

# Women in NSW 2014

Overview of the annual report on women's progress towards equality in NSW

'The *Women in NSW* report series provides an excellent tool to chart our progress towards gender equality. We now have three years of comprehensive data enabling us to monitor trends and identify trouble spots as they emerge.'

Pru Goward MP  
Minister for Women

## About the report

*Women in NSW 2014* continues the NSW Government's commitment to track gender equity across key aspects of women's lives. This is the third report in the annual report series.

The *Women in NSW* reports provide a widely accessible and regularly updated source of data on women's social and economic outcomes. Some 90 indicators track women's status across the areas of health and wellbeing, education, work, leadership and safety.

Drawing on administrative data sources and survey data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and elsewhere, the reports are designed to be used by government, the community, students and educators and the people of NSW.

The full report is available at [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au)

## A profile of NSW women

In 2013, there were an estimated 3.8 million women in NSW representing half of the total NSW population. This is an increase of some 250,000 women since the 2011 Census.

Most NSW women (64 percent) live in Greater Sydney with around one-third living in the remainder of the state.

Aboriginal women in NSW make up 2.5 percent of the female population and half of the total Aboriginal population. The age structure for Aboriginal women is very different to that of non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal girls (0–19 years) comprise approximately 23 percent of the Aboriginal female population, whereas girls comprise 12 percent of the non-Aboriginal female population.



Other facts about NSW women reported this year:

- women's median age in 2013 was 38.7 years, 1.8 years older than men's
- life expectancy for women, at 84 years, is around four years longer than for men
- a slightly higher proportion of women than men reported having a disability in 2012 (19 percent of women and 18 percent of men)
- women are more than twice as likely as men to be primary carers for people with disability or someone aged
- mothers continue to give birth at older ages, and there has been a decline in the fertility rate among teenagers over recent years; in 2012, 24 percent of all mothers who gave birth were 35 years of age and older and 3.2 percent were teenagers.

## Health and wellbeing

This year's report looks at areas of health and wellbeing that are particularly relevant to women and where women experience the use of health services differently to men.

Women continue to be impacted more than men by many of the health conditions we identified in last year's report:

- young women are 2.5 times more likely than young men to be hospitalised for intentional self-harm
- young women are 16 times more likely than young men to require hospitalisation as a result of Chlamydia, the sexually transmissible disease with the highest incidence in NSW
- women aged 65 years and over are 1.3 times more likely to be hospitalised for a fall-related injury than men of the same age.

Cardiovascular disease continues to rank first among the leading causes of death for women and men in NSW. As in the past, older women in 2012 were more likely than men to die from dementia and Alzheimer's disease. However, since 2010 diabetes has risen three places from the 11th ranked to the 8th ranked leading cause of death for NSW women.

Women are less likely than men to engage in unhealthy behaviours. Fewer women than men smoke (12 percent compared to 20 percent of men in 2013) and around half as many women

as men engage in risky drinking (17 percent compared to 36 percent of men in 2013).

The rates of normal vaginal births for women have decreased over the last two decades in NSW, and the rate of elective caesarean sections increased. This is a nationwide trend. Of the states and territories, NSW had the highest rate of vaginal births in 2011.

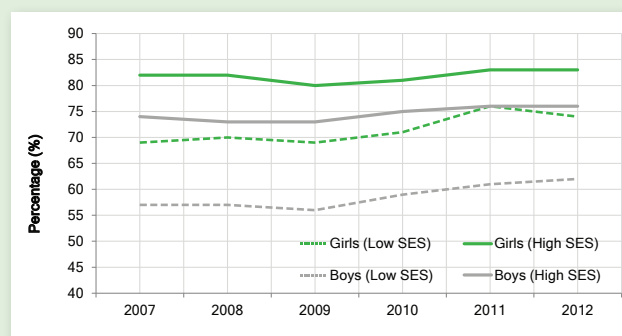
## Education and learning

NSW women and girls have made substantial progress in educational attainment and achievement in the last few decades. Some key highlights from this year's report include:

- 57.5 percent of NSW women in 2013 had qualifications at Certificate III and above, reflecting a gender gap that is now less than 2 percentage points in men's favour
- girls consistently outperform boys in high school completion rates with a 10 percentage point gap in girls' favour in 2012<sup>1</sup>
- women hold a greater share of university commencements in undergraduate (57 percent) and postgraduate study (59 percent).

