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Profile of Women’s Employment in NSW:   
Trends and Issues

Final Report

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# Executive Summary

This report presents a profile of women’s employment and their experience in the New South Wales (NSW) labour market. The report has been commissioned by the Office for Women’s Policy, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, to provide the most up to date available information on women’s labour force status in NSW.

The methodology employed in this report comprises a review of existing statistics on women’s working lives in NSW and a comprehensive literature review and analysis on women’s quality part-time work. The report brings together existing statistical collections in NSW and Australia to provide a statistical profile of women’s working lives in NSW. Analysis of the primary data was supplemented with a range of secondary sources that assisted in explaining differences between women and men, different groups of women and changes in the labour market status of women over time. A review of the academic literature on quality part-time work was also undertaken and incorporated into the report.

Chapter 1 reviews the status of women in the NSW labour market. The key findings are:

* NSW is the most populous state of Australia; there were 7,195,050 residents as at December 2009 (ABS 3101.0)
* nationally, NSW represents approximately 31% of Australia’s labour force
* based upon the most recent data, in NSW there are 3,625,853 females and 3,563,652 males
* 1,671,423 females and 2, 029,971 males are in the NSW labour force
* the NSW female labour force represents approximately 13% of the national labour force
* the female participation rate is 55.7% in 2010 having risen steadily from 44% in 1980
* the unemployment rate for women in NSW is 5.1%, and for men, 5.4%
* the female underemployment rate was 10% compared to 5.6% for males (underemployment rates have been consistently 3% or more higher than for males)
* the underutilisation rate for women is 15.2%, for men it is 10.8%

Chapter 2 considers the occupations and industries where women in NSW work. The key findings are:

* 15% of women are employed in the NSW public sector, making the NSW public sector the largest employer of women in NSW
* 60.9% of NSW public sector employees are women
* industries with a high proportion of female employees include health care and social assistance (79% female), education and training (69%), accommodation and food services (58%) and retail trade (54%). Over half of all women in NSW are employed in these four industries
* occupations with high proportions of women in NSW include: sales workers (12% of all employed women), clerical and administrative workers (24%), community and personal service workers (13%) and professionals (28%)
* part-time working arrangements are most common for women employed as sales workers (72%), labourers (63%), and community/personal service workers (59.5%)
* part-time arrangements are less common amongst professional (30.8%) and managerial (18.3%) occupations, particularly in areas such as engineering (18.5%) and information and communications technology (6.7%)
* across almost all occupations, the percentage of women working part-time is greater than the percentage of men working part-time in the same occupation
* of all women employed in NSW in 2008, 11.9% were self-employed, compared to 19.5% of men
* of those self-employed, 33.6% were women

Chapter 3 considers the work patterns and working time arrangements of women in NSW.

The key findings are:

* 45% of women, compared to 17% of men, are employed part-time
* women 15-19 years (66.9%), 35-44 years (46.7%) and women 65 years and older (63%) have the highest proportions of part-time employment among women
* 40% of women working in NSW felt they had no control over the number of hours worked or when they were worked
* women in dual-income households were more likely to have a preference for fewer hours than female breadwinner households
* just under a half (44%) of all women's employment and just over half (55%) of their part-time employment are in female dominated industries – retail trade, accommodation and food services, administrative and support services, and health care/social assistance
* full-time female workers tend to work fewer weekly hours than their male counterparts in NSW, working 39.1 hours compared to 42.7 (part-time hours are more comparable, with women working an average 17.4 hours compared to 16.5 for men)
* 56% of part-time women workers in NSW agreed that they had control over the number of hours they worked
* 25% of NSW female workers in dual earner households said that they would prefer to work less hours, more so than single working women (15%) – this may be partly explained by income stress experienced by single income households

The key patterns of women’s employment in NSW are:

* 70.4% of women in the NSW workforce are employed on a permanent basis compared to 79.8% of men (a similar pattern is evident at the national level)
* 29.6% of employed women in the NSW workforce are employed casually compared to 19.3% of men, and of these, four in five are part-time casuals (compared to one in two men)
* less than a quarter of women in casual employment in 2008 and/or 2009 moved into permanent employment by 2009 (once permanently employed, they were likely to remain in permanent employment)
* the extensive casualisation of women's part-time employment results in many women working in poor quality jobs lacking in basic employment rights

Chapter 4 reviews how much women in NSW earn and how their pay is set. The key results for women’s pay are:

* the average weekly ordinary full-time earnings of women in NSW is $1,145.70, compared to $1,354.70 for men in NSW (this translates into an annual pay rate of $59,576.40 for women and $70,444.40 for men)
* regardless of the method of calculation, on average, women in NSW are paid less than men – the same is true at the national level
* male average weekly ordinary full-time earnings in NSW continue to be around 18% higher than average weekly ordinary full-time earnings for females
* using average weekly ordinary full-time earnings as the measure, the gender pay gap has narrowed slightly between 1995 and 2010, from men earning 22% more in 1995 to 18% more in 2010 (the gender pay gap was as high as 23% in 2000 and as low as 15% in 2004)
* excluding managerial employees, and on an hourly basis, the average pay gap in NSW is currently around 10.6%
* nationally, the gender pay gap increases over a lifetime, peaking at 25% for workers between the ages of 50-54 (for full-time employees); for junior employees (15-19 years), the gender pay gap is less than 5%
* the gender pay gap is also evident in the work that children perform
* the main methods of settings women’s pay are registered collective agreements (42.6%) and unregistered individual agreements (i.e. common law contracts) (32.2%)– approximately 19.9% of women’s pay is set by Award
* women in NSW are over-represented in low paying industries such as retail trade and accommodation/food services; there is also a more distinct gender pay gap in high paying industries such as financial services, professional services, and health care
* women whose wages are award reliant are likely to earn less than those whose wages are determined via collective or individual agreements (critically, women in part-time or casual employment are more likely to be award reliant. Related to this, women in the accommodation/food services, retail trade and administrative services are likely to be award reliant)

Chapter 5 considers the issue of access to paid leave. The key results relating to leave entitlements are:

* across Australia, 62.3% of female employees have access to paid leave entitlements (defined as having employer provided and paid sick leave, and/or holiday leave), compared to 60.6% of male employees)
* 24.8% of female employees do not have access to paid leave entitlements (compared to 15.7% of males)[[1]](#footnote-1)
* given that approximately 30% of women in NSW are employed casually, almost a third of women do not have access to paid leave entitlements
* for female employees in Australia, the occupation groups with the highest percentage of paid leave entitlements are managers (91.7%), professionals (87.8%) and clerical and administrative workers (82.6%)
* Australian women in the accommodation/food industry, or working as labourers, sales workers or community/personal services workers are less likely to receive paid leave entitlements
* Australia wide, 49% of women receive paid parental leave entitlements. (compared to 42% of men)
* nationally, women working full-time have much greater access to paid parental leave than part-time women employees
* access to parental leave entitlements is greater for high skilled workers in managerial (48%) and professional roles (58%) (in contrast, around 15% of lower skilled labourers and sales workers have access to these entitlements)
* paid parental leave entitlements are far more extensively available in the public sector than the private sector

Chapter 6 looks at how women in NSW balance paid employment with their child caring and other responsibilities.

The findings relating to women balancing work and care responsibilities are:

* 31% of women in NSW provided unpaid child care in 2006, compared to 23% of men
* 74% of women in NSW reported having spent time on unpaid domestic work, in contrast to 63% of men
* as well as more women undertaking care, more women are primary carers and commit more hours to care responsibilities than men
* women in NSW are more likely than men to provide care to older people, people with disabilities and children who aren’t their own
* women who provided care to a person with a disability, long-term health condition and an older person were more than twice as likely as men to take the role of primary carer for that individual
* households in NSW with children under the age of 15 are likely to have a male full-time earner and a female part-time earner
* in couples with children under 15, 13.8% of working women work part-time, compared to 2.2% of men, and 9.3% of women work full-time compared to 26% of men
* women and men in NSW most commonly used paid leave and flexible working hours to care for another person (the other most common work arrangements used by women are part-time work, casual work, or unpaid leave; men are most likely to use rostered days off)
* 31% of Australian women who are willing to work but not actively looking (hidden unemployment) cite care responsibilities as their main reason for not looking for work
* 21% of children under the age of 12 years in NSW attended formal child care, 28% of children were looked after by extended family or other informal care arrangements and 58% of children had no usual child care arrangements. No usual child care arrangements means they did not use any formal (such as preschool or long day care) or informal care arrangements (such as care by extended family)

Chapter 7 reviews female retirement incomes, including women’s superannuation arrangements, within the context of the national policy environment. The key results relating to the adequacy of women’s retirement income are:

* women in NSW continue to have lower levels of superannuation coverage than men, with 63% coverage of women and 73% of men
* the median employer contribution per year for women in Australia was $2,598, compared to $3,607 for men (data unavailable for NSW) (women are over-represented in lower income groups with the consequence that the average employer contribution for women remains below that for men)
* for those still in work, women had an average superannuation balance of $52,272 with a median value of $18,489 (by contrast, men’s balances averaged $87,589 with a median value of $31,252)
* superannuation coverage decreases with age – 41% of women aged over 55 were covered by superannuation in 2007 compared to 60% of men; 84% of women aged between 24 and 54 years had super coverage, compared to approximately 90% of men
* for those aged 60-64, the average gap between the superannuation balances of men and women was $58,500 or 30% (Rothman and Tellis, 2008)
* women’s relatively low lifetime earnings contribute to continued gender gaps in retirement incomes and time out of the workforce in the early working years, due to child care, has a compounding effect (Jefferson, 2009); publicly-administered pension schemes that are independent of employment, tend to deliver more favourable outcomes to women
* those under 18 or paid less than $450 per month do not attract compulsory employer superannuation contributions

Chapter 8 examines trade union membership among female employees in NSW. The key results with respect to trade union membership are:

* union membership has fallen from 41% to 21% in NSW in the last 20 years (the fall has been less pronounced amongst women, falling from 35% to 21%)
* union membership among female employees in NSW has decreased by 14%; from 35% in 1990 to 21% in 2009
* union density is highest for women in the Education and Training industry (41%), and for men, in the electricity, gas, water and waste services industry (46%)
* union density for men and women is considerably higher in the public sector (46%) than it is in the private sector (14%)
* women whose pay is set by collective agreement receive better pay outcomes than those who are award reliant (fostering workplace environments that support women to join a union is ultimately likely to bring about improvements in their pay and conditions)

Chapter 9 profiles the labour market experiences of several different groups of NSW women – women with different educational attainment levels, women located in regional or remote areas, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal women and women with disabilities. The key findings with respect to these segments of the female population are:

* the proportion of women in NSW with a non-school qualification has increased from 47.4% in 2001 to 56.8% in 2009, but remains lower than that for males (57.7%)
* the level of women in NSW with tertiary qualifications has increased four-fold between 1991 and 2009 (from 6.9% to 26.6%), surpassing the level of tertiary qualification for men in NSW (22.7%)
* regional differences are strongly apparent with respect to participation and unemployment rates (low female participation rates are evident in the Canterbury/Bankstown, Central Western Sydney, Richmond-Tweed and the Murray regions, and high female unemployment rates persist in the Canterbury/Bankstown and Gosford/Wyong regions
* women who speak Southwest and Central Asian languages at home are the least likely to be employed either full-time (18%) or part-time (13%) and the most likely not to be in the labour force (62%) as a percentage within their own language group
* women in NSW with a disability are less likely than men to enter the labour force, and those who do are far less likely to be working full-time
* Aboriginal women have a vastly different experience of the labour market than non-Aboriginal women (unemployment among Aboriginal women in NSW declined from 13.9% in 1992 to 8.8% in 2006
* according to the Census data, half of Aboriginal women in NSW remained outside the labour force in 2006
* Aboriginal women are less likely to be in the labour force, and more likely to be unemployed compared to non-Aboriginal women

# Glossary of terms

**Actively looking for work**   
Includes writing, telephoning or applying in person to an employer for work; answering an advertisement for a job; checking factory noticeboards or the touch screens at the Centrelink offices; being registered with Centrelink as a jobseeker; checking or registering with any other employment agency; advertising or tendering for work; and contacting friends or relatives.

**ANZSCO**

The Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 2006 (ANZSCO) is used to categorise the occupation of an employee’s job.

**ANZSIC**

The Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006 (ANZSIC) is used to categorise an employee’s industry of employment.

**Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)**

Average Weekly Earnings statistics represent average gross (before tax) earnings of employees and does not relate to average award rates nor to the earnings of the 'average person'. Estimates of average weekly earnings are derived by dividing estimates of weekly total earnings by estimates of number of employees.

**Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE)**

Average weekly ordinary time earnings refers to one week's earnings of employees for the reference period, attributable to award, standard or agreed hours of work. It is calculated before taxation and any other deductions (e.g. superannuation, board and lodging) have been made. Included are award, workplace and enterprise bargaining payments, and other agreed base rates of pay, over-award and over-agreement payments, penalty payments, shift and other allowances; commissions and retainers; bonuses and similar payments; payments under incentive or piecework; payments under profit sharing schemes normally paid each pay period; payment for leave taken during the reference period; all workers' compensation payments made through the payroll; and salary payments made to directors. Excluded are amounts salary sacrificed, non-cash components of salary packages, overtime payments, retrospective pay, pay in advance, leave loadings, severance, termination and redundancy payments, and other payments not related to the reference period.

**Disability**

ABS definition of disability is if a person has a disability if they report that they have a limitation,

restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. This includes:

* loss of sight (not corrected by glasses or contact lenses)
* loss of hearing where communication is restricted, or an aid to assist with, or substitute for, hearing is used
* speech difficulties
* shortness of breath or breathing difficulties causing restriction
* chronic or recurrent pain or discomfort causing restriction
* blackouts, fits, or loss of consciousness
* difficulty learning or understanding
* incomplete use of arms or fingers
* difficulty gripping or holding things
* incomplete use of feet or legs
* nervous or emotional condition causing restriction
* restriction in physical activities or in doing physical work
* disfigurement or deformity
* mental illness or condition requiring help or supervision
* long-term effects of head injury, stroke or other brain damage causing restriction
* receiving treatment or medication for any other long-term conditions or ailments and still restricted
* any other long-term conditions resulting in a restriction (ABS, Cat. No. 4430.0, 2003)

**Employed**   
All persons aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

* worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers); or
* worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers); or
* were employees who had a job but were not at work and were:
  + away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week; or
  + away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week; or
  + away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement; or
  + on strike or locked out; or
  + on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job; or
* were employers or own account workers, who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

**Employment rate**

The employment rate (or employment to population ratio) is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the civilian population aged 15 years and over within the same group.

**Employer**A business with one or more employees.

**Formal Care**  
Regulated care away from the child's home. The main types of formal care are before and/or after school care, long day care, family day care and occasional care (ABS Cat. No. 4402.0, 2008a).

**Full-time workers**  
Employed persons who usually worked 35 hours or more a week (in all jobs) and those who, although usually working less than 35 hours a week, worked 35 hours or more during the reference week (ABS, Cat. No. 6103.0, 2009a).

**Hidden Unemployment**

People who are not in the labour force but who want to work, are either actively looking for work but are not immediately available or are not actively looking for work but are available to start work within four weeks.

**Independent Contractor**

Independent contractors are people who operate their own business and who contract to perform services for others without having the legal status of an employee, i.e. people who are engaged by a client, rather than an employer. Independent contractors are engaged under a contract for services (a commercial contract), whereas employees are engaged under a contract of service (an employment contract). Independent contractors' employment may take a variety of forms, for example, they may have a direct relationship with a client or work through an intermediary. Independent contractors may have employees, however they spend most of their time directly engaged with clients or on client tasks, rather than managing their staff (ABS, Cat. No. 6359.0, 2010a).

**Informal Care**

Non-regulated care, arranged by a child's parent/guardian, either in the child's home or elsewhere. It comprises care by (step) brothers or sisters, care by grandparents, care by other relatives (including a non-resident parent) and care by other (unrelated) people such as friends, neighbours, nannies or babysitters. It may be paid or unpaid (ABS, Cat. No. 4402.0, 2008a).

**Labour force**

For any group, persons who were employed or unemployed, as defined.

**Labour force status**   
A classification of the civilian population aged 15 years and over into: employed, unemployed or not in the labour force, as defined. The definitions conform closely to the international standard definitions adopted by the International Conferences of Labour Statisticians.

**Labour force underutilisation rate**  
The sum of the number of persons unemployed and the number of persons in underemployment, expressed as a proportion of the labour force.

**Not in labour force**   
Persons who were not in the categories employed or unemployed as defined.Those not participating in the labour force (that is not employed or unemployed) are considered to be not in the labour force (NILF).

**Other Business Operators**

People who operate their own business, with or without employees, but who are not operating as independent contractors. Other business operators are distinguished from independent contractors in that they generally generate their income from managing their staff or from selling goods or services to the public, rather than providing a labour service directly to a client. Other business operators spend little time working on client tasks with most of their time spent on managing their employees and/or business (ABS, Cat. No. 6359.0, 2010a).

**Own Account Worker**

An own account worker is a person who operates his or her own unincorporated economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade and hires no employees (this category was formerly entitled self employed).

**Owner Manager of Incorporated Entities (OMIEs)**

People who operate their own unincorporated enterprise, that is, a business entity in which the owner and the business are legally inseparable, so that the owner is liable for any business debts that are incurred. Includes those engaged independently in a trade or profession. These people are classified as employers under 'status in employment' if their business has employees, or own account workers if they do not.

**Participation rate**For any group, the labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over in the same group.

**Part-time workers**  
Employed persons who usually worked less than 35 hours a week (in all jobs) and either did so during the reference week, or were not at work during the reference week (ABS, Cat. No. 6103.0, 2009a).

**Pay setting method**This refers to how the main part of an employees’ pay was set. The ABS reports on three main methods of pay setting for employees:

* Award or pay scale only **–** employees who had their rate of pay specified in an award or pay scale and were not paid more than rate of pay
* Collective agreement – employees who had the main part of their pay set by a registered or unregistered collective agreement or an enterprise award
* Individual arrangement – employees who had the main part of their pay set by an individual contract, registered individual agreement (e.g. Australian Workplace Agreement), common law contract, or an agreement to receive over-award payments. Working proprietors of incorporated businesses are included within the individual arrangement category

**Underemployment rate**  
The number of underemployed workers expressed as a percentage of the labour force.  
  
**Underemployed workers**  
Employed persons aged 15 years and over who want, and are available for, more hours of work than they currently have. They comprise:

* persons employed part-time who want to work more hours and are available to start work with more hours, either in the reference week or in the four weeks subsequent to the survey; or
* persons employed full-time who worked part-time hours in the reference week for economic reasons, such as being stood down or insufficient work being available (it is assumed that these people wanted to work full-time in the reference week and would have been available to do so)

**Unemployed**  
Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, and:

* + had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and were available for work in the reference week; or
  + were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.

# Introduction

This report presents a profile of women’s employment and their experience in the NSW labour market. It has been developed as a resource for policy makers, community members and organisations to understand the varied needs and experiences of women in relation to their workforce participation, including for different groups of women.

The report was commissioned by the Office for Women’s Policy, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, to provide the most up to date available information on women’s labour force status in NSW.

Women’s increasing participation in employment is one of the most powerful sources of social and economic change in Australian society. Women’s working lives are an important and ongoing policy issue for all levels of government, which affects the lives of the entire NSW community. The quality of working lives for women and men is especially salient given recent events where economic crisis had a fundamental impact on employment outcomes globally. Into the future, major economic social and demographic changes, including labour market fragmentation, changing occupational profiles and an ageing population, are likely to continue to transform the nature of work. These changes may have a disproportionate effect on women, who are currently over-represented in the occupations that are growing and predicted to grow most rapidly, and who have historically and continue to undertake the majority of care in society. It is therefore timely to take stock of women’s working lives.

