median age for childbirth was 29.9 years in 2013, with women aged 30–34 years having the highest fertility rates at 119.7 babies per 1000 females.<sup>40</sup>



The age of Queensland mothers showed a slight variance depending on where they live in Queensland, with the highest median age of mothers recorded as 30.6 years in major cities and the lowest as 27.2 years in very remote areas in 2013.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the trend for women to delay childbearing, in 2013 4.7 per cent of all Queensland mothers and 18.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers were aged between 15 and 19 years.<sup>42</sup> Nationally in 2013, 3.4 per cent of all Australian mothers and 17.6 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers were aged between 15 and 19 years.<sup>43</sup> Fertility rates for Queensland women aged 15–19 years have been generally unchanged between 2003 and 2013. The teenage fertility rate in 2013 was 19.9 babies per 1000 females, the lowest since 2006, but it was the third highest of any state or territory in Australia, following the Northern Territory (40.5) and Tasmania (21.6).<sup>44</sup>

Of all births registered in Queensland in 2013, 5.9 per cent were to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers<sup>45</sup>, constituting the largest number of births to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers of all states and territories in Australia.<sup>46</sup> Compared with all females in Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females have higher fertility rates, especially at younger ages. Births to women aged under 30 years contributed to three-quarters (75.4 per cent) of the total fertility rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Queensland in 2013, with the peak age group being 20–24 years (137.2 babies per 1000 females).<sup>47</sup> In comparison, the peak age group for all Queensland women in 2011 was 30–34 years (119.7 babies per 1000 females).<sup>48</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female teenagers have fertility rates more than four times higher than that of all female teenagers in Queensland in 2013 — 62.7 babies per 1000 females compared to 14.6 babies per 1000 females.<sup>49</sup>

#### Did you know?

*The fertility rate in Queensland was 1.94 babies per woman in 2013, above the national average of 1.88 babies per woman.*

*Queensland women are giving birth at a later age with women aged 30–34 years having the highest fertility rates. This age group also has the highest fertility rate nationally.*

## Households and living arrangements

The most common living arrangements in Queensland households in 2011 were couples with children (31.5 per cent), followed by couples with no children (28.3 per cent).<sup>50</sup> However, couple-only families are projected to overtake couple families as the most common family type in Queensland in 2017 or 2022.<sup>51</sup> One person or 'lone' households (22.8 per cent) were slightly less common, with one-parent families (11.4 per cent) and group households (4.7 per cent) the least-common type of living arrangements.<sup>52</sup>

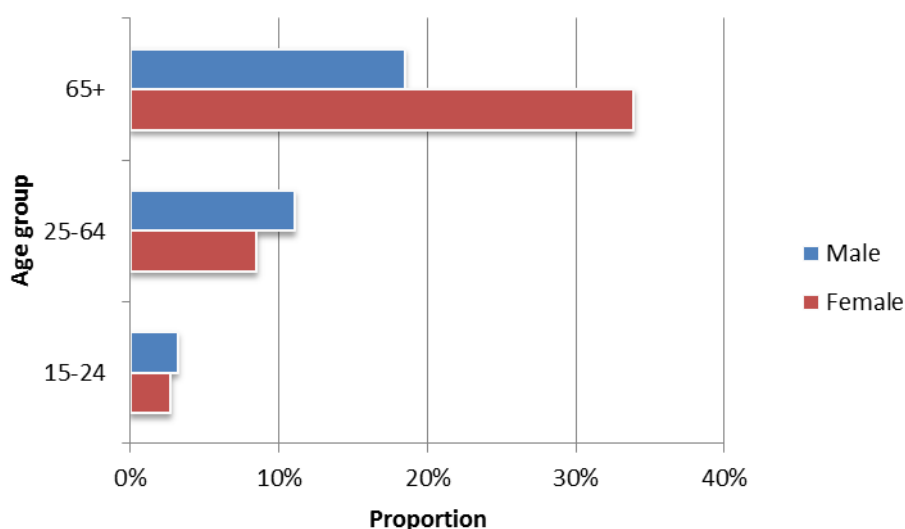
Queensland females were most likely to be living either with a partner in a registered marriage (37.1 per cent) or as a dependent aged under 15 years (19.7 per cent) in 2011.<sup>53</sup> Fewer women than men remained living at home with their parents once they had an independent income.<sup>54</sup>



Queensland women are significantly more likely than men to head one-parent families. Of the 1,148,179 families in Queensland in 2011, 9.2 per cent were one-parent families with children aged under 15 years.<sup>55</sup> Of those one-parent families, 85.6 per cent were headed by women.<sup>56</sup>

At the time of the 2011 Census, of Queenslanders living in private dwellings (such as houses, motels, flats, caravans and houseboats), one in 11 people (8.9 per cent) were living alone.<sup>57, 58</sup> Both women and men are more likely to live alone as they get older, with seniors aged 65 years and older accounting for more than one-third (37.6 per cent) of Queenslanders living alone in private dwellings.<sup>59</sup> However, women are much more likely than men to live alone in the older age group because of their tendency to live longer and be younger than their male partners. Of Queenslanders aged 65 years and older living in private dwellings, almost twice the percentage of women as men lived alone — 33.8 per cent (89,497) compared with 18.4 per cent (43,592) (see Figure 1.2).<sup>60</sup>

**Figure 1.2**  
**Proportion of Queensland females and males aged 15 years and older who live alone<sup>(a)</sup>, 2011**



<sup>(a)</sup> People living alone in private dwellings such as houses, motels, flats, caravans/residential parks, prisons, tents, humpies and houseboats, excluding unoccupied dwellings in caravan/residential parks, marinas and manufactured home estates.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, 'Queensland (State/Territory), Basic Community Profile, Table B23 Relationship in household by age by sex', viewed 16 April 2015, <[http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230)>

## 2. Safety



### Introduction

Most Queensland females do not experience violence and feel safe at home. Nine in 10 Queensland women reported that they did not experience physical or sexual assault or threat during the previous 12 months (94.1 per cent in 2012<sup>61</sup>). The majority of females felt safe at home alone after dark (79.3 per cent 2010<sup>62</sup>).

Despite these findings, crime statistics suggest there are gendered patterns in crime. Queensland females are more likely than men to be the victims of certain types of crimes such as sexual offences, stalking and domestic and family violence, including intimate partner homicide and elder abuse. Less than one-third (28.1 per cent in 2010) of Queensland women reported feeling safe walking alone in local area after dark, compared with 69.4 per cent of men.<sup>63</sup> Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience higher levels of violent crime compared with non-Indigenous women, and are particularly vulnerable to domestic and family violence.

Queensland women from financially and socially disadvantaged groups can access the justice system through organisations that provide ongoing legal assistance, such as Legal Aid Queensland. Legal Aid Queensland is a major source of legal services offering information, advice and representation in law matters to disadvantaged women as a priority client group, including women experiencing domestic and family violence.

### Victims of crime overview

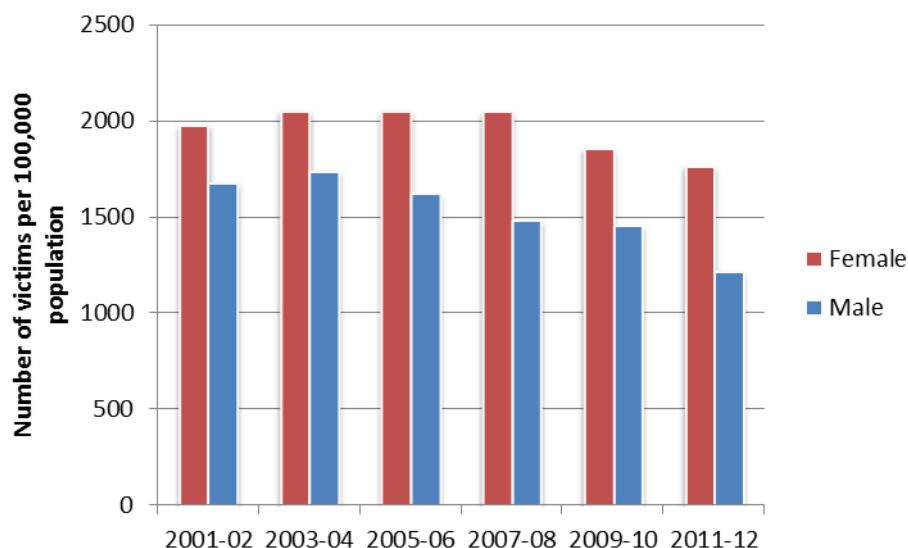
The Queensland Police Service broadly categorises the following offences as 'Offences Against the Person': homicide, assault, sexual offences, robbery, kidnapping and abduction, extortion, stalking and life endangering acts.

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 in Queensland, females were almost equally likely to be the victims<sup>64</sup> of Offences Against the Person as males — 49.3 per cent compared with 50.5 per cent.<sup>65</sup>

However, gender and age are both factors which influence the extent to which a person is likely to experience victimisation, and the likelihood to which a person is likely to be the victims of certain types of crimes. In 2014–15, Queensland females were significantly over-represented as victims of sexual offences (81.8 per cent of victims) and stalking (74.3 per cent of victims), but were least likely to be the victims of robbery (31.8 per cent of victims) and extortion (32.8 per cent of victims).<sup>66</sup>

The largest single cohort of victims by age and gender is females aged 15–19 years in Queensland. These young women were most likely to experience victimisation, representing 9.3 per cent of all victims recorded in 2011–12<sup>67</sup>, at the rate of 1762 victims per 100,000 of the female 15–19 years population.<sup>68</sup> The rate at which Queenslanders in the 15–19 years age group are likely to experience victimisation has been declining since 2006–07, although to a lesser extent for females than males (see Figure 2.1).<sup>69</sup> The demographic group least likely to be victims were females aged 0–4 years and 50–54 years with each age group comprising 1.4 per cent of all victims in 2011–12.<sup>70</sup> It should be noted that lower reporting rates for the former age group may not necessarily mean lower incidence rates. Rather, it may be due to the victims' inability to personally report to authorities and/or the perpetrators concealment of the offence(s).

**Figure 2.1**  
**'Offences Against the Person' victims per 100,000 people of the Queensland 15–19 years population, 2001–02 to 2011–12<sup>(a)</sup>**



<sup>(a)</sup> Only those offences where the victim's age and sex were identified are included.

Source: Queensland Police Service, various years, *Annual statistical review*, <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/services/reportsPublications/statisticalReview/>

Victim and offence statistics reflect only those crimes reported to the police. For example, many sexual offences go unreported with only one-third (33 per cent) of sexual offences being reported in Queensland in 2011–12.<sup>71</sup> Relying on the data recorded by the police can lead to an underestimation of the true rate of victimisation<sup>72</sup>, compared with self-reported data from anonymous surveys which

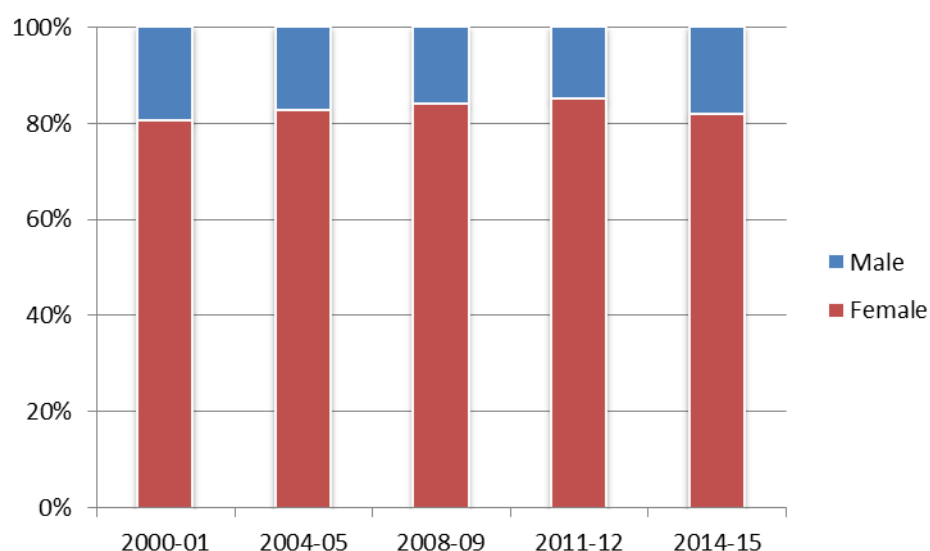
show significantly more victims.<sup>73</sup> It is also difficult to know the actual number of instances where a breach of domestic violence protection order occurs but is not officially reported, as the burden of reporting a breach is on the aggrieved in most instances.<sup>74</sup> Accordingly, fluctuations in crime levels between years may not represent increases or decreases in actual crime levels but may reflect changes in the public's reporting behaviours.<sup>75</sup>

## Sexual offences

A sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature and includes a prescribed sexual offence.<sup>76</sup> Sexual offences include rape, attempted rape and other sexual offences<sup>77</sup> and can be considered to incorporate any physical contact, or intent of contact, of a sexual nature directed toward another person where that person does not give consent, gives consent as a result of intimidation or deception, or where consent is proscribed (namely, the person is legally deemed incapable of giving consent because of youth, temporary/permanent [mental] incapacity or there is a familial relationship)<sup>78</sup>.

Queensland Police Service statistics reveal that overall the rate of sexual offences reported has significantly decreased during the past 15 years — a 37.1 per cent decrease from 175 offences per 100,000 persons in 1998–99 to 110 offences per 100,000 persons in 2013–14.<sup>79, 80</sup> However, female victims have been significantly over-represented during this period (see Figure 2.2).<sup>81</sup>

**Figure 2.2**  
**Percentage of female and male sexual offence victims in Queensland, 2000–01 to 2014–15**



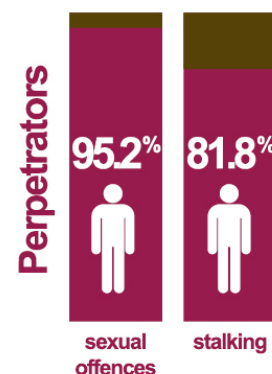
Note: Those victims whose sex was not stated have not been included.

Source: Queensland Police Service, various years, *Annual statistical review*, <<http://www.police.qld.gov.au/services/reportsPublications/statisticalReview/>> Queensland Police Service, 2015, *Number of victims by offences, Queensland, 01/07/2013 to 30/06/2014* and *Number of victims by offences, Queensland, 01/07/2014 to 30/06/2015* current as at 28 July 2015, unpublished data. Only victims whose age is identified have been included. The data is preliminary and subject to change.

There was a 2.7 per cent increase in the total number of sexual assault victims in Queensland, from 4332 in 2013–14 to 4449 in 2014–15.<sup>82</sup> As with previous years, in 2014–15, females were significantly more likely to be victims than males, constituting 81.8 per cent (or 3640) of all reported sexual offence victims in Queensland.<sup>83</sup> In all age groups, females were significantly more likely to be victims of sexual assault than males. Victims aged under 20 years accounted for two-thirds (65.8 per cent) of all female sexual assault victims in Queensland in 2014–15, with girls and young women in the 10–19 years age group most likely to be victims, comprising 43.9 per cent of total victims and 53.6 per cent of female victims.<sup>84</sup> Females in the 10–19 years age group were more than five times as likely as males of the same age to be victims of sexual offences in 2014–15.<sup>85</sup>

There was little difference in the proportion of female victims between Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of sexual assault and non-Indigenous victims of sexual assault in 2014, with females accounting for 81.7 per cent of total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of sexual assault and 82.7 per cent of total non-Indigenous victims of sexual assault.<sup>86</sup> However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females were over-represented among female victims of sexual assault in Queensland, constituting 11.4 per cent (or 379) of total female victims of sexual assault, despite representing a small proportion of the total Queensland female population (3.6 per cent in 2011).<sup>87, 88</sup>

‘Sexual offences’ is a unique crime category because males are significantly over-represented as offenders. Queensland Police Service statistics reveal that during the past 10 years males have represented more than 90 per cent of sexual offenders in Queensland. In 2014–15, of all sexual offenders, 95.2 per cent (or 2563 offenders) were male.<sup>89</sup> Male offenders were more likely to be aged 50 years and over, accounting for one in five (19.8 per cent) sexual offenders, and 15–19 years (18.1 per cent of sexual offenders), indicating that likelihood of offending did not decrease markedly with age, as is the case for most other types of offences.<sup>90</sup>

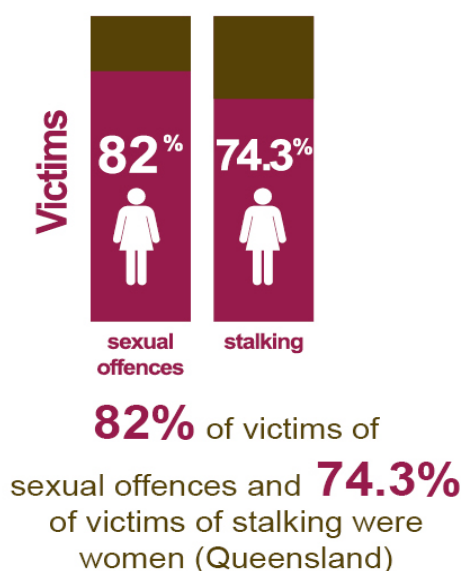


**95.2%** of perpetrators of sexual offences and **81.8%** of offenders of stalking were men (Queensland)

For the majority of sexual offences reported to the police, offenders were known to the victim (one in seven [71.4 per cent] of victims of solved offences in 2014 in Queensland<sup>91</sup>), such as a family member or acquaintance. Queensland females were 4.6 times as likely as males to be sexually assaulted by a family member and 5.1 times as likely to be sexually assaulted by a stranger, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics recorded crime statistics in 2014.<sup>92, 93</sup> Females accounted for 95.0 per cent (or 209) of victims, who were sexually assaulted by a current partner, compared with 10 males in 2014.<sup>94</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women also experience high levels of victimisation by a family member. In 2014, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female victims of sexual assault, more than one-third (34.0 per cent) were victimised by a family member (including 9.0 per cent by a current partner), compared with 27.9 per cent of non-Indigenous female victims (including 5.8 per cent by a current partner).<sup>95</sup>

## Stalking

Stalking is when a person intentionally directs their attention towards another person, while the other person considers the attention of the stalker harassing, unwanted and/or possibly harmful or threatening.<sup>96</sup> Stalking can include behaviours such as following, loitering, watching, contacting or leaving material for another person which causes the other person to be fearful or causes detriment to the stalked person or any other person. Stalking is a criminal offence and may indicate an increased risk of future domestic violence.<sup>97</sup>



Queensland women are over-represented as victims of stalking offences, comprising three-quarters (74.3 per cent) of all victims of stalking in 2014–15.<sup>98</sup> Females aged 20–24 years were most likely of all persons to be victims of stalking, comprising 11.7 per cent of all victims, where age and sex were known.<sup>99</sup> Males are significantly more likely to be offenders for this crime (81.8 per cent of all stalking offenders in 2014–15<sup>100</sup>). Six in 10 female victims (62.2 per cent) identified that the perpetrator was known to them, with friends, colleagues or other acquaintances (45.8 per cent) being the most common types of relationship between offenders and victims, followed by previous partners (11.7 per cent).<sup>101</sup>

### Did you know?

*Queensland females aged 15–19 years represented 9.3 per cent of victims of all offences recorded in 2011–12, the highest of any age groups for both females and males.*

*The majority of victims of sexual offences and stalking are females, accounting for 82 per cent of victims of sexual offences and 74.3 per cent of victims of stalking in 2014–15 in Queensland.*

*Females in the 10–19 years age group are most likely to be victims of sexual offences, comprising 43.9 per cent of total victims in 2014–15 in Queensland.*

*Queensland females were more than four times as likely as males to be sexually assaulted by a family member and five times as likely to be sexually assaulted by a stranger in 2014.*

*More than 80 per cent of all stalking offenders were male in 2014–15 in Queensland.*



## Domestic and family violence

The *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* states that domestic and family violence is abusive or violent behaviour used by one person to control or dominate another person within relationships defined under the Act such as intimate personal relationships, family relationships and informal care relationships.<sup>102</sup>

Domestic and family violence takes many forms, from physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation through to emotional and social abuse, economic deprivation, and behaviour that in any way controls or dominates or causes a person to fear for their personal safety or wellbeing.<sup>103</sup>

**Table 2.1**  
**Offences Against the Person victims by relationship of offender to victim<sup>(a)</sup>, Queensland, 2014–15**

| Offender–victim relationships               | Number |        |        | %      |      |       |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|-------|
|   | Female | Male   | Total  | Female | Male | Total |
| Domestic relationships                      |        |        |        |        |      |       |
| Partner                                     | 1,861  | 184    | 2,045  | 91.0   | 9.0  | 100   |
| Former partner                              | 253    | 43     | 296    | 85.5   | 14.5 | 100   |
| Child                                       | 486    | 360    | 846    | 57.4   | 42.6 | 100   |
| Other family member                         | 1,816  | 977    | 2,793  | 65.0   | 35.0 | 100   |
| Subtotal                                    | 4,416  | 1,564  | 5,980  | 73.8   | 26.2 | 100   |
| Friends, colleagues and other acquaintances | 6,402  | 8,987  | 15,389 | 41.6   | 58.4 | 100   |
| Strangers                                   | 1,216  | 1,911  | 3,127  | 38.9   | 61.1 | 100   |
| Not stated                                  | 558    | 468    | 1,026  | 54.4   | 45.6 | 100   |
| Total                                       | 12,592 | 12,930 | 25,522 | 49.3   | 50.7 | 100   |

<sup>(a)</sup> Based on those victims whose age and sex were known; these figures do not represent a unique victim count. Thus, a person charged with multiple offences will be counted multiple times in any demographic breakdown. These data are preliminary and may be subject to change.