The gap between girls' HSC completion rates in the highest and lowest socioeconomic groups has narrowed over the last 5 years from 12 to 9 percentage points. However, girls living in metropolitan areas are much more likely to complete their HSC than girls living in remote areas (78 percent compared to 57 percent).

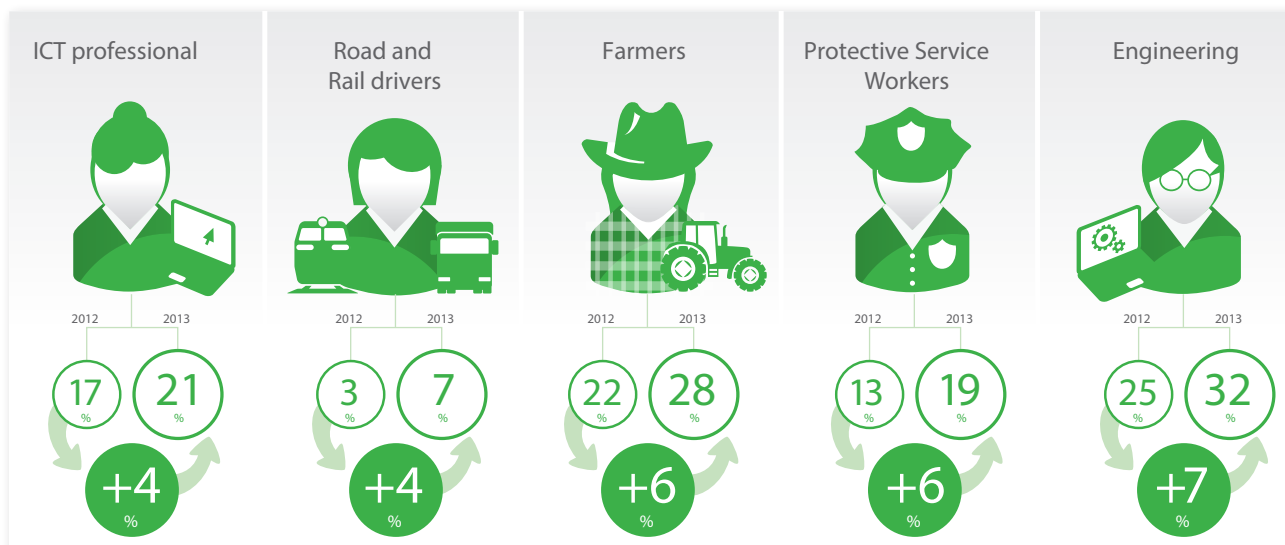
### Completion rates to year 12 by socioeconomic status, NSW, 2007–12



Data source: Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (2014) *Report on Government Services 2014*, Productivity Commission, [www.pc.gov.au](http://www.pc.gov.au)

<sup>1</sup> Note that 2011 completion rates shown in *Women in NSW 2013* indicated that boys' completion rates had surpassed those of girls. This was an error in source data reported by the Productivity Commission, which was later revised. The corrected data is in the figure in this overview.

## Areas of growth, women's share of selected non-traditional occupations



Data source: ABS *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly*. Cat no. 6291.0.55.003, SuperTable E08.

While the educational outcomes of girls and women are positive overall, girls continue to favour traditional subjects and avoid the science, engineering and mathematics-related areas that can lead to high paying careers.

Women made up just 12 percent of technical and trade apprentice and trainee commencements in the 12 months to September 2013, a fall from 17 percent 12 months earlier. The proportion of Higher School Certificate (HSC) completions that are in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects remains lower for girls (31 percent) than for boys (45 percent). The same gender divide is found at university level where women make up the majority of all university enrolments (although men are catching up) but only one-third of all women are enrolled in STEM subjects.