Despite the importance of issues relating to women’s working lives, there is a lack of up to date and readily accessible information documenting how women in NSW are faring across a range of issues affecting women’s working lives. This report aims to fill this gap in the data.

## Objectives

The key objectives of the report are therefore to:

* provide up to date statistical information and analysis of women’s labour market position, experience and outcomes in NSW, including an understanding of how these have changed over time
* analyse key issues regarding working lives for different groups of women, such as Aboriginal women, migrant women, and women living in rural and regional NSW
* provide information and analysis that can contribute to the development of policy advice and options to address women’s employment and workplace needs in NSW
* identify policy implications about how the key issues for women identified in the research could be addressed, particularly at a State level
* provide a focus on part-time work to contribute to the NSW Office for Women’s Policy’s work on quality part-time work

## Key questions

The intention of the report is to both inform and to be used as a resource. The report has therefore been designed to both answer key questions about women’s labour force participation, and also profile key facts to make these questions accessible to a broad audience. These key questions are:

* What is women’s labour force status in NSW?
* In what occupations and industries do women in NSW work?
* What are the work patterns and working time arrangements of women in NSW?
* How secure are women’s jobs in NSW?
* How much do women in NSW earn and how is their pay set?
* What are women’s paid leave entitlements in NSW and how many women access paid leave?
* How do women in NSW balance employment with care responsibilities?
* How do women in NSW fare in retirement?
* How involved are women in NSW in trade unions?
* What are the labour market experiences of different groups of women in NSW?

## Report structure

The report is organised to answer these key questions. The next section outlines the methodology used for the research, including the data sources that were drawn upon to prepare the profile. The profile is then divided into ten main chapters. Chapter One provides an overview of women’s employment in NSW. This includes trends on the level of female employment, unemployment and underemployment. Chapter Two outlines what type of occupations and industries NSW women are employed in as well as providing a snapshot of self-employment amongst the State’s women. Chapter Three examines working time arrangements and working time preferences. Particular attention is paid to quality part-time work. It also reviews job security including an analysis of the rate of casual and permanent jobs as well as the proportion of women with access to paid leave entitlements. Chapter Four analyses women’s current earnings and measures the gender pay gap. Chapters Five and Six profile the care arrangements for working women in NSW, including access to paid leave and other ways that women balance paid employment with their care responsibilities. Chapter Seven reviews female retirement incomes, including women’s superannuation arrangements, within the context of the national policy environment. Chapter Eight examines trade union membership among female employees in NSW. Chapter Nine, profiles the labour market experiences of several different groups of NSW women – women with different educational qualifications, women at different stages of the life-cycle, women located in regional or remote areas, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal women, and women with disabilities.

# Methodology and data sources

Women's labour force participation has increased significantly in recent years while men's has declined. Still, women's experience of work remains, overall, distinct from that of men’s in terms of how they engage with work, the constraints within which they do so, and the rewards they achieve. The methodology of this report focuses on outlining these differences, and some of the reasons for them, by

* comparing female and male labour market status;
* comparing how different groups of women fare in the labour market;
* providing comparisons between NSW and Australia; and
* highlighting significant changes in women’s working lives to inform future policy directions.

## Scope of the study

The methodology employed in this report involves two elements:

1. A review of existing statistics on women’s working lives in NSW.
2. A comprehensive literature review and analysis of women’s quality part-time work.

### Review of existing statistics on women’s working lives in NSW

The report brings together existing statistical collections in NSW and Australia to provide a statistical profile of women’s working lives in NSW. Review of the statistical or primary data involved four explicit types of analysis that assisted in the identification of policy implications:

1. *Identifying differences between women and men*: The labour market status of women was compared to that of men across a range of areas, including comparison of labour market participation, occupational profile, employment-based conditions, entitlements and use of leave arrangements and educational attainment
2. *Identifying differences between groups of women*: The statistical profiling highlighted differences in labour market participation, occupational profile, employment based conditions, entitlements and use of leave arrangements and educational attainment for women who belong to different demographic, cultural, and socio-economic groups, including women of different ages
3. *Identifying differences between NSW and Australia*: Wherever possible, comparing how women are faring in NSW relative to women Australia wide, using comparisons between NSW and national averages
4. *Identifying changes over time*: Changes in women’s labour market status were examined over time to identify prevailing trends (trend analysis was between 1980 to 2010)

The analysis involves time-series, longitudinal, and cross-sectional analysis of ABS and Australia at Work data sources to provide up to date statistical information and analysis of women’s labour market position in NSW and Australia. Table M.1– Project Scope – overviews the data presented in each chapter by theme. This is not an exhaustive list of all the analysis, as the analysis is also presented in the text.

***Table M.1: Project Scope***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chapter** | **Section** | **Analysis** |
| What is women’s labour force status in NSW? | How many women are employed and participating in the labour force? | Participation Rates, by gender, 1980-2010, NSW % |
| Participation Rates, by gender, States and Australia, 2010, % |
| Participation rates by gender, marital status and age, 2010, NSW, % |
| Female participation rates by age, States and Australia, 2010, % |
| Married female participation rates by age and States, 2010, % |
| Participation Rates, by gender and age, NSW 1980, 2000 and 2010, % |
| How many women are unemployed, underemployed or underutilised? | Unemployment Rates, by gender, States and Australia, 2010, % |
| Total labour underutilisation, by gender, NSW, 1978 to 2010, % |
| In what occupations and industries do women in NSW work? | What industries do women work in?  What occupations do women work in? | Employment status by industry and gender, NSW, male/female workforce, 2010, % |
| Occupational profile by gender, NSW, 2010, as proportion of all employment by gender |
| Female full-time and part-time status by detailed occupation, employees only, NSW, May 2010, % |
| How many women are self-employed? | Self-employment rates 2001-2008 |
| What are the work patterns and working time arrangements of women in NSW? | What are women’s part-time working patterns in NSW? | Part-time status, by gender, NSW and Australia, 1980- 2010, % |
| Do women’s employment patterns vary by age? | Female labour force status, NSW, by age group, June 2010, % |
| How many hours do women work? | Average weekly hours, by gender and employment status, NSW and Australia, 2010, hours |
| Working time preferences: are women satisfied with the hours they work | Working hour preferences by household employment status, female employees, NSW and Australia, 2009, % |
| How secure are women’s jobs in NSW? | How many women are in casual and permanent employment? | Casualisation, by gender, NSW and Australia, November 2009, % |
| How much do women in NSW earn and how is their pay set? | Do women earn as much as men? | Gender pay gap (AWOTE), NSW and Australia, 1995-2010 |
|  | Average weekly cash earnings by gender and sector, Australia, 2008, dollars |
| Gender pay gap by hourly ordinary time pay, NSW and Australia, August 2008, dollars |
| Gender pay gap, full-time employees by age group, weekly mean earnings Australia, 1990- 2008 |
| Gender pay gap by industry, non-managerial employees, hourly ordinary time pay rates, Australia |
| How is women’s pay set? | Method of pay setting, average weekly total cash earnings, non-managerial employees, NSW |
| Gender pay gap (non-managerial adults) by state/territory – hourly ordinary time rates of pay, |
| Employee self-reports on who negotiates their pay and conditions, NSW, 2009 |
| What are women’s paid leave entitlements in NSW and how many women access paid leave? | How many women have access to general leave entitlements? | Employee access to entitlements by gender, Australia, % of employed persons, November 2008- November 2009 |
| Employee access to entitlements by gender, occupation and employment status, Australia, % of employed persons to November 2009 |
| How many women have access to Parental Leave? | Parental leave entitlement, Australia, by industry and gender, 2009, % |
| Parental leave by occupation and gender, Australia, 2009, % |
| Access to parental leave by full-time and part-time hours and gender, Australia, 2002 and 2009, % |
| How do women in NSW balance employment with care responsibilities? | What is the profile of carers in NSW? | Care provision (recipient of care), NSW, 2005 |
| How is women’s employment affected by child care responsibilities? | Household structure and employment status, NSW, 2010, percentage of workforce by sex |
| How is women’s employment affected by care responsibilities for older people, people with long term illness and people with a disability? | Caring responsibilities for the elderly, sick and disabled, NSW, 2003 |
| Carer responsibilities for female workers, NSW and Australia, 2009, % |
| What work arrangements do women use to care? | Work arrangements used to care, NSW, 2005 |
| Type of care usually attended, NSW, 2008 |
| Type of care by usual weekly cost, NSW, 2008, % |
| How many women perform unpaid domestic work? | Unpaid domestic work, number of hours(a), NSW, 2006, % |
| How do women in NSW fare in retirement? | How much money will women have when they retire? | Distribution of those with employer provided super contributions, Australia, by total income and gender, 2005-06 |
| Median employer provided super contributions, Australia, by age and gender, 2005-2006 |
| Mean super balances, Australia, by age and gender, 2005-06 |
| Projection of average super assets, by gender and income decile, Australia, 2010-2011 and 2030-2031 |
| How involved are women in NSW in trade unions? | What are the trends in union membership in NSW? | Figure 9.1, Trade Union membership in main job by gender, NSW and Australia, 1990-2009, % |

Analysis of the primary data was supplemented with a range of secondary sources that assisted in explaining differences between women and men, different groups of women, and changes in the labour market status of women over time. For example, secondary sources provided useful information on the impact of the recession on women, supplementing the ABS data on gender pay equity.

Data from *Australia at Work* – the Workplace Research Centre’s longitudinal study of the working lives of Australian workers – was used to supplement the analysis around employment status, working hours, working time preferences, control over working hours, and workplace negotiation. Other relevant published reports and academic research were also used to inform the analysis undertaken in this report.

**Data sources**

Multiple data sources have been drawn upon to compile this profile. The selection process was primarily driven by the availability of data. Wherever possible, data for women in NSW have been reported on, but where this has not been available national data for women have been reported. Gender comparisons and comparisons of women in NSW to those at the national level have been included where relevant. The key data sources used are shown in Table M.2 – Main data sources used in report.

***Table M2. Main data sources used in report***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Data Source** | **Source** |
| Australia at Work | University of Sydney |
| Australian Census | ABS |
| Australian Labour Market Statistics (ABS) | ABS |
| Australian Work and Life Index | Uni. South Australia |
| Australian Social Trends (Child Care) | ABS |
| Average Weekly Earnings | ABS |
| Career Experience Survey | ABS |
| Census of Population and Housing | ABS |
| Childhood, Education and Care | ABS |
| Disability, Ageing and Carers survey | ABS |
| Education and Work | ABS |
| Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) | ABS |
| Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership | ABS |
| Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation | ABS |
| Forms of Employment | ABS |
| Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey | University of Melbourne |
| Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians | ABS |
| Labour Force Surveys Australia | ABS |
| Managing Care and Work Survey | ABS |
| National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey | ABS |

A fuller description of the data sources used in this report is included in Appendix 1, Data sources used.

## Literature review

A review of academic literature on quality part-time work was undertaken. This focus was chosen to inform the ongoing work of the NSW Government and the Office for Women’s Policy. The results of this review are integrated into the report, with a number of areas focused upon. These include:

* part-time working conditions
* characteristics of good quality part-time work
* implementing good quality part-time work

# What is the status of women in the NSW labour market?

This chapter examines women’s labour force status in NSW, including participation rates, female employment rates, unemployment rates, and the proportion of females outside the labour force. In sum, women’s labour force participation has been increasing, however compared to men, more women experience higher levels of unemployment, underemployment and being underutilised.

In NSW, based on the most recent data:

* NSW is the most populous state of Australia – there were 7,195,050 residents as at December 2009 (ABS 3101.0, 2010b)
* nationally, NSW represents approximately 31% of Australia’s labour force
* based upon the most recent data, in NSW there are 3,625,853 females and 3,563,652 males
* 1,671,423 females and 2,029,971 males are in the NSW labour force
* the NSW female labour force represents approximately 13% of the national labour force
* the female participation rate is 55.7% in 2010 having risen steadily from 44% in 1980
* The unemployment rate for women in NSW is 5.1%, and for males 5.4%
* the female underemployment rate was 10% compared to 5.6% for men – underemployment rates have been consistently 3% or more higher than for men
* the underutilisation rate for women is 15.2%, for men it is 10.8%

In summary:

*Table 1.1: Key labour force statistics, NSW, 2010\**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| NSW | Females | Males |
| Population | 3,625,853 | 3,563,652 |
| Workforce | 1,671,423 | 2,029,971 |
| Participation rate | 55.7% | 70.1% |
| Unemployment rate | 5.1% | 5.4% |
| Underemployment rate | 10% | 5.6% |
| Underutilisation rate | 15.2% | 10.8% |

## \*Participation and unemployment data refer to June 2010. Underutilisation and underemployment to May 2010, the latest available data.

## How many women are in employment and participating in the labour force?

The total size of the NSW labour force is just over 3.7 million people, and of these 1.6 million are women. In August 2010, the employment rate (that is, people who were employed), for women in NSW was 53.4%, compared to 67.3% for men[[2]](#footnote-2).

### Participation and employment rates

As of June 2010, women’s labour force participation rate (that is, people who were employed or looking for work) in NSW was 55.7%, compared to the male participation rate of 70.1%. Labour force participation rates are collected monthly through the ABS Labour Force Survey (ABS Cat. No. 6202.0, 2010c). The lower rate of female labour force participation indicates that women are more likely than men to not participate or to drop out of the workforce altogether (that is not be employed and not looking for work) than to be or become unemployed. Women cite caring responsibilities as the main reason they are unavailable for employment (Richardson, 2009).

There are two significant long term trends in participation rates in NSW. Participation rates for females have risen from around 44% in 1980 to 55.7% in 2010, see Table 1.2. Simultaneously, participation rates for men in NSW have fallen from 78%, to just over 70% now. These trends are also found at the national level.

*Table 1.2: Participation rates, by gender, 1980-2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Female | | | Male | | |
| Sydney | NSW | Australia | Sydney | NSW | Australia |
| 1980 | 46.0 | 43.9 | 45.1 | 78.4 | 78.3 | 78.4 |
| 1985 | 47.0 | 44.9 | 46.2 | 75.9 | 75.3 | 75.8 |
| 1990 | 53.1 | 50.7 | 52.5 | 75.4 | 74.0 | 75.6 |
| 1995 | 54.4 | 52.4 | 54.0 | 73.9 | 72.7 | 73.8 |
| 2000 | 55.7 | 53.4 | 54.6 | 73.2 | 71.6 | 72.2 |
| 2005 | 58.0 | 55.3 | 57.0 | 73.1 | 70.5 | 72.2 |
| 2010 | 57.5 | 55.7 | 58.6 | 72.9 | 70.1 | 72.2 |

Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, June

### NSW compared to the other States

For both men and women, participation rates are lower in NSW than the Australian average (58% for women and 72% for men) (ABS 2010c, Cat. No. 6202.0). Participation rates for men and women in Sydney (58% for women and 73% for men) are much closer to the Australian average.

The female participation rate is also lower in NSW than every other Australian state, Table 1.3. Likewise, the male participation rate in NSW is comparatively low, being lower than the national average, and lower than that of Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria.

*Table 1.3: Participation rates, by gender, states and Australia, 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| State / Territory | Female | Male |  |
| Persons | |
| NSW | 55.7 | 70.1 | 63.0 | |
| Victoria | 58.6 | 72.2 | 65.3 | |
| South Australia | 57.4 | 69.4 | 63.3 | |
| Western Australia | 61.0 | 76.6 | 68.9 | |
| Queensland | 61.3 | 74.4 | 67.8 | |
| Tasmania | 57.3 | 67.0 | 62.0 | |
| Australia | 58.4 | 72.1 | 65.3 | |

\*Data for ACT and Northern Territory not included as only Trend and Original data series available

Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, June

Across Australia and NSW, over the last 30 years female participation rates have increased across all age groups, except for 15-19 and 20-24 years where they have dropped, especially sharply for the 15-19 year old category, as shown in Table 1.3. Table 1.4 also shows that the participation rates for women 60-64 (15.9%- 38.8%) and 65 years and over (3.6%-6.9%) have increased significantly since 1980. The possible causes of this are further discussed in the Chapter 3 on employment arrangements.

*Table 1.4: Participation rates, by gender and age, NSW 1980, 2000 and 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | Female | | | Male | | |
| 1980 | 2000 | 2010 | 1980 | 2000 | 2010 |
| 15-19 | 57.2 | 58.1 | 47.8 | 64.2 | 56.4 | 49.0 |
| 20-24 | 70.3 | 77.3 | 69.1 | 91.9 | 84.0 | 80.2 |
| 25-34 | 51.7 | 71.2 | 72.4 | 95.7 | 93.4 | 88.9 |
| 35-44 | 58.0 | 71.6 | 74.8 | 95.6 | 91.6 | 92.2 |
| 45-54 | 47.0 | 68.6 | 76.2 | 92.0 | 87.4 | 87.3 |
| 55-59 | 29.3 | 45.1 | 61.0 | 81.9 | 70.5 | 80.1 |
| 60-64 | 15.9 | 16.0 | 38.8 | 53.8 | 44.2 | 58.9 |
| 65 and over | 3.6 | 2.6 | 6.9 | 11.2 | 9.3 | 14.7 |

Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, June

Growth in participation rates, however, has varied considerably for women of different age groups and important changes are emerging. In particular, in NSW participation rates no longer exhibit a dip in the key childbearing years of 25-34, as they did in the past. For instance, in 1980 51.7% of 25-34 year old females in NSW participated in the labour market, whereas in 2010 the corresponding figure was 72..4%. Comparison with the other states shows that Western Australia displays a classic M curve, and that the ACT displays a more conventional inverted U curve, see Figure 1.1.

*Figure 1.1: Female participation rates by age, states and Australia, 2010, %*



Source: ABS 2010d, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001, Aug

The traditional ‘M curve’, reflecting female exit from the labour force during the child bearing years and then returning later once children have reached high school or later, has disappeared from the NSW female labour force patterns. Instead, females (married and unmarried) in NSW are participating in greater proportions until they reach their mid 50s and presenting an inverted ‘U curve’ or an inverted ‘L curve‘, see Figure 1.2 and Table 1.5.

This is similar to the male pattern over the life course rather than the conventional female life course pattern. Compared to the other states in Australia, this is quite unique. Married females in NSW display increasing participation until the 45-54 year age category, then decreasing participation rates. Non-married females in NSW show much lower participation rates than married females in younger years, and then higher participation rates until they reach approximately 35 years, where married female participation rates start to outstrip unmarried female participation rates. Another unusual feature of female participation rates in NSW is the comparatively low rates for women in the age category 15-19. As Figure 1.1 shows, they are lower than all other States and Territories. There is no obvious explanation for this in the research literature, but may relate to increased educational participation of women in this age group; further research is needed to understand this pattern.

*Figure 1.2: Participation rates by gender, marital status and age, 2010, NSW, %*



Source: ABS 2010d, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001, Aug

*Table 1.5: Female participation rates, by gender, marital status and age, 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Females NSW | | | Males NSW | | |
|  | Married | Not Married | All | Married | Not Married | All |
| 15-19 | 64.5 | 46 | 46.5 | 100 | 44.9 | 45.3 |
| 20-24 | 66.7 | 69.5 | 68.8 | 90.8 | 75.6 | 77.7 |
| 25-34 | 69.5 | 76.9 | 72.3 | 94.1 | 86.7 | 90.8 |
| 35-44 | 73.8 | 72.6 | 73.4 | 95.2 | 81.1 | 91.8 |
| 45-54 | 77.8 | 73.8 | 76.7 | 90.7 | 72.2 | 86.2 |
| 55-59 | 61.5 | 61 | 61.3 | 83 | 66.1 | 79.7 |
| 60-64 | 41.4 | 34.8 | 39.2 | 59.8 | 51.1 | 57.9 |
| 65 and over | 9.6 | 3.7 | 6.5 | 18.2 | 7.5 | 15.0 |

Source: ABS 2010d, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001, Aug

What explains these patterns in NSW? The classic labour economics explanations for increasing female labour force supply are listed below (Birch 2005):

* increases in wage rates for females
* reduced family income or reduced income from other sources such as investments
* increases in cost of living (including mortgage repayments and education costs)
* buoyant labour market conditions and availability of suitable jobs
* increased educational qualifications
* duration of residence
* presence of family-friendly practices in workplaces
* affirmative public policies, such as pay equity, anti-discrimination and equal opportunity

These explanations are not listed in a hierarchy of most to least important but rather from direct economic reasons to more social reasons and each of these factors warrants further examination to determine their relative impact on the marked changes in female labour force participation in NSW.