Source: Queensland Police Service, 2015, *Number of victims by offences and relationship of offender to victim, Queensland, 01/07/2014 to 30/06/2015*, current as at 7 August 2015, unpublished data.

Both men and women can perpetrate domestic and family violence. However, it is widely acknowledged that the majority of victims are women and the majority of perpetrators are male.<sup>104, 105, 106</sup>

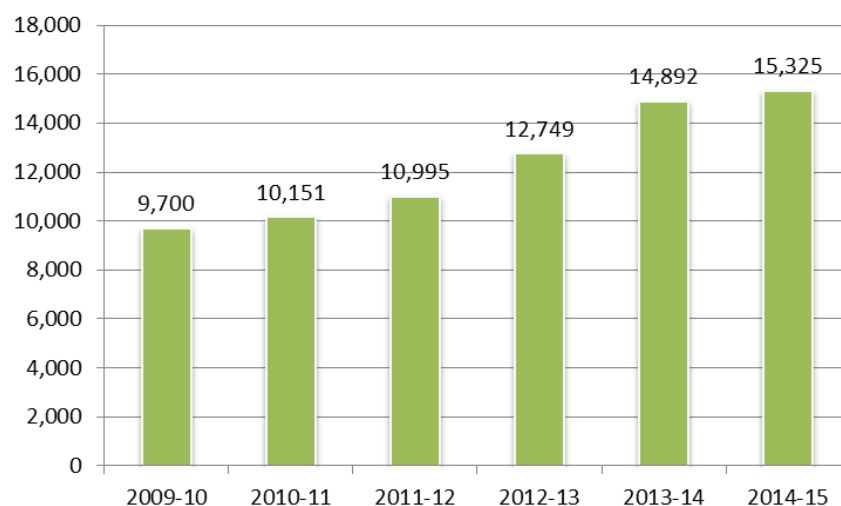
In 2014–15, Queensland females accounted for seven in 10 (73.8 per cent) of all victims experiencing ‘Offences Against the Person’ committed by someone who was related as a partner, a former partner, a child or other family member (see Table 2.1).<sup>107</sup> In particular, females were significantly over-represented as victims of partner offences, making up 91 per cent of victims of offences committed by a current partner and 85.5 per cent of victims of offences committed by a former partner.<sup>108</sup>

It must be noted that domestic and family violence statistics do not accurately represent the extent of the problem.<sup>109</sup> Many incidents of domestic and family violence are unreported largely due to the private nature of the relationships within which violence occurs.



The Office of the State Coroner statistics reveal that between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2013, approximately 45 per cent (or 180) of all homicide victims reported in Queensland were classified as domestic or family violence-related.<sup>110, 111, 112</sup> Of these domestic and family violence-related deaths, over half of deaths (56.7 per cent, or 102) occurred within an intimate partner relationship. Women were more likely to be killed by an intimate partner, whereas men had a higher propensity to be killed within a family relationship — by a relative, such as a parent, child, sibling or cousin. Women were almost four times more likely than men to be killed by an intimate partner, comprising 79.4 per cent (or 81) of the total 102 victims of intimate partner relationship homicides. Of the total 167 offenders who were responsible for the total 180 domestic and family violence-related deaths, 82.0 per cent were male. All female victims were killed by a current or former male partner, compared with three of the total 21 male victims killed by a current or former male partner.

**Figure 2.3**  
**Number of reported Domestic Violence Protection Order breaches in Queensland, 2009–10 to 2014–15**



Source: Queensland Police Service, 2014, *Number and rate of reported offences, Queensland, 01/07/2009 to 30/06/2014*, viewed 3 September 2015, <[https://www.police.qld.gov.au/rti/published/about/Documents/Qld\\_Regions\\_Districts\\_201314.pdf](https://www.police.qld.gov.au/rti/published/about/Documents/Qld_Regions_Districts_201314.pdf)>

Queensland Police Service, 2015, *Number of offenders by offences, Queensland, 01/07/2014 to 30/06/2015*, current as at 7 August 2015, unpublished data. Includes only those offenders where age was known; and this data are preliminary and may be subject to change.

Protection from domestic violence is available through the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*. Protection orders granted under the Act are civil orders, but a breach of a protection order is a criminal offence. As shown in Figure 2.3, over the last five years, the number of reported breaches of domestic violence protection orders has steadily increased from 9700 reported in 2009–10 to 15,325 in 2014–15 (a 58.0 per cent increase).<sup>113, 114</sup> Queensland males accounted for 86.3 per cent of offenders for the breach of domestic violence protection order offence, and the majority of male offenders were aged 20–39 years (68.1 per cent) in 2014–15.<sup>115</sup> However, unlike other offence categories, a substantial proportion of offenders were also in the older age groups, with more than a quarter (27.3 per cent) of all male offenders aged 40 years and older.<sup>116</sup>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience higher rates of domestic and family violence, compared with non-Indigenous women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were far more likely than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to be killed due to domestic and family violence, comprising 70 per cent of domestic and family violence-related deaths of people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, during the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2012 in Queensland.<sup>117</sup>

In 2012–13, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females across Australia were 34.2 times more likely to be hospitalised due to domestic and family violence than their non-Indigenous counterparts.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females, about two-thirds (61.9 per cent) of all hospitalisations for assault were linked to family violence, compared with 55.7 per cent for non-Indigenous females.<sup>119</sup> Seven in 10 (70.7 per cent) family violence-related hospitalisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females resulted from partner (spouse/domestic partner) violence, compared with 34.6 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males. For non-Indigenous females, 74.5 per cent of family violence-related hospitalisations were the result of partner (spouse/domestic partner) violence, compared with 29.5 per cent for non-Indigenous males.<sup>120</sup>

## Elder abuse

Elder abuse refers to acts occurring within a relationship of trust, which results in harm to an older person.<sup>121</sup> Such relationships may include those that the elderly have with their adult children, spouses, carers or health professionals. Elder abuse can be of a physical, sexual, financial, psychological, or social nature and can include neglect.<sup>122</sup>

The Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) in Queensland provides a statewide service to respond to the abuse of older Queenslanders. The EAPU services include a statewide confidential telephone information and support and referral services — Elder Abuse Helpline — for anyone experiencing, witnessing or suspecting abuse of an older person by someone they know and trust.

In the 2013–14 year the Elder Abuse Helpline received 1183 calls relating to 1266 elder abuse cases (involving 1092 victims and 1150 abusers), an increase by 19.5 per cent compared with 990 calls in 2012–13.<sup>123, 124</sup> The number of elder abuse cases, victims and abusers also increased by 23.3 per cent, 21.7 per cent and 20.2 per cent respectively, compared with 1027 elder abuse cases, 897 victims and 957 abusers in 2012–13.<sup>125</sup>

Analysis of calls to the EAPU helpline during 2013–14 was consistent with previous years, with women markedly more likely to be recorded as alleged victims of elder abuse (67.8 per cent) than men (32.2 per cent).<sup>126, 127</sup> Women were also more likely to be reported as alleged victims than men in all age groups. Elder abuse tended to increase with age, with persons aged 80–84 most at risk, accounting for 21.3 per cent (or 233) of all elder abuse victims, with women in this age group twice as likely as men to experience elder abuse.<sup>128</sup>

The primary types of elder abuse reported to EAPU were financial (43.2 per cent) and psychological (33.2 per cent) in 2013–14.<sup>129</sup> There was no difference in this trend between female and male victims. Other forms of reported elder abuse included neglect, physical, social and sexual abuse.<sup>130</sup>

In 2013–14, EAPU results indicate that the majority (73.6 per cent) of alleged elder abusers were identified as the daughter (37.5 per cent) and son (36.1 per cent) of the elderly person.<sup>131</sup> More than half (56.8 per cent) of abuse in non-trust relationships were perpetrated by neighbours (34.9 per cent) and workers or management at an aged care facility or community service providers (21.9 per cent).<sup>132</sup>

### Did you know?

*In 2014–15, Queensland females accounted for seven in 10 victims experiencing Offences Against the Person committed by a partner, a former partner, a child or other family member.*

*Queensland males accounted for 86.3 per cent of offenders for the breach of domestic violence protection order offence in 2014–15. The majority of male offenders were aged 20–39 years (68.1 per cent).*

*Calls to the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit helpline during 2013–14 reveal that women were markedly more likely to be recorded as alleged victims of abuse (67.8 per cent) than men (32.2 per cent).*

## Accessing the justice system

Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ) is a major source of legal services, providing information, advice, referrals and representation in family, civil and criminal matters to financially and socially disadvantaged people. LAQ provides free legal advice in family law matters concerning parenting issues, relationship issues, domestic and family violence, child protection and family dispute resolution and in civil law matters concerning anti-discrimination, Victim Assist Queensland and employment.

Women are less likely than men to ask for ongoing legal assistance, representing 38.9 per cent of applications for LAQ in 2013–14.<sup>133</sup> As shown in Table 2.2, women predominantly use LAQ for family and civil law matters, compared with men who use the services mainly for criminal law matters.<sup>134</sup>

**Table 2.2**

**Legal advice, applications and approvals in family, civil and criminal areas of law provided to Queensland women and men by Legal Aid Queensland, 2013–14**

| Action                | Area of law  | Female | Male | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------|------|-------|
| Proportion (%)        |              |        |      |       |
| Legal advice sought   | Family law   | 67     | 33   | 100   |
|                       | Civil law    | 50     | 50   | 100   |
|                       | Criminal law | 25     | 75   | 100   |
| Applied for Legal Aid | Family law   | 62     | 38   | 100   |
|                       | Civil law    | 62     | 38   | 100   |
|                       | Criminal law | 21     | 79   | 100   |
| Legal Aid approved    | Family law   | 60     | 30   | 100   |
|                       | Civil law    | 68     | 32   | 100   |
|                       | Criminal law | 20     | 80   | 100   |

Source: Legal Aid Queensland, 2014, *Legal Aid Queensland annual report 2013–14*, p. 29. Viewed 7 September 2015, <<http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/publications/Reports/annual-report/Documents/laq-annual-report-2014.pdf>>

The Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* aims to protect people from unfair discrimination, sexual harassment and other objectionable conduct, and provides a means to bring a complaint and have it resolved.<sup>135</sup> Complaints relating to a workplace context may also be made internally to the employer, to unions and to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

In 2013–14 the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission (ADCQ) accepted and dealt with 617 complaints.<sup>136, 137</sup> Of these, 67 complaints were for sexual harassment, representing 10.9 per cent of all accepted complaints.<sup>138</sup> Illegal discrimination on the basis of pregnancy also accounted for 21 (or 3.4 per cent) accepted complaints to the ADCQ. A further 17 (or 2.8 per cent) accepted complaints were made about illegal discrimination relating to parental status and one (or 0.2 per cent) accepted complaint about breastfeeding. Fifty-seven complaints (9.2 per cent) were made and accepted for discrimination on the basis of sex. Consistent with previous years, 2013–14 figures show that discrimination tends to occur in the work context (63.8 per cent of all accepted complaints).<sup>139</sup>

#### Did you know?

*Of 617 complaints accepted and dealt with by the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission in 2013–14, about 11 per cent were for sexual harassment.*

*Queensland women use Legal Aid Queensland as a major source of legal services, providing information, advice and representation predominantly in family and civil matters, compared with men who used the services mainly for criminal law matters.*

### 3. Education and training



#### Introduction

Education increases people's ability to fully participate in their communities and in broader society. Levels of educational attainment are often positively related to socioeconomic status and associated life opportunities, with employment opportunities and earning potential generally increasing as education levels increase.

Queensland women and girls have achieved greater participation in education and improved educational attainment during the past few decades. More females than males attend Queensland tertiary institutions including TAFE and universities and hold higher education qualifications. However, Queensland women follow different education and training pathways than men. From secondary through to post-secondary learning, women remain under-represented as both students and workers in non-traditional fields (such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), despite the recent increase in the number of women studying within these fields.

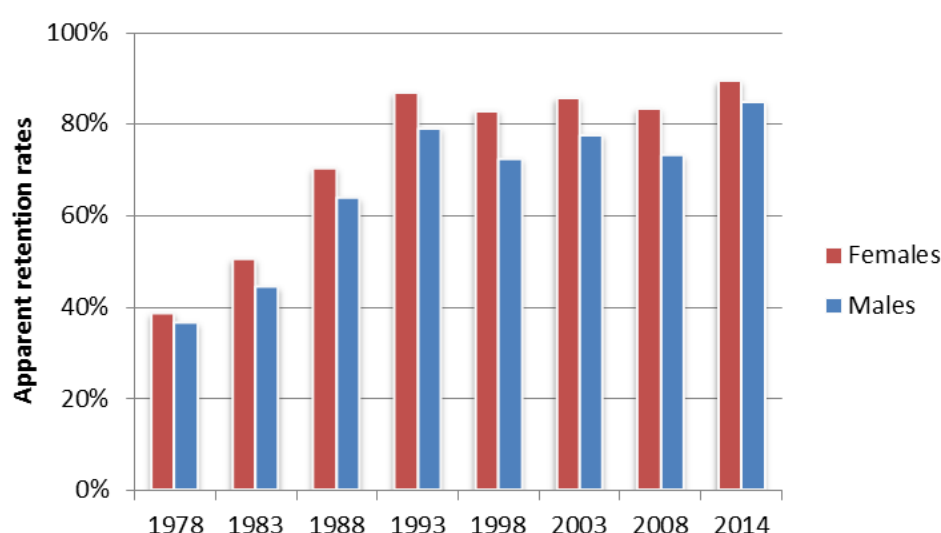
This trend has long-term economic consequences for women. National and international research indicates that occupations and industries in non-traditional fields are often associated with a considerably higher level of pay than other fields<sup>140</sup>, and that having a qualification in those fields tends to result in higher earnings later in life.<sup>141, 142</sup>

## Secondary education

Female participation in secondary school education, especially completion of Year 12, is important to the continuing increase in employment opportunities and earning potential of women in Queensland. Secondary school education is a mixture of compulsory and non-compulsory schooling. By law, it is compulsory to attend school until Year 10 is completed (or until the student turns 16, whichever is sooner). While it is not compulsory to complete Years 11 and 12, successive governments have sought to increase Year 12 attainment through learning or earning policies.

During the past few decades there has been a significant increase in the percentage of students, both male and female, who have continued through to Year 12 in Queensland secondary schools (see Figure 3.1). Although significantly lower than for non-Indigenous students, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completing Year 12 has also notably increased.<sup>143</sup>

**Figure 3.1**  
**Apparent retention rates<sup>(a)</sup> of Queensland full-time students across Year 8 to Year 12, 1978 to 2014**



<sup>(a)</sup> Apparent retention rates, commonly used to measure secondary school retention and completion, are calculated as the number of school students in Year 12 expressed as a percentage of the number at Year 8 four years earlier.

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004, *Schools, Australia, 2003*, 'Table 11 Apparent retention rates, full-time students, from year 7/8 to year 12 by sex', cat. no. 4221.0, viewed 29 April 2015,

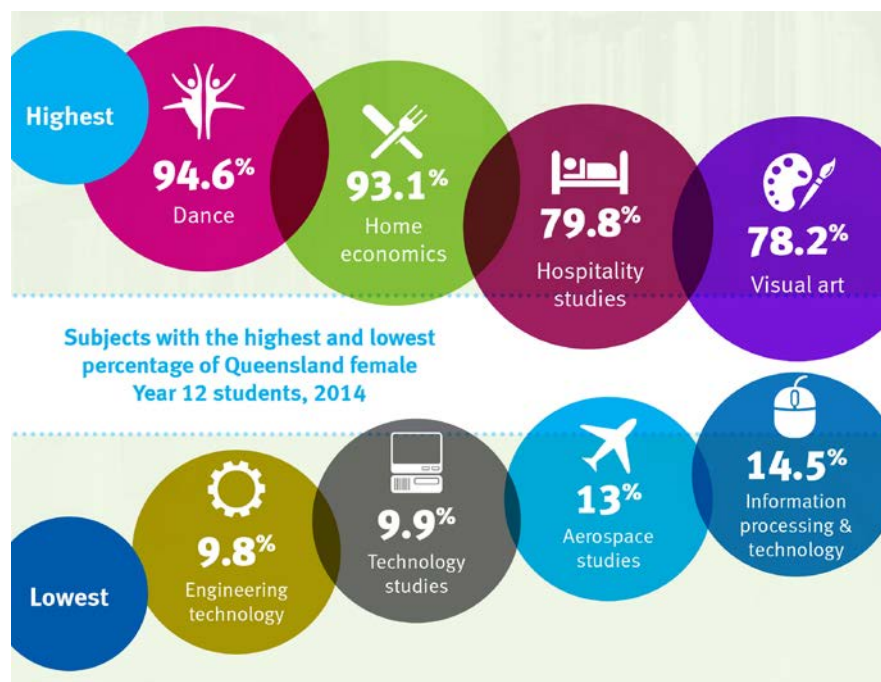
<[http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/0B1AE25F1CD8FD0FCA256E430075FC2B/\\$File/42210\\_2003.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/0B1AE25F1CD8FD0FCA256E430075FC2B/$File/42210_2003.pdf)>

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Schools, Australia, 2014*, 'Table 64a: Apparent retention rates (ARR), 2000-2014', data cube: Excel spreadsheet, cat. no. 4221.0, viewed, 29 April 2015,

<<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4221.02014?OpenDocument>>



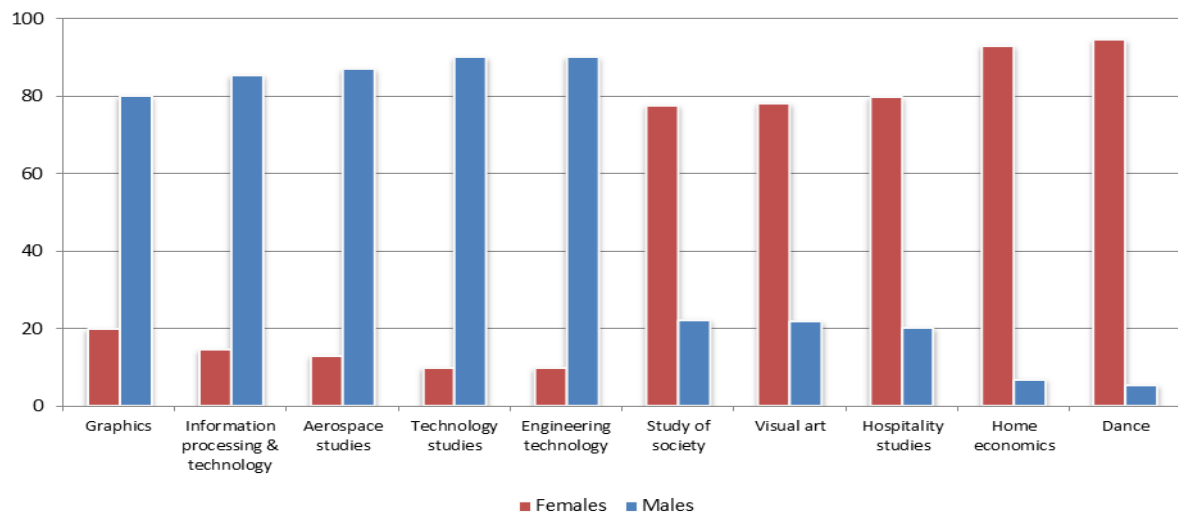
In 2014, there were almost equal numbers of male and female attending Queensland secondary school (from Year 8 to Year 12) with just about three per cent fewer females than males.<sup>144</sup> When comparing females and males who are choosing to attend non-compulsory schooling years, the picture is reversed. Females are consistently more likely than males to continue onto Years 11 and 12, with higher retention rates for females (89.4 per cent) than for males (84.9 per cent) in 2014 (see Figure 3.1).<sup>145</sup> Similarly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (71.6 per cent) were also more likely than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males (66.3 per cent) to finish Year 12.<sup>146</sup>



Historically, there has been a significant difference in subject choice between female and male students. Many more female than male students have studied subjects in the arts and humanities such as dance, home economics, study of society, hospitality, tourism, and visual arts. In contrast, many more male than female students have studied subjects related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This trend of gender difference in Year 12 subject selection was still occurring in Queensland schools in 2014. For example, nine in 10 dance students and home economics students were females, whereas only one in 10 engineering technology students and technology studies students were females.<sup>147</sup> (See Figure 3.2)



**Figure 3.2**  
**Subjects<sup>(a)</sup> with the highest and lowest percentage of Queensland female Year 12 students, 2014**



<sup>(a)</sup> includes Authority subjects (including Senior External Authority subjects) and excludes those subjects studied by less than 100 students in 2014.

