

Conclusion



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Winner of the 2014 University of Western Sydney Women of the West Award, finalist in the 2013 NSW Premier's Woman of the Year Award.

Photographer: Jamie North

Conclusion

Women in NSW 2014, the third release in this report series, provides critical information to monitor the status of women in NSW. This year's report reveals a number of changes for women, both positive and negative. It also shows that for many indicators there has been no change since last year.

The health and wellbeing chapter highlights a number of key issues relating to women's health. Although women are less likely than men to rate their health positively, women in NSW engage in healthy behaviours more often than men. Fewer women than men smoke, around half as many women as men engage in drinking which poses a lifetime risk to health, fewer women than men are overweight and obese, and women are more likely than men to eat fruit and vegetables. In 2014, three key issues have continued to impact on women's health more than men's – women are more likely than men to be hospitalised for intentional self-harm, chlamydia and fall-related injuries.

Women and girls still outnumber men and boys in key areas of educational attainment and participation, including in undergraduate and postgraduate study and year 12 completions. One of the most significant changes from last year's report has been in women's share of technical and trade apprenticeship and traineeship commencements, dropping 5 percentage points since 2012.

We also see a continuation of highly gendered labour market dynamics. Women remain under-represented in non-traditional trades; however, since last year's report there has been a significant increase in women working in the mining industry. A new 'long hours of work indicator' shows that men are more likely than women to undertake long working hours, although interestingly long hours of work has declined for both men and women over the past 10 years.

Women continue to be poorly represented in senior management positions; however, some significant gains have been made in a number of indicators. Women occupied 21 percent of directorships in NSW-based ASX 200 companies, an increase of 5 percentage points in three years. Since 2011, the proportion of women as secondary school principals has increased by 4 percentage points, and by 3 percentage points for women Senior Counsels in the legal profession.

In the final chapter on safety and justice, we continue to see a highly gendered criminal justice domain, with women being more likely than men to be victims of domestic violence, domestic homicides and sexual assaults. A recent increase in domestic violence-related assault is a concerning development.

In this year's report, we have once again reported how NSW women compare to women in Australia and have extended this analysis by providing information and data in each chapter conclusion comparing women in Australia to women in other OECD countries. Similar to other OECD countries, women in NSW and Australia earn less than men and have lower employment rates, but the gender gap in employment rates has been decreasing over time. Compared with other OECD countries, Australia performs strongly across a range of indicators. For example, tertiary education completion rates exceed the OECD average by 9 percentage points. However, for indicators such as year 12 completion rates and rates of overweight and obesity, Australia has some way to go before exceeding or achieving parity with the OECD average.

It is hoped that this third edition of the *Women in NSW* report series continues to inform policy and practice and generate discussion about gender equity and women's issues. This report has been developed based on feedback from a number of internal and external stakeholders as well as the women of NSW. The Department of Family and Community Services invites feedback and suggestions on how to make future publications of the *Women in NSW* report more useful and meaningful to improve services for women in NSW.

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