The inhibitors of female labour supply tend to be:

* marriage
* the presence of young children
* depressed labour markets producing the ‘discouraged worker effect’ (depressed labour markets can have the opposite effect, where women step into the labour market to compensate for their partner’s loss of income or job, i.e. providing the ‘added worker effect’.

*Figure 1.3 Married female participation rates by age and States, 2010, %*



Source: ABS 2010d, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001, Aug

In NSW and compared to the other States and Territories, marriage does not appear to reduce female labour supply in the first instance, see Figure 1.4. On the contrary, the labour force participation of married women in NSW increases right through to the age range 45-54 and only after that drops slightly. Without further research it is difficult to ascertain exactly what is happening in NSW, except to say that it is unusual and contrary to labour market conventions. The increased participation rates of females in the child bearing and caring years could, for instance, be a result of mortgage stress, education costs or increased educational attainment and human capital endowment. It may also be that job availability is suitable for married women. More targeted research is necessary to determine causal relationships.

The participation rates presented do not account for full-time and part-time work and the pattern may also relate to the hours of work that females in NSW are engaged in. It is possible, for example, that more females in NSW are engaged in more part-time work than before or than females in other states. Part-time patterns of work are analysed in Chapter 3. The continuing participation in the paid labour force of married women in NSW warrants closer examination as does consideration of the implications of this, such as increased child care needs.

## How many women are unemployed or underemployed?

As of June 2010, the unemployment rate for women in NSW was 5.1%, lower than the male unemployment rate of 5.4%. As noted in Table 1.3, female labour force participation rates are lowest in NSW compared to every other state and territory. However compared to other states in Australia female unemployment levels are second lowest, with only the female unemployment rate in Western Australia being lower. This could reflect levels of hidden unemployment (see below) so that official unemployment rates do not fully show actual levels of unemployment or underemployment. Alternatively, the results could reflect the strength of the labour market for women, so that where women are actively seeking work, they are able to find it.

*Table 1.6: Unemployment rates, by gender, States and Australia, 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **State / Territory** | **Female** | **Male** | **Persons** |
|  | |
| NSW | 5.1 | 5.4 | 5.3 | |
| Victoria | 5.6 | 5.2 | 5.4 | |
| South Australia | 5.5 | 5.2 | 5.4 | |
| Western Australia | 4.0 | 3.7 | 4.4 | |
| Queensland | 5.5 | 5.1 | 5.3 | |
| Tasmania | 5.5 | 7.7 | 6.7 | |
| Australia | 5.9 | 4.8 | 5.2 | |

\*Data for ACT and Northern Territory not included as only Trend and Original data series available

Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, June

Unemployment for both men and women in NSW follows highly cyclical paths relating to economic downturns and upturns. In the recession of the 1980s, unemployment peaked at 11.5% for women and 11.2 for men. In the 1990s, economic contraction produced peaks of 9.8% for women, and a significantly higher 12% for men. In the recent economic downturn[[3]](#footnote-3), unemployment rates were lower than the previous economic downturns, with male unemployment reaching 6.7%, compared to 7% for women.

#### Underemployment, underutilisation and hidden unemployment

The underemployed are those in work but seeking more hours. Large numbers of women in NSW report wanting to work, or wanting to work more hours. As of May 2010 the female underemployment rate was around 10% compared to 5.6% for men and the underutilisation rate for women was 15.2%, compared to the male rate of 10.8%. Labour underutilisation is the proportion of the labour force which is unemployed or underemployed. Women in NSW are more likely to be underemployed than men. Over the last 30 years underemployment rates for women in NSW have been consistently 3% higher or more than for men. The extent of additional hours that women want requires further investigation.

Underutilisation is partly related to the economic cycle. However it is often experienced differently by men and women, with women experiencing higher rates of underutilisation than men. Figure 1.4 shows the cyclical nature of underemployment through three business cycles. Rates of underutilisation have seen sustained increases through the cycles for both women and men. Women’s underutilisation rates are persistently higher than men's. Furthermore, the impact of downturns increases the underutilisation gap between men and women considerably. However the impact of the recent (2008-2009) financial downturn was felt relatively evenly between men and women in NSW, unlike the broader Australian experience where men (especially full-time workers in sectors such as manufacturing) bore the greater impact. Between May 2007 and May 2009, full-time male jobs in Australia fell by 1.6% (or almost 22,500 jobs), compared to overall employment being flat over this period. This is likely due to the different industry composition in NSW compared to other states. For example the relatively large retail sector in NSW benefited significantly from economic stimulus implemented by the Commonwealth Government.

*Figure 1.4: Total labour underutilisation, by gender, NSW, 1978- 2010, %*



Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, 2010

Women also predominate among the hidden unemployed, defined as people who are not in the labour force but who want to work, looking for work or are available to start working. Women primarily cite care responsibilities as the main reason why they are unable to remain within the labour force. Of the women who were willing to work but not actively looking, 31% said this was because they were caring for children. Of those who were completely out of the labour force, 43% named home duties and child care as their main activities. Further, for those in the 25 to 34 year old group, they comprised 80% of the hidden unemployed and for the 35 to 44 year old group, 77%, 82% and 78% respectively citing home duties or child care as their main occupation (Richardson, 2009).

# In what occupations and industries do women in NSW work?

* 15% of women are employed in the NSW public sector, making the NSW public sector a major employer of women in NSW
* 60.9% of NSW public sector employees are women
* industries with a high proportion of female employees include health care and social assistance (79% female), education and training (69%), accommodation and food services (58%) and retail trade (54%). Over half of all women in NSW are employed in these four industries
* occupations with high proportions of women in NSW include sales workers (12% of all employed women), clerical and administrative workers (24%), community and personal service workers (13%) and professionals (28%)
* part-time working arrangements are most common for women employed as sales workers (72%), labourers (63%), and community/personal service workers (59.5%)
* part-time arrangements are less common amongst professional (30.8%) and managerial (18.3%) occupations, particularly in areas such as engineering (18.5%) and information and communications technology (6.7%)
* across almost all occupations, the percentage of women working part-time is greater than the percentage of men working part-time in the same occupation
* of all women employed in NSW in 2008, 11.9% were self-employed, compared to 19.5% of men
* of those self-employed, 33.6% were women

## How many women work in the public and private sectors?

The NSW government is the largest employer of women in NSW. In 2009, 232,259 women were employed in the NSW public sector, comprising 15% of all employed women in NSW. Three-fifths (60.9%) of all employees in the NSW public sector were women, compared to 46.4% in NSW in general (NSW DPC, 2009a). This is partly influenced by the industry and occupational profile of the public sector, for example the provision of education and health care that have high proportions of female employees.

## What industries do women work in?

Gender segregation (where women and men work in areas where their colleagues are predominantly of their own gender) in employment remains pronounced, despite the increased labour force participation of women in NSW and the increasing investment women make in their education. One factor influencing this may be the greater availability of part-time work in certain industries and occupations than others. Women appear to be influenced in their career choice by the extent to which they consider jobs can be combined with bringing up a family (e.g. Murray 2010).

Women in NSW are overrepresented in the care, education and service industries. Table 2.1 provides a distribution of the male and female workforces by industry in NSW, according to their full-time and part-time employment status, and contribution to total industry employment.

It also shows the industries which employ large percentages of women include the health care and social assistance (79% of all employees are women), education and training (68.9%), accommodation and food services (57.8%) and retail trade (54.1%) industries. Over half of all women’s employment in NSW is located in these four industries. The last two industries, where just over 20% of working women are employed, also constitute the lowest paid. Health care and social assistance, (employing nearly 20% of working women) displays one of the largest industry gender pay gaps (see Chapter 4). The finance sector, another large employer of women (accounting for nearly 6%), has the largest industry gender pay gap[[4]](#footnote-4).

Women are least represented in the construction (9.8%), mining (12.5%), electricity, gas, water and waste services (20.8%) and transport, postal and warehousing (21.5%) industries. These industries have traditionally been male dominated and continue to be so.

*Table 2.1 Employment status by industry and gender, NSW, male/female workforce, 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Industry | Male | | | Female | | |
| FT | PT | Industry Male | FT | PT | Industry Female |
| Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing | 3.3 | 0.6 | 69.5 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 30.5 |
| Mining | 1.5 | 0.0 | 87.5 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 12.5 |
| Manufacturing | 10.5 | 0.8 | 73.2 | 3.1 | 1.9 | 26.8 |
| Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services | 1.9 | 0.1 | 79.2 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 20.8 |
| Construction | 12.7 | 1.5 | 90.2 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 9.8 |
| Wholesale Trade | 4.1 | 0.3 | 63.6 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 36.4 |
| Retail Trade | 5.9 | 2.7 | 45.9 | 4.9 | 7.3 | 54.1 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 2.7 | 2.5 | 42.2 | 3.0 | 5.6 | 57.8 |
| Transport, Postal and Warehousing | 7.1 | 1.1 | 78.5 | 1.6 | 1.1 | 21.5 |
| Information Media and Telecommunications | 2.2 | 0.3 | 54.0 | 1.9 | 0.6 | 46.0 |
| Financial and Insurance Services | 3.8 | 0.3 | 46.6 | 4.0 | 1.6 | 53.4 |
| Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services | 1.3 | 0.3 | 50.0 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 50.0 |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 7.8 | 1.0 | 56.5 | 5.5 | 2.7 | 43.5 |
| Administrative and Support Services | 1.9 | 1.0 | 46.9 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 53.1 |
| Public Administration and Safety | 5.9 | 0.5 | 59.7 | 3.9 | 1.2 | 40.3 |
| Education and Training | 2.9 | 1.3 | 30.7 | 6.6 | 4.5 | 68.9 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 3.2 | 1.1 | 21.0 | 9.7 | 10.0 | 79.0 |
| Arts and Recreation Services | 1.2 | 0.6 | 54.8 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 45.2 |
| Other Services | 3.9 | 0.6 | 58.5 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 41.5 |
| % Male/Female Employment | 83.5 | 16.5 | 100.0 | 54.5 | 45.5 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2010e, Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.55. 003, May

Several industries predominantly employing women also employ relatively high levels of women who work part-time. These industries include the health care and social assistance (10% of all employed women are part-time workers in this industry), retail trade (7.3%), accommodation and food service (5.6%) and education and training (4.5%). Due to the high proportion of part-time jobs (over half) which are also casual, many of these jobs are insecure and lack rights such as paid holiday and sick/carers’ leave (see Chapters 5 and 6). In contrast, part-time work in any industry accounts for only a small percentage of male employment.

Relatively high proportions of the female workforce are employed full-time in healthcare (9.7%) and education (6.6%), professional scientific and technical services (5.5%) and retail trade (4.9%) industries.

## What occupations do women work in?

Over half of all women employed in NSW work in only two of seven occupational groups, clerical and administrative (24% of all employed women) and professional workers (28%). These occupations, with sales (12%) and community and personal service workers (13%) account for three quarters of women’s employment.

Figure 2.1 compares the occupational distribution of men and women in NSW. It demonstrates the existence of occupational (as well as industry, see above) gender segregation. For example it shows that 37% of all employed women and only 13% of employed men work in the clerical and administrative, and community and personal service categories.

Women are overrepresented in professional occupations compared to men. They accounted for over half of all employees in 2008, reflecting their increasing educational qualifications. They are, however, largely employed in traditional female industries such as education, health, social, welfare and the increasingly feminised legal profession. In the *Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI) Report* for 2010, managerial and professional workers report that their work interferes with life outside work and time spent on non-work activities. Men and women in managerial occupations reported having worse work-life outcomes compared to other occupations, and this was the case whether differences in work hours were controlled or not. Professional women in particular responded that work interferes more with life outside of work, compared to their male colleagues, regardless of how many hours they work (Pocock, et al, 2010).

Trades and technician roles remain predominantly male vocations, with 24% of all employed men in these occupations, compared to only 4% of women. Although some 14% of all those employed in these roles are women, in the three largest categories which are the most male dominated (including construction, automotive, engineering and telecommunications trades), women represent less than 1%.[[5]](#footnote-5) Men are also overrepresented as labourers (11%), machinery operators (10%) and managers (17%).

*Figure 2.1: Occupational profile by gender, NSW, 2010, as a proportion of all employment by gender, %*



Source: ABS 2010e, Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.55. 003, May

Women are more likely to work part-time than men across almost all occupations with many feminised occupations in particular characterised by part-time working arrangements.

Table 2.2 provides the proportion of women and men who work full-time and part-time by occupation in NSW. It provides the percentage of men and women who work full-time and part-time by broad occupation category (italicised, e.g. Managers, Professionals) and within each broad occupation category the information on each detailed type of occupation (e.g. within the broad Manager category, the percentage of male and female Chief Executives who work part-time and full-time).

Table 2.2 shows that over half the female workforce employed as sales workers (72%), labourers (63%), and community/personal service workers (59.5%) are likely to be working part-time. By comparison, the percentage of women working part-time in professional (30.8%) or managerial (18.3%) roles is much smaller. Part-time work is particularly uncommon in managerial roles, as it is among certain professions. For example, of women engineering/science/transport/design and information and communication technology (ICT) professionals, less than 20% work part-time. Women in these occupations are also underrepresented.

In addition to the availability of part-time work varying for women by occupation, across almost all occupation groups the proportion of women who work part-time is greater than the proportion of men who work part-time. This is especially so for sales workers (37.7% difference working part-time), technicians and trades workers (32.5% difference) and labourers (27.5% difference).

*Table 2.2: Female full-time and part-time status by detailed occupation, employees only, NSW, May 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female | | Male | | F – M% difference | | |
| Occupation | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time | Part-time |
| *Managers* | 81.7 | 18.3 | 95.7 | 4.7 | -14 | 13.6 |
| Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators | 83.3 | 16.7 | 94.1 | 5.9 | -10.8 | 10.8 |
| Farmers and Farm Managers | 66.7 | 33.3 | 93.8 | 6.3 | -27.1 | 27 |
| Specialist Managers | 83.1 | 16.9 | 97.8 | 3.0 | -14.7 | 13.9 |
| Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers | 82.1 | 17.9 | 91.3 | 8.7 | -9.2 | 9.2 |
| *Professionals* | 69.2 | 30.8 | 89.4 | 10.6 | -20.2 | 20.2 |
| Arts and Media Professionals | 78.6 | 21.4 | 93.3 | 6.7 | -14.7 | 14.7 |
| Business, Human Resource and Marketing | 77.2 | 22.8 | 92.7 | 7.3 | -15.5 | 15.5 |
| Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals | 77.8 | 18.5 | 93.7 | 7.9 | -15.9 | 10.6 |
| Education Professionals | 67.9 | 32.1 | 73.8 | 26.2 | -5.9 | 5.9 |
| Health Professionals | 55.0 | 45.0 | 84.8 | 15.2 | -29.8 | 29.8 |
| ICT Professionals | 93.3 | 6.7 | 95.1 | 3.3 | -1.8 | 3.4 |
| Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals | 75.0 | 28.6 | 82.4 | 23.5 | -7.4 | 5.1 |
| *Technicians and Trades Workers* | 58.6 | 41.4 | 91.1 | 8.9 | -32.5 | 32.5 |
| Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians | 64.7 | 35.3 | 91.1 | 8.9 | -26.4 | 26.4 |
| Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers | 100.0 | 0.0 | 95.3 | 4.7 | 4.7 | -4.7 |
| Construction Trades Workers | 0.0 | 0.0 | 91.4 | 8.6 | -91.4 | -8.6 |
| Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers | 0.0 | 0.0 | 96.9 | 3.1 | -96.9 | -3.1 |
| Food Trades Workers | 66.7 | 41.7 | 73.5 | 26.5 | -6.8 | 15.2 |
| Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers | 44.4 | 55.6 | 87.5 | 12.5 | -43.1 | 43.1 |
| Other Technicians and Trades Workers | 57.9 | 42.1 | 87.1 | 9.7 | -29.2 | 32.4 |
| *Community and Personal Service Workers* | 40.5 | 59.5 | 60.4 | 39.6 | -19.9 | 19.9 |
| Health and Welfare Support Workers | 63.2 | 36.8 | 87.5 | 12.5 | -24.3 | 24.3 |
| Carers and Aides | 35.4 | 64.6 | 53.3 | 46.7 | -17.9 | 17.9 |
| Hospitality Workers | 31.4 | 70.6 | 28.0 | 72.0 | 3.4 | -1.4 |
| Protective Service Workers | 80.0 | 20.0 | 90.6 | 12.5 | -10.6 | 7.5 |
| Sports and Personal Service Workers | 57.1 | 42.9 | 36.4 | 63.6 | 20.7 | -20.7 |
| *Clerical and Administrative Workers* | 59.4 | 40.6 | 85.8 | 14.2 | -26.4 | 26.4 |
| Office Managers and Program Administrators | 63.3 | 36.7 | 95.7 | 4.3 | -32.4 | 32.4 |
| Personal Assistants and Secretaries | 67.4 | 32.6 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 67.4 | -67.4 |
| General Clerical Workers | 56.1 | 43.9 | 76.9 | 23.1 | -20.8 | 20.8 |
| Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists | 54.9 | 45.1 | 63.6 | 36.4 | -8.7 | 8.7 |
| Numerical Clerks | 55.4 | 44.6 | 88.0 | 8.0 | -32.6 | 36.6 |
| Clerical and Office Support Workers | 56.3 | 43.8 | 77.8 | 22.2 | -21.5 | 21.6 |
| Other Clerical and Administrative Workers | 71.4 | 28.6 | 93.3 | 6.7 | -21.9 | 21.9 |
| *Sales Workers* | 28.0 | 72.0 | 65.7 | 34.3 | -37.7 | 37.7 |
| Sales Representatives and Agents | 75.0 | 25.0 | 96.9 | 3.1 | -21.9 | 21.9 |
| Sales Assistants and Salespersons | 23.2 | 76.8 | 55.4 | 44.6 | -32.2 | 32.2 |
| Sales Support Workers | 12.1 | 87.9 | 45.5 | 54.5 | -33.4 | 33.4 |
| *Machinery Operators and Drivers* | 66.7 | 33.3 | 89.1 | 10.9 | -22.4 | 22.4 |
| Machine and Stationary Plant Operators | 80.0 | 20.0 | 94.1 | 2.9 | -14.1 | 17.1 |
| Mobile Plant Operators | 100.0 | 0.0 | 94.4 | 5.6 | 5.6 | -5.6 |
| Road and Rail Drivers | 33.3 | 33.3 | 84.2 | 15.8 | -50.9 | 17.5 |
| Storepersons | 50.0 | 50.0 | 86.2 | 13.8 | -36.2 | 36.2 |
| *Labourers* | 37.0 | 63.0 | 64.5 | 35.5 | -27.5 | 27.5 |
| Cleaners and Laundry Workers | 32.6 | 69.6 | 50.0 | 50.0 | -17.4 | 19.6 |
| Construction and Mining Labourers | 0.0 | 0.0 | 88.2 | 11.8 | -88.2 | -11.8 |
| Factory Process Workers | 61.1 | 38.9 | 81.8 | 21.2 | -20.7 | 17.7 |
| Farm, Forestry and Garden Workers | 50.0 | 66.7 | 66.7 | 27.8 | -16.7 | 38.9 |
| Food Preparation Assistants | 33.3 | 66.7 | 22.7 | 72.7 | 10.6 | -6 |
| Other Labourers | 26.7 | 73.3 | 62.5 | 37.5 | -35.8 | 35.8 |

Source: ABS 2010e, Detailed Labour Force Survey Cat. No. 6291.55. 003, May

## How many women are self-employed?

In NSW in 2008, 16.2% of employees were self employed[[6]](#footnote-6). The rate of self-employment was higher among men than it was among women in NSW with 11.9% of women being self-employed, compared to 19.5% of men. Of the total number of self-employed in NSW, 33.6% were women.