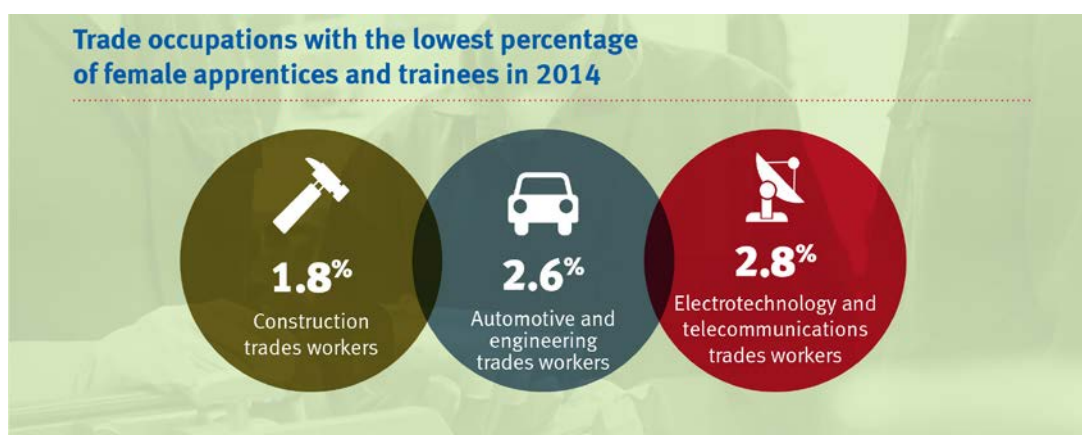
Source: Queensland Government Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015, *Subject enrolments and levels of achievement – 2014*, viewed 29 April 2015, <[http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/publications/qcaa\\_stats\\_sen\\_subjects\\_2014.pdf](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/publications/qcaa_stats_sen_subjects_2014.pdf)>

## Vocational education and training

Vocational education and training (VET) is available for students who wish to gain work-related qualifications. Apprenticeships and traineeships are common examples of VET but there is also a variety of other certificate and diploma programs. VET is directly aimed at developing work skills and knowledge needed for specific occupations. Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes, industry organisations and community education providers are some of the ways in which VET is provided.

In 2013, there were 254,497 students enrolled in the publicly funded VET system, with just under half (46.4 per cent, or 118,146) being female.<sup>148</sup> More than one-quarter (27.5 per cent) of female VET students were aged 15–19 years, the highest of any age group.<sup>149</sup> The number of both male and female VET students fell considerably by 12.6 per cent and 13.0 per cent respectively from 2012 to 2013 — the lowest since 2002.<sup>150</sup>

Gender preferences for certain fields of study appear to be much the same for VET students as for Year 12 students. In 2013, female VET students tended to study in the two fields of study: Society and culture and Management and commerce. In comparison, male VET students were more likely to study Engineering and related technologies with 40.5 per cent of male VET students studying Engineering and related technologies, compared with only 2.8 per cent of female VET students.<sup>151</sup> More than half (51.8 per cent) of female VET students studied either Society and culture or Management and commerce, compared with only 17.4 per cent of male VET students.<sup>152</sup>



Similar gender patterns existed in VET students who were in training for an apprenticeship or traineeship. Significantly more males (70.2 per cent) than females (29.8 per cent) were undertaking apprenticeship or traineeship training as at 30 September 2014.<sup>153</sup> The vast majority of females undertook non-trade focused apprenticeships or traineeships that prepared them for clerical, sales and service work occupations (see Table 3.1). In comparison, most males did trade-related apprenticeships or traineeships in areas such as construction, cars, engineering, electrotechnology, and telecommunications.

**Table 3.1:**  
**Occupations with the highest and lowest percentage of Queensland female apprentices and trainees in training, 30 September 2014<sup>(a)</sup>**

| Occupation   | Female | Male | Total |
|--|--------|------|-------|
| Trade occupations with the lowest proportion of females                | %      |      |       |
| Construction trades workers  | 1.8    | 98.2 | 100   |
| Automotive and engineering trades workers                              | 2.6    | 97.4 | 100   |
| Electrotechnology <sup>(b)</sup> and telecommunications trades workers | 2.8    | 97.2 | 100   |
| Non-trade occupations with the highest proportion of females           | %      |      |       |
| Carers and aides   | 92.1   | 7.9  | 100   |
| General clerical workers   | 78.7   | 21.3 | 100   |
| Specialist managers <sup>(c)</sup>                                     | 76.9   | 23.1 | 100   |

<sup>(a)</sup> Excludes occupations that have fewer than 100 apprentices and trainees in training. Highest representation refers to at least 75 per cent of all apprentices and trainees in training, while lowest representation refers to less than 25 per cent of all apprentices and trainees in training.

<sup>(b)</sup> Electrotechnology trades cover a range of electrical and electronic trades including electricians and refrigeration and air-conditioning mechanics.

<sup>(c)</sup> Specialist managers cover managing special functions within organisations, including advertising and sales, financial, human resources, production and distribution, education, health and welfare, and ICT.

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2014, *Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentice and Trainee Collection*, September quarter 2014: pivot tables.

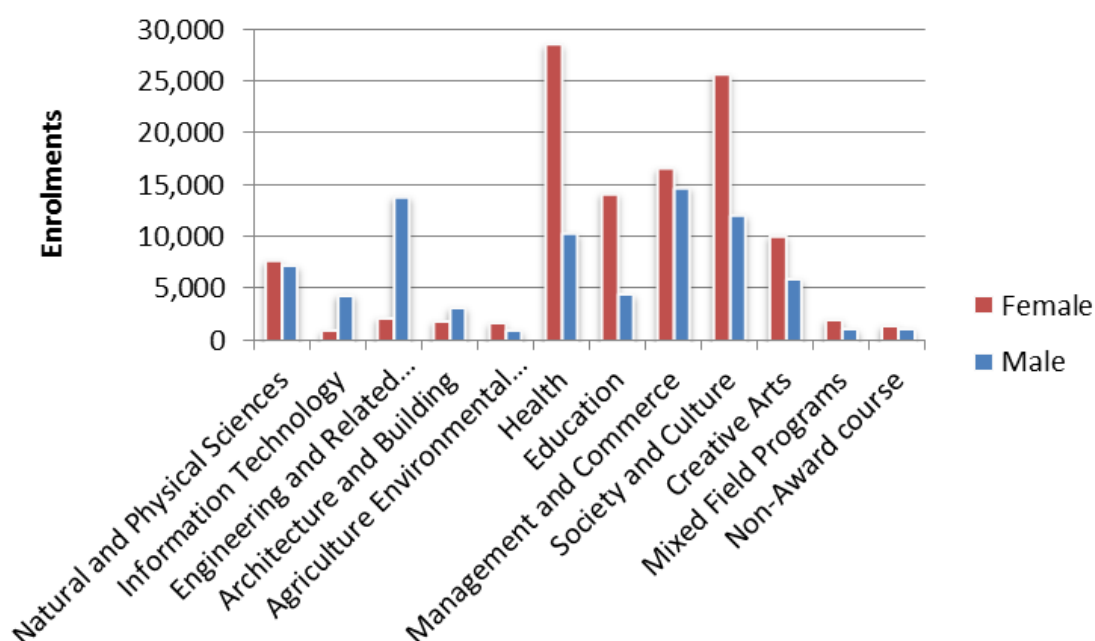
## Did you know?

*The vast majority of female vocational education or training students who were in training for an apprenticeship or traineeship undertook non-trade focused apprenticeships or traineeships designed to prepare people for clerical, sales and service work occupations.*

## Higher education

In Queensland, the number of both female and male domestic students enrolling in undergraduate and postgraduate studies has generally increased during the past decade.<sup>154</sup> In 2013, 230,735 domestic students undertook higher education in Queensland, an increase of 3.5 per cent from 2012.<sup>a, 155</sup>

**Figure 3.3:**  
**Broad fields of study<sup>(a)</sup> for Queensland female and male domestic students enrolled in higher education courses, 2013<sup>(b), (c)</sup>**



<sup>(a)</sup> Broad fields of education consist of 12 courses: Natural and physical sciences, Information technology, Engineering and related technologies, Architecture and building, Agriculture environmental and related studies, Health, Education, Management and commerce, Society and culture, Creative arts, Mixed field programs, and Non-award course. These fields are the broadest categories classified by the Australian Standard Classification of Education on the basis of theoretical content and the broad purpose for which the study is undertaken.

<sup>(b)</sup> A student undertaking a combined course may be counted in two fields of education.

<sup>(c)</sup> Mixed field programs provide general and personal development education including literacy and numeracy skills and personal, social and workplace relationships; and the non-award course refers to the unit, course or program not being undertaken as part of a course of study.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Data Collections, uCube, viewed 11 May 2015,  
<<http://highereducationstatistics.education.gov.au/Default.aspx>>

<sup>a</sup> Domestic students include students who are Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens or the holder of a permanent visa; students who have requested their gender to be recorded as neither male nor female are counted as female.

Women are more likely than men to commence and complete higher education award courses, with women comprising the majority — 56.8 per cent of commencements and 61.2 per cent of completions in 2013.<sup>b, 156</sup> Of people aged 15–74 years, 22 per cent of women had obtained a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification in 2014, compared to 16.9 per cent of men.<sup>157</sup>

There is a distinct difference between females and males in the selection of their broad fields of study. Of domestic students enrolled at a Queensland higher education institution in 2013, the most popular field of study was Health for females (26.7 per cent of female enrolments), and Management and commerce for males (one-fifth of male enrolments) (see Figure 3.3).<sup>158</sup> The largest gender difference was in the field of Engineering and related technologies, studied by 2.1 per cent of females compared with 18.7 per cent of males.<sup>159</sup> In contrast, women considerably outnumbered men in Education (3.2 times), Health (2.8 times), and Society and culture (2.1 times) courses.<sup>160</sup> These gender differences are consistent with those for Year 12 secondary school and VET students.

#### Did you know?

*More Queensland women than men are commencing and completing higher education award courses, with women comprising the majority of commencements and completions.*

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's education

Apparent Year 8 to Year 12 retention rates<sup>161</sup> for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland are increasing, from 51.2 per cent to 66.3 per cent for males and from 62.6 per cent to 71.6 per cent for females in the 10 years to 2014.<sup>162</sup> In 2014, there were more full-time Year 12 students with a reported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status in Queensland than in any other state in Australia. Those students made up more than one-third (37.8 per cent, or 2826) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander full-time Year 12 students nationally.<sup>163</sup>

While there is a slight difference in apparent Year 8 to Year 12 retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female and male students, the difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous female students is significant. For example, in 2014, retention rates were 71.6 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female students and 90.8 per cent for non-Indigenous female students.<sup>164</sup>

The number of Queenslanders participating in higher education award courses who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is increasing. While this increase applies to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men, a greater number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women than men have earned a higher education qualification at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. More than twice as many Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (2212) as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males (1005) held a bachelor's degree, according to the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Excludes students who commenced and completed enabling programs or non-award units of study, which do not lead to a higher education award.

In contrast, fewer Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males held vocational education and training qualifications. For example, females accounted for just over two-fifths (42.5 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with Certificate III and IV level qualifications in 2011.<sup>166</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females are more likely than males to have a post-secondary qualification in the fields of management and commerce, education, and health, while males are much more likely to have a qualification in the fields of engineering and related technologies, and architecture and building.<sup>167</sup>

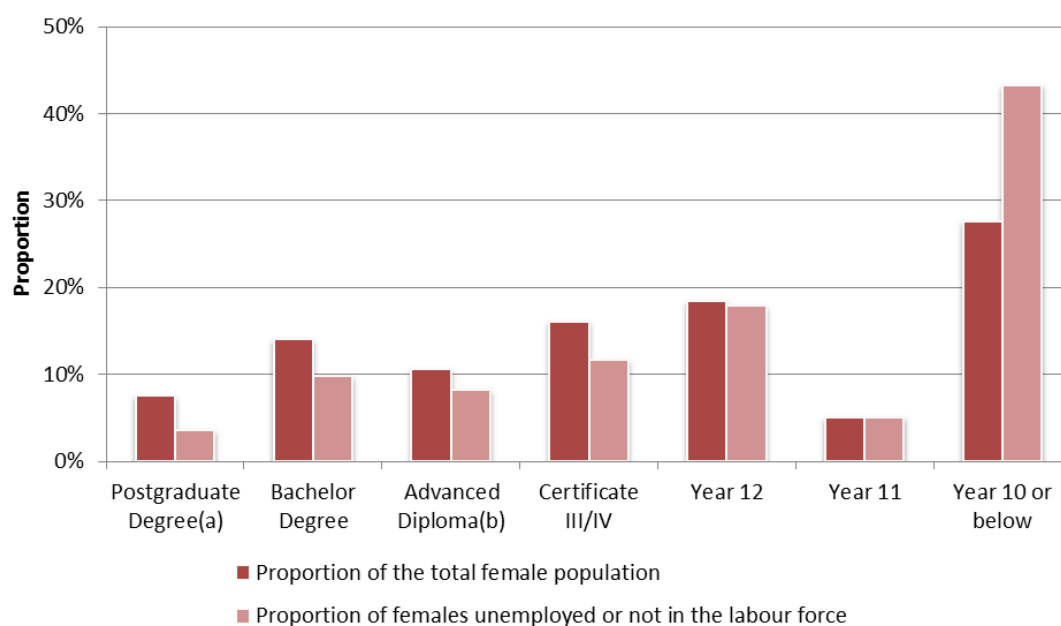
## Education and training outcomes

A person's level of educational attainment is linked with their employment and workforce outcomes such as higher lifetime earnings. Benefits from higher education arise also for the broader society in terms of lower unemployment and higher productivity.<sup>168</sup>

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Social Trends, in 2011 in Queensland labour force participation rates were significantly higher for those with an educational attainment of Year 12 or equivalent (85 per cent) and bachelor's degree or above (88.4 per cent) compared with people without non-school qualifications<sup>169</sup> (71.7 per cent).<sup>170</sup>

**Figure 3.4:**

**Proportion of the total female population and proportion of females unemployed or not in the labour force by educational attainment, Queensland, 2009**



(a) Includes a postgraduate degree, graduate diploma and graduate certificate.

(b) Includes an advanced diploma and diploma.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, *Education and training experience, 2009*, cat. no. 6278.0, Customised report.

Both Queensland females and males with a post-secondary educational qualification are less likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force (see Figure 3.4). The 2009 Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Education and Training Experience reports that females with a highest educational attainment of Year 10 or below made up 27.6 per cent of the total female population and 43.3 per cent of females who were unemployed or not in the labour force.<sup>171</sup> In contrast, females with a bachelor's degree accounted for 14 per cent of the total female population but only 9.8 per cent of females who were unemployed or not in the labour force.<sup>172</sup>

Highest level of educational attainment is also closely linked to income. A person's earning power in the workforce is likely to increase as their level of education rises. Income levels generally increase for both Queensland women and men with higher levels of post-secondary qualification (see Table 3.2).<sup>173</sup> In Australia, someone with a bachelor qualification is likely to earn, on average, \$430,000 more, compared with a Year 12 graduate, over their lifetime in current dollars as in 2014.<sup>174</sup>

**Table 3.2**  
**Average usual weekly earnings and level of highest educational attainment for Queensland women and men, 2009<sup>(a) (b)</sup>**

| Level of highest educational attainment                           | Total average weekly earnings (\$) |              | Female earnings as a % of male earnings | Full-time average weekly earnings (\$) |              | Female earnings as a % of male earnings |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------|---|--|--------------|---|
|   | Males                              | Females      |   | Males                                  | Females      |   |
| Postgraduate Degree/<br>Graduate Diploma/<br>Graduate Certificate | 1751.3                             | 1116.7       | 63.8                                    | 1870.6                                 | 1357.3       | 72.6                                    |
| Bachelor's Degree   | 1565.4                             | 1008.2       | 64.4                                    | 1654.7                                 | 1223.1       | 73.9                                    |
| Advanced Diploma/Diploma  | 1196.5                             | 730.2        | 61.0                                    | 1271.9                                 | 989.6        | 77.8                                    |
| Certificate III/IV  | 1149                               | 623.3        | 54.2                                    | 1208.9                                 | 829.9        | 68.6                                    |
| Year 12   | 911.4                              | 566.8        | 62.2                                    | 1103.1                                 | 761.4        | 69.0                                    |
| Year 11   | 838.4                              | 568.2        | 67.8                                    | 927.6                                  | 795.8        | 85.8                                    |
| Year 10 or below  | 882.1                              | 600.9        | 68.1                                    | 950.2                                  | 775.4        | 81.6                                    |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1131.3</b>                      | <b>735.2</b> | <b>65.0</b>                             | <b>1237.4</b>                          | <b>971.3</b> | <b>78.5</b>                             |

<sup>(a)</sup> Data relates to employees aged 15 years and older not at school, excluding owner managers of incorporated enterprises, and to mean usual weekly earnings in current main job.