### Work

As in previous years, women and men have different patterns of engagement with the workforce. Notable gender comparisons include:

- more women than men engage in casual employment (26 percent compared to 21 percent) although this gap has narrowed slightly since last year
- women and men in NSW have similar unemployment rates (just under 6 percent in January 2014)

- women fare worse than men when it comes to underemployment and underutilisation, women's underutilisation rate in 2013 was 3.7 percentage points higher than men's
- women spend on average 13 hours more per week than men on unpaid household work
- among full-time workers men still earn 14 percent more each week than women.

Indicators in this section of the report were supplemented this year by a new indicator tracking long working hours.

This indicator reveals men are more likely than women to work long hours. In 2013, about 26 percent of women of child-rearing age who were working full-time reported working 45 hours or more per week compared to 37 percent of men in the same age group. Over the last decade long hours of work have declined for both men and women, although they have fallen more among men.

This year's report also reveals notable growth areas in women's participation in non-traditional industries and occupations. Women's presence in the mining industry increased significantly over the last year, and women grew their share in some non-traditional occupations such as farming, and information and communications technology.

The data in *Women in NSW 2014* highlights a number of changes for women both positive and negative and for many indicators shows limited movement since last year. We invite you to study the report and make up your own mind about where the remaining challenges for gender equality lie.

## Leadership

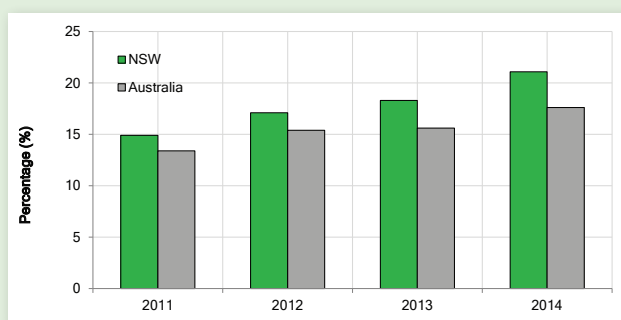
Tracking progress in women's leadership representation is an important goal of the *Women in NSW* reports.

This year we have seen slow progress in a number of areas, including in women's representation in the education and legal professions, and on private sector boards in the ASX 200, where women's share of directorships of NSW-based companies (21 percent) has grown by 6 percentage points since 2011.

Women's representation in many areas remains largely unchanged. In NSW, women make up:

- 20 percent of members of the NSW Legislative Assembly
- 38 percent of NSW Government board and committee members
- 33 percent of judges and magistrates
- 30 percent of senior academics in NSW universities
- 10 percent of Queen's Counsel or Senior Counsel
- 58 percent of primary school principals and of TAFE Institute directors and managers
- 40 percent of secondary school principals.

### Female board directorships in ASX 200 companies, NSW and Australia, 2011–14



Data source: NSW Institute of Company Directors for NSW data, unpublished; ABS (2014) *Gender Indicators Australia, February 2014*. Cat no. 4125.0 for national data.

## Safety

Women continue to be more likely than men to experience violence in family and community settings, although men are more likely to be victims of homicide or physical assault.

In NSW, in the twelve months to March 2014:

- women were the victim in more than two-thirds of domestic violence-related (DV-related) assaults
- women were four times as likely as men to be sexually assaulted
- more than two-thirds of DV-related assaults were perpetrated by males only, and where the victim was a female 78 percent of offenders were male only
- Aboriginal women were six times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be victims of DV-related assaults
- women were victims in 30 percent of cases of non-DV related assault
- 70 percent of apprehended domestic violence orders were granted to protect women.

This year we report a recent increase in DV-related assault rates for men and women, rising by 2 percent overall over the two years to March 2014.

When it comes to recorded incidents of non-DV related assault, a downwards trend is evident for women and men; the number of female and male victims has fallen by an average of 3 percent per annum since 2005.

There has been a decline in the number and proportion of sex-discrimination complaints lodged by NSW women with both the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and the Australian Human Rights Commission since the data we reported last year.

[www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au)