The rate of self-employment has decreased from 20.4% in 2001 (14.1% for women and 25.5% for men) to 16.2% in 2008. While the vast majority (85%) of self-employed men in NSW work full-time hours, slightly less than half (49.6%) of self-employed women do (ABS 2010f, Cat. No 1338.1, March 2010).

Within the *Australia at Work* study, the proportion of NSW employed women in self-employment is higher than ABS estimates, at 15% in 2007, 14% in 2008 and 13% in 2009. As is the case in the ABS data however, the level of self-employment among women is much lower than it is among men where in 2009 it accounted for 21% of men’s employment in NSW.

The *AWALI Report* for 2010 found no evidence that self-employment enables a better work-life relationship than being employed, rather self-employment is associated with longer work hours (Pocock, et al, 2010). The *Australia at Work* study also found the self-employed have longer average hours of work when compared to employees (van Wanrooy, et al, 2009a). Despite this, when the transitions into and out of self-employment across all three waves of the *Australia at Work* study are tracked, nearly all women who are self employed remain self employed, showing a greater stability than employed women’s movements between full-time and part-time employment.

Gender segregation in industries and occupations continue in NSW with complex implications for the gender pay gap. Improving women’s skills, qualifications and networks in a broad range of areas is recommended. This is also in line with the COAG targets under the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development.

Women’s under-representation in managerial roles also needs addressing and employers need the tools with which to measure their progress in this area.

# 3 What are the work patterns and working time arrangements of women in NSW?

In Australia, the definition of part-time work is very wide. The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines part-time as any work less than 35 hours per week. It includes work for only a few hours a week (at least usually an hour a week or more) and those usually working just under full-time (full-time being 35 hours or more per week (in all jobs (ABS, 2009c)).

In NSW key findings relating to part-time work are:

* 45% of women, compared to 17% of men, are employed part-time
* women 15-19 years (66.9%), 35-44 years (46.7%) and women 65 years and older (63%) have the highest proportions of part-time employment among women
* 40% of women working in NSW felt they had no control over the number of hours worked or when they were worked
* women in dual-income households were more likely to have a preference for fewer hours than female breadwinner households
* just under half (44%) of all women's employment and just over half (55%) of their part-time employment are in female dominated industries (retail trade, accommodation and food services, administrative and support services and health care/social assistance)
* full-time female workers tend to work fewer weekly hours than their male counterparts in NSW, working 39.1 hours compared to 42.7 (part-time hours are more comparable, with women working an average 17.4 hours compared to 16.5 for men)
* 56% of part-time women workers in NSW agreed that they had control over the number of hours they worked
* 25% of NSW female workers in dual earner households said that they would prefer to work less hours, more so than single working women (15%) (this may be partly explained by income stress experienced by single income households)

The key patterns regarding patterns of employment in NSW are:

* 70.4% of women in the NSW workforce are employed on a permanent basis compared to 79.8% of men (a similar pattern is evident at the national level)
* 29.6% of employed women in the NSW workforce are employed casually compared to 19.3% of men, and of these, four in five are part-time casuals (compared to one in two men)
* less than a quarter of women in casual employment in 2008 and/or 2009 moved into permanent employment by 2009 (once permanently employed, they were likely to remain in permanent employment)
* the extensive casualisation of women's part-time employment results in many women working in poor quality jobs lacking in basic employment rights

## What are women’s part-time working patterns in NSW?

Women are more likely to work part-time compared to men. Table 3.1 shows the growth in the number of men and women working full-time and part-time in NSW for the period from 1980- 2010. In NSW, women are far more likely to work part-time than men – 45% of women, compared to 17% of men, are employed part-time (ABS 2010c cat 6202.0).

One of the most significant changes in the patterns of work for Australians, including people in NSW, is the increasing rate of part-time employment for both women and men. In 2010, almost 30% of the total national workforce is employed part-time (as either a permanent or casual employee), up from about 15% in 1980. The same pattern of change has also happened in NSW. In June 1980 the proportion of women working part-time in NSW was 32.6% and in 2010 this had increased to 45% (ABS 2010c cat 6202.0). By contrast, 17% of males in NSW worked part-time in 2010, an increase from just 5% in 1980 (ABS 2010c cat 6202.0).[[7]](#footnote-7)  However 69% of part-time workers in NSW are women, and the proportion of part-time workers who are women has remained broadly stable over this period. This has been the pattern Australia wide.

Over 50% of women who work part-time are employed on a casual basis, but it should be noted that part-time and casual work are not exactly the same. Casual employees, whether they work part-time or full-time hours, generally do not receive paid leave and have no guarantee of ongoing employment.

*Table 3.1: Part-time status, by gender, NSW and Australia, 1980-2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female | | Male | |
| Year | NSW | Australia | NSW | Australia |
| 1980 | 32.6 | 34.6 | 4.8 | 5.1 |
| 1985 | 33.2 | 36.7 | 5.9 | 6.2 |
| 1990 | 37.7 | 39.9 | 7.7 | 8.0 |
| 1995 | 40.2 | 42.5 | 10.2 | 10.9 |
| 2000 | 40.1 | 43.5 | 11.3 | 12.4 |
| 2005 | 42.8 | 45.0 | 13.8 | 14.6 |
| 2010 | 44.7 | 45.7 | 16.8 | 16.6 |

Source: ABS 2010c, Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0, Jun

Australia wide, while women’s workforce participation rates have increased (see chapter 1), the proportion of women participating in part-time employment has also increased. Between 1980 and 2010 the proportion of women in NSW employed part-time as a percentage of all employed women rose from 32.6% to 44.7%, and Australia wide from 34.6% to 45.7%. A similar increase in the percentage of part-time employment is also evident for men in NSW and Australia, but starting from a much lower rate (4.8% to 16.8% and 5.1% to 16.6% respectively). This indicates that the increase in part-time employment is a factor influencing labour force participation across the labour market generally.

## How do we explain the increase in part-time work?

The growth of part-time work (both casual and permanent) is attributable to a number of factors. The Productivity Commission examined this phenomenon recently (Abhayaratna et al., 2008) and attributed part of the change to changes in employee characteristics (called supply side factors) including the need for students and the preference for older workers to work part-time, as well as women's increased labour force participation. At the same time employer requirements (demand side factors) have changed with employers using part-time work to adjust working hours more readily to customer requirements which have also altered, for example demands for longer and more varied business opening hours.

The elements that potentially influence women’s decisions to work part-time, include:

* child care availability and affordability
* full-time work entailing long and inflexible hours
* tax/benefit systems discouraging greater work engagement by second earners, undertaking a disproportionate share of domestic labour
* partner’s long work hours
* lack of appropriate flexibility at their workplace
* social expectations about women’s roles

There is also considerable debate about whether or not women freely choose to work part-time or whether they do so because they are constrained by the sorts of factors described above (Hakim, 2002; OECD, 2010).

## Where are part-time jobs and employees?

Part-time jobs and part-time workers tend to be concentrated in particular industries and occupations:

* just under a half (43%) of all women's employment and a similar share (45%) of their part-time employment is in the female dominated industries of retail trade, accommodation and food services, administrative and support services[[8]](#footnote-8) and health care/social assistance[[9]](#footnote-9)
* education, and the finance industry are also female dominated (and make up a further 17% of all women’s employment) but women’s part-time work is a smaller share of women's employment in these industries
* part-time management positions are unusual, and overall women are underrepresented as managers[[10]](#footnote-10)
* although well represented in the professions (over half of all professionals are women and nearly one-third work part-time),[[11]](#footnote-11) women are not necessarily in the higher paid professions or employed at the highest paid levels. The lack of part-time work at senior levels contributes to this.[[12]](#footnote-12)

### Do women’s employment patterns vary by age?

Women, much more than men, engage in part-time work over their life course in order to combine working with other activities. The Productivity Commission study of part-time work (Abhayaratna et al., 2008), made findings which illustrated the different reasons why women work part-time at different ages:

* younger women (15-24) often work part-time and combine this with education.
* women in the child bearing years of 25-44 make up 44% of part-time employees Australia wide (nearly 60% of part-time women workers in this age group reported working these hours for childcare reasons, another 10-20% said they preferred part-time work)
* of older women aged 45-54, 40% said they worked part-time out of preference, with childcare reasons given by only 20% of these workers
* women with caring responsibilities for children or people with disabilities, long term health conditions and older people also work part-time in order help meet their caring roles, e.g. in couple households with children under 15, 13.8% of working women work part-time, compared to 2.2% of men[[13]](#footnote-13)

In NSW women’s full-time employment grows strongly until the age of 29- 34, dips sharply between 35 and 44 then increases again, but not to earlier levels. Table 3.2 indicates female and male labour force status by age and illustrates this. A similar pattern is apparent at the national level (Preston and Jefferson, 2007). In contrast, women's overall participation rate increases until the 55-59 year age group when it declines much faster than the male participation rate. As noted in Chapter 1, the labour force participation of married women in NSW also does not dip between 35 and 44 but increases right through to the age range 45-54 and only after that drops slightly. Nevertheless, the pattern of women’s full-time participation and their departure from the labour market earlier than men, has serious implications for women's earnings over the life course and for their retirement income. For men, whilst male full-time employment participation has decreased over the past 30 years (see Chapter 1) it still remains much higher than women’s for all age groups.

*Table 3.2: Female labour force status, NSW, by age group, June 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age group | Participation Rate% | Employed  full-time% | Employed  part-time% | Unemployment rate% | Total |
| *15-19 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 49 | 32.2 | 49.9 | 17.7 | 100.0 |
| Female | 47.8 | 14.5 | 66.3 | 19.2 | 100.0 |
| *20-24 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 80.2 | 60.1 | 28.4 | 11.5 | 100.0 |
| Female | 69.1 | 49.3 | 43.4 | 7.3 | 100.0 |
| *25-34 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 88.9 | 85.3 | 10.5 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| Female | 72.4 | 62.8 | 32.2 | 5.0 | 100.0 |
| *35-44 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 92.2 | 88.4 | 8.2 | 3.4 | 100.0 |
| Female | 74.8 | 48.9 | 46.7 | 4.4 | 100.0 |
| *45-54 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 87.3 | 86.5 | 10.5 | 3.0 | 100.0 |
| Female | 76.2 | 56.9 | 40.9 | 2.1 | 100.0 |
| *55-59 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 80.1 | 83.0 | 12.4 | 4.7 | 100.0 |
| Female | 61 | 56.6 | 42.0 | 1.3 | 100.0 |
| *60-64 yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 58.9 | 70.9 | 24.5 | 4.6 | 100.0 |
| Female | 38.8 | 46.5 | 49.5 | 4.1 | 100.0 |
| *65 and over yrs* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 14.7 | 50.4 | 48.2 | 1.3 | 100.0 |
| Female | 6.9 | 37.0 | 63.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2010c Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0 June

The participation statistics above do not identify the impact on women’s economic situation from working part-time during the years when career building and earnings consolidation takes place. It has been noted (Preston and Jefferson, 2007) that ‘the type of part-time work (and conditions of part-time work) is an important determinant of such an impact’. This issue is revisited in the chapter on women’s earnings and in the discussion around factors influencing women’s retirement incomes.

### How many hours do women work?

Full-time female workers tend to work fewer weekly hours than their male counterparts in NSW, working 39.1 hours compared to 42.7 hours. Part-time hours are more comparable, with women working an average 17.4 hours compared to 16.5 hours for men. This is illustrated in Figure 3.1. A comparison of national average hours indicates a similar pattern at the national level.

*Figure 3.1: Average weekly hours, by gender and employment status, NSW and Australia, 2010, hours*



Source: ABS 2010e Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.55.001, May

There is a tendency for women working part-time to continue working part-time. In the Australia at Work survey, of NSW female employees who worked part-time in 2007, 84% continued to work part-time hours in 2008 while only 16% shifted to full-time hours. Of those NSW female employees who moved to full-time hours in 2008, 74% remained in full-time employment in 2009 while 27% reverted back to part-time hours (Australia at Work, 2009)

## Working time preferences: are women satisfied with the hours they work?[[14]](#footnote-14)

### Why do women work part-time?

Women’s reasons for working part-time in the prime age groups are predominantly to care (principally for children, but also for adults) or that they prefer to work part-time. According to the available research, Australian women’s satisfaction with their hours of paid work is mixed. For example:

* women generally report being satisfied with their work hours, with part-time work appearing more satisfactory in terms of work/life balance than full-time work (Pocock et al. (2010:34); Abhayaratna et al. (2008: 173-177, 252))[[15]](#footnote-15) (this is true too in NSW where, in 2009, 73% of NSW female employees working part-time hours and around 66% of NSW female employees working full-time hours reported they were happy with their hours (*Australia at Work*, 2009))
* a substantial proportion, up to one-third, of full-time women workers wish to reduce their hours (Pocock et al. (2010); Abhayaratna et al. (2008)) (NSW female employees working full-time hours were more than three times as likely as those working part-time hours to state a preference for working fewer hours (32% and 9% respectively))
* yet a significant share of part-time women workers consider themselves underemployed and would like more hours (NSW women employees working part-time hours were much more likely than those working full-time to state a preference for more hours (18% and 2% respectively))

### Are women who work part-time happy with the hours they work?

Part-time women workers who want more hours tend to be in the younger age group; those wishing to reduce from full-time hours are generally in the prime working age group (35-54) and in older age groups (Abhayaratna et al. 2008).

Despite the apparent satisfaction with their work hours exhibited by many part-time workers, much part-time work can be difficult to combine with caring responsibilities even though it is often used ‘as a central mechanism for reconciling work and care’ (Strazdins et al., 2007; Campbell and Chalmers, 2008; Pocock et al. 2010). A degree of employee control of working hours, relating both to predictability and employee-friendly flexibility is critical to assisting with work/life balance. The *Australia at Work* study identifies lack of control over working hours as a significant issue for a substantial minority of NSW part-time women workers[[16]](#footnote-16). In the study, 41% of part-time women workers in New South Wales disagreed that they had control of the number of hours they worked. This was 11% higher than the rate of disagreement amongst women part-time workers Australia wide.

A different picture emerges however when working time preferences are analysed according to household employment status, as shown in Table 3.3. In 2009, 25% of NSW female workers in dual earner households said that they would prefer to work less hours. Further, they were more likely than NSW single working females (15%) and NSW female breadwinners (17%) to report a preference to work fewer hours[[17]](#footnote-17). This in part may be explained by the high levels of income stress experienced by single income households, which are often headed by women. Nevertheless, despite the downturn associated with the Global Financial Crisis, working hour preferences for female workers in both NSW and Australia have remained relatively stable across all three years of the Australia at Work study.

*Table 3.3: Working hour preferences by household employment status, female employees, NSW & Australia, 2009, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Prefer fewer hours | Happy with hours | Prefer more hours | Total |
| *NSW* |  |  |  |  |
| Single working | 14.9 | 71.7 | 13.5 | 100.0 |
| Female breadwinner | 17.4 | 65.9 | 16.8 | 100.0 |
| Dual earner | 25.2 | 67.0 | 7.8 | 100.0 |
| *Australia* |  |  |  |  |
| Single working | 18.9 | 68.4 | 12.5 | 100.0 |
| Female breadwinner | 18.3 | 71.0 | 10.6 | 100.0 |
| Dual earner | 22.6 | 69.9 | 7.5 | 100.0 |

\* Estimate not reliable n<20

n=2 refused missing

Note: For this analysis, Single working = female does not have a partner, including sole parents. Female breadwinner = where female has a partner but the partner is not currently working. Dual earner = where female and her partner are working and either of them are working on a full-time or part-time basis.

Population: All female respondents remaining in study in 2009 in paid employment in 2009

Weight: Weights09

Source: Australia at Work W3

Despite the economic downturn, there was little change in reported working time preferences in the Australia at Work study between 2007 and 2009. The AWALI Report for 2010 also did not find evidence to suggest that the economic downturn was associated with less work-life interference, despite an overall fall in hours worked by women (Pocock, et al, 2010). The AWALI Report for 2010 also found that Australian women, especially mothers, remain hard pressed for time. The mismatch between hours worked and working time preferences indicates that many workplaces are far from flexible on terms that suit workers’ needs.

These results indicate a strong need to enable more movement between full-time and part-time hours of work for females in NSW and a need to break down the hard distinctions between full-time and part-time work. The notion of ‘flexicurity’ has gained policy traction in Europe and refers to the ability to have secure jobs with flexible hours (Auer, 2010). Against the backdrop of changing workforce preferences, needs and demographics in NSW and Australia, more broadly, it may be timely to consider the potential for such a concept to be realised in NSW.

## What are part-time workers' working conditions?

Part-time jobs have particular features. Half of the part-time jobs in NSW are casual as opposed to permanent positions; and only one in 10 full-time positions are casual. This is very similar to the situation Australia wide.

As a group, part-time employees also display certain characteristics. They receive less on-the-job training and have more limited career prospects. For example they perform fewer supervisory functions and have poorer promotion rates. They are less likely to be in the higher skilled occupations than full-time employees (Abhayaratna et al., 2008).

Women part-time employees are significantly more likely than women full-time workers to suffer unpredictability in work:

* only two thirds of female part-time workers compared to 93% of female full-time workers are guaranteed a minimum number of work hours
* 40% had varying weekly hours or were usually required to be on call or standby, compared to 28% of full-time employees
* notice of schedules was also generally shorter for part-time workers
* women working full-time in permanent positions were much more likely to have a say about the days on which they worked than part-time permanent women (92% as opposed to 50%), though part-time women casuals were much more likely than permanent part-time staff to be able to do this

Paid family-related forms of leave, integral to facilitating women’s workforce participation, are less available to part-time than full-time workers. For example, as over half of women part-time employees are casual (see below), a much greater proportion of part-time than full-time workers do not receive paid personal/carers’ leave or annual leave (see chapter Five).

### What would good quality part-time work look like?

Internationally, there has been considerable debate about how to define a ‘decent’ job’ and how to improve the quality of part-time work (International Labour Organization, 2004). Drawing on this work, researchers in Australia have begun developing ideas about what constitutes quality part-time work.

The characteristics that make part-time jobs better include:

* part-time work being available in all industries and at all occupational levels
* hours of part-time work being carer-friendly
* pay and conditions being available on a pro-rata basis to equivalent full-time positions
* access to training, skill acquisition and pay and career progression
* well-designed jobs enabling the use and acquisition of skill, avoiding short hours positions which are less likely to facilitate this, and avoiding work intensification through failure to re-size a job to fit the hours worked
* job protection
* employees having a say in their work
* ability to reduce hours from full-time and increase part-time ones in the same job or a promotion level job (Charlesworth et al., 2005; Lyonette et al., 2010; Chalmers et al., 2005; DIIRD, 2005)

In the United Kingdom, the association between part-time and flexible work and occupational downgrading and lack of career prospects has been examined over some years. It appears that women continue to experience degradation in occupational level and career prospects very significantly on becoming part-time[[18]](#footnote-18) with the resulting widespread underutilization of their skills (EOC 2005; Darton and Hurrell, 2005; Grant et al., 2005; Smeaton and Marsh 2006; Hegewisch, 2009).

Although not as comprehensively researched in Australia, occupational downgrading when taking up part-time work and a long-term pay penalty associated with reduced hours appears to exist. One study analysed a longitudinal data set where each respondent described how and whether they had been employed since they were 15 years old. It used this to examine women's earnings over time (Chalmers and Hill, 2007). The study’s findings suggested earnings grew for full-time workers, whereas earnings fell over years of part-time work. A woman who reduced her hours and then returned to full-time work suffered irretrievable earnings loss compared to the situation she would have been in had she continued to work full-time.