<sup>(b)</sup> Part-time income differences between females and males are statistically not significant and therefore not included.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, *Education and training experience, 2009*, cat. no. 6278.0, Customised report.

However, Queensland males generally earn more than Queensland females with the same level of qualification with average weekly earnings for females being only 65 per cent of those for males.<sup>175</sup> Full-time female employees also earned less than full-time male employees with the same level of qualification — 78.5 per cent of male earnings.

The most pronounced difference in average weekly earnings for males and females with the same level of qualification was for those workers with a Certificate III or IV, with females' average weekly earnings being only 54.2 per cent of those for males with this type of qualification.<sup>176</sup>

The field of study can also influence earning potential, with certain occupations and industries being associated with a higher level of pay. Evidence shows that occupations and industries in non-traditional fields (such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are more likely than other fields to link with a considerably higher level of pay, and having a qualification in those fields tends to result in higher earnings later in life.<sup>177, 178, 179</sup> From secondary through to post-secondary learning, there is a clear difference between women and men in the choice of their fields of study. Queensland women compared with men remain underrepresented as both students and workers in non-traditional fields, despite the recent increase in the number of women studying within these fields.



## 4. Employment and economic security



### Introduction

Queensland women are now participating in the workforce at record levels and are in a better position to build economic independence and self-sufficiency and contribute to society. However, women's workforce participation remains lower than the male participation rate. Women are also more likely than men to engage in part-time and casual work and to exit the labour force to engage in unpaid caring and domestic work.

Queensland women work in a wide range of occupations and industries. The number of women working in non-traditional occupations (such as technicians and trades workers) and industries (such as mining and construction) has considerably increased during the past decade. But women are still over-represented in some lower-paid industries and occupations than for men.

There are fewer women than men in higher-level positions which provide opportunities to be part of the decision-making processes. Together, these trends contribute to women's lower superannuation balances and financial security in retirement.

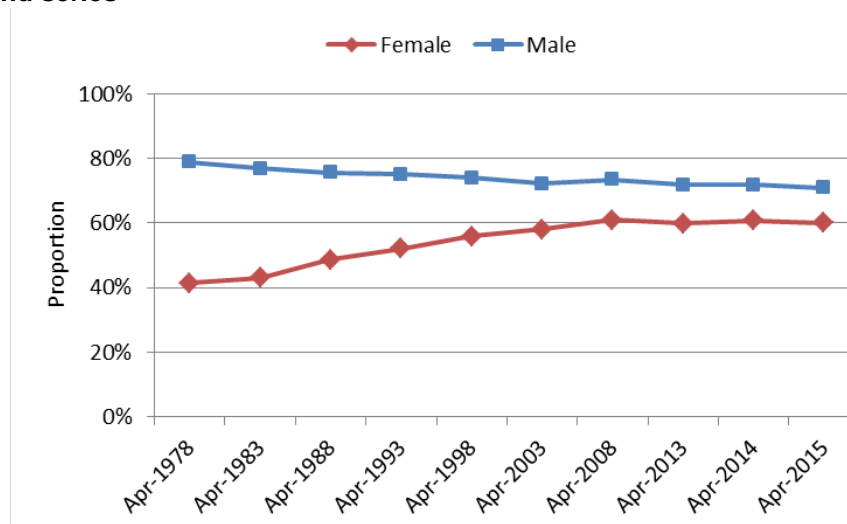
### Women's labour force participation

Having a stable source of financial income through employment is the key to women's economic independence and directly affects their wellbeing. Women's labour force participation, that is, being employed or available to work, or looking for work, has dramatically increased during the past 37 years in Queensland.

The labour force participation rate for women rose by 18.6 percentage points from 41.3 per cent in April 1978 to 59.9 per cent in April 2015, while the rate for males fell slightly during the same period (see Figure 4.1).<sup>180</sup> Consequently, the gender gap in labour force participation has decreased from 37.5 percentage points in April 1978 to 10.9 percentage points in April 2015.<sup>181</sup>

**Figure 4.1**

**Labour force participation rates for Queensland women and men, April 1978 to April 2015, trend series**

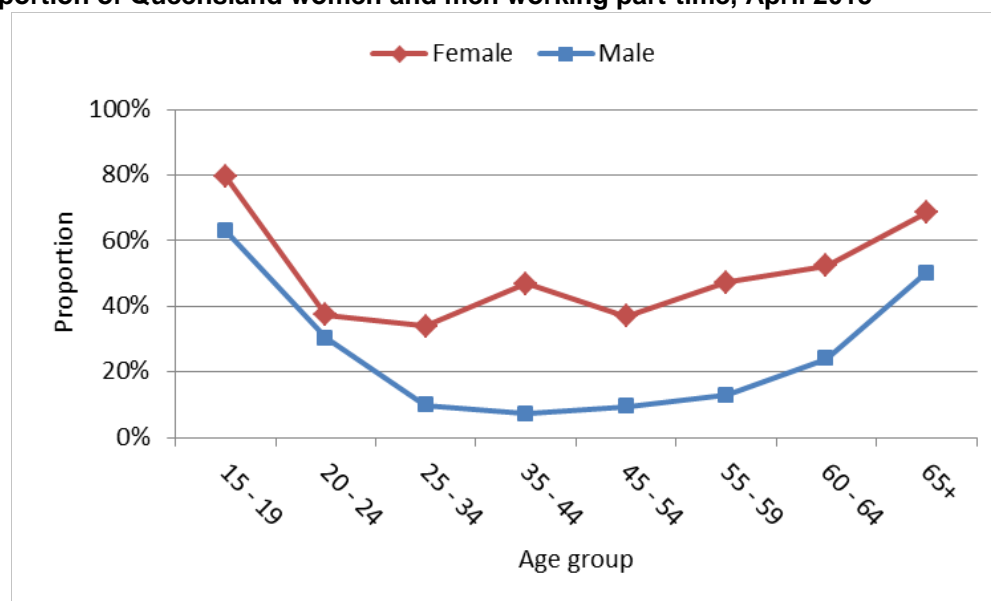


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Labour force, Australia, April 2015*, 'Table 06 Labour force status by sex – Queensland – Trend, seasonally adjusted and original', data cube: Excel spreadsheet, cat. no. 6202.0, viewed 25 May 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6202.0Apr%202015?OpenDocument>

Queensland women accounted for 46.7 per cent of all Queenslanders employed in April 2015, up from 34.4 per cent in April 1978.<sup>182</sup> However, Queensland female employees are highly concentrated in part-time work. Of all female employees in Queensland, 44.3 per cent worked part-time in April 2015, compared with 16.6 per cent of all male employees.<sup>183</sup>

At all ages, the proportion of employed women working part-time was greater than for men. The difference between women and men was most pronounced in the 35 to 44 years age group in which 46.9 per cent of women and 7.2 per cent of men who were employed worked part-time (see Figure 4.2).<sup>184</sup> These are generally child-bearing and child-rearing years but are also prime working years during which career advancement is likely to occur.

**Figure 4.2**  
**Proportion of Queensland women and men working part-time, April 2015**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Labour force, Australia, detailed – electronic delivery, Apr 2015*, 'LM8 - Labour force status by age (detailed), state and territory, marital status and sex, February 1978 onwards', data cube: SuperTable, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001, viewed 25 May 2015,  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.001Apr%202015?OpenDocument>

Queensland women are also more likely than men to be employed on a casual basis without paid leave entitlements. In 2013, almost one-third (29.1 per cent) of female employees were employed without paid leave entitlements (compared with 23.2 per cent for males), and those women comprised more than half (54.4 per cent) of all employees without leave entitlements.<sup>185</sup>

Many Queensland women experience labour under-utilisation, either through unemployment or underemployment, such as when a woman in casual or part-time work wants and is available for more hours of work than she currently has. In 2013, about one in seven (14.8 per cent) Queensland women in the labour force were either unemployed, or preferred and were available to work more hours, compared with about one in nine (11.5 per cent) men.<sup>186</sup>

Some groups within the Queensland female population are less likely to participate in the workforce, and their labour is more likely to be under-utilised, compared with both their male counterparts and women in general. In 2011, the unemployment rate for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women was almost four times (19.6 per cent) higher than for non-Indigenous women (5.4 per cent).<sup>187</sup>

Queensland lone mothers are also significantly less likely to participate in the workforce than partnered mothers and lone fathers. The unemployment rate for Queensland women with a disability was 14.1 per cent in 2011.<sup>188</sup> This was significantly higher than the rate for all Queensland women (6.1 per cent), but lower than the unemployment rate for Queensland men with a disability (17.4 per cent) in the same period.<sup>189</sup>

### Did you know?

Queensland women accounted for 46.7 per cent of all Queenslanders employed in April 2015, up from 34.4 per cent in April 1978.

Of all Queensland female employees aged 15 years and older, 44.3 per cent worked part-time and almost one-third were employed on a casual basis.

## Women's representation in occupations and industries

Queensland women work in a range of occupations and industries, but are highly concentrated in some and under-represented in others. As in February 2015, Queensland women were predominantly employed as clerical and administrative workers (24.9 per cent of all employed Queensland women), followed by employment as professionals (21.6 per cent of all employed Queensland women).<sup>190</sup> They were least likely to work as machinery operators and truck drivers (1.4 per cent of all employed Queensland women) or technicians and trades workers (4.6 per cent of all employed Queensland women).<sup>191</sup>

Compared with men, Queensland women comprised high proportions of the three occupation groups: clerical and administrative workers (78.0 per cent), community and personal service workers (68.4 per cent), and sales workers (62.5 per cent) (see Figure 4.3).<sup>192</sup>

**Figure 4.3**

**Proportion of Queensland female and male employees aged 15 years and older across occupation groups<sup>(a)</sup>, February Quarter 2015**



<sup>(a)</sup> Occupation data is coded to the 2006 Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

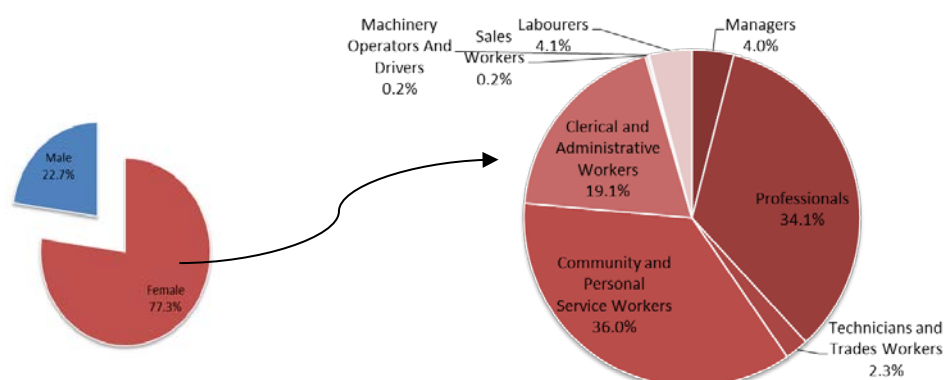
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Labour force, Australia, detailed, quarterly, Feb 2015*, 'E09 - Employed persons by industry (ANZSIC division), occupation (ANZSCO major group), state and territory and sex, August 1991 onwards', data cube: SuperTable, cat. no. 6291.0.55.003, viewed 26 May 2015,

<<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.003Feb%202015?OpenDocument>>

Queensland women dominate the workforce of certain industries such as health care and social assistance and education and training. One in three (32.4 per cent) female workers was in these two industries in February 2015.<sup>193</sup> Females accounted for more than three-quarters (77.3 per cent) of all employees in the health care and social assistance industry and 71.9 per cent of all employees in the education and training industry in Queensland in February 2015.<sup>194</sup>

However, in those industries where women are over-represented women still undertook the vast majority of clerical and administrative or community and personal service jobs. In February 2015, more than a half of female employees (55.1 per cent) in the health care and social assistance industry were employed as clerical and administrative workers or community and personal service workers, consisting of nine in 10 (92.4 per cent) total clerical and administrative workers and eight in 10 (79.5 per cent) of total community and personal service workers in the industry (see Figure 4.4).<sup>195</sup>

**Figure 4.4**  
**Proportion of Queensland female and male employees aged 15 years and older in the health care and social assistance industry and total female employees across occupation groups, February 2015**

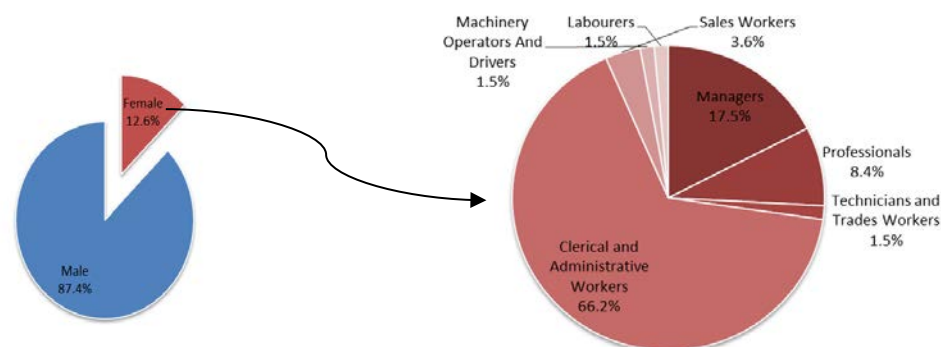


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Labour force, Australia, detailed, quarterly, Feb 2015*, 'E09 - Employed persons by industry (ANZSIC division), occupation (ANZSCO major group), state and territory and sex, August 1991 onwards', data cube: SuperTable, cat. no. 6291.0.55.003, viewed 26 May 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.003Feb%202015?OpenDocument>

In contrast, only one in 12 Queensland female workers worked in the mining, manufacturing, electricity and construction industries in February 2015.<sup>196</sup> Those industries are generally considered non-traditional for women and often have the lowest proportion of female employees. For example, women accounted for 12.6 per cent of the construction industry workforce, 17.4 per cent of the mining industry workforce, 24.8 per cent of the electricity, gas, water and waste services, and 26.1 per cent of the manufacturing industry in February 2015.<sup>197</sup>

In those non-traditional industries, women are highly concentrated in clerical and administrative jobs. Two-thirds of female employees (66.2 per cent) in the construction industry undertook clerical and administrative jobs, accounting for 82.7 per cent of total clerical and administrative workers in the industry (see Figure 4.5).<sup>198</sup>

**Figure 4.5**  
**Proportion of Queensland female and male employees aged 15 years and older in the construction industry and total female employees across occupation groups, February 2015**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Labour force, Australia, detailed, quarterly, Feb 2015*, 'E09 - Employed persons by industry (ANZSIC division), occupation (ANZSCO major group), state and territory and sex, August 1991 onwards', data cube: SuperTable, cat. no. 6291.0.55.003, viewed 26 May 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.003Feb%202015?OpenDocument>

### Did you know?

*In February 2015, Queensland females undertook almost four in five clerical and administrative jobs and two-thirds of community and personal service jobs, while Queensland males made up most machinery operators and drivers (90.6 per cent) and technicians and trades workers (85.8 per cent).*

*Only one in 12 Queensland female workers worked in the mining, manufacturing, electricity and construction industries in February 2015.*

## Work and family

Many factors influence Queensland women's ability to participate in the paid workforce and the extent to which they participate. Women's role as a child-bearer and mother impacts on their participation in paid work. Other factors such as access to child care and flexible work arrangements, having unpaid care responsibilities, or whether mothers are partnered or not, all contribute to women's paid work experiences.

Queensland women are likely to spend less time on paid work (employment-related work) and more time on unpaid domestic work<sup>c</sup> and caring for other people, compared with Queensland men. In 2011, Queensland women accounted for two-thirds (67.4 per cent) of all Queenslanders who spent one to 15 hours a week on their paid work, while men comprised more than three-quarters (76.5 per cent) of Queenslanders who spent 49 hours or more on paid work.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Includes the following domestic activities: meal preparation, service and clean-up; washing, ironing and managing clothes; other housework; gardening, mowing and yard work; home, car and bike maintenance; or household shopping and managing household financial affairs.



The 2011 Census found that almost one-half (43.6 per cent) of Queensland women aged 15 years and older spent 15 hours or more every week on unpaid domestic activities, compared with only 17.6 per cent of men.<sup>200</sup> It was predominantly women who spent 30 hours or more weekly on unpaid domestic work in Queensland (80.3 per cent), whereas men accounted for almost two-thirds (63.0 per cent) of people who spent fewer than five hours a week.<sup>201</sup>

Queensland women take primary responsibility for child care. More women than men provided unpaid child care in all age groups, with the 25–34 and 35–44 years age groups showing the greatest gender gap in 2011.<sup>202</sup> In these age groups which generally focus on child-bearing/rearing and career progress, women accounted for more than one-half (58.0 per cent) of all Queenslanders who cared for their own child/children.<sup>203</sup>

Queensland working mothers are much more likely than fathers to structure their work arrangements to accommodate child care responsibilities. For Queensland working mothers, part-time work (38.4 per cent) and flexible working hours (37.0 per cent) were the most commonly used arrangements to care for a child in 2014.<sup>204</sup> In comparison, working fathers were very unlikely to use part-time work arrangements to care for a child, with only three per cent using such arrangements.<sup>205</sup> More than two-thirds (65.9 per cent) of working fathers did not use any work arrangements to care for children, compared with 31.3 per cent of working mothers.<sup>206</sup>

Queensland women continue to provide the majority of care for people with a disability in Queensland. Of 484,400 Queenslanders who provided informal care to an older person or someone with a disability or long-term health condition in 2012, 56.8 per cent were women.<sup>207</sup> Queensland women are also more likely to be primary carers<sup>d</sup> who provide ongoing assistance for at least six months with one of the core activities of communication, mobility or self-care. Women comprised two-thirds (70.4 per cent) of all primary carers (151,400) in 2012 in Queensland.<sup>208</sup> Almost half of these women (44.8 per cent, or 47,800, were aged 45–64 years). And 89.0 per cent of all parents who were primary carers of people with a disability in Queensland were women.<sup>209</sup>

### Did you know?

The 2011 Census found that half of Queensland women aged 15 years and older spent 15–29 hours every week on unpaid domestic activities, while half of Queensland men spent five to 14 hours.

To care for a child, Queensland working mothers most commonly used flexible working hours (42 per cent) and part-time work (41 per cent), while only five per cent of working fathers used part-time work arrangements.

<sup>d</sup> A primary carer is a person who provides the most informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to a person with one or more disabilities, with one or more of the core activities of mobility, self-care or communication. Primary carers only include persons aged 15 years and over.



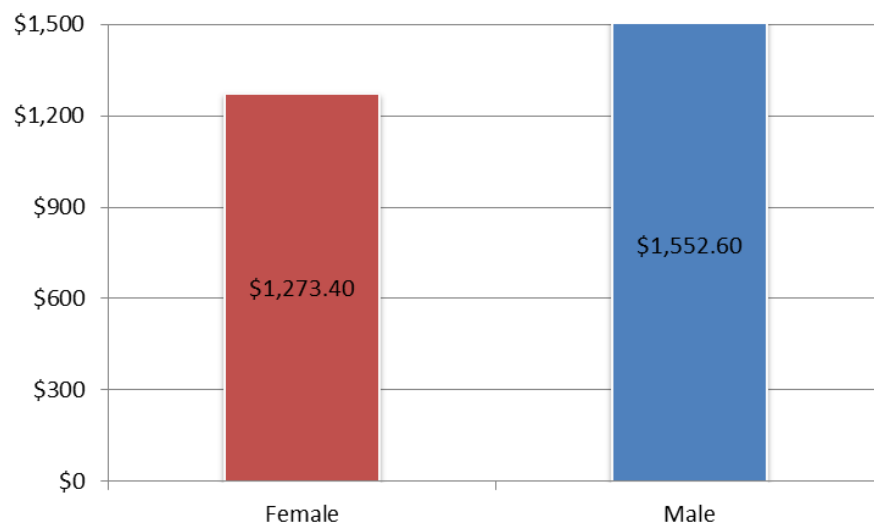
## Income

Queensland women are more likely than men to have educational attainments from tertiary education. However, this does not translate to higher incomes with Queensland men consistently recording higher average weekly earnings and higher hourly wages than women.

Many factors influence women's income and affect their long-term financial security. A higher proportion of women than men are likely to be employed on a part-time and/or casual basis, resulting in a lower average weekly income for women. Also, a clear link has been acknowledged between interruptions to paid employment and reduced career and wage progression.<sup>210</sup> Compared with men and women who remain in employment, women who exit the labour force for a period of time may experience disrupted skill acquisition, fewer training opportunities, skill depreciation and reduced work experience, all of which reduce opportunities for promotion and higher earnings. Evidence also indicates that a broad range of organisational initiatives such as flexible working arrangements, child care support, paid parental leave, improved career path, pay equity, and training and professional development are important in the attraction and retention of women in the workplace.<sup>211</sup>

Examination of women's earnings, relative to those of their male counterparts, highlights a substantial pay gap and suggests that, based on income, women tend to be less financially secure than men. As at May 2015, Queensland female adult employees<sup>e</sup> working full-time ordinary hours earned an average of \$ 1273.40 per week, while male adults earned an average of \$ 1552.60 per week.<sup>212</sup> That is, on average, every week Queensland women earn \$279.20 (or about 18 per cent) less than men (see Figure 4.6). This 18 per cent gender pay gap means that, on average, for every dollar earned by a full-time male employee, a full-time female employee earns 82 cents.

**Figure 4.6**  
**Queensland female and male earnings (full-time adult ordinary time), May 2015**

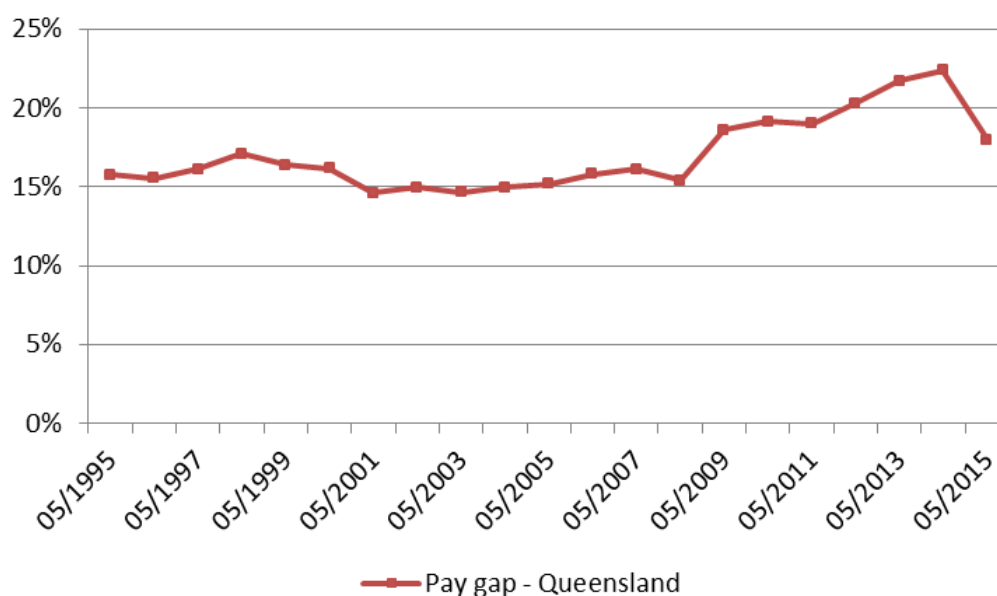


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Average weekly earnings, Australia, May 2015*, 'Table 11C. Average weekly earnings, Queensland (dollars) — Trend', cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 1 October 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6302.0May%202015?OpenDocument>>

<sup>e</sup> Adult employees are those employees 21 years of age or older and those employees who, although under 21 years of age, are paid at the full adult rate for their occupation.

As depicted in Figure 4.7, the pay gap between Queensland women and men has hovered between 14 per cent and 23 per cent for the past two decades, with the lowest gap of 14.6 per cent in May 2001 and May 2003.<sup>213, 214</sup> During recent years the gender pay gap has increased in Queensland and in Australia as a whole, showing a record high gap of 22.4 per cent and 18.2 per cent respectively in May 2014.<sup>215, 216, 217, 218</sup> This effect has been more pronounced in Queensland than the national average (see Figure 4.7).

**Figure 4.7**  
Gender pay gap in Queensland between May 1995 and May 2015, trend



Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Average weekly earnings, Australia, May 2015*, 'Table 11C. Average weekly earnings, Queensland (dollars) — Trend', cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 1 October 2015,

<<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6302.0May%202015?OpenDocument>>

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *Average weekly earnings, Australia, May 2012*, 'Table 11C. Average weekly earnings, Queensland (dollars) — Trend', cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 1 October 2015,

<<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6302.0May%202012?OpenDocument>>

The gender segregation found within certain industries and occupations is also likely to contribute to the gap in the average earnings of males and females. National statistics revealed that male-dominated industries tend to attract a high average weekly income. Conversely, those industries in which positions are heavily populated by women tend to have a lower average weekly income.

For example, in May 2014, the average weekly total cash earnings for all employees in Australia was highest for those employees in the mining industry (\$2,499.60), followed by electricity, gas, water and waste services (\$1,767.80).<sup>219</sup> However, at this time women comprised only 14.0 per cent of all mining industry employees.<sup>220</sup> In contrast, industries characterised by lower total average weekly earnings such as health care and social assistance (\$1,083.90) and education and training (\$1,177.10) were populated with a higher proportion of female employees, with females constituting 76.8 per cent and 69.8 per cent respectively in May 2014.<sup>221, 222</sup>

Based on the weekly ordinary time cash earnings of full-time adult employees working in non-managerial roles as at May 2010, the basic chemical and chemical product manufacturing industry<sup>223</sup> had the largest pay gap with men earning more than twice that of women — \$1,887.20 compared with \$901.70.<sup>224</sup> The highest paying industry in Queensland for both men and women was coal mining, followed by electricity supply for women, and by oil and gas extraction for men. Although women's wages in these fields are higher than women's wages in other sectors, the gender pay gap still exists. For example, in the coal mining industry male employees earned 13.1 per cent more than female employees.<sup>225</sup> The low-paying industries for Queensland women were textile, leather, clothing and footwear manufacturing, and grocery, liquor and tobacco product wholesaling, and these industries also showed the pay gap with men earning 37 per cent and 24.5 per cent respectively more than women.<sup>226</sup>

In terms of hourly cash earnings, the highest paying occupation for Queensland women was medical practitioners (\$49.10), followed by health therapy professionals (\$47.20) in 2010.<sup>227</sup> The lowest paying occupation for women was food trades workers (\$17.80).<sup>228</sup> In comparison, for Queensland men the highest paying occupation was financial brokers and dealers, and investment advisers (\$68.60), while the lowest paying occupation was cleaners and laundry workers (\$19.40).<sup>229</sup>

#### Did you know?

As at November 2014 in Queensland, for every dollar earned by a full-time male employee, full-time female employees earn 79.5 cents, on average. The pay gap between Queensland women and men has increased in recent years from 14.8 per cent in November 2007 to a record high of 20.5 per cent in November 2014.

In terms of hourly cash earnings, the highest paying occupation for Queensland women in 2010 was medical practitioners followed by health therapy professionals. The highest paying occupation for Queensland men was financial brokers and dealers, and investment advisers.

## Financial stress and poverty

It has been acknowledged that women are more likely than men to live in marginalised circumstances and to remain marginalised.<sup>230</sup> They are most likely to experience financial stress and living in poverty and live on the fringes of society due to a range of factors that go beyond poverty, such as lack of education, social isolation, mental illness, unemployment and stigmatisation. Such disadvantages have far-reaching impacts that can span generations. Because women are usually the primary carers of children, it is important to consider the wider effects of women's poverty on children.

Queensland women are more likely than men to have government pensions and allowances as their main source of household income, in 2010 at 21.7 per cent, compared with 14.7 per cent of men, in the previous two years.<sup>231</sup> More than one in five (22.5 per cent) Queensland women aged 18 years and older delayed medical consultation because they had one or more cash flow problems<sup>f</sup> and were unable to pay it in 2010, while this was the case with 18.3 per cent of men.<sup>232</sup> About one-fifth of Queensland women (19.2 per cent) delayed purchasing prescribed medication because they could not afford it, compared with 11.9 per cent of men.<sup>233</sup>

Most one-parent families with children under 15 years in Queensland are headed by mothers — 85.1 per cent in 2011.<sup>234</sup> Lone mothers' risk of poverty is compounded by the fact that they are less likely to be in the labour force and more likely to be unemployed than both partnered mothers and lone fathers. In 2010, the majority (83.6 per cent) of jobless one-parent family households with children under 15 years reported that they could not raise \$2000 within a week for something important, compared with 64.6 per cent of jobless couple-family households.<sup>235</sup> Jobless one-parent households were also significantly more likely to have cash flow problems.<sup>236</sup> (See Table 4.1.)

**Table 4.1**  
**Queensland jobless households<sup>(a)</sup> with children aged under 15 years with financial stress, 2010**

| Household composition | Unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for an emergency | Had one or more cash flow problems |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Proportion (%)        |  |                                    |
| One-parent family     | 83.6   | 78.5                               |
| Couple family         | 64.6   | 47.8                               |

<sup>(a)</sup> A jobless household is a household where there are no persons aged 15 years or older who are currently employed.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *General social survey: States and territories, 2010*, 'General Social Survey 2010: Queensland, Table 23.1 Characteristics of one family households, proportion', data cube: Excel spreadsheet, cat. no. 4159.0.55.003, viewed 12 June 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4159.0.55.0032010?OpenDocument>>

## Retirement and superannuation

Women are more likely than men to exit the labour force to engage in unpaid child care and domestic work. Such interruptions to workforce participation significantly impact on the accumulation and growth of superannuation over time.<sup>237</sup> Failure to accrue superannuation during career breaks has a long-term effect on women's financial security and economic independence, particularly in retirement, because a lack of super contributions (especially at a young age) inevitably reduces the amount of compound interest earned on superannuation funds.

<sup>f</sup> Types of cash flow problem include being unable to pay electricity, gas or telephone bills, mortgage or rent payments, or for car registration or insurance on time; being unable to make a minimum payment on credit card; pawning or selling something because cash was needed; going without meals; being unable to heat home; seeking financial help from friends or family; and seeking assistance from welfare or community organisations.

Women's higher rate of participation in part-time and casual labour also impacts on superannuation accumulation and, accordingly, women consistently have lower superannuation balances than men.

It should be noted that superannuation statistics are not regularly collected at both national and state levels. This section uses the most recent and reliable statistics publicly available in the Queensland context.

At all ages, Queensland men are more likely than women to have superannuation coverage. In 2007, about three-quarters (73.3 per cent) of males aged 15–69 years had superannuation coverage, compared with 65.3 per cent of females in Queensland.<sup>238</sup> The difference largely reflects Queensland men's higher labour force participation rates compared with women's, especially in the 55–64 years age group. For example, of all age groups, the 55–64 years group showed the greatest proportional difference between women and men, in which 74.3 per cent of men and 57.0 per cent of women had superannuation coverage in 2007.<sup>239</sup>

However, between 2000 and 2007, the proportion of Queenslanders who had a superannuation account<sup>g</sup> increased across all age groups. The increases in the percentage of females with superannuation accounts were greater than those for males, except in the 65–69 year age group.<sup>240</sup> For women, the most noticeable change in the trends occurred in the 55–64 year age group, where 55.9 per cent of women had no superannuation coverage in 2000, compared with 32.3 per cent in 2007. Increases in superannuation coverage reflect a positive trend whereby women who enter and move through the workforce are increasingly likely to have superannuation as a source of income in retirement.<sup>241</sup>

Queensland women aged 65–69 years and 70 years and older are the group most likely to have no superannuation coverage. Three in five (61.8 per cent) women aged 65–69 years had no superannuation, compared with 43.8 per cent of men in that age group in 2007.<sup>242</sup> These proportions increased to 85.9 per cent of women and 72.3 per cent of men in the 70 years and older age group.<sup>243</sup>

Although Queensland women's superannuation coverage is improving, women's superannuation balances continue to be lower than men's. The median superannuation balance (the amount at which half the population has more and half has less) was \$39,944 for Queensland women aged 45–69 years, compared with \$69,233 for Queensland men in the same age group in 2007.<sup>244</sup>

The gap between Queensland women and men's superannuation balances increases with age. As previously discussed, interruptions to workforce participation between ages 25–44, and women's lower rates of full-time workforce participation generally are likely to play a large role in this.

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<sup>g</sup> Relates to those superannuation accounts in the accumulation phase and includes up to three superannuation accounts per person.

The median superannuation balance for women aged 45–54 years in 2007 was \$81,492, which was 69.2 per cent of the median superannuation balance of men in the same age group (\$117,811).<sup>245</sup> The difference increased in the 60–64 year group in which the median superannuation balance for women (\$141,101) was only one-third of the median superannuation balance of men (\$451,466).<sup>246</sup> The noticeable drop in the median superannuation balance for women aged 60–64 years may reflect generational differences in the level of women’s workforce participation and their eligibility for and accrual of superannuation during their working life.<sup>247</sup>

#### Did you know?

*Three in five (61.8 per cent) Queensland women aged 65–69 years had no superannuation, compared with 43.8 per cent of men in that age group in 2007.*

*The median superannuation balance for Queensland women aged 60–64 years in 2007 was one-third of the median superannuation balance of men.*



## 5. Leadership



### Introduction

Queensland has made great advancements in women's workforce participation and educational attainment in recent years. Despite this, women in Queensland and Australia as a whole are still under-represented in leadership roles in many areas, including those with the greatest societal influence or the greatest financial reward. Having women in positions of leadership maximises the opportunities for competent, qualified women to contribute to civic, business and community life. Women's representation in leadership positions benefits both women and organisations. Evidence consistently finds a range of benefits in having women in senior posts in the public and private sectors.<sup>248, 249</sup> For example, organisations show better financial performance, access the widest talent and skill pool available to them, and are more responsive to clients and broader stakeholders.<sup>250</sup>

While it is difficult to ascertain specific causes of women's underrepresentation in senior leadership positions, this 'glass ceiling' phenomenon is resulted from a range of interrelated potential causes such as the association of leadership with male paradigms, a lack of flexible work arrangements, unconscious bias on gender roles, a lack of female role models and child care cost and availability.<sup>251, 252</sup>

### State government

The 2015 Queensland State General Election saw 25 women (28.1 per cent) of all persons elected to the 89-seat Legislative Assembly. While the proportion of females elected has increased from 20.2 per cent (or 18 women) in the previous election in 2012, it is lower than the figures in earlier years when women constituted about one-third of all persons elected (see Table 5.1).



**Table 5.1****Females and males elected to the Queensland Legislative Assembly, 2001–2015**

| Date | Female | Male | Female         | Male |
|------|--------|------|----------------|------|
|      | Number |      | Proportion (%) |      |
| 2015 | 25     | 64   | 28.1           | 71.9 |
| 2012 | 18     | 71   | 20.2           | 79.8 |
| 2009 | 32     | 57   | 36.0           | 64.0 |
| 2006 | 30     | 59   | 33.7           | 66.3 |
| 2004 | 30     | 59   | 33.7           | 66.3 |
| 2001 | 33     | 56   | 37.1           | 62.9 |

Source: Electoral Commission Queensland, various years, *Election information and results*, viewed 16 June 2015, <<http://results.ecq.qld.gov.au/elections/index.html>>

As of 16 June 2015, women hold 25 of 89 seats (28.1 per cent) in the Queensland Parliament and eight of the 14 Cabinet Ministers (57.1 per cent) are female, including the Premier and Deputy Premier. The year 2015 marked the first time in Australia's political history that women dominated the government. It is also the first time an Indigenous woman has been elected a Member of Parliament in Queensland (the Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP, a Nunukul/Nughi woman, Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation). It is only the second time two women, through the appointments of Premier and Deputy Premier, have led a state government in Australia and it is a first for Queensland.

## Judiciary

As at September 2015, women comprised one-third (30.4 per cent) of the 158 serving Queensland judges and magistrates (see Table 5.2).<sup>253</sup> Within the Queensland judiciary, women currently hold two senior positions in the Supreme Court — the first female Chief Justice and President of the Court of Appeal Division.<sup>254</sup> One of the two Deputy Chief Magistrate in the Queensland Magistrates Court is held by a woman.<sup>255</sup>

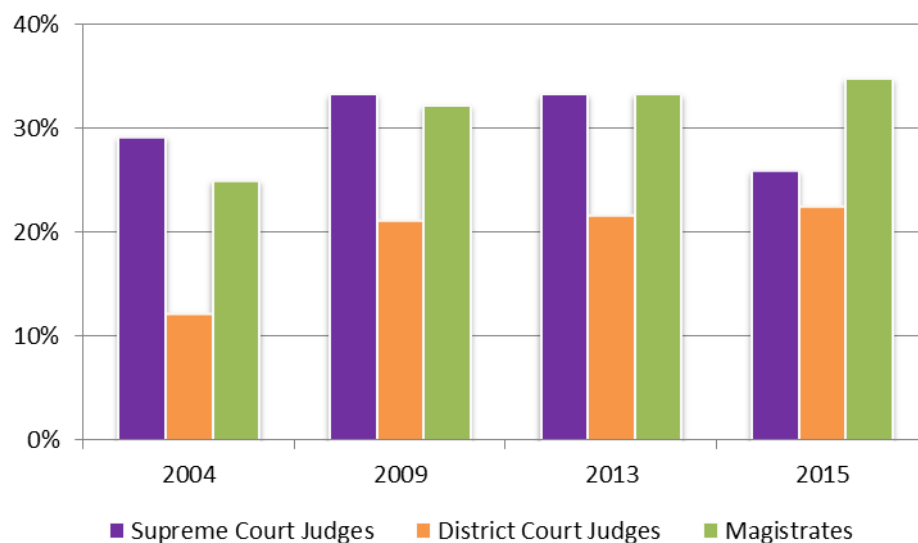
**Table 5.2****Female and male members of the Queensland State judiciary, September 2015**

|                               | Female    | Male       | Female         | Male        |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|-------------|
|                               | Number    |            | Proportion (%) |             |
| Supreme Court judges          | 7         | 20         | 25.9           | 74.1        |
| District Court judges         | 9         | 31         | 22.5           | 77.5        |
| Magistrates Court magistrates | 32        | 59         | 35.2           | 64.8        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>48</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>30.4</b>    | <b>69.6</b> |

Source: Supreme Court Library of Queensland, (date not defined), *Queensland Judiciary – Profiles*, viewed 11 September 2015, <<http://www.sclqld.org.au/judicial-papers/judicial-profiles/>>

The proportion of female members of the Queensland judiciary has steadily increased over the past 10 years, from 22.9 per cent in 2004 to 30.4 per cent in 2015, except for the recent decrease in female Supreme Court judges (see Figure 5.1). However, women are still considerably underrepresented, especially in senior positions, compared with men.