A case study of a finance institution (Whittard, 2003) using interviews and analysing company staff data illustrates how such earnings loss comes about. The author concludes from her research that ‘the reality experienced by the majority of participants was a drop of potentially two or three grades in the career path when transferring to less than full-time hours and the potential loss of current skills and future progression opportunities’.[[19]](#footnote-19) As one of the women in the study said: ‘I would have liked to come back to lending … but they don't do it part-time. So this is it, cashiering part-time.’[[20]](#footnote-20)

### How would promoting quality part-time work help?

Improving the quality of part-time work would enable women to remain in employment for the hours they choose[[21]](#footnote-21) and still progress their earnings and career potential. It would also facilitate movement back into longer hours.

Better quality part-time work means making it available at all occupational levels and in all industries, for example:

* in retail and community services where many part-time jobs are concentrated, many of which lack indicators of quality such as paid leave and predictable hours
* in better paid occupations and industries which need to be opened up to part-time and flexible work to enable women's greater participation

Changes on this scale would also encourage fathers to engage in such work, though only when availability of part-time work is coupled with its acceptance: so that choosing it will not result in a career penalty (for example, for perceived lack of career commitment). This would promote gender equity at work. At home, where women workers (whether full-time or part-time) bear a heavy domestic load, flexible and reduced hours should enable men to participate more (Craig and Mullan, 2009). This would enable women to remain more engaged in work – and lead to the development of a virtuous circle. Sole parents, too, would benefit from more good quality part-time and flexible jobs as they face especially strong time pressures.

### Change at the workplace level

A number of groundbreaking Australian research projects have worked inside organisations to understand the barriers to good quality part-time work and how they can be overcome. The organisations involved have wanted to promote work/life integration through changing their work practices, also with a view to improving their organisation's performance. The ideas discussed below draw on this work and other research into organisations or particular industries, including from overseas.

1. ***Cultural change within organisations***

To make part-time and flexible work available throughout an organisation, existing ideas about what characterises an ‘ideal’ worker have to be abandoned (Williams, 2000). Expectations of an ‘ideal worker’ may vary within an organisation:

* it may be someone who can work full-time shifts at any time they are rostered; or
* the ability to stay at work for long hours including anti-social times in order ‘to get the job done’ (Charlesworth and Baird, 2009, unpublished)

Both ‘ideals’ are difficult for workers with caring responsibilities – primarily women – to fulfil. But rather than identifying the necessary changes to work practices as a ‘women's issue’, research projects found men as well as women workers ‘who [also] could or did not want to comply with company expectations of limitless time commitments’. Drawing on this sentiment broadened the appeal and impact of flexible working policies. There is also increasing evidence that men would like to reduce work hours and participate more in childcare (Pocock et al. 2010).

Another strategy to promote and embed part-time and flexible working throughout an organisation is enabling all workers to apply for it. For example one Sydney law firm reports this as part of its culture change strategy. This firm linked flexible working to organisational changes such as promoting the need for meetings to be held during usual working hours..[[22]](#footnote-22)

Organisations in the UK have reported that failing to make flexible hours available to all staff could lead to hostility between staff and demotivation by those excluded (Croucher and Kelliher, 2005). This addresses rigid ideas about which jobs can and cannot be done part-time as it implies that potentially all can be.

1. ***Managerial commitment to change***

Managerial commitment to part-time and flexible working needs to be signalled strongly and clearly by senior management. At one manufacturing organization, a formal policy was seen as a way of signalling senior management's intention to incorporate part-time work more fully into the organisation, as well as assisting line managers (Charlesworth and Cartwright 2007). The organisation also promotes equal access to part-time working arrangements throughout the workforce.

Three other issues stand out as limiting the availability of part-time work in organisations: a lack of formal policies and procedures for acting on requests for part-time work; a skills deficiency amongst managers relating to the implementation of part-time work policies; and a lack of experience in the management of part-time workers. Managers may not know about company policies or how to process part-time applications. For example, in one police station where part-time work was being introduced, a police sergeant commented ‘we got thrown part-time work and never got thrown a book to go with it’ (Charlesworth and Whittenbury 2007).

Critical elements in making part-time work successful include:

* establishing and disseminating throughout an organisation formal policies and procedures to guide managers as well as staff about how to apply for part-time work; how to assess an application; and how to implement positive decisions
* training in implementing the policies; in redesigning jobs where reduced hours are agreed so they are manageable in the hours worked; and in managing part-time workers in an equitable way, e.g. ensuring the quality of their work is maintained and improved in terms of skills, responsibility and career opportunities, including training.[[23]](#footnote-23) – where a long hours culture is entrenched, this can be difficult to achieve without addressing this issue first
* resourcing line managers to implement part-time work (failure to do this can mean that part-time workers remain with a full-time workload or full-time colleagues are allocated the work of a reduced hours worker on top of their existing job – leading to work intensification – neither situation is conducive to a productive and positive work environment.[[24]](#footnote-24))
* training managers is essential – United States research has indicated success with training for line managers using online tools, short individual training sessions, and ensuring results are evaluated (Kossek and Hammer 2008 analysed in Hegewisch 2009)

1. ***Work organisation, job design, career part-time jobs***

Change in work practices to provide good quality part-time work is influenced by:

* a detailed understanding of perceived barriers to part-time work in a particular position to understand its basis and potential solutions
* a ‘can-do’ approach to trialling change

New approaches have included:

* trialling new arrangements: This was done successfully in one Victorian retailer (a supermarket chain) that had expressed concerns about more flexible work arrangements (Bardoel et al., 2007)
* developing deputies: a health organisation had a very senior part-time manager who deputised for the chief executive. A system of shadows and backups for essential deputising roles was devised, with different staff taking on different roles (Bardoel et al., 2007) – this type of approach also has the advantage of providing cover for full-time staff taking holidays and sick leave
* supporting part-time lawyers: a small law firm which had two senior lawyers working part-time, one of these did court work and on the day she was not working she had excellent secretarial support that could take calls from clients and who knew when to contact a senior staff member to assist if there was a problem
* ensuring continuity: in Victoria Police the perceived need for an officer to continue handling all the work linked to preparing the court cases they were involved in presented a barrier to part-time work in operational police roles. They found that this perceived problem of ‘continuity’ created difficulties for full-time as well as part-time staff – at the police station studied, a position was funded to assist officers whatever their hours worked, with this aspect of the job – it proved popular and beneficial in terms of efficiency for all (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007)
* developing self-rostering guidelines: guidelines on how to implement employee choice rostering for supermarkets were devised by one employer association to improve job quality, the emphasis was on consultation and communication with staff

1. ***Employee voice***

The benefits of consulting with staff are emphasised in academic research and good practice implementation. One study of two similar male dominated manufacturing organizations found women at one but not at the other felt they had good jobs, including good quality part-time work. The women employees at one of these organisations ‘were consulted, were provided with opportunities for training and career advancement and were given choices about working arrangements. This situation permeated all levels of the organization and was carried out by line managers. Good jobs were constructed within the organization through an array of managerial initiatives and cultural practices’. In the other organisation women were dissatisfied with their jobs. The employer appeared uncommitted to its EEO programs. Women employees ‘were not consulted…felt marginalized and regarded their jobs as being “bad”’ (Burgess et al., 2005: 473).

## How many women are in casual and permanent employment?

Job security is an important aspect of job quality. Employment as a casual rather than a permanent employee deprives the worker of secure employment and the benefits which go with it. For example, casual employees are not entitled to paid sick and carers’ leave, paid annual leave and very many cannot access (or cannot realistically access) unpaid parental leave and unfair dismissal protections.

### Casual employment and its risks

The term ‘casual’ is one that has no precise or fixed meaning in law (Owens, 2001). There are two distinct types of casuals in Australia – ‘true casuals’ that have short-term and irregular employment; and ‘long-term casuals’ who may have worked for their current employer for lengthy periods (Owens, 2001). In 2007, 57.4% of women casuals had worked in their current job for a year or more (for men the proportion was 52%) (ABS 2009b, Cat. No. 6361.0). Casuals do not receive paid sick and carers’ leave, paid annual leave or redundancy pay and may be dismissed at an hour's notice.

The *Fair Work Act* 2009 (the FWA) (and other legislation)[[25]](#footnote-25) however, provides some employment rights to casuals. These include two days unpaid personal/carer's leave per occasion and unpaid compassionate leave, and to long term casuals, unfair dismissal rights, the right to *r*equest flexible working arrangements*,* and unpaid parental leave. To acquire these rights casuals must have been employed by the same employer on a ‘regular and systematic basis‘(for 6 or 12 months to claim unfair dismissal[[26]](#footnote-26) and 12 months for the other entitlements) and have a reasonable expectation of employment continuing on this basis.

In relation to wages, casual employees are usually entitled to a loading of 20-25% on their hourly pay. Watson (2005), using HILDA[[27]](#footnote-27) data available in 2003, estimated that this loading does not prevent a wage gap between casual and permanent part-time workers existing. He estimated that permanent part-time women employees earn about 10% more than casual part-time women employees after accounting for the loading and known personal characteristics. He argues that the gap is more likely to be due to workplace factors ‘relat[ing] to the devaluation of casual jobs’ (Watson, 2005: 28).

The risks associated with casual employment have partly been recognised in changes to industrial law at the state and national levels. In 2006, the NSW Industrial Relations Commission ordered that NSW Awards include a secure employment clause covering an opportunity for casual employees to convert to permanent employment after six months’ continuous employment. Some federal awards provided for casual employees to seek permanency after a particular period of employment (Stewart, 2009).

Since the NSW Government referred its industrial relations powers to the Federal Government in January 2010, employment conditions in most NSW workplaces are now governed by the *Fair Work Act* 2009.[[28]](#footnote-28) However, the FWA does not make explicit arrangements for conversion applications but these can be included in modern awards. It appears few such provisions have been incorporated in modern awards and this has usually only been done if they were previously an ‘industry standard’ (Stewart, 2009:60).

#### Casuals: gender patterns[[29]](#footnote-29)

Women are far less likely to be employed on a permanent basis than men and are more likely to be casual employees. Table 4.1 outlines the proportion of permanent and casual employees in NSW and Australia by gender.

Table 3.4 shows that in 2009, 70.4% of employed women and 79.8% of employed men in NSW were permanent staff with the remainder employed as casuals (29.6% of women compared to 20.3% of men). Of the women employed as casuals, approximately four in five are employed part-time (24.5% part-time; 5.1% full-time[[30]](#footnote-30)); whereas for men approximately one in two casuals work part-time hours (11.4% part-time casual; 8.9% full-time casual) (ABS, 2010. Cat. No. 6105, July 2010).

A similar pattern is evident at the national level, with 28.3% of employed women working as casuals compared to one-fifth of men (21.7%), with similar proportions of women casuals working part-time.

*Table 3: Casualisation, by gender, NSW and Australia, November 2009, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Employment Status* | NSW | | | Australia | | |
| Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| Full-time permanent | 74.6 | 49.6 | 62.4 | 73.9 | 49.6 | 62.1 |
| Full-time casual | 8.9 | 5.1 | 7.0 | 9.3 | 4.4 | 6.9 |
| Part-time permanent | 5.2 | 20.8 | 12.8 | 4.7 | 21.6 | 13.0 |
| Part-time casual | 11.4 | 24.5 | 17.8 | 12.0 | 24.3 | 18.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS, 2010g Australian Labour Market Statistics Cat. No. 6105, July 2010

#### Casuals: hours of work

For women, part-time work is often also casual work. More than half the women who work part-time in NSW (and Australia) are casual. Of the entire NSW women’s employed labour force, 24.5% is both casual and part-time compared to the 20.8% which is permanent and part-time.

As shown in Table 3.1, both men and women who work full-time are largely employed on a permanent basis in NSW and Australia. For women in NSW, 5.1% are full-time casuals compared to 49.6% who are full-time permanent. There are slightly more full-time casuals as a proportion of employed women in NSW than nationally (4.4%) and slightly fewer men in NSW employed as full-time casuals than nationally (8.9% compared to 9.3%). This is likely to be due to the different industry compositions of employment, with NSW having a higher proportion of employment in service jobs which are casualised than the national level.

Half of all women employees are both permanent and full-time (49.6%) whereas nearly three out of four men are, both in NSW and nationally. A far smaller proportion of employed women than men therefore conform to the norm of secure full-time employment.

## What is the nature of women’s movement between casual and permanent jobs?

Australia at Work data (which tracks employees’ permanent or casual status across 2007, 2008 and 2009) indicates that there is a low level of movement from casual to permanent work and vice versa.[[31]](#footnote-31) Three quarters (75%) of NSW woman employees who were casuals in 2007 remained employed as casuals in 2008 and 2009.

Less than one quarter (24%) of NSW women employed as casuals moved into permanent jobs in 2008. Just over one fifth (22%) engaged as casuals in both 2008 and 2009 secured a permanent job by 2009. Most women casual employees appear to be ‘long term’ casuals – as the ABS data cited above also suggests. Although in the minority, NSW women casuals who obtained permanent employment in 2008 were highly likely (93%) to still be in permanent employment in 2009.

Similar trends exist in the movement between permanent and casual employment for women at the national level. However, a higher proportion of women at the national level remained casual in 2008 and 2009 (82% nationally compared to 75% in NSW); and the proportion of females nationally employed as casuals in 2007 and 2008 who moved into permanent employment in 2009 was lower (15% nationally compared to 22% in NSW). It appears to be easier to move from casual to permanent employment in NSW than nationally. This may be due to differences between the age profiles of women in the study from NSW compared to those at the national level (those in the NSW profile being older), or reflect the different industry composition of the NSW labour market compared to that at the national level.

The findings in *Australia at Work* of a low level of transition from casual to permanent employment are similar to those from research by Welters and Mitchell (2009) using seven years of data from the HILDA. They cautiously conclude that the longer an employee is a casual with an employer, the less likely they are to move into a non-casual job (and into unemployment). The chances of moving from casual to permanent status are reduced by the amount of time an employee has spent not in work, a finding which may have particular relevance to women.

Additionally, in *Australia at Work*, approximately 90% of women employed on a casual basis in NSW worked part-time hours across all three years of the study. This indicates little movement to full-time hours.

### Preferences and constraints

Although some research indicates women part-time casuals may be satisfied with their work (Wooden and Warren, 2004), this needs to be considered in the context of the constraints women face in seeking employment (discussed above). The low level of movement out of casual part-time work to more secure or longer hours employment may reflect these constraints as much as employee preferences given so much available part-time work is casual. The availability of casual part-time work may reflect employer preferences for ‘flexible‘ employees (Burgess et al., 2008) as much as employee preferences. Satisfaction with their jobs does not compensate women for the long-term disadvantages associated with poor quality work.

There appears to be little evidence (in Australia) that optional conversion clauses (where, for example, employers may be required to explain to casuals who have worked regularly for them that they can apply for permanency – which an employer may only refuse on reasonable grounds) work to remedy insecurity and poor job quality. In an overview of the new industrial relations system, Stewart (2009: 60) indicates that such clauses appear to have been little used. Pocock et al. (2004) have pointed out that expecting ‘insecure casuals’ to risk taking action against their employers to enforce it (as well as lose their casual loading) is unrealistic.

In this context, and drawing on proposals by Pocock et al. (2004) and Burgess et al. (2008) consideration could be given (with appropriate protection for existing casuals) to options to restrict casual employment to true casuals. These could include an obligation on employers (as part of the minimum standards established by the FWA) to notify their casual employees after a period of time (6 or 12 months) that they have the option of converting to permanent status – effectively extending the current type of conversion clauses to all casuals. Alternatively, all the employment rights associated with permanency could be automatically extended to casuals after a period of time. This would be a type of automatic conversion clause and would remove the onus from individual employees to decide whether to apply for permanent status or not.

# 4. How much do women in NSW earn and how is their pay set?

Women are paid less than men in NSW and at the national level. The difference in what men are paid compared to what women are paid, is commonly referred to as the gender pay gap. The key results for women’s pay are:

* the average weekly ordinary full-time earnings of women in NSW is $1,145.70, compared to $1,354.70 for men (this translates into an annual pay rate of $59,576.40 for women and $70,444.40 for men)
* regardless of the method of calculation, on average, women in NSW are paid less than males – the same is true at the national level
* male average weekly ordinary full-time earnings in NSW continue to be around 18% higher than average weekly ordinary full-time earnings for females
* using average weekly ordinary full-time earnings as the measure, the gender pay gap in NSW has narrowed slightly between 1995 and 2010, from men earning 22% more in 1995 to 18% more in 2010 (the gender pay gap was as high as 23% in 2000 and as low as 15% in 2004)
* excluding managerial employees and on an hourly basis, the average pay gap in NSW is currently around 10.6%
* nationally, the gender pay gap increases over a lifetime, peaking at 25% for workers between the ages of 50-54 (for full-time employees) – for junior employees (15-19 years), the gender pay gap is less than 5%
* the gender pay gap is also evident in the work that children perform
* the main methods of setting women’s pay are registered collective agreements (42.6%) and unregistered individual agreements (i.e. common law contracts) (32.2%) – approximately 19.9% of women’s pay is set by award ((ABS 2008b Cat. No. 6306.0, Employee Earnings and Hours, August)
* women in NSW are overrepresented in low paying industries such as retail trade and accommodation/food services; there is also a more distinct gender pay gap in high paying industries such as financial services, professional services, and healthcare
* women whose wages are award reliant are likely to earn less than those whose wages are determined via collective or individual agreements (critically, women in part-time or casual employment are more likely to be award reliant, and related to this, women in the accommodation/food services, retail trade and administrative services are likely to be award reliant)

There are a number of ways to compare the earnings of women with those of men. The following section reports on the gender pay gaps in NSW and Australia using average full-time weekly earnings which includes overtime (AWE), average full-time weekly ordinary time earnings which excludes overtime (AWOTE), average weekly total earnings which includes part-time as well as full-time hours and average hourly ordinary time pay rates.

All average weekly earnings data refer to one week's earnings of employees, calculated before taxation and any other deductions (e.g. tax, superannuation, board and lodging) have been made. Average hourly rates of pay used below are ordinary time only and also calculated before taxation and any other deductions (e.g. tax, superannuation, board and lodging) have been made

Average Weekly Earnings statistics are produced quarterly. Average hourly earnings (as in Table 4.4 ) are derived from data available every two years. Award, workplace and enterprise bargaining payments, and other agreed base rates of pay, are included.

## Do women earn as much as men?

Male average weekly full-time ordinary earnings (AWOTE) continue to be around 21% higher than average weekly full-time earnings for females in Australia. There is a smaller gender gap in NSW of 18%. Table 4.1 also shows the trend in the ratio of male to female average weekly full-time ordinary time earnings for NSW and nationally. While the pay gap between women and men in NSW initially improved from 1995 to 2005 the male-female ratio has remained between 1.17 and 1.18 for the past five years but remains below the national one. At the national level, the ratio has remained fairly steady across the period from 1995 to 2010, ranging from between 1.18 and 1.21. The gap has increased in 2009 and 2010 with the widest gap in the past fifteen years being in 2010 (with the ratio up to 1.21).