**Figure 5.1**  
**Percentage of women in the Queensland Judiciary, between 2004 and 2015**



Source: Supreme Court Library of Queensland, *Queensland Judiciary – Profiles*, accessed in 2015, 2013, 2009 and 2004, <<http://www.sclqld.org.au/qjudiciary/>>

## Government boards and State Public Service

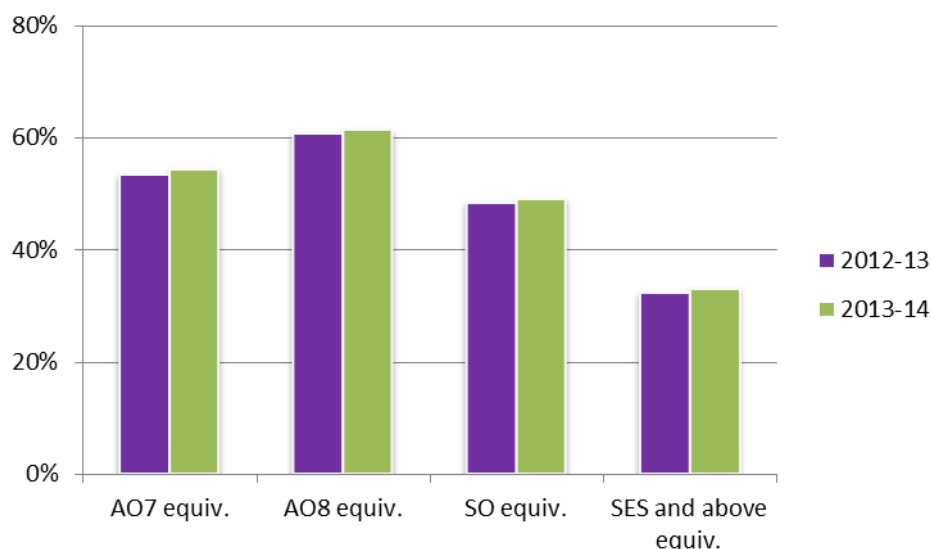
There are about 320 Queensland Government bodies, each providing leadership and responsibility for various government processes. Queensland Government boards have traditionally been characterised by a low percentage of female members.

As at May 2015, 31 per cent of those board positions are filled by women. In order to address women's underrepresentation in this area of leadership, the Queensland Government has committed to two targets that by 2020 (1) 50 per cent of all new board appointees to Queensland Government bodies to be women and (2) 50 per cent representation of women on Queensland Government bodies.

Women constituted almost two-thirds (65.7 per cent) of the Queensland Public Service workforce in 2013–14.<sup>256</sup> The proportion of women in the public service has steadily increased over the past decade — from 60.5 per cent in 2003–04.<sup>257</sup> Women account for the majority of line management roles - administrative officer (AO) levels 7 and 8 — which is the pipeline to senior leadership, at 54.3 per cent and 61.4 per cent respectively in 2014.<sup>258</sup>

However, women continue to be significantly underrepresented in high-paid senior management positions. As at June 2014, women accounted for one-third (33.1 per cent) of senior executive service (SES) officers and above, and about half (49.1 per cent) of senior officers (SO), based on full-time equivalents.<sup>259</sup> These figures remained unchanged when compared with the previous year at 32.3 per cent and 48.4 per cent respectively.<sup>260</sup> Similarly, women's representation in AO levels 7 and 8 did not show any change (see Figure 5.2).<sup>261, 262</sup>

**Figure 5.2**  
**Proportion of females in AO7 equivalent to SES and above equivalent, 2012–13 and 2013–14**



Source: Queensland Government Public Service Commission, 2014, *Queensland public service workforce characteristics 2013-2014*, viewed 17 June 2015, <<http://www.psc.qld.gov.au/publications/workforce-statistics/assets/characteristics-qps-2014.pdf>>

Queensland Government Public Service Commission, 2013, *Queensland public service workforce characteristics 2012-2013*, viewed 18 June 2015, <<http://www.psc.qld.gov.au/publications/workforce-statistics/assets/characteristics-qps-2013.pdf>>

## Private company directors and managers

As at 31 May 2015, women held 19.9 per cent of directorships on the top 200 companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX200) with 33 company boards (16.5 per cent) reporting no female representation.<sup>263</sup> The proportion of female board directorships in ASX 200 companies is steadily increasing in recent years showing a significant increase from 2009 when women held 8.3 per cent of all board directorships (see Figure 5.3).<sup>264</sup>

Women accounted for 30 per cent of all new appointees made to ASX 200 boards in 2014 — up from 22 per cent in both 2012 and 2013.<sup>265</sup> The proportion of new female appointees in 2014 represented a significant increase from 2009 and 2008 when women comprised 5 per cent and 8 per cent respectively (see Figure 5.3).<sup>266</sup>

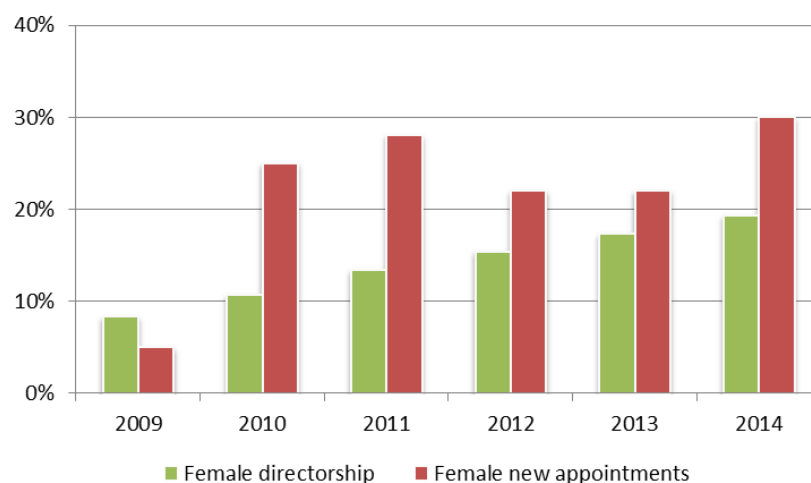
### Did you know?

*As of 16 June 2015, women hold 25 of 89 seats in the Queensland Parliament and eight of the 14 Cabinet Ministers are female.*

*As at June 2015, women comprised almost one-third of all serving Queensland judges and magistrates.*

*Nationally, women held only 3.5 per cent of all CEO positions and 19.9 per cent of board directorships in the top 200 companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange.*

**Figure 5.3**  
Proportion of female directorship on and female new appointees to ASX 200 boards between 2009 and 2014

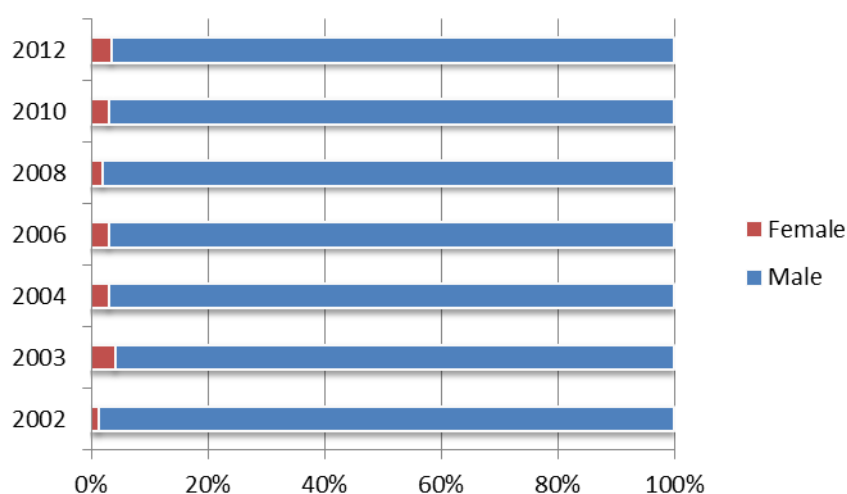


Source: Australian Institute of Company Directors, *Statistics*, viewed 24 June 2015, <<http://www.companydirectors.com.au/Director-Resource-Centre/Governance-and-Director-Issues/Board-Diversity/Statistics>>

As at 30 June 2013, women accounted for 15.1 per cent (or 19) of total 126 board directorships in 18 companies in Queensland listed on the ASX200.<sup>267</sup> New South Wales had the highest representation of female directors at 18.5 per cent while Western Australia showed the lowest figure at 7.7 per cent.

Women are significantly underrepresented among chief executive officers (CEO) or board chair positions. There were seven women (3.5 per cent) and 195 men (96.5 per cent) in CEO positions in ASX 200 companies in 2012 — an increase of one woman (or 0.5 percentage points) when compared to 2010 when there were six female CEOs (or 3 per cent).<sup>268</sup> This has remained little changed for the past 10 years (see Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4**  
Proportion of male and female chief executive officers in 200 ASX companies



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014, *Gender indicators, Australia, Feb 2014*, cat. no. 4125.0, viewed 24 June 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4125.0main+features6110Feb%202014>>

## 6. Housing



### Introduction

Access to housing is a basic need, with safe and affordable housing being important to a person's health and wellbeing. Adequate housing has been recognised, nationally and internationally, as an essential human right that is closely linked with other human rights. Housing is not merely shelter; it is the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity.<sup>269</sup>

Women are especially vulnerable to inadequate housing within contexts specific to their gender (such as experiencing a higher rate of domestic and family violence and being, on average, lower income earners than men) and may experience impacts differently to men. Inadequate housing can also have wider social effects on other basic rights. Individuals without housing, with unaffordable housing or with housing in an inaccessible or unsuitable location may experience difficulties accessing and maintaining education and employment, and accessing health and other services and facilities.

### Housing affordability and stress

Housing affordability has been a topical issue in recent years following a period of high growth in house prices in Australia. In 2014, when compared internationally, Australia was described as having a 'severely unaffordable' housing market particularly in major state capitals<sup>270</sup>, with the median house price being on average 6.4 times greater than the median household income.<sup>271, 272</sup>

Housing stress<sup>h</sup> occurs when a household spends more than 30 per cent of gross income on basic housing costs, that is, rent or mortgage. Households spending 50 per cent or more are said to be in severe housing stress.<sup>273</sup> In 2011–12, 18 per cent of Australian households were in housing stress and 6 per cent of households were in severe housing stress.<sup>274</sup>

In 2011–12, almost one in five (18.5 per cent) households in Queensland were in housing stress, higher than the national average of 18.0 per cent and the second highest of any state, closely following New South Wales (19.5 per cent).<sup>275</sup>

In 2011–12, the majority of households (65 per cent) in Queensland were owners with or without a mortgage, while the proportion of households renting was 33 per cent.<sup>276</sup> Of Queensland households in housing stress, renters were the worst affected. Financial assistance with housing costs, such as Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is available for some low-income households to assist with rental affordability, and this has a substantial impact on reducing levels of housing stress. Nationally, in June 2013, 67 per cent of CRA recipients would have paid more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on rent without CRA, but this figure reduced to 40 per cent of households after receiving CRA.<sup>277</sup>

According to the 2011 Census, in Queensland one-parent families with dependent children were more likely to rent (52.4 per cent) than own their home (43.9 per cent), compared with other household types. For example, among couple families with children, only a quarter (25.3 per cent) rented and 72.4 per cent owned their home in 2011.<sup>278</sup> This trend has particular implications for women because the vast majority of one-parent families in Queensland were lone-mother families (89.6 per cent in 2009–10).<sup>279, 280</sup>

Lone-parent households with dependent children spend a higher rate of their average gross income on housing costs such as mortgage repayments, rent, property and water rates, as well as body corporate fees, compared with other household types. Queensland one-parent families with dependent children spent 23 per cent of their average gross income on housing costs in 2011–12, compared with 15 per cent for couple families with dependent children and 14 per cent for other one-family households such as a couple with their non-dependent children only.<sup>281, 282</sup>

Table 6.1 shows the affordability of private rental and community housing for Queenslanders who received Commonwealth Rent Assistance as at June 2014. Of all 72,554 lone-parent income units in Queensland who received Commonwealth Rent Assistance to assist with housing affordability, 88.7 per cent (or 64,357) were female. Female recipients are more likely than male recipients to experience difficulty in affording their housing. Almost a half (49.5 per cent) of all lone female households and 40.4 per cent of lone-mother households spent 30 per cent or more of their income on rent, compared with 46.3 per cent of lone-male households and 36.6 per cent of lone-father households.

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<sup>h</sup> Housing stress is a measure of housing affordability where the proportion of household income spent on basic housing costs (that is, rent or mortgage) is calculated.

**Table 6.1**  
**Affordability of private rental and community housing for Queensland's Rent Assistance recipients by selected income unit<sup>(a)</sup> types, June 2014<sup>(b)</sup>**

| Income unit type | Affordability                               | Females      |      | Males        |      |
|------------------|---|--------------|------|--------------|------|
|                  |   | Income units | %    | Income units | %    |
| Lone person      | Pay less than 30 per cent of income on rent | 41,650       | 50.5 | 45,516       | 53.7 |
|                  | Pay 30 per cent or more of income on rent   | 40,867       | 49.5 | 39,315       | 46.3 |
|                  | Total                                       | 82,517       | 100  | 84,831       | 100  |
| Lone parent      | Pay less than 30 per cent of income on rent | 38,343       | 59.6 | 5,195        | 63.4 |
|                  | Pay 30 per cent or more of income on rent   | 26,014       | 40.4 | 3,002        | 36.6 |
|                  | Total                                       | 64,357       | 100  | 8,197        | 100  |

<sup>(a)</sup> An income unit comprises a single person (with or without dependent children) or a couple (with or without dependent children). Single social security recipients living together in the same household are regarded as separate income units. Income units entitled to a daily rate of Commonwealth Rent Assistance who are renting privately or from Community Housing providers are not separately identified in Centrelink administrative data. A small number of income units where affordability was not able to be calculated are excluded from housing stress calculations.

<sup>(b)</sup> As at fortnight ending 6 June 2014 (Note the Energy Supplement and Income Support Bonus introduced in 2013 are included in income used in affordability calculations)

Source: Australian Government Department of Social Security Housing Data Set as at June 2014, unpublished data.

## Housing assistance

The social housing system in Queensland includes public housing, such as public rental housing and state-owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and community housing. Social housing provides assistance to counter the issues of housing affordability, housing stress and homelessness.

Public housing, administered by the Queensland Government, is targeted at people who have difficulty obtaining affordable, secure and appropriate private accommodation. Women are significantly more likely than men to be public housing tenants, with 65 per cent of public rental housing tenants and 73.7 per cent of SOMIH tenants in Queensland being women as at 30 June 2015 (see Table 6.2).<sup>283</sup> Single females aged over 55 years and single mothers with children under 18 years were particularly over-represented in public housing, comprising 18.6 per cent and 17.9 per cent respectively of all public housing tenants.<sup>284</sup>



**Table 6.2**  
**Tenants<sup>(a)</sup> of public rental housing and SOMIH programs in Queensland, 30 June 2015**

| Family type  | Public rental housing |               |             | SOMIH             |              |             | Total         |              |
|--|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
|  | Males<br>(Number)     | Females       |             | Males<br>(Number) | Females      |             | Number        | % of females |
|  |                       | Number        | %           |                   | Number       | %           |               |              |
| Single person  | 4,260                 | 3,922         | 47.9        | 138               | 176          | 56.1        | 8,496         | 48.2         |
| Single parent with child/ren under 18                    | 1,095                 | 9,422         | 89.6        | 93                | 1,145        | 92.5        | 11,755        | 89.9         |
| Single parent with child/ren with minimum age 18 or over | 485                   | 2,950         | 85.9        | 38                | 173          | 82.0        | 3,646         | 85.7         |
| Couple only  | 297                   | 411           | 58.1        | 23                | 29           | 55.8        | 760           | 57.9         |
| Couple with child/ren under 18                           | 1,893                 | 2,595         | 57.8        | 228               | 375          | 62.2        | 5,091         | 58.3         |
| Couple with child/ren minimum age 18 or over             | 685                   | 697           | 50.4        | 45                | 54           | 54.5        | 1,481         | 50.7         |
| Single person over 55                                    | 6,605                 | 10,728        | 61.9        | 95                | 251          | 72.5        | 17,679        | 62.1         |
| Couple only over 55 <sup>(b)</sup>                       | 2,576                 | 2,430         | 48.5        | 92                | 84           | 47.7        | 5,182         | 48.5         |
| Other  | 1,503                 | 2,883         | 65.7        | 210               | 406          | 65.9        | 5,002         | 65.8         |
| <b>Total tenants</b>                                     | <b>19,399</b>         | <b>36,038</b> | <b>65.0</b> | <b>962</b>        | <b>2,693</b> | <b>73.7</b> | <b>59,092</b> | <b>65.5</b>  |
| <b>Total tenancies (households)</b>                      | <b>50,371</b>         |               |             | <b>3,242</b>      |              |             | <b>53,613</b> |              |

<sup>(a)</sup> Tenancies have at least one tenant and in some cases joint tenancies where each of the tenants is jointly and separately responsible for rent and tenancy conditions.

<sup>(b)</sup> Tenancy has at least one occupant aged 55 years or over.

Source: Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works, SAP R/3 and HNA System Report, July 2015, unpublished data.

Mainstream community housing is for low-to-moderate income or special needs households and is administered by not-for-profit organisations. In 2014–15, the community housing program in Queensland assisted 11,199 households, and 67 per cent of new community housing tenancies were allocated to households with special needs, such as where one or more persons had a disability, or identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or were aged over 75 years.<sup>285</sup> Similar to public housing, most mainstream community housing households had a female as the main tenant — 64 per cent Australia-wide in 2007.<sup>286</sup>

## Homelessness

Homelessness is a complex social problem which intersects closely with many other issues, such as violence or conflict in the home, substance use or mental health problems, job loss or financial stress, housing crises due to lack of affordable housing, or a combination of issues.<sup>287</sup> Homelessness can be defined in different ways as there is a range of views on what constitutes homelessness. According to the *Homelessness Bill 2013*, a person is experiencing homelessness if s/he is in any of the following situations<sup>288</sup>:

- i. sleeping rough or living in an improvised dwelling
- ii. temporarily living with friends or relatives, with no other usual address and no capacity to obtain other suitable accommodation
- iii. no safe place to live (including because the person is, or is at risk of, experiencing domestic violence)
- iv. living in accommodation provided by a specialist homelessness service
- v. living in a refuge, shelter or similar crisis accommodation
- vi. living in a caravan park, boarding house, hostel or similar accommodation, whether on a short-term or long-term basis, in respect of which the person has no secure lease and the person is not living in that accommodation by choice.

Based on the 2011 Census, there were, on average, 46 homeless people per 10,000 of the Queensland population.<sup>289</sup> While the rate is lower than the national average of 49 per 10,000 population, Queensland has Australia's third-highest rate of homelessness after the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.<sup>290</sup> Compared with the 2006 Census, the rate has slightly decreased for Queensland (from 48 per 10,000 population) but risen nationally (from 45 per 10,000 population).<sup>291</sup>

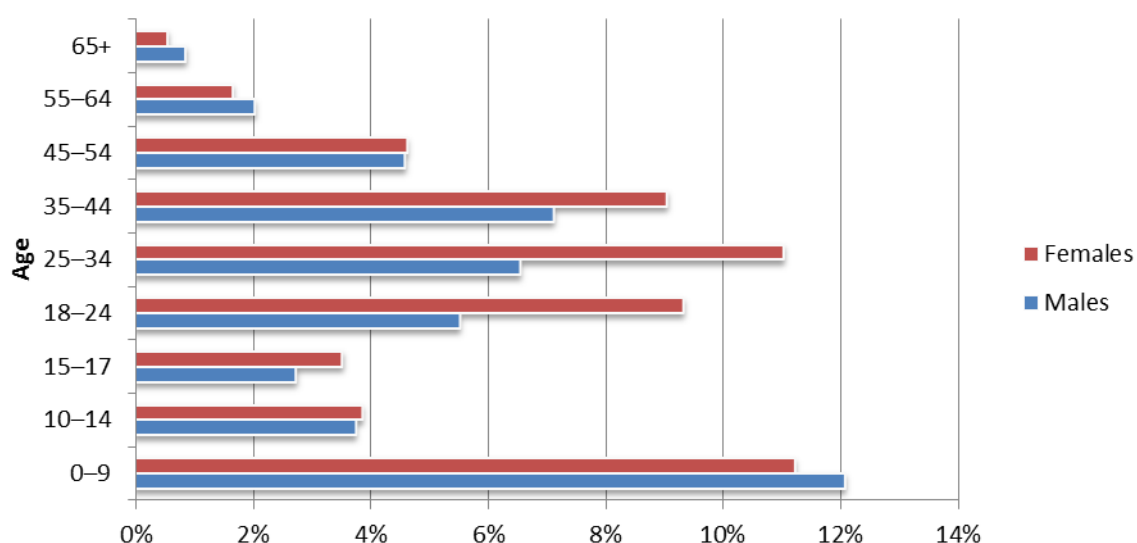
While there are more homeless males than females, women now constitute a considerable proportion of homeless people compared with the 1950s and 1960s, when it was thought that the homeless population was disproportionately made up of middle-aged and older men.<sup>292</sup> Of total 19,838 homeless people in Queensland in 2011, 43 per cent (or 8504) were female.<sup>293</sup> Slightly more females (1907) than males (1880) were staying in supported accommodation for the homeless (including government-funded specialist homelessness services), while there were considerably more males than females staying in boarding houses and in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping rough.<sup>294</sup>

Specialist homelessness services, funded through the National Affordable Housing Agreement and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, are the primary response to homelessness Australia-wide. These services specifically help people who are homeless or are at imminent risk of becoming homeless, such as people escaping domestic violence, and are mostly delivered by non-government organisations.<sup>295</sup> Government-delivered specialist homelessness services include the Homeless Persons Information Queensland telephone service, and the Queensland Homeless Health Outreach Teams that provide front-line health services to people sleeping rough and other homeless people.

In Queensland, the age and gender profile of people accessing government-funded specialist homelessness services has changed in recent years. Clients presenting as either homeless or at risk of homelessness are now more likely to be female and relatively young. In 2013–14, an estimated 43,751 Queenslanders accessed specialist homelessness services, of whom women comprised more than half (54.8 per cent, or 21,329) of all clients.<sup>296</sup> The rate of Queensland women accessing specialist homelessness services has increased significantly in recent years, up to 103 per 10,000 of the Queensland female population in 2013–14, from 76 per 10,000 females in 2006–07. The rate of Queensland men accessing services also increased but to a lesser extent — 85 per 10,000 males in 2013–14 from 70 per 10,000 males in 2006–07.<sup>297, 298, 299</sup>

Women aged 18–44 years are most likely to access specialist homelessness services, accounting for more than half (53.6 per cent) of female clients and just under a third (29.4 per cent) of all clients in Queensland in 2013–14 (see Figure 6.1).<sup>300</sup> When comparing all clients of specialist homelessness services in Queensland by age group and gender, the largest single cohort of adult clients is females aged 25–34 years.<sup>301</sup>

**Figure 6.1**  
**Specialist homelessness service clients in Queensland by age group and sex as a percentage of all clients, 2013–14**



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2014, *Specialist Homelessness Services 2013–14, Queensland supplementary tables 2013–14*, 'Table Qld2.1: Clients and support periods, by age and sex, 2013–14, adjusted for non-response', cat. no. HOU 276, viewed 20 July 2015, <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129549890>>

Women aged 45 years and older are increasingly accessing specialist homelessness services in Queensland, accounting for 12.4 per cent of female clients and 6.8 per cent of total clients in 2013–14 (Figure 6.1).<sup>302</sup> This age group showed the greatest proportional increase in rates in the five-year period between 2006–07 (25 per 10,000 females) and 2010–11 (39 per 10,000 females).<sup>303</sup> However, rates for younger women aged 15–24 years were still significantly higher at 146 per 10,000 females aged 15–19 years and 145 per 10,000 females aged 20–24 years in 2010–11.<sup>304</sup>

Queensland women accessing specialist homelessness services in 2013–14 were more likely to present as a single parent with one or more children (46.7 per cent of female clients), compared to the largest male cohort, who presented as a lone person (36.4 per cent of male clients).<sup>305</sup> For the majority of both male and female clients aged 15 years and over seeking support, the main source of income was some form of government payment; Parenting Payment and Newstart Allowance for female clients (34.8 per cent and 21.9 per cent respectively) and Newstart allowance and Disability support pension (Centrelink) for male clients (40.7 per cent and 23.9 per cent respectively).<sup>306</sup>

In 2011 in Queensland, homelessness rates were almost 10 times higher for Indigenous people at 310 per 10,000 population (approximately one in 30 people), compared to a rate of 34 per 10,000 population of non-Indigenous Queenslanders (approximately one in 294 people).<sup>307</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls are over-represented among those who receive assistance from specialist homelessness services. A third (30.9 per cent) of Queensland female clients of specialist homelessness services identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in 2012–13<sup>308</sup>, despite representing a small proportion of the total Queensland female population (3.6 per cent in 2011)<sup>309</sup>.

As with non-Indigenous clients, there are more female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients accessing specialist homelessness services in Queensland than there are male Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients: 7254 compared with 5189 in 2012–13.<sup>310</sup> The differences were mainly in the 18–24 and 25–34 age groups in which there were more than twice as many females (2722) than males (1259).<sup>311</sup>

It should be noted that the concept of home for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can differ to that of non-Indigenous people and, as a result, affect their experiences of homelessness and the services they need and access<sup>312</sup>.

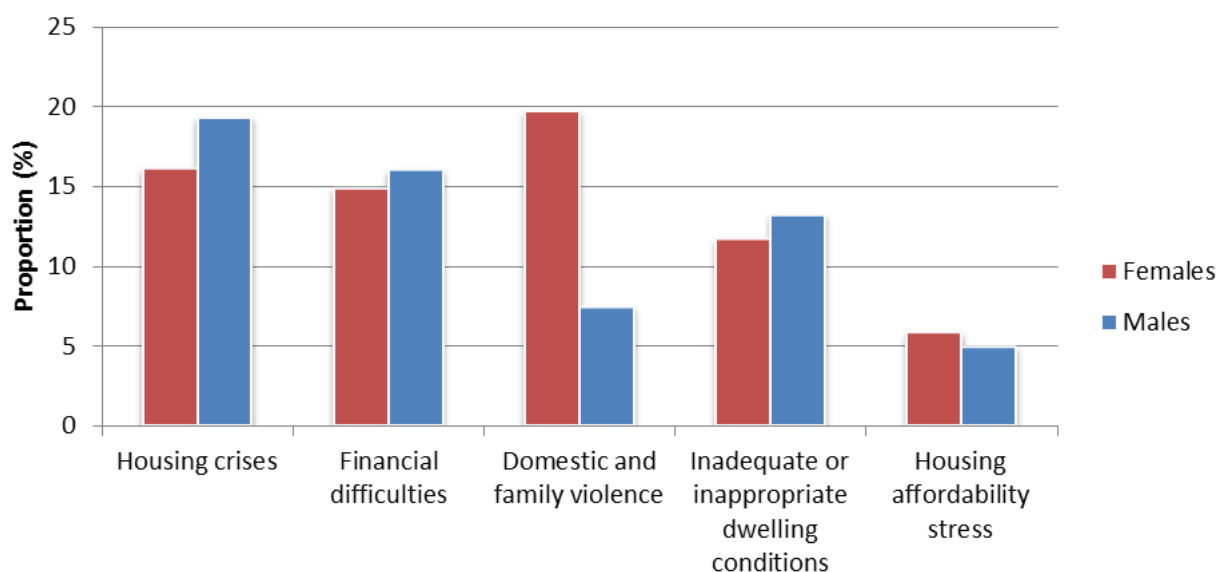
## Homelessness and domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence has been recognised as a major risk factor for homelessness for women and children in Australia.<sup>313, 314</sup> While it is difficult to measure the total number of women who experience or are at risk of domestic and family violence-related homelessness, statistical data available show a close link between women's homelessness and experiences of domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence was ranked as the most common reason by Queensland women seeking specialist homelessness assistance, with one-fifth (19.7 per cent) of female clients reporting this as the main reason in 2013–14 (see Figure 6.2).<sup>315</sup> In comparison, domestic and family violence ranked fourth for male clients with 7.4 per cent of male clients reporting this as the main reason during the same period.<sup>316</sup> Subsequently, the vast majority of clients of specialist homelessness services who were escaping domestic and family violence in Queensland were females (76.4 per cent in 2013–14).<sup>317</sup>

**Figure 6.2**

**Top five main reasons for seeking government-funded specialist homelessness service assistance by sex, Queensland, 2013–14<sup>(a)</sup>**



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2014, *Specialist Homelessness Services 2013–14, Queensland supplementary tables 2013–14*, 'Table Qld2.14: Clients, by main reason for seeking assistance, 2013–14, adjusted for non-response', cat. no. HOU 276, viewed 22 July 2015,

<<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129549890>>

### Did you know?

*Queensland women made up two-thirds (65 per cent) of all public rental housing tenants and three-quarters (74 per cent) of state owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants as at 30 June 2015.*

*In 2013–14, 103 per 10,000 of the Queensland female population, compared with 85 per 10,000 Queensland males, accessed government-funded specialist homelessness services.*

*Women comprised more than three-quarters of all Queensland clients seeking specialist homelessness services due to domestic and family violence in 2013–14, with domestic violence being the most common main reason for female clients seeking support.*

## 7. Health and wellbeing



### Introduction

The health of Queensland women continues to improve. Queensland women enjoy longer life expectancies and perceive their overall health status positively. Fewer women die from breast cancer or cervical cancer than a decade ago, and the overall incidence of these types of cancer among Queensland women is decreasing. Queensland females are increasingly undertaking sufficient physical activity for its health benefits and are participating in sport and physical recreation activity.

However, there are other women's health and wellbeing outcomes that require improvement such as decreasing rates of healthy weight, mental and behavioural health problems, high smoking rates among pregnant women and high alcohol consumption rates among younger women.

The advancement of good health is not equally experienced by all groups or individuals in Queensland. Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women generally experience poorer health and lower life expectancy than other Queensland women, and women in disadvantaged areas are more likely to smoke during pregnancy and less likely to undertake enough physical activity for health benefit, compared with those females in advantaged areas.



## Life expectancy and overall health status

Life expectancy<sup>i</sup> is a key indicator of health and Queensland women generally enjoy longer life expectancy than men with life expectancy for Queensland women being 4.5 years longer than males — 84.1 years for females and 79.6 years for males in 2011–13.<sup>318 319</sup> (See Chapter 1 Demographics for details.)

Self-assessed health status is another common, effective measure of overall health.<sup>320</sup> Most Queenslanders perceive their overall health status positively. In 2012, 83.0 per cent of people in Queensland aged 18 years and over considered themselves to be in 'good' or 'very good to excellent' health, with little difference between females (83.5 per cent) and males (82.5 per cent).<sup>321</sup>

Younger females were more likely than older females to rate their health as excellent or very good, with females aged 18–24 years having the highest prevalence (89.1 per cent) and females aged 75 years and over having the lowest prevalence (70.3 per cent).<sup>322</sup> This pattern was similar for males.

Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Queensland aged 15 years and older (81.5 per cent in 2008) gave a positive self-assessment of their health saying that they were either in 'good' or 'very good to excellent' health, while 18.5 per cent reported to be in 'fair or poor health'.<sup>323</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's self-assessed health status varied across age groups, with females aged 15–44 years more likely to rate their health as 'excellent' or 'very good' compared with females in older age groups.<sup>324</sup>

## Pregnancy and childbirth

In 2013, there were 63,354 births registered in Queensland, which constituted about one-fifth (20.6 per cent) of all births registered in Australia.<sup>325</sup> Of those Queensland births, 8.2 per cent were registered as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.<sup>326</sup> Just over half (51.7 per cent) of the Queensland births were male babies, resulting in a sex ratio at birth of 107.1 male births per 100 female births.<sup>327</sup> (See Chapter 1 Demographics for further information on childbirth in Queensland.)

Of the women who gave birth in Queensland in 2012, most (97.5 per cent) gave birth in a hospital.<sup>328</sup> The proportion of births by caesarean section has steadily increased in Queensland, from 25.6 per cent of births in 2000<sup>329</sup> to 33.2 per cent in 2012<sup>330</sup>. Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were less likely to give birth by caesarean section compared with non-Indigenous mothers (at 25.9 per cent compared with 33.7 per cent in 2012).<sup>331</sup>

Of the mothers who delivered a baby in Queensland in 2012, 4.7 per cent had used assisted conception technologies<sup>j</sup>, which has been steadily increased in Queensland from 2.6 per cent of mothers in 1996.<sup>332</sup> Over one-third (36.5 per cent) of these mothers were aged 30–34 years and 11.4 per cent were aged 40 or older.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> The number of years that a baby born in a given year can expect to live, if age-specific death rates do not change.

<sup>j</sup> Assisted conception includes categories: AIH / AID, AIH / AID and ovulation induction, GIFT, ICSI, IVF, Ovulation induction, other and not stated.

In 2012, seven in 10 (73.1 per cent) Queensland babies were exclusively breastfed at any time before they were discharged from hospital following the birth.<sup>334</sup> Queensland mothers aged 20–34 years were slightly more likely to exclusively breastfeed (74.1 per cent) than mothers in other age groups (70.9 per cent of mothers aged under 20 years and 69.7 per cent of mothers aged 35 years and over).<sup>335</sup>

#### Did you know?

*Most Queensland women (83.5 per cent in 2012) reported their health positively, either 'good' or 'very good to excellent'.*

*Just over half (51.7 per cent) of Queensland births in 2013 were male babies, resulting in a sex ratio at birth of 107.1 male births per 100 female births.*

*One-third of all births in Queensland in 2012 were by caesarean section. Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers were less likely to have a caesarean section than non-Indigenous mothers*

## Diseases and causes of death

Queensland females have a longer life expectancy than males. Females are less likely than men to die at younger ages (before the age of 75 years) and of preventable causes.<sup>336</sup> During lifetime, compared with males, females have better health outcomes with lower hospitalisation rates for chronic disease and lower cancer incidence rates including melanoma, colorectal and lung cancer.<sup>337</sup>

However, Queensland females carry a higher burden of disability, particularly for long-term disabling conditions that often do not require hospitalisation and are unlikely to cause death.<sup>338</sup> In 2011–12, Queensland females were 20 per cent more likely than males to report an eye condition, 9 per cent more likely to report a respiratory condition such as asthma and 8 per cent more likely to report musculoskeletal conditions such as arthritis.<sup>339</sup> The prevalence of a mood disorder, an anxiety disorder and migraines was also higher among women.<sup>340</sup>

The most common cause of death for both women and men in 2013 in Queensland was heart disease (which includes angina, blocked arteries of the heart and heart attacks).<sup>341</sup> For Queensland women, this was followed by cerebrovascular diseases (including stroke), dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and trachea, bronchus and lung cancer (see Table 7.1).<sup>342</sup>

Queensland females were over-represented in the following causes of death categories in 2013, some of which are female-specific causes: ovarian cancer (100 per cent), breast cancer (98.9 per cent), dementia and Alzheimer's disease (62.8 per cent), cerebrovascular diseases (61.3 per cent), and heart failure (59.0 per cent).<sup>343</sup>

By contrast, female deaths were proportionately lower compared to male deaths for causes including intentional self-harm (22.6 per cent), skin cancer (27.7 per cent), cirrhosis and other diseases of liver (36.0 per cent) and lung cancer (36.6 per cent).<sup>344</sup>

**Table 7.1:**  
**Leading causes of death for Queensland females, 2013<sup>(a)</sup>**

| Cause of death  | Rank | Females | Total  |          |
|---|------|---------|--------|----------|
|   |      |         | Number | Female % |
| Ischaemic heart diseases (angina, heart attacks, and blocked arteries of the heart)                       | 1    | 1,782   | 3,999  | 44.6     |
| Cerebrovascular diseases (including haemorrhages, strokes, infarctions and blocked arteries of the brain) | 2    | 1,228   | 2,002  | 61.3     |
| Dementia and Alzheimer's disease  | 3    | 1,201   | 1,912  | 62.8     |
| Trachea, bronchus and lung cancer   | 4    | 610     | 1,666  | 36.6     |
| Chronic lower respiratory diseases (asthma, bronchitis and emphysema)                                     | 5    | 595     | 1,343  | 44.3     |
| Breast cancer   | 6    | 559     | 565    | 98.9     |
| Colon, sigmoid, rectum and anus cancer  | 7    | 377     | 867    | 43.5     |
| Diabetes  | 8    | 375     | 776    | 48.3     |
| Cancer of female genital organs (including ovarian cancer)  | 9    | 325     | 325    | 100.0    |
| Blood and lymph cancer (including leukaemia)  | 10   | 306     | 744    | 41.1     |

<sup>(a)</sup> Causes listed are the leading causes of death for all deaths registered in 2013, based on the World Health Organisation recommended tabulation of leading causes - International Classification of Diseases (ICD). ICD ranked in the table are in the order of I20-I25; I60-I69; F01-F03, G30; C33-C34; J40-J47; C50; C18-C21; E10-E14; C51-C58; and C81-C96.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Causes of death, Australia, 2013*, '4 Underlying causes of death (Queensland)', cat. no. 3303.0, viewed 18 August 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3303.02013?OpenDocument>

Cancer (malignant neoplasms) was the second largest broad cause of death in Queensland, after heart-related diseases, causing about one-third (30.6 per cent, or 8551) of all 27,901 deaths and accounting for 27.0 per cent of female deaths and 33.9 per cent of male deaths in Queensland in 2013.<sup>345</sup> The female cancer incidence rate was 31 per cent lower than the male rate in 2011.<sup>346</sup>

Lung, trachea and bronchus cancer is the most common cause of cancer death for both males and females, causing 17.2 per cent (or 610) of female cancer deaths and 21.2 per cent (or 1060) of male cancer deaths in 2013 in Queensland.<sup>347</sup> Breast cancer caused the second highest number of female cancer deaths (15.8 per cent, or 559, of female cancer deaths) and ovarian cancer recorded 177 deaths, comprising 5.0 per cent of female cancer deaths in Queensland in 2013.<sup>348</sup>

The overall incidence of the women-specific cancers is stable or decreasing and women are becoming increasingly likely to survive these cancers. There were 120 female breast cancer incidences per 100,000 people of the Queensland female population in 2011, compared with 124 incidences per 100,000 females in 2001.<sup>349</sup>

Female breast cancer death rates in Queensland decreased by 19 per cent (or 2.3 per cent per year) between 2001 and 2010 – 20 deaths per 100,000 females in 2010 compared with 25 deaths per 100,000 females in 2001.<sup>350</sup> The incidence rate (between 2002 and 2011) and mortality rate (between 2001 and 2010) for cervical cancer was unchanged.<sup>351</sup>

Screening is vital to the early detection of some existing cancers and detection of cell abnormalities that may lead to invasive cancer.<sup>352</sup> The BreastScreen Queensland program provides free breast cancer screening for women aged 40 and older, but especially targets those aged 50–69 years. The participation rate for the target age group was 58 per cent in the two-year period 2011–12, slightly above the national rate (55 per cent).<sup>353</sup> Women living in regional and remote areas of Queensland were slightly more likely to participate in the program than those in major cities or very remote areas.