*Table 4.1: Gender pay gap (AWOTE), NSW and Australia, 1995-2010*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NSW | | | | Australia | | | |
| Year | Male AWOTE  ($) | Female AWOTE ($) | Ratio Male to Female | Female % of male pay | Male AWOTE  ($) | Female AWOTE ($) | Ratio Male to Female | Female % of male pay |
| 1995 | 725.00 | 596.60 | 1.22 | 82.3 | 688.90 | 575.00 | 1.20 | 83.5 |
| 1996 | 755.70 | 621.50 | 1.22 | 82.2 | 716.30 | 594.80 | 1.20 | 83.0 |
| 1997 | 773.80 | 647.50 | 1.20 | 83.7 | 743.60 | 621.20 | 1.20 | 83.5 |
| 1998 | 799.70 | 670.10 | 1.19 | 83.8 | 774.80 | 646.30 | 1.20 | 83.4 |
| 1999 | 837.40 | 705.70 | 1.19 | 84.3 | 792.10 | 669.70 | 1.18 | 84.5 |
| 2000 | 886.70 | 722.30 | 1.23 | 81.5 | 831.60 | 697.20 | 1.19 | 83.8 |
| 2001 | 927.80 | 765.60 | 1.21 | 82.5 | 867.00 | 734.60 | 1.18 | 84.7 |
| 2002 | 963.90 | 805.40 | 1.20 | 83.6 | 911.40 | 773.30 | 1.18 | 84.8 |
| 2003 | 1,019.60 | 856.00 | 1.19 | 84.0 | 963.10 | 813.10 | 1.18 | 84.4 |
| 2004 | 1,037.00 | 898.40 | 1.15 | 86.6 | 995.50 | 845.60 | 1.18 | 84.9 |
| 2005 | 1,098.80 | 949.50 | 1.16 | 86.4 | 1,050.40 | 892.60 | 1.18 | 85.0 |
| 2006 | 1,133.10 | 964.30 | 1.18 | 85.1 | 1,087.90 | 917.00 | 1.19 | 84.3 |
| 2007 | 1,183.70 | 1,007.70 | 1.17 | 85.1 | 1,140.30 | 959.40 | 1.19 | 84.1 |
| 2008 | 1,210.80 | 1,033.00 | 1.17 | 85.3 | 1,193.20 | 1,004.80 | 1.19 | 84.2 |
| 2009 | 1,279.20 | 1,085.10 | 1.18 | 84.8 | 1,268.80 | 1,054.40 | 1.20 | 83.1 |
| 2010 | 1,354.70 | 1,145.70 | 1.18 | 84.6 | 1,342.10 | 1,106.40 | 1.21 | 82.4 |

Source: ABS 2010h, Average Weekly Earnings Cat. No. 6302.0, May

Gender pay gaps appear significantly narrower in the public sector. In NSW the median remuneration for males (non-casual) in the public sector at June 2009 was $66,825; and for females was $64,203 (Public Sector Workforce (NSW), 2009)[[32]](#footnote-32). In May 2010, the Australian public sector[[33]](#footnote-33) gender pay gap in weekly full-time ordinary earnings was 13.9%, compared to 26.2% in the private sector (ABS 2010h, Cat. No. 6302.0, Tables 5 and 8, seasonally adjusted data). These findings are also apparent using average weekly total earnings for 2008[[34]](#footnote-34). Across all sectors men earn approximately 1.5 times as much as women. This is shown in Table 4.2.

*Table 4.2: Average weekly total earnings by gender and sector, Australia, 2008, $*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female | Male | Ratio Male to Female | Female% of male pay |
| Private Sector – FT |  |  |  |  |
| Managerial adult | 1401.20 | 1761.00 | 1.26 | 79.57 |
| Non-managerial adult | 1006.30 | 1255.90 | 1.25 | 80.13 |
| Non-managerial junior | 487.70 | 505.10 | 1.04 | 96.56 |
| Total non-managerial | 988.70 | 1226.00 | 1.24 | 80.64 |
| Total | 1040.90 | 1308.50 | 1.26 | 79.55 |
| Private Sector – PT | 409.40 | 389.50 | 0.95 | 105.11 |
| All Private Sector employees | 699.90 | 1117.30 | 1.60 | 62.64 |
| Public Sector – FT |  |  |  |  |
| Managerial adult | 2071.00 | 2359.80 | 1.14 | 87.76 |
| Non-managerial adult | 1203.70 | 1391.40 | 1.16 | 86.51 |
| Non-managerial junior | 493.00 | 681.81 | 1.38 | 72.31 |
| Total non-managerial | 1203.10 | 1390.30 | 1.16 | 86.54 |
| Total | 1235.20 | 1451.50 | 1.18 | 85.10 |
| Public Sector – PT | 618.70 | 587.00 | 0.95 | 105.40 |
| All Public Sector employees | 969.30 | 1306.30 | 1.35 | 74.20 |
| All Sectors – FT |  |  |  |  |
| Managerial adult | 1491.10 | 1804.70 | 1.21 | 82.62 |
| Non-managerial adult | 1062.30 | 1280.40 | 1.21 | 82.97 |
| Non-managerial junior | 487.70 | 506.60 | 1.04 | 96.27 |
| Total non-managerial | 1048.10 | 1254.80 | 1.20 | 83.53 |
| Total | 1093.80 | 1331.50 | 1.22 | 82.15 |
| All Sectors – PT | 450.80 | 414.90 | 0.92 | 108.65 |
| All Sector Employees | 762.30 | 1146.50 | 1.50 | 66.49 |

Source: ABS 2008b Employee Earnings and Hours, Cat. No. 6306.0 August

The largest gender pay gaps are in the private sector, where female employees earn approximately 63% of male employees’ earnings, compared to 74% in the public sector (averaging full- and part-time hours together). With the exception of non-managerial junior staff the wage gap is greater in the private sector compared to the public sector across all employment categories. Relative wage parity is evident for junior workers in the private sector where female employees earn approximately 97% of the male wage. Using this measure however, female part-time workers earn more than male part-time workers. Across the private and public sector female part-time employees earn approximately 9% more than male part-time workers. The NSW Government is conducting a pay equity audit for the NSW public service to investigate whether there is gender pay gap and develop best practice principles to promote flexible work practices. The purpose of this audit is to identify and provide a detailed analysis of discrepancies between pay.

Turning to hourly pay rates, for female workers in NSW, the adult (21 years and over) ordinary time hourly gender wage gap is currently 10.6%. This gap was slightly lower than the gap at the national level, which was 11.9%, Figure 4.1.

*Figure 4.1: Gender pay gap by average hourly ordinary time pay, NSW & Australia, August 2008, $*



Source: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010.

The gender pay gaps tend to worsen over female workers’ lifetimes. Figure 4.2 illustrates that while women working between the ages of 15-19 experience an average 4.4% wage gap, this increases with age, up to a differential of 25% for females between the ages of 50-54. Analysis of children’s work also indicates that females are half as likely to be paid for their work, and when paid are paid at lower rates ($8.00 per hour compared to $9.85 for males of the same age) (Fattore 2005).

*Figure 4.2: Gender pay gap, full-time employees by age group, weekly mean earnings Australia, 1990 to 2008, %*



Note: Full-time employees only, based on weekly mean earnings

Source: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010

While an analysis of gender pay gaps by industry for NSW is not available because wage data for industry is not provided at a state level, Table 4.3 provides this data for Australia. There is a strong presence of women in relatively low paying sectors such as retail, administrative services and accommodation/food services. The pay gap within these sectors tends to be low which is largely due to a high level of award reliance in these industries. While there is a strong presence of women in relatively high paying sectors such as financial and insurance services, professional, scientific and technical services and health care and social assistance, the gender pay gaps in these three industries are the highest (at 28.6%, 28.4% and 24.1% respectively). This may in part be explained by the different occupational profile of female and male workers in these industries.

*Table 4.3: Gender pay gap by industry, non-managerial employees, average hourly ordinary time pay rates, Australia, August 2008*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Award reliance  (%) | Hourly earnings | | Gender pay gap  (%) | Females as proportion of total employment (%) |
| Male  ($) | Female  ($) |
| Mining | 1.2 | 46.6 | 36.6 | 21.5 | 15.4 |
| Manufacturing | 12.2 | 27.2 | 24.3 | 10.7 | 24.1 |
| Electricity, gas, water and waste services | 5.4 | 33.1 | 30.5 | 7.9 | 23.6 |
| Construction | 9.1 | 30.5 | 25.5 | 16.4 | 11.8 |
| Wholesale trade | 9.0 | 27.5 | 24.3 | 11.6 | 34.6 |
| Retail trade | 28.9 | 22.4 | 20.7 | 7.6 | 57.7 |
| Accommodation and food services | 50.3 | 20.9 | 20.5 | 1.9 | 56.1 |
| Transport, postal and warehousing | 8.3 | 27.6 | 26.5 | 4.0 | 22.5 |
| Information media and telecommunications | 5.6 | 35.9 | 30.3 | 15.6 | 41.6 |
| Financial and insurance services | 2.2 | 41.3 | 29.5 | 28.6 | 54.3 |
| Rental, hiring and real estate services | 20.2 | 28.5 | 24.1 | 15.4 | 46.2 |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 5.4 | 40.1 | 28.7 | 28.4 | 45.3 |
| Administration and support services | 33.9 | 26.4 | 24.0 | 9.1 | 57.9 |
| Public administration and safety | 3.6 | 33.0 | 30.5 | 7.6 | 48.4 |
| Education and training | 8.4 | 34.0 | 31.4 | 7.6 | 70.5 |
| Health and social assistance | 17.2 | 36.5 | 27.7 | 24.1 | 80.8 |
| Arts and recreation services | 14.2 | 27.7 | 23.0 | 17.0 | 41.6 |
| Other services | 25.4 | 23.8 | 22.3 | 6.3 | 41.7 |
| All industries | 16.5 | 30.3 | 26.7 | 11.9 | 46.8 |

Note: Non-managerial adult employees only  
Source: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010

Female dominated occupations have historically attracted lower wages, and the type of work that women have traditionally done has been undervalued compared to the work traditionally done by men. As a way to address the problem of undervaluation based on gender, in 2000 the NSW Industrial Relations Commission handed down an Equal Remuneration Principle (ERP). The principle allows fresh assessments of the value of work and the rates of pay in an award on a gender-neutral basis. The NSW ERP does not require sex discrimination to be proved. This is now also a feature of the Commonwealth industrial relations system with the introduction of the Fair Work Act (OFWP, 2009). The *Fair Work Act* includes the concept of equal pay for work of ‘equal or comparable’ value, which provides for the consideration of pay equity based on comparisons between different but comparable work. What happens to pay equity ratios in the new federal legislative environment is a ‘must-watch area’.[[35]](#footnote-35)

## How is women’s pay set?

In order to understand the causes of the gender pay gap, it is useful to look at the gender profiles of pay setting methods. These are the legal instruments that set pay and conditions. These include awards that apply to occupations or industries; collective agreements thatcan be made between a group of employees and the employer; and individual contracts.

Female non-managerial employees earned less than males across all pay-setting methods. In 2008 the average weekly total cash earnings for NSW female employees on registered collective agreements was $814 while it was $1,163 for NSW male employees on registered collective agreements. The gender pay gap was lowest between men and women whose pay was set under an award, which reflects that average hourly pay rates for men under awards are less than those for women but women work fewer hours per week, Figure 4.3 below.

*Figure 4.3: Method of pay setting, average weekly total cash earnings, non-managerial employees, NSW, August 2008*



Source: ABS 2008c Employee Earnings and Hours, Cat. No. 6306.009 August

The average weekly cash earnings of NSW female employees on award-only arrangements ($475) are considerably lower than the average weekly cash earnings for NSW female employees on registered collective agreements ($814), unregistered collective agreements ($967), registered individual agreements ($827) and unregistered individual arrangements ($908)[[36]](#footnote-36).

Across Australia, the most common methods of pay setting for part-time employees are collective agreements and award only arrangements. Of all women working part-time more than one-quarter (28.5%) are award-reliant whereas the figure is lower for full-time women (11.1%) and full-time men (9%) (ABS 2008b Cat. No. 6306.0, Employee Earnings and Hours, August). Women casuals (like men) are much more likely to be reliant on awards than women in permanent employment. In 2008 nearly 42.8% of women in casual employment were award-reliant in contrast to only 12.4% of women in permanent employment. For casual employees overall the most common method of pay setting was by award (39.7%).

The award or pay scale only method of pay setting for employees was highest in the accommodation and food services industry (50.3%), administrative and support services (33.9%) and retail trade (28.9%). All of these industries have a large proportion of female employees. The collective agreement method was highest in the public administration and safety industry (88.2%), education and training (81.2%), electricity, gas, water and waste services (67.5%), health care and social assistance (64.5%). All of these industries have a high proportion of public sector employment. Individual arrangements were highest in the wholesale trade industry (75.5%) and professional, scientific and technical services (70.9%) (Table 15, ABS 2008b, Cat. No. 6306.0, Employee Earnings and Hours, August).

The gender pay gap in NSW is lower than other States and Territories in Australia. The high level of award-reliance among female employees in NSW is likely to contribute to this. Table 4.4 outlines the gender pay gap for States and Territories in Australia at August 2008, taken from the Australian Government submission to the Fair Work Australia Annual Wage Review, 2010 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010).

*Table 4.4: Gender pay gap, (non-managerial adults) by state/territory – average hourly ordinary time rates of pay, August 2008*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Adult hourly ordinary time earnings ($) | | Gender Pay Gap (%) |
|  | Female | Male |
| NSW | 27.80 | 31.10 | 10.6 |
| Victoria | 26.30 | 29.50 | 10.8 |
| Queensland | 25.40 | 29.30 | 13.3 |
| South Australia | 25.10 | 28.30 | 11.3 |
| Western Australia | 26.30 | 33.10 | 20.5 |
| Tasmania | 24.80 | 26.10 | 5.0 |
| Northern Territory | 26.30 | 29.60 | 11.1 |
| Australian Capital Territory | 31.50 | 35.60 | 11.5 |
| Australia | 26.70 | 30.30 | 11.9 |

Source: Commonwealth of Australia (2010).

Table 4.4 shows that NSW had the second lowest hourly gender pay gap in Australia for non managerial adults. The gender pay gaps vary from 5% in Tasmania to 20.5% in Western Australia. According to the submission (from which table 4.4 is taken) most of the variation was due to variation in male hourly rates (which varied by $9.50). In comparison female earnings varied by $3.00 (excluding the ACT, which has high female earnings).The relatively high gender pay gap in Western Australia is influenced by high male earnings, with the male average hourly rate being $2.80 above the national average and the female average hourly rate, being $0.40 below the national average.

Related to gender pay equity is the fact that women, regardless of their position in the labour market are less likely to collectively bargain. In part, this can be attributed to the fact that they have traditionally relied on institutional means of wage and condition setting such as awards and other determinations made by state and federal industrial tribunals. The Australia at Work data show that in 2009 a slightly lower proportion of female (38%) compared to male employees (44%) in NSW reported directly negotiating their pay and conditions with their employer.

*Table 4.5: Employee self-reports on who negotiates their pay and conditions, NSW, 2009, %*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Male | Female | All |
| There is no negotiation | 7.6 | 8.3 | 7.9 |
| Negotiation directly with employer | 44.0 | 38.0 | 41.3 |
| Union negotiated | 32.1 | 34.8 | 33.3 |
| Group of employees negotiated | 5.5 | 3.3 | 4.5 |
| Another person or group negotiated | 4.0 | 1.8 | 3.0 |
| Don’t know | 6.7 | 13.8 | 9.9 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Population: NSW Employees only

Source: Australia at Work W3

Weight: Weights09

Many employees lack an understanding of how their pay and conditions are determined. From Table 4.5 we can also see that among NSW employees, females were twice as likely (14%) as males (7%) to say that they ‘don’t know’ who negotiates their pay and conditions on their behalf with their employer which, together with the proportion stating there is no negotiation, indicates that women in particular commonly lack ‘voice’ in their workplaces. Research also indicates that many employees accept their jobs on a ‘take it or leave it’ basis. For example, in 2009, respondents in the Australia at Work survey were asked whether they feel they have the *opportunity* to negotiate with their employer about their pay. Those that feel they have the opportunity to do so are then asked whether they have actually negotiated their pay with their employer in the previous year. Almost two-fifths (39%) of NSW female employees felt that they had the *opportunity* to negotiate their pay with their employer. Younger female employees were more likely than older female employees to report having the opportunity to negotiate their pay.

Of those NSW female employees who felt they had the opportunity to negotiate their pay with their employer, less than half (42%) also reported *actually having done so* in the previous year. In comparison, only 31% of those in Tasmania who felt they had the opportunity to negotiate their pay with their employer *actually did so* in the previous year. In the Northern Territory 50% of women who felt they had the opportunity went on to negotiate their pay. Australia-wide this figure is 39%. While younger female workers were more likely than older female workers to feel they had the opportunity to negotiate their pay, a lower proportion of young female employees actually went on to do so. The persistence of the gender pay gap remains a critical issue for women in NSW. There appears to be several reasons for the continuing gender gap, including the weaker industrial relations strength of women vis-à-vis men and the traditional under-valuing of work stereotypically characterised as ‘women’s work’. Essentially, whether an employee bargains comes down to two main influences: the level of bargaining power and structural factors such as the size of the workplace – employees with limited bargaining power are not involved in workplace negotiation; they tend to be low-paid, low-skilled and those with weaker attachment to the workforce such as part-time workers and casuals. All of these factors are associated with the employment of women (van Wanrooy, et al, 2009; Jefferson, 2009; Richardson, 2009).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, there are many ways to measure gender pay gaps. There is, however, no consistently reported measure or common access point for research and data analysis of these matters in the Australian context (NSW OFWP, 2009). Accordingly, the research team supports the development of a federal research program into pay equity and associated issues related to women’s workforce participation. While the recently completed process of Award Modernisation presented an opportunity for addressing equal remuneration across a wide range of occupations and industries, this did not appear to be a focal point of the approach adopted by the Australian Industrial Commission, and the newly established Fair Work Australia. As a result, it is suggested that the award review process provides another opportunity for a review of classification scales and pay relativities within and between awards.

# How many women in NSW have access to paid leave?

Access to paid leave is one important way to provide women with the flexibility they often need in order to help them balance work with other responsibilities, especially caring. The importance of paid leave in balancing work and family responsibilities has partly been recognised in the National Employment Standards that provide for 20 days’ paid annual leave, 10 days’ paid personal/carer’s leave, and two days’ paid compassionate leave[[37]](#footnote-37) as required for permanent staff. From the beginning of 2011, paid parental leave will be available to the vast majority of working women. However access to paid leave entitlements varies according to a range of factors. The key results relating to leave entitlements are:

* across Australia, 62.3% of female employees have access to paid leave entitlements (defined as having employer provided and paid sick leave, and/or holiday leave), compared to 60.6% of male employees)
* 24.8% of female employees do not have access to paid leave entitlements (compared to 15.7% of men)[[38]](#footnote-38)
* given that approximately 30% of women in NSW are employed casually, almost a third of women do not have access to paid leave entitlements
* for female employees in Australia, the occupation groups with the highest percentage of paid leave entitlements are managers (91.7%), professionals (87.8%) and clerical and administrative workers (82.6%)
* Australian women in the accommodation/food industry, or working as labourers, sales workers or community/personal services workers are less likely to receive paid leave entitlements
* Australia-wide, 49% of women receive paid parental leave entitlements. (compared to 42% of men)
* women working full-time have much greater access to paid parental leave than part-time women employees (Australia-wide)
* access to parental leave entitlements is greater for high skilled workers in managerial (48%) and professional roles (58%)(in contrast, around 15% of lower skilled labourers and sales workers have access to these entitlements)
* paid parental leave entitlements are far more extensively available in the public sector than the private sector

## General paid leave entitlements – how many women have paid leave entitlements?

In November 2009, there were approximately 10.7 million employed people in Australia. Of these, 61% (6.5 million) were employees with paid leave entitlements, that is, they were entitled to paid sick and carers’ and/or paid holiday leave. Of the remaining employed people:

* 2.1 million were employees without paid leave entitlements
* 1 million were independent contractors
* 975,000 were other business operators (ABS, 2010a, Cat 6359.0)

Of the 6.5 million people who were employees with paid leave entitlements, a minority, 36%, were women. Table 5.1 shows the proportion of employees with and without access to leave entitlements by gender. The proportion of female employees without access (24.8%) was greater than the share of men (15.7%), while the proportion of female and male employees with access was similar for both women (62.3%) and men (60.6%).

***Table 5.1: Employee access to entitlements by gender, Australia, % of employed persons, November 2008-November 2009***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Entitlement Status** | **November 2008** | | **November 2009** | |
| **Female** | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** |
| With paid leave entitlements | 62.5 | 61.3 | 62.3 | 60.6 |
| Without paid Leave entitlements | 24.0 | 15.1 | 24.8 | 15.7 |

Excludes people who were contributing family workers in their main job.

Source: ABS 2010a Forms of Employment Cat. No. 6359.0 November

The high proportion of female employees without paid leave entitlements is related to the high proportion of female employees (nearly one-third, see Chapter 3) who are employed as casuals. Casuals do not usually receive paid sick and carers’ and/or paid holiday leave. Entitlement to paid leave varies by occupation, however across all occupations greater percentages of men have access to paid leave entitlements compared to women. Table 5.2 shows the percentage of employees with paid leave entitlements by occupation.

***Table 5.2: Employee access to entitlements by gender, occupation and employment status, Australia, % of employed persons to November 2009***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female | | | Male | | | F-M Difference | | |
| Occupation | Full-time | PT | Total | Full-time | PT | Total | Full-time | PT | Total |
| Managers | 96.4 | 66.3 | 91.7 | 95.9 | 47.8 | 94.0 | 0.5 | 18.5 | -2.3 |
| Professionals | 95.7 | 71.3 | 87.8 | 94.9 | 51.2 | 90.8 | 0.8 | 20.1 | -3.0 |
| Technicians and Trades Workers | 86.0 | 41.9 | 66.6 | 90.7 | 39.1 | 86.8 | -4.6 | 2.8 | -20.2 |
| Community and Personal Service | 84.1 | 42.0 | 56.7 | 82.0 | 25.5 | 60.4 | 2.1 | 16.5 | -3.7 |
| Clerical and Administrative | 94.5 | 63.7 | 82.6 | 91.2 | 41.8 | 84.3 | 3.3 | 21.9 | -1.7 |
| Sales Workers | 88.7 | 26.0 | 46.4 | 91.1 | 20.7 | 63.8 | -2.3 | 5.3 | -17.4 |
| Machinery Operators and Drivers | 77.5 | 34.0 | 60.5 | 84.9 | 19.4 | 77.2 | -7.4 | 14.6 | -16.7 |
| Labourers | 75.3 | 31.5 | 47.5 | 74.1 | 20.7 | 55.3 | 1.1 | 10.8 | -7.8 |

Source: ABS 2010a Forms of Employment Cat. No. 6359.0 November

For female employees, the occupation groups with the highest percentage of paid leave entitlements are managers (91.7%), professionals (87.8%) and clerical and administrative workers (82.6%). For male employees the same occupation groups have high levels of paid leave entitlements, that is, managers (94%), professionals (90.8%), and clerical and administrative workers (84.3%). However across all occupation groups the percentage of male employees with paid leave entitlements is greater than the percentage of women with paid leave entitlements. For female employees the occupations with high percentages of employees without paid leave entitlements include sales workers (53.6%); labourers (52.5%) and community and personal service workers (43.3%). For male employees occupations with high percentages of employees without paid leave entitlements include labourers (44.7%), community and personal service workers (39.6%) and sales workers (36.2%) (ABS, 2010a, Cat. No. 6359.0).

Access to paid leave entitlements is greater for full-time staff than part-time staff, which also partly explains the greater percentage of male employees with paid leave entitlements compared to female employees. Most full-time employees had paid leave entitlements (90%). By comparison, of the 2.7 million part-time workers, less than half (42%) had paid leave entitlements (ABS, 2010a, Cat. No. 6359.0), reflecting the very high level of casualisation amongst part-time workers. Amongst women part-timers, over half are employed as casuals (see Chapter 3).

***Paid Parental Leave***

Paid parental leave has been a major social, industrial and political concern in Australia over the past few years, particularly within the context of: the ability of Australian parents to balance their work and family responsibilities; concerns over the costs and availability of child care; shrinking labour markets; an ageing population; and initiatives to increase the fertility rate in Australia.

In 2009 the Productivity Commission released its inquiry report into the provision of a paid parental leave scheme. The Federal Government accepted most of the recommendations, and in June 2010 the *Paid Parental Leave Bill* was passed. The scheme commences on 1 January 2011 and will provide 18 weeks at the federal minimum wage for the primary carer (usually the mother). Two weeks paid leave for the other parent is to be introduced by the federal Government from January 2013 . Eligibility is relatively wide, and is wider than the eligibly requirement for unpaid parental leave under the Fair Work Act. This may cause some confusion and there have been calls to align the eligibility tests or to address the problem in some way.[[39]](#footnote-39)

The applicant must have been engaged in work continuously for at least 10 of the 13 months prior to the expected birth or adoption of the child and undertaken at least 330 hours of paid work in the 10-month period (an average of around one day of paid work a week). The payment is available to those earning less than $150,000 per year.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Not all Australian workers have had access to paid maternity/parental leave. The statistics are collected in different ways, but the latest estimates from the ABS indicate that 49% of women had access to paid maternity leave and 42% of men had access to paid paternity leave (ABS 2010a, Cat. No. 6359.0). These data do not indicate the duration of leave, but EOWA data on companies with 100 or more employees[[41]](#footnote-41) and analysis of enterprise agreements (Baird et al, 2009), suggest that in the private sector the most common periods of paid maternity leave are 6 weeks, 9 weeks and 12 weeks. NSW public servants have had access to paid maternity leave of 14 weeks since 2005. In 2005 one week of paid paternity leave was also awarded (Baird et al, 2009).

The new paid Parental Leave Scheme will extend the availability of paid parental leave. Productivity Commission estimates for its proposed scheme which was very similar to that legislated for by the government, suggests 85% of women and 95% of men will be eligible for the payment due to wide eligibility criteria (Productivity Commission, 2009). It will particularly benefit low-paid women who are less likely to be covered by agreements or policies granting them paid leave at present. Its provision for coverage of casuals and the self-employed will be particularly beneficial. To date, the spread of paid parental leave depended either on enterprise agreements (the contents of which were subject to periodic renegotiation), or company policies which could be changed by employers unilaterally.

ABS data provides details of paid parental leave by sector, industry, occupation and hours.[[42]](#footnote-42) High proportions of public sector workers receive paid parental leave entitlements – 66% of female and 50% of male public sector workers receive parental leave entitlements. In the private sector 28% of female and 21% of male employees have parental leave entitlements.

Across virtually all industries, women in Australia have greater access to parental leave than men, although this varies considerably between industries. Figure 5.1 shows levels of parental leave entitlement by industry and gender. Low levels of parental leave entitlements exist in the accommodation/food services, retail trade, administrative services and rental/real estate services industries. These are shown in Figure 5.1.

***Figure 5.1: Parental leave entitlement, Australia, by industry and gender, 2009, %***



Source: ABS 2009c Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Cat. No. 6310.0 August

At the occupational level, greater proportions of high skilled workers in managerial (48%) and professional roles (58%) have parental leave entitlements. In contrast, around 15% of lower skilled labourers and sales workers have access to these entitlements, as shown in Figure 5.2.

***Figure 5.2: Parental leave by occupation and gender, Australia, 2009, %***



Source: ABS 2009c Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Cat. No. 6310.0 August

This distribution of entitlements is linked to the employment status of workers in these occupations, with part-time work being prevalent in areas such as accommodation/food services and retail, and sales work. The limited entitlement to parental leave in these occupations is in part due to high turn-over and significant proportions of casual staff in these occupations.

Women who work full-time have greater access to parental leave entitlements than women who work part-time. Figure 5.3 presents the data for full-time and part-time employees, and indicates that almost half of female full-time workers (49.9%) have access to parental leave entitlements compared to 21.8% of women who are employed part-time. While access to parental leave has improved over time for both full-time and part-time workers, the demarcation between these groups remains stark.

*Figure 5.3: Access to parental leave by full-time and part-time hours and gender, Australia, 2002 and 2009, %*



Source: ABS 2009c Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Cat. No. 6310.0 August

Access to paid leave remains an important issue for women. An example of progressive application of leave entitlements is the Industrial Award endorsed by the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW Local Government employers in NSW. These employers will top up the wages of female and male employees who receive paid parental leave instalments under the Federal Scheme to their full rate of pay. The Award takes effect from 1 January 2011 and provides 18 weeks parental leave at full pay to both mothers and fathers as an Award entitlement. The paid parental leave period will be counted as service for accruing annual leave, sick leave and long service leave and employees will also receive superannuation contribution payment[[43]](#footnote-43).

Entitlements to paid leave are largely available to permanent employees only, and given that women predominate in casual employment, this highlights the importance of women securing permanent employment. The new paid parental leave scheme is a minimum which enterprise bargaining may improve upon. Such improvements are likely to continue to exclude casuals. Yet as many women move to part-time work which is often casual after the birth of their first child, they may forfeit improved rights under enterprise agreements which would benefit them when they have their second and later children.

# How do women in NSW balance paid employment with their child caring and other caring responsibilities?

Over the last quarter of a century, the proportion of women of childbearing age and women with dependent children who are participating in the Australian labour force has risen markedly (see Chapter 1). This has contributed significantly to economic growth and government revenues. It has also corresponded with an increase in the average age at which women first give birth and the increasing likelihood of dual care responsibilities for women (and men) that have to care for older parents and their children. The level of support available for combining paid work with childbearing and family life will have a strong bearing on women’s labour force participation.

Our key findings relating to women balancing work and care responsibilities are:

* 31% of women in NSW provided unpaid child care in 2006, compared to 23% of men
* 74% of women in NSW reported having spent time on unpaid domestic work, in contrast to 63% of men
* as well as more women undertaking care, more women are primary carers and commit more hours to care responsibilities than men
* women in NSW are more likely than men to provide care to older people, people with disabilities and children who aren’t their own
* women who provided care to a person with a disability, long-term health condition and an older person were more than twice as likely as men to take the role of primary carer for that individual
* households in NSW with children under the age of 15 are likely to have a male full-time earner and a female part-time earner
* in couples with children under 15, 13.8% of working women work part-time, compared to 2.2% of men, and 9.3% of women work full-time compared to 26% of men;
* women and men in NSW most commonly used paid leave and flexible working hours to care for another person (the other most common work arrangements used by women, are part-time work, casual work, or unpaid leave – men are most likely to use rostered days off)
* 31% of Australian women who are willing to work but not actively looking (hidden unemployment) cite care responsibilities as their main reason for not looking for work
* 21% of children under the age of 12 years in NSW attended formal child care, 28% of children were looked after by extended family or other informal care arrangements and 58% of children had no usual child care arrangements. No usual child care arrangements means they did not use any formal (such as preschool or long day care) or informal care arrangements (such as care by extended family)

As the population ages and the proportion of people of working age declines, women’s contribution to economic growth through their labour force participation and to government revenue through the taxes they pay will be increasingly important. However, the ageing of the population and increasing longevity of older people is likely to heighten the future demand for women (and men) of working age to provide care and assistance to older relatives and friends who may be unwell, have a disability or who require support for daily living. At the same time, demands on parents, particularly women, for childcare will continue. To resolve the conflict between the need for greater labour force participation and for increased unpaid caring work, those who undertake caring responsibilities will need more and different assistance to satisfactorily balance these activities.

## How many women provide care in NSW?

There are two broad definitions of ‘care’ used in workforce analysis. The first refers to ordinary parenting or guardianship duties towards children living in the household. The second encompasses the ongoing personal assistance provided to an older person or someone with a disability or in ill health. Women are more likely than men to undertake both of these types of caring responsibility. Primary carer refers to the person with the main or sole caring responsibilities.

According to the 2006 Census, 31% of women in NSW provided unpaid care for their own and/or another person’s children in the two weeks prior to census night, compared to 23% of men. [[44]](#footnote-44) A corresponding gender discrepancy was found in relation to care for people with disabilities, long-term health conditions and older people. Approximately 14% of women and 9% of men provided such care over the same period. These percentages do not refer to the amount of care given but the percentage of men and women who actually provided care, with women also providing larger amounts of care in terms of hours compared to men.

The care women in NSW provide differs somewhat to that of males, with women providing a broader range of care than men. Table 6.1 shows the type of care provided by the gender of carer in NSW, obtained from the 2005 *Managing Care and Work* Survey(ABS 2006a Cat. No. 4912.1). Women carers are almost as likely to provide care for children other than their own (51% of female carers) as they are their own children (55%), while approximately one-fifth (19%) provide assistance to a person aged 65 years and over. In contrast, male care activity tends to be concentrated within the immediate household, with 62% of male carers providing care for their own children and just one-third looking after children who are not theirs. Men are also less likely than women to provide care to a person aged 65 and over with 13% of male carers providing this.

*Table 6.1: Caregiver (18 and over) by recipient of care, NSW, 2005*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Females | | Males | |
|  | ‘000 | % | ‘000 | % |
| Own child living in household(a) | 741.2 | 54.5 | 650.0 | 61.6 |
| Other child(a) | 688.6 | 50.6 | 355.8 | 33.7 |
| Person with a long-term health condition or disability(b) | 105.2 | 7.7 | 84.0 | 8.0 |
| Person with a short-term sickness or injury(b) | 67.9 | 5.0 | 49.6 | 4.7 |
| Person aged 65 years or over | 257.1 | 18.9 | 141.0 | 13.4 |
| **Total(c)** | **1360.5** |  | **1056.0** |  |

(a) Aged 14 years and under

(b) Aged 15-64 years

(c) Figures do not sum to total (nor percentages to 100) as person could provide care for more than one recipient

Source: ABS 2006a Managing Care and Work, Cat. No. 4912.1

The 2005 *Managing Care and Work* survey (ABS, 2006a Cat. No. 4912.1) provides a useful overview of the employment activity and work-based care arrangements of carers in NSW and is the most recent survey of its kind. It also supplies disaggregated data on the two major types of caregivers (to children and to adults) outlined above, and profiles various characteristics of these groups. The survey shows that of all individuals (18 and over whether or not in paid work) who provided care in the six months to October 2005, 55% were women. Women provided the majority of care regardless for all care recipients:

* of all persons who cared for a child not their own, 65.9% were women
* of all persons who cared for a person with a long-term health condition or disability, 55.6% were women
* of all persons who cared for a person with a short-term sickness or injury, 57.8% were women
* of all persons who cared for a person aged 65 years or over, 64.6% were women

Approximately three-quarters of female carers had ongoing care responsibilities (77% compared to 82% of male carers) with women being more likely to provide one off or occasional care than men.[[45]](#footnote-45)

## How do women’s child care responsibilities affect their labour market activity?

Female employment status is affected by child care responsibilities much more than it is for men. Table 6.2 illustrates the employment patterns of men and women in different household arrangements with and without children in NSW. The greatest discrepancy between males and females is seen in couples with children under 15, where 13.8% of working women undertake part-time work, compared to 2.2% of men, and 9.3% of women work full-time compared to 26% of men. Five per cent of the female workforce is made up of single mothers of children aged less than 15, while single fathers comprise less than 1% of the male workforce.

*Table 6.2: Household structure and employment status, NSW, 2010, percentage of workforce by sex\**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Employed FT** | **Employed PT** | **Unemployed** | **Total** |
| Couple only |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 14.9 | 8.0 | 0.7 | 23.6 |
| *Male* | 18.0 | 3.6 | 0.6 | 22.3 |
| Couple, child under 15 |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 9.3 | 13.8 | 1.0 | 24.1 |
| *Male* | 26.0 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 29.2 |
| Couple, children over 15 |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 6.4 | 5.1 | 0.2 | 11.7 |
| *Male* | 9.1 | 1.2 | 0.3 | 10.6 |
| Single parent, child under 15 |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 1.7 | 2.8 | 0.7 | 5.2 |
| *Male* | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Single parent, child over 15 |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 2.3 | 1.2 | 0.0 | 3.5 |
| *Male* | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| Single Person household |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 6.0 | 2.3 | 0.3 | 8.6 |
| *Male* | 7.1 | 1.4 | 0.6 | 9.1 |
| **All households** |  |  |  |  |
| ***Female*** | 51.8 | 43.3 | 5.0 | 100.0 |
| ***Male*** | 78.3 | 16.4 | 5.3 | 100.0 |

Note: Expressed as proportion of male, female and total workforce as a percentage.

\*Coverage of all males in the labour force is 73%; certain workers, including dependent children and students, have been excluded.

Source: ABS 2010c Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6202.0 June

Eight per cent of employees ceased work altogether when their youngest child was born, and in this case the vast majority (96%) were women. The most common leave types taken by women when the youngest child was born were unpaid parental leave (39%) and paid parental leave (32%). This pattern broadly reflects the findings of the Parental Leave in Australia Study[[46]](#footnote-46) (PLAS). For men, the most common leave types were paid recreational/holiday/annual leave (68%) and paid parental leave (19%) reflecting the findings in PLAS and the widespread lack of paid parental leave for men. The duration of the leave taken by men is considerably shorter than that taken but women.

Research by the Australia Institute (Richardson, 2009) indicates that parenting responsibilities are associated with contrasting workforce behaviour in men and women. Specifically, the presence of young children in the household tends to lead men to increase their involvement in the labour market and women to reduce theirs. This is likely to reflect a prevailing ‘male breadwinner’ model of earning in two-parent households. As discussed in Chapter 1, a significant number of women are among the ‘hidden unemployed’ – women who are willing to work but not actively looking for jobs. Within this group, 31% of women stated that the reason they were not looking for work was because they were caring for children. Of those who were completely out of the labour force, 43% named home duties and child care as their main activities. Among females aged 25-34 years and those aged 35-44 years, 82% and 78% respectively cited home duties or child care as their main occupation (Richardson, 2009).

One way of facilitating increased female labour force participation is through flexible work and hours arrangements. Sixty-three per cent of all women working in the NSW public sector, worked full-time in 2009 compared to 56% of all women employees in NSW (ABS 2010c Labour Force 6202.0). This may be influenced by flexible work hour arrangements in the NSW public sector which may facilitate more women to work full-time hours. Further investigation is needed to understand which flexible work practices facilitate full-time working in the public sector.

## How does women’s care for older people and people with disabilities affect their labour market activity?

Examining the entire population (not just those of working age), approximately 12% of women and 10% of men provide ongoing, unpaid care to people with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or older people (aged 60 and over) (ABS, 2004a). Table 6.3 provides the proportion of women and men in NSW who have these care responsibilities using the 2003 ABS *Disability, Ageing and Carers* survey. While the percentage of men and women with care responsibilities differed only marginally, women who provided care to a person with a disability or an older person were more than twice as likely as men to take the role of primary carer for that individual (26% of female carers versus 12% of male carers).

*Table 6.3: Caring responsibilities for the elderly, sick and disabled, NSW, 2003*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Females** | | **Males** | |
|  | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** |
| **Carer** | 407.0 | 12.3 | 341.0 | 10.3 |
| *Primary carer*  *Not a primary carer* | 107.6 | 26.4 | 42.1 | 12.3 |
| 299.4 | 73.6 | 298.9 | 87.7 |
| **Not a carer** | 2891.3 | 87.7 | 2949.2 | 89.6 |
| Total | 3298.3 | 100.0 | 3290.2 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2004a Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey, Cat. No. 4430.0

Up to date information on the labour market activity of women who care for people with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or older people is available from the *Australia at Work* survey findings, Table 6.4. In 2009, 14% of female employees in the study (of those participating in the labour market) reported having caring responsibilities of this nature.

*Table 6.4: Carer responsibilities for female workers, NSW and Australia, 2009, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Primary carer** | **Non-primary carer** | **Not a carer** | **Total** |
| *Part-time hours* | | | | |
| NSW (*n*=400) | 9.0 | 5.1 | 85.9 | 100.0 |
| Australia (*n*=1,125) | 6.8 | 6.2 | 87.0 | 100.0 |
| *Full-time hours* | | | | |
| NSW (*n*=463) | 6.4 | 5.9 | 87.7 | 100.0 |
| Australia (*n*=1,300) | 5.0 | 4.4 | 90.6 | 100.0 |
| *Self employed* | | | | |
| NSW (*n*=123) | 10.0 | 5.5 | 84.5 | 100.0 |
| Australia (*n*=324) | 8.5 | 6.2 | 85.3 | 100.0 |
| ***All female workers*** | | | | |
| NSW (*n*=986) | 6.2 | 5.4 | 88.4 | 100.0 |
| Australia (*n*=2,750) | 8.0 | 5.5 | 86.5 | 100.0 |

\* Estimate not reliable n<20

Population: All female respondents remaining in study in 2009 and in paid employment in 2009

Weight: Weights09

Source: Australia at Work W3

Among NSW female workers, 9% of those working part-time hours, 6.4% of those working full-time and 10% of those who are self-employed report being a primary carer for a person with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or older person. A further 5.1% of NSW females working part-time hours, 5.9% of those working full-time hours and 5.5% of those who are self-employed report having care responsibilities but not being the primary carer.

## What work arrangements do women use to care?

In 2005, more than 1.16 million carers in NSW were employees in paid employment. Of these, almost 532,000 (46%) had used some form of work arrangement in the last six months to help care for another person, as shown in Table 6.5 (ABS, 2006a). More women (about 57% of the total) than men employees used such work arrangements.

*Table 6.5: Work arrangements used to care for a child or an adult, NSW, 2005*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Females** | | **Males** | |
|  | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** |
| Paid leave | 143.1 | 47.5 | 133.5 | 57.8 |
| Flexible working hours | 113.2 | 37.6 | 80.4 | 34.8 |
| Rostered day off | 40.3 | 13.4 | 44.1 | 19.1 |
| Unpaid leave | 51.1 | 17.0 | 25.0 | 10.8 |
| Informal arrangement with employer | 40.6 | 13.5 | 26.4 | 11.4 |
| Part-time work | 51.4 | 17.1 | \*3.6 | \*1.6 |
| Working from home | 23.4 | 7.8 | 25.0 | 10.8 |
| Casual work | 37.7 | 12.5 | 9.4 | 4.1 |
| Shift work | 16.1 | 5.4 | 19.1 | 8.3 |
| **Total** | **301.0** | **100.0** | **230.8** | **100.0** |

Note: Figures do not sum to total as a person could use more than one type of work arrangement

\*Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

Source: ABS 2006a Cat. No. 4912.1,

Table 6.5 indicates that the most common work arrangements used by both women and men to care for another person were paid leave[[47]](#footnote-47), and flexible working hours. However, males were more likely than females to use paid leave (57.8% compared to 47.5%) or a rostered day off (19.1% compared to 13.4%). Females were considerably more likely to use part-time work (17.1% compared to less than 2% of men), casual work (12.5% versus 4.1%) and unpaid leave (17% versus 10.8%) to care for another person.

Of the 532,000 employees who used work arrangements to care, approximately 21% wanted to increase their use of work arrangements to help care for someone. Around one-fifth (19%) of women in the private sector compared to 25% of men wanted to do this. While the public sector is at the forefront of introducing flexible work arrangements, around one-quarter (23%) of females and around 16% of males wanted to increase their use of work arrangements to care. This suggests that flexible work arrangements and other policies to facilitate work and care need to be extended so that a greater number of employees can access such arrangements when needed.

More women than men use self employment arrangements as a strategy to make care easier. Around 380,000 of all carers were self-employed, of whom 10% had become self-employed to make it easier for them to care for another person. Triple the proportion of females as males shifted to self-employment to make caring easier (18% compared to 6%) though as indicated in Chapter 2, there is little evidence that self-employment enables a better work-life balance than being employed. Once again, this reinforces the fact that many employees are not able to access sufficient work arrangements to help them care, including flexible work hours. This might also suggest that the cost of childcare may be so high, that women may find it a cost effective measure to remain at home and try to start a business, adapting this with their care arrangements.

The *Negotiating Caring and Employment* (NCE) report (Thomson, Hill, Griffiths and Bittman 2009) looked at how carers manage to combine work and care. One aspect examined how aspects of work could hinder or promote this. The report found that having at least one ‘carer-friendly’ working arrangement available increased the chances of their remaining in work once they took up caring responsibilities. Submissions to the ‘It’s About Time: Women, Men, work and Family’ final report refer to the need for an increased range of workplace accommodations to be available to working carers. One example is having the use of a work telephone to make monitoring/support calls to the person being cared for (HREOC, 2010). The NCE report additionally found that carers in permanent employment as opposed to casual work are more likely to remain in work.

#### Formal child care arrangements

Access to, and the cost of, child care remains a key issue for women in NSW. Data from the ABS *Childhood, Education and Care* survey, provides insights into the child care arrangements for children in NSW. In 2008, 21% of children under the age of 12 years in NSW attended formal child care (defined as regulated care away from the child's home). The main types of formal care are before and/or after school care, long day care, family day care and occasional care (ABS 2008a Cat. No. 4402.0).

Approximately 28% of children were looked after by extended family or other informal care arrangements (defined as non-regulated care, arranged by a child's parent/guardian, either in the child's home or elsewhere. It comprises care by (step) brothers or sisters, care by grandparents, care by other relatives (including a non-resident parent) and care by other (unrelated) people such as friends, neighbours, nannies or babysitters. It may be paid or unpaid (ABS 2008a Cat. No. 4402.0). Fifty-eight per cent of children had no usual child care arrangements. See Table 6.6 below.

*Table 6.6: Type of care usually attended, NSW, 2008*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Age of child (years)** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Under 2** |  | **2-3** |  | **4-5** |  | **6-12** |  | **Total** |  |
|  | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** |
| **Children with usual child care arrangements** | 71 | 40 | 115 | 65 | 92 | 53 | 202 | 33 | 479 | 42 |
| *Formal care* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Before and/or after school care | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 7 | 62 | 10 | 74 | 6 |
| Long day care | 21 | 12 | 76 | 43 | 33 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 130 | 11 |
| Other formal care | 13 | 7 | 17 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 39 | 3 |
| ***Children in formal care*** | **33** | **19** | **89** | **50** | **49** | **29** | **66** | **11** | **238** | **21** |
| *Informal care* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grandparent | 36 | 20 | 45 | 25 | 42 | 24 | 92 | 15 | 215 | 19 |
| Other person | 11 | 6 | 22 | 12 | 27 | 16 | 81 | 13 | 141 | 12 |
| ***Children in informal care*** | **45** | **25** | **61** | **35** | **63** | **36** | **153** | **25** | **322** | **28** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Children in formal care only | 26 | 14 | 54 | 30 | 29 | 17 | 48 | 8 | 157 | 14 |
| Children in informal care only | 37 | 21 | 26 | 15 | 42 | 24 | 136 | 22 | 242 | 21 |
| Children in both formal and informal care | 8 | 4 | 35 | 20 | 21 | 12 | 17 | 3 | 81 | 7 |
| **Children with no usual child care arrangements** | **108** | **60** | **62** | **35** | **81** | **47** | **417** | **67** | **669** | **58** |
| All children | 178 | 100 | 178 | 100 | 173 | 100 | 619 | 100 | 1148 | 100 |

Source: ABS 2008 Cat. No. 44020DO001.200806, Childhood Education and Care, NSW, June, Table 1

Use of formal child care arrangements is similar for couple and single parent families (21% and 20% respectively). However a far greater proportion of single parent families use informal care arrangements compared to couple families (38% and 26% respectively). This is likely to be due to the difficulty many single parents in NSW have in meeting the costs of formal child care for their children (ABS Cat. No. 44020DO001.200806, Table 3). This means that extended family members play a crucial role in assisting single parents in entering and remaining in paid employment.

Some two-thirds (67%) of NSW parents cited work-related reasons as the main reason their children were in formal care, one in five (22%) cited benefit to the children and the remaining 9% said it was due to personal reasons. For those parents with children in informal care arrangements, three-fifths (61%) cited work-related reasons, one-quarter (24%) cited personal reasons and the remaining 15% cited benefit for the child (ABS Cat. No. 44010D0001.200806, Table 5).

Parents who use care limit their care hours to keep the total costs down. Table 6.7 provides the usual weekly cost of care by type of care, reported as the net cost of care to the parents after the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Tax Rebate have been deducted. Table 6.7 shows that in 2008, 74% of NSW parents with children in formal care incurred a weekly cost of $20 or more, more than one-third (38%) paid between $20 and $59 per week and a further 36% paid $60 or more per week.

*Table 6.7: Type of care by usual weekly cost, NSW, 2008, %*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Child care arrangement** | | |
| **Weekly cost of childcare** | **Children in formal care (%)** | **Children in informal care (%)** | **All children aged 0-12 years who usually attend child care (%)** |
| No cost | 1 | 89 | 46 |
| $1 to $19 | 23 | 1 | 12 |
| $20 to $59 | 38 | 3 | 19 |
| $60 to $79 | 10 | 1 | 6 |
| $80 or more | 26 | 5 | 16 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: ABS Cat. No. 44020DO001.200806, Childhood Education and Care, NSW, June 2008,

Given that women are over-represented among the low paid, the above analysis highlights the important role of affordability of child care for working families. Difficulties with availability overall and in appropriate locations appear also to be an issue though the extent of this problem needs further research.

## How much unpaid domestic work do women perform?

Women are more likely than men to both carry out unpaid domestic work and to devote more hours to doing so. The latest census data (ABS, 2007) presented in Table 6.8 indicates that 73.6% of women in NSW reported having spent time on unpaid domestic work in the week prior to census night, compared to 62.7% of men. This translates into approximately 373,000 more women than men performing unpaid domestic work in NSW. These figures are for all women and men regardless of whether they engage in paid work and to what extent.

Unpaid work within the household, such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, gardening and home maintenance, takes up a substantial proportion of people’s waking lives. It contributes to the functioning of domestic life, providing goods and services that would otherwise have to be paid for. While it is excluded from most official measures of economic activity, the value of unpaid household work in Australia has been estimated as equivalent to up to half of Gross Domestic Product (Pink, 2009).

Table 6.8 also indicates that one-quarter (24.7%) of NSW women had spent 30 hours or more on domestic work, whereas the most common length of time spent on domestic work by men was less than five hours (44.5%). Just 6.9% of men reported having spent 30 hours or more on domestic tasks. Men were also more likely than women (26% versus 16.5%) to have done no unpaid domestic work in the week prior to census night.

*Table 6.8: Unpaid domestic work, number of hours(a), NSW, 2006, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Females** | | **Males** | |
|  |  | ***NSW*** | ***Australia*** | ***NSW*** | ***Australia*** |
| Did unpaid domestic work | Less than 5 hours | 20.8 | 20.3 | 44.5 | 43.9 |
| 5-14 hours | 32.1 | 32.5 | 37.3 | 37.9 |
| 15-29 hours | 22.4 | 22.4 | 11.3 | 11.4 |
| 30 hours or more | 24.7 | 24.7 | 6.9 | 6.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total domestic work | 73.6 | 75.1 | 62.7 | 64.1 |
| Did no unpaid domestic work |  | 16.5 | 15.4 | 26.0 | 25.1 |
| Unpaid domestic work not stated |  | 9.8 | 9.5 | 11.2 | 10.8 |
| **Total** |  | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** |

(a) The 'Unpaid Domestic Work: Number of Hours' variable records people who spent time doing unpaid domestic work in either their own home and in other places, for themselves, their family and other people in their household, in the week prior to Census Night.

Source: ABS 2007a, Cat. No. 2068.0

This is also confirmed in the ABS Time-use survey (ABS 2006b), that found that on average women spend 2 hours and 11 minutes per day on housework compared to men who spend 43 minutes (2008b). These gendered differences in domestic work are also evident among children. Females 12-16 years are 1.2 times more likely to work than males, reflecting the significant number of females who do ‘care’ work such as looking after children or older relatives.

An analysis of time use data from ABS surveys in 1997 and 2006 has examined unpaid (domestic labour and child care) and paid work distribution within families with at least one child under four (Craig and Mullan, 2009). It found that part-time women workers had increased their childcare over the period. Overall they had a higher total paid and unpaid workload than their partners working full-time and than men and women in other family types (dual full-time earners and male single breadwinners). In dual full-time earner families, women had increased their childcare and domestic labour but their average hours at their job had decreased. Fathers’ time use in these families had on average remained stable (at 554 and 559).

Craig and Mullan (2009) conclude that ‘Gender gaps in parental workforce participation and domestic time allocation did not narrow’ – indeed they appear to have worsened in two-earner households. Whilst improving working conditions for women (enabling access to more paid leave and flexible working for example) may assist their workforce participation, men need to be strongly encouraged to participate more in unpaid work. There is a role for enabling them to work fewer hours and/or more flexibly. This and other research indicates that it is difficult for men to take ‘time to care’ from work due to colleagues and managers perceived and actual disapproval (Bittman et al., 2004). Strengthening flexible working rights as well as promoting the business benefits of workforce diversity to employers should assist women’s labour force participation. There may also be a role for government in publicity campaigns promoting men’s domestic role as has been done in other countries.

# How do women in NSW fare in retirement?

Despite the existence of Australia’s system of a privately-managed compulsory superannuation scheme since the early 1990s, women continue to have a lower level of superannuation coverage than men. In addition, career breaks and gender pay gaps have strong effects on the accumulation of women’s superannuation contributions. The key results relating to the adequacy of women’s retirement income are:

* women in NSW continue to have lower levels of superannuation coverage than men, with 63% coverage of women and 73% of men
* the median employer contribution per year for women in Australia was $2,598, compared to $3,607 for men (data unavailable for NSW)(women are over-represented in lower income groups with the consequence that the average employer contribution for women remains below that for men)
* for those still in work, women had an average superannuation balance of $52,272 with a median value of $18,489; by contrast, men’s balances averaged $87,589 with a median value of $31,252
* superannuation coverage decreases with age – 41% of women aged over 55 were covered by superannuation in 2007 compared to 60% of men; 84% of women aged between 24 and 54 years had super coverage, compared to approximately 90% of men
* for those aged 60-64, the average gap between the superannuation balances of men and women was $58,500 or 30% (Rothman and Tellis, 2008)
* women’s relatively low lifetime earnings contribute to continued gender gaps in retirement incomes and time out of the workforce in the early working years, due to child care, has a compounding effect (Jefferson, 2009); publicly-administered pension schemes that are independent of employment, tend deliver more favourable outcomes to women
* those under 18 or paid less than $450 per month do not attract compulsory employer superannuation contributions

Australia’s retirement income system has three principal elements: a publicly-funded age pension, a mandatory employer defined contribution superannuation scheme (introduced in 1992[[48]](#footnote-48)) and private savings which may include voluntary superannuation contributions. It now places emphasis on individuals to fund more of their own retirement.

There are a number of inter-related factors emerging from the introduction of superannuation that combine to negatively impact on the retirement incomes of women when compared to those of men. Jefferson (2009) states that women’s traditional patterns of unpaid care work tend to be linked with fewer average years of paid work, relatively high representation in part-time and low paid work and gender pay gaps in earnings. Because Australia’s compulsory superannuation scheme – one of the main pillars of the retirement income system – is based on participation in paid employment, these factors mean women are likely to accumulate smaller superannuation balances than men. Additionally, employers are not required to pay the employer superannuation contribution where an employee earns less than $450 per month (gross) or is under 18 and works less than 30 hours per week.[[49]](#footnote-49)

## Coverage of superannuation

In 2007, a slightly lower level of women (and men) in NSW had superannuation coverage than women overall, at 63% for women in NSW and 66% for all Australian women[[50]](#footnote-50). Seventy-three per cent of men in NSW and 76% of all Australian men had superannuation coverage in 2007. While a smaller proportion of women have superannuation coverage than men, as a result of the introduction of compulsory superannuation, coverage has increased dramatically from only 14% in 1974 to 66% in 2007 Australia-wide (ABS 2009b).

Superannuation coverage decreases with age. Among Australians aged between 24 and 54 years, 87% had super coverage (84% of women and 90% of men), compared with 75% of Australians aged 55 to 63 (68% of women and 82% of men). When considering all women over 55, only two-fifths (41%) were covered by superannuation in 2007 compared to 60% of men in the same age group. The higher proportions of coverage of those in younger age groups reflect the introduction of compulsory superannuation (Richardson, 2009).

## Accumulation of superannuation balances

While the amount that is contributed to superannuation is the same for men and women who are earning the same, because women are over-represented in lower income groups (and conversely, under-represented in high income groups, Figure 7.1) the average employer contribution for women remains below that for men. Three-fifths of employees receiving less than $40 a week in employer super contributions are women. Conversely, only one-third (34%) of those employees who received superannuation contributions of more than $100 a week were women (Richardson, 2009).

This translates into lower average annual employer contributions to superannuation for women. The same is true of median contributions. For example, in 2005-06 it was estimated that the median employer contribution for women was $2,598 compared to $3,607 for men, see Figure 7.2 (Rothman and Tellis, 2008).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Figure 7.1: Distribution of those with employer provided super contributions, Australia, by total income and gender, 2005-06*  Source: Rothman and Tellis (2008) | *Figure 7.2: Median employer provided super contributions, Australia, by age and gender, 2005-06*  Source: Rothman and Tellis (2008) |

For those still in work at the time of the survey in 2007, women had an average superannuation balance of $52,272 with a median value of $18,489. By contrast, men’s balances averaged $87,589 with a median value of $31,252. According to these figures, men’s balances are on average 68% higher than women’s balances (Richardson, 2009).

While superannuation coverage among women has increased dramatically since the introduction of compulsory superannuation, modelling by Rice Warner Actuaries (2010) estimates that a typical Australian woman earning 82.5% of average male earnings and who takes a career break of five years can expect to save one-quarter (26%) less than women who do not take a career break and one-third (35%) less than men. There is a dip in women’s contributions between the ages of 30 and 40 years due to many women shifting to part-time work or leaving the workforce while they raise their children, see Figure 7.2 (Rothman and Tellis, 2008).

Older women face particular disadvantage in retirement compared to men of a similar age. For example, the gap between the average superannuation balance for men and women aged between 60 and 64 years was more than $58,500, see Figure 7.3. Put another way, the average superannuation balance for women in this age group was almost 30% lower than it was for men in the same age group (Rothman and Tellis, 2008).

|  |
| --- |
| *Figure 7.3 Mean super balances, Australia, by age and gender, 2005-06* |

Source: Rothman and Tellis (2008)

Women’s longer life spans mean their financial needs tend to be higher than men’s in retirement yet they tend to retire earlier and with fewer resources than men. When asked about their retirement intentions 13% of women intended to retire between 55 to 59 years of age compared to only 5% of men, and 31% between 60 to 64 years compared to only 18% of men. Of the women who planned to retire between 45 and 54 years of age, more than half (51%) expected to have no personal income when they retired. Among employed women, just over one-third (36%) expected that their main source of income in retirement would be superannuation, an annuity or an allocated pension. Of particular concern, almost one-fifth (18%) of women who recently retired had no income other than the pension (Richardson, 2009).

While there are some signs of improvement for women in the future, the pace and degree of change will not be sufficient to deliver gender parity in superannuation. Commonwealth Treasury projections indicate a narrowing of the gap over time between superannuation balances of men and women who earn the same income, shown in Table 7.1. For example, the gap between the average superannuation balance of men and women will be approximately halved over the next two decades (i.e. from 67% in 2010-11 to 33% by 2030-31). Nevertheless, it will remain significant, indicating that further action is needed to eliminate it entirely.

*Table 7.1: Projection of average super assets, by gender and income decile, Australia, 2010-2011 and 2030-2031*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2010-2011** | | | **2030-2031** | | |
| **Decile** | **Women** | **Men** | **Difference**  **%** | **Women** | **Men** | **Difference**  **%** |
| 2 | $47,750 | $70,400 | 47 | $69,600 | $98,950 | 42 |
| 5 | $64,800 | $101,150 | 56 | $126,750 | $185,750 | 47 |
| 8 | $116,200 | $193,000 | 66 | $272,500 | $383,650 | 41 |
| 10 | $257,600 | $458,750 | 78 | $589,000 | $766,950 | 30 |
| All | $