The Queensland Cervical Screening program targets women aged 20–69 years and the participation rate was 56 per cent Queensland-wide in the two-year period 2011–12, with women living in major cities to have a slightly higher participation rate than those women in regional or remote areas.<sup>354</sup>

There were 3363 deaths registered across Queensland between 2009 and 2013 where the deceased person was identified as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, with female deaths accounting for 44.9 per cent (or 1510 deaths) of those registered.<sup>355</sup> The most-common cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females during this period was Ischaemic heart diseases (10.6 per cent of female deaths), closely followed by diabetes (9.7 per cent of female deaths).<sup>356</sup>

The diabetes death rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females was 6.2 times the rate of non-Indigenous females (81.8 per 100,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females compared with 13.2 per 100,000 non-Indigenous females) and comprised 51.8 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths caused by diabetes.<sup>357</sup> Breast cancer death rates were similar for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (20.0 per 100,000) and non-Indigenous females (20.7 per 100,000).<sup>358</sup>

There were 34,080 falls-related hospitalisations in 2011–12 in Queensland, with almost half (49 per cent) of them occurred for people aged 65 years and older. In this age group, women are more likely than men to be hospitalised due to falls, accounting for seven in 10 (68 per cent, or 11,338) of falls-related hospitalisations for people aged 65 years and older.<sup>359</sup> Women comprised about two-thirds (61.3 per cent of, or 217, deaths) of falls-related deaths in people aged 65 years and older in 2010 in Queensland.<sup>360</sup>

#### Did you know?

*The most-common cause of death for Queensland women was heart disease in 2013, which was followed by cerebrovascular diseases (including stroke), and dementia and Alzheimer's disease.*

*Queensland women aged 65 years and older are more likely than men of the same age to be hospitalised due to falls — accounting for seven in 10 of falls-related hospitalisations for people aged 65 years and older in 2011–12.*

## Mental health

Mental and behavioural conditions such as dementia, depression, substance abuse and anxiety disorders continue to be more common among Queensland women than men. In 2011–12, Queensland females were 28 per cent more likely than Queensland males to report a mental or behavioural problem — 16.1 per cent of Queensland women, compared with 12.6 per cent of men, reported having experienced mental and behavioural health problems in the previous 12 months, which lasted or were expected to last at least six months or more.<sup>361</sup>

Mood disorders were the most commonly reported mental and behavioural problem for Queensland women (12.3 per cent of all Queensland females), followed by anxiety-related problems (5.5 per cent) in 2011–12.<sup>362</sup> Queensland women were 62 per cent more likely to report a mood disorder and 72 per cent more likely to report an anxiety-related problem, compared with men.<sup>363</sup> However, females were 66 per cent less likely than males to report an alcohol- or drug-related problem and 40 per cent less likely to report any other mental or behavioural problem.<sup>364</sup>

Queensland females are also much more likely than males to experience high or very high levels of psychological distress including nervousness, agitation, psychological fatigue and depression. In 2011–12, Queensland females aged 18 years and older were almost twice as likely to report high or very high levels of psychological distress in the past four weeks as Queensland males (13.6 per cent compared with 7.7 per cent).<sup>365</sup>

Of all age groups for both women and men, young women aged 18–29 years most commonly experienced high or very high psychological distress at 17.1 per cent, compared with 10.7 per cent of men in that age group.<sup>366</sup> More than two-thirds (67.4 per cent) of Queensland Indigenous women aged 15 years and older reported a low-to-moderate level of psychological distress, and 31.9 per cent reported high to very high levels in 2008.<sup>367</sup>

Nationally, women appear slightly more likely than men to seek medical assistance for mental health problems and to take medication to treat their disorder. In 2011–12, of all Australians who had experienced a mental and behavioural problem in the 12 months previously, 70.4 per cent of females consulted a GP, compared with 64.7 per cent of males.<sup>368</sup> Further, 61.5 per cent of females, compared with 54.7 per cent of males, took at least one medication in the last two weeks to treat their disorder.<sup>369</sup>

## Health risk factors

Smoking, drinking, using illicit drugs and being overweight are risk factors to good health and wellbeing, causing a range of serious health conditions which reduce quality of life and contribute to the occurrence of serious chronic diseases.

### Smoking

Tobacco smoking is one of the leading causes of preventable deaths and diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and vascular disease, and health inequality in Queensland.<sup>370</sup> On average, Queensland females are one year older than males when they have their first full cigarette at 16.4 years and 15.3 years respectively in 2010.<sup>371</sup>

Fewer Queensland females than males were daily smokers. In 2014, one in eight (11.8 per cent) females aged 18 years and older reported daily smoking, compared with one in six (16.2 per cent) males.<sup>372</sup> Daily smoking was highest in the age range of 25-34 years for both females (16.7 per cent) and males (28.0 per cent).<sup>373</sup>

Queensland females have a shorter duration of daily smoking, compared with Queensland males. Females become daily smokers slightly later than males (18.3 years compared with 17.6 years in 2010) and stop smoking on a daily basis two years earlier than males (32.9 years compared with 35.0 years in 2010).<sup>374</sup>

Daily smoking rates in Queensland continue to decline: a 26 per cent decrease, or about three per cent per year between 2004 and 2014, with the rate of decline per year similar for females and males.<sup>375</sup> The greatest decline has been achieved in younger male age groups aged 18–44 years (3.8 per cent per year between 2002 and 2013).<sup>376</sup>

Queensland female teenagers aged 14–19 years were more likely to smoke (8.4 per cent) than males of that same age (6.3 per cent<sup>377</sup>).<sup>378</sup> Pregnant women in Queensland also show high smoking rates compared with other population groups, with about one in eight (or 13 per cent) pregnant women smoked throughout pregnancy.<sup>379</sup>

Smoking during pregnancy was more prevalent in teenagers and among socioeconomically disadvantaged women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Queensland teenagers were 2.5 times more likely to smoke at some time during their pregnancy than women aged 20 years and older (35 per cent and 14 per cent respectively in 2012), and women from disadvantaged areas were six times more likely to smoke during pregnancy than those in advantaged areas (26 per cent compared with 4 per cent in 2011).<sup>380</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were 3.7 times more likely to smoke at some time during pregnancy than non-Indigenous women (48 per cent compared with 13 per cent in 2012).<sup>381</sup>

## Alcohol consumption

Alcohol consumption is lower in Queensland females than males. Queensland males had their first full serve of alcohol 1.3 years earlier than females (16.3 years compared with 17.6 years) and were twice as likely to drink every day.<sup>382</sup>

In all age groups, Queensland females are less likely than males to drink at levels which put them at risk of harm. In 2014 in Queensland, eight per cent of females, compared with 26.5 per cent of males, aged 18 years and over drank alcohol at the riskiest levels.<sup>k 383</sup> Also, 9.7 per cent of females, compared with 14.4 per cent of males, drank more than four drinks on a single occasion at least monthly.<sup>384</sup>

Younger people in Queensland are more likely to consume alcohol at levels that put them at risk of harm. In 2014 in Queensland, compared with females aged 65–74 years, females aged 25–34 years were 3.2 times more likely to drink at the riskiest levels and females aged 18–24 years were 17 times more likely to drink at single-occasion risky levels at least monthly.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>k</sup> Lifetime and at least monthly single occasion risk combined. Lifetime risk is consuming two or more standard drinks per day (greater than 14 per week) at risk of harm/developing health problems over a lifetime. Single occasion risk is consuming more than four standard drinks on a single occasion at risk of an alcohol-related injury.



However, in recent years the pattern of risky alcohol consumptions has been diminishing for young Queenslanders. Drinking at the level of combined lifetime and single occasion risk has been decreased about 32 per cent (or 12 per cent per year) over four years (2010–2013) for both females and males aged 18–29 years, whereas there was no change for those aged 30–64 years.<sup>386</sup>

## Illicit drug use

The National Drug Strategy Household Survey found that in 2013 about one in six Queenslanders aged 14 years and older (15.5 per cent) reported having used any illicit drug in the past 12 months, with Queensland females reporting less use of illicit drugs than males at 11.6 per cent compared with 19.6 per cent.<sup>387</sup> Illicit drug use includes the use of illegal drugs (such as cannabis and ecstasy) and of pharmaceutical drugs (such as pain killers and tranquillisers) for non-medical purposes, and the misuse of other substances (such as inhalants including petrol, glue and paint).<sup>388</sup>

## Overweight and obesity

Queensland females are more likely than males to be a healthy weight. In 2014, fewer than half of Queensland females aged 18 years and older (44.2 per cent) reported they were in the healthy weight range, compared with 35.0 per cent of males.<sup>389, 390</sup> About two-thirds (65.5 per cent) of females aged 18–24 years were in the healthy weight range, while about 50 per cent of females aged 25–44 years were in this range.<sup>391</sup> The lowest rate was reported by women in the 65–74 years age group (32.2 per cent) and men in the 45–54 years age group (22.7 per cent).<sup>392</sup> Women are less likely than men to be overweight or obese at (52.4 per cent), compared with almost two-thirds (63.3 per cent) of males.<sup>393</sup>

However, rates of overweight and obesity are steadily increasing in Queensland adults — an increase of 13 per cent (1.6 per cent per year) in the prevalence of self-reported adult overweight and obesity between 2004 and 2013.<sup>394</sup> The increase was similar for both females and males and did not differ by socioeconomic status or geographic remoteness.

Obesity rates were about 80 per cent higher in disadvantaged areas than advantaged areas, and 48 per cent higher in very remote areas than major cities in 2014 in Queensland<sup>395</sup> with a greater weight difference reported among females than males. Females in disadvantaged areas were, on average, 5.5 kg heavier than females in advantaged areas, and females in very remote areas were, on average, 6.3 kg heavier than females in major cities in 2011–12 in Queensland.<sup>396</sup> The average weight difference for males was 1.8 kg between disadvantaged and advantaged areas and 3.8 kg between very remote areas and major cities.<sup>397</sup>

About two-thirds (65.7 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were measured as overweight or obese in 2012–13.<sup>398</sup> Compared to non-Indigenous Queenslanders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were 12 per cent more likely to be overweight or obese; 39 per cent more likely to be obese and 25 per cent less likely to be healthy weight.<sup>399</sup>

## Medical services

In 2010 in Queensland, one in five (20.4 per cent) adults reported they had delayed getting a medical consultation and 15.6 per cent had delayed purchasing prescribed medication at some time in their lives because they could not afford it.<sup>400</sup>

Queensland women were more likely than men to delay obtaining medical services (22.5 per cent compared with 18.3 per cent) and medications (19.2 per cent compared with 11.9 per cent) due to cost.<sup>401, 402</sup> Especially, young Queensland females aged 18–24 years were approximately twice as likely as men in the same age group to delay obtaining medical services (35.3 per cent compared with 18.5 per cent) and medications (30.8 per cent compared with 13.2 per cent) because they could not afford the cost.<sup>403, 404, 405</sup>

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females are more likely to smoke than Queensland females in general. More than one-third (39.4 per cent) of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women reported to be daily smokers in 2012–13<sup>406</sup>, compared with 14.4 per cent of all Queensland females in 2013<sup>407</sup>.

Australia-wide, the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 years and over and non-Indigenous people aged 15 years and over who consume alcohol at lifetime risky levels were similar for both females (9.8 per cent and 9.7 per cent respectively) and males (27.4 per cent and 27.7 per cent respectively).<sup>408, 409</sup>

There was little difference across age groups, apart from women aged 55 years and over. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in this age group were significantly less likely to consume alcohol at lifetime risky levels, compared with non-Indigenous women of the same age (6.8 per cent compared with 10.2 per cent).<sup>410</sup>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females aged 15 years and over were slightly more likely than non-Indigenous females to have consumed more than four standard drinks on any one occasion (39.8 per cent compared with 32.1 per cent).<sup>411</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women aged 35 years and over were significantly more likely than non-Indigenous women of the same age to have exceeded the threshold for single occasion risk, with those aged 35–44 years showing the greatest difference (52.3 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women compared with 35.8 per cent of non-Indigenous women).<sup>412</sup>

About two-thirds (65.7 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were measured as overweight or obese in 2012–13.<sup>413</sup> Compared to non-Indigenous Queenslanders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were 12 per cent more likely to be overweight or obese; 39 per cent more likely to be obese and 25 per cent less likely to be healthy weight.<sup>414</sup>

### Did you know?

*More Queensland women (16.1 per cent) than men (12.6 per cent) experienced mental and behavioural conditions such as dementia, depression, substance abuse and anxiety disorders in 2011–12.*

*Queensland females are less likely to smoke daily than males, with the highest rate among those aged 25–34 years both for females (16.7 per cent) and males (28.0 per cent) in 2014.*

*Fewer than half (44.2 per cent) of Queensland females aged 18 years and over were in the healthy weight range, while about one-third of males were in this range in 2014.*

## Physical activity and healthy lifestyle

### Sufficient physical activity for health benefit

Regular physical activity is important to people's health and wellbeing and helps reduce risk of disease such as cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, certain forms of cancer and depression and some injuries.<sup>415</sup> Physical activity and healthy lifestyle are also important to achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight which is directly related to the reduced risk of chronic health conditions, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease and musculoskeletal conditions.<sup>416</sup>

Sufficient physical activity for adults involves being active for 30 minutes or more on most days and activity can be accumulated over multiple sessions of 10–15 minutes duration.<sup>417</sup> In 2014, the majority (59.5 per cent) of Queenslanders aged 18–75 years reported that they were engaged in sufficient physical activity for health benefit, with little difference between females and males (57.8 per cent and 61.3 per cent respectively).<sup>418</sup>

Younger females were more likely to achieve sufficient physical activity with females aged 18–24 years most commonly undertaking sufficient physical activity at 69.0 per cent.<sup>419</sup> Physical activity markedly decreases with age and fewer than half (47.8 per cent) of women aged 65–74 years said they were sufficiently physically active.<sup>420</sup> This pattern was similar with males with 77.2 per cent in the 18–24 years age group undertaking sufficient physical activity, compared with 51.7 per cent in the 65–75 years age group.<sup>421</sup>

Queenslanders are noticeably more likely to undertake sufficient physical activity for health benefit. Between 2004 and 2013, the proportion of people aged 18–75 years in Queensland achieving the recommended physical activity increased by 38.6 per cent, and the increase was reported by both females and males, most age groups and most socioeconomic and geographic regions.<sup>422</sup>

However, during this period, the prevalence of sufficient physical activity was on average 11.0 per cent lower for females than for males.<sup>423</sup> Also, females from the most advantaged areas were much more likely (on average 18.1 per cent higher) to do enough physical activity for health benefit than those females from the most disadvantaged areas.<sup>424</sup>

### Participation in sport and physical recreation activity

Participation in sport and physical recreation activity provides many benefits, including simple enjoyment, improved health and the opportunity for social interaction and cohesion.<sup>425</sup> In 2013–14, about one in two (54.5 per cent) Queensland females aged 15 years and over participated in sport and physical recreation activity as a player, competitor or person who took part in some other physically active role at least once in the previous 12 months.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Adults recommends that adults aged 18–64 years irrespective of cultural background, gender or ability be active on most, preferably all, days every week; accumulate 150 to 300 minutes (2 ½ to 5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity or 75 to 150 minutes (1 ¼ to 2 ½ hours) of vigorous intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous activities, each week and do muscle strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.

The participation rate was similar for males (52.9 per cent).<sup>427</sup> Queensland women aged 15–24 years were considerably more active than men of the same age, with 72.0 per cent of women (compared with 59.0 per cent of men) in the 15–17 years group and 73.4 per cent of women (compared with 56.5 per cent of men) in the 18–24 years group participating in sport or physical activity.<sup>428</sup> However, men were slightly more active than women aged 65 years and over (41.3 per cent compared with 37.1 per cent).<sup>429</sup>

Queensland women are increasing their participation in sport and physical recreation. Their overall participation saw a 37.9 per cent increase between 1995–96 and 2005–06 before declining in 2009–10.<sup>430</sup> In comparison, men had a similar trend but showed a more moderate increase of 33.1 per cent during the same period.

In 2011–12, of Queensland females aged 15 years and older, slightly less than a half (48.4 per cent) participated in a non-organised sport and recreation activity, while 22.8 per cent did so in an organised setting through recreation clubs, sporting or non-sporting associations, through gymnasiums, or through a wide variety of other sporting and non-sporting arrangements.<sup>431</sup> The most popular activity for Queensland women was walking (28.6 per cent), followed by fitness or gym (18.0 per cent) (see Table 7.2).<sup>432</sup>

**Table 7.2**  
**Top 10 sport and physical recreation activities for Queenslanders, 2011–12<sup>(a)</sup>**

| Activity                     | Females                | Males |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------|
|                              | Participation rate (%) |       |
| Walking for exercise         | 28.6                   | 16.3  |
| Fitness/gym                  | 18.0                   | 15.3  |
| Swimming/diving              | 7.5                    | 5.8   |
| Jogging/running              | 6.6                    | 6.6   |
| Cycling/BMXing               | 5.7                    | 9.3   |
| Tennis (indoor and outdoor)  | 3.0                    | 3.5   |
| Netball (indoor and outdoor) | 2.9                    | 0.7   |
| Bush walking                 | 1.9                    | 2.6   |
| Golf                         | 1.6                    | 7.2   |
| Soccer (outdoor)             | 0.7                    | 4.3   |

<sup>(a)</sup> The top 10 ranked activities for Queensland in terms of total population in 2011–12.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *Participation in sports and physical recreation, Australia 2011–12*, 'Participation in sport and physical recreation data cubes, Table 10 Participants, top 10 activities — by states and territories and sex', data cube: Excel spreadsheet, cat. no. 4177.0, viewed 26 August 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4177.02011-12?OpenDocument>

### Did you know?

*About six in 10 Queensland females aged 18–75 years reported that they were engaged in sufficient physical activity for health benefit in 2014.*

*The most popular sport and physical recreation activity for Queensland women was walking, followed by fitness or gym in 2011–12.*

- <sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep 2014*, cat. no. 3101.0, 'Table 8. Estimated resident population and percentage-States and Territories', viewed 14 April 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Sep%202014?OpenDocument>>
- <sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep 2014*, cat. no. 3101.0, viewed 14 April 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/3101.0Main%20Features1Sep%202014?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3101.0&issue=Sep%202014&num=&view=>>>
- <sup>3</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 'Table 4. Estimated resident population, by sex- -States and Territories', viewed 14 April 2015, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Sep%202014?OpenDocument>>
- <sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *2011 Census of Population and Housing, 'Queensland (State/Territory), Indigenous Profile, Table I02 Indigenous status by sex'*, viewed 14 April 2015, <[http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230)>
- <sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *2011 Census of Population and Housing, 'Queensland (Statistical Areas Level 4), Basic Community Profile, Table B01a Selected person characteristics by sex'*, viewed 14 April 2015, <[http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/3?opendocument&navpos=230)>
- <sup>7</sup> Based on the figures in the Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)
- <sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014, *Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2014*, cat. no. 3105.0.65.001, Life expectancy, 'Table 6.1 Life expectancy at birth by sex, states and territories, 1881 onwards', viewed 14 April 2014, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3105.0.65.0012014?OpenDocument>>
- <sup>9</sup> *ibid.*
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- <sup>35</sup> *ibid.*
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- <sup>37</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> Since 2007, Queensland's total fertility rates based on the year of birth registration have been higher than those based on year of the birth occurrence, as the result of changes in the timeliness of registration of births in Queensland. Care should be taken when interpreting changes in Queensland births between 2005 and 2010, to prevent a possible overestimation of fertility rates due to registration of births that occurred in previous years. For example, the total fertility rate for Queensland women in 2007 was 2.08 babies per woman, the highest rate recorded in Queensland since 1977. However, the occurrence rate of the birth in the same year was 1.98, meaning that some of the births registered in 2007 occurred in 2006 or earlier years.
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- <sup>109</sup> Note that the data include both open and closed coronial matters and are be subject to change, pending the outcomes of any further investigations.
- <sup>110</sup> Note that the number of deaths is based on the number of persons who have died, not the number of incidents. More than one person may have been killed at an incident, hence some offenders have been counted more than once. Similarly, more than one offender may be responsible for a death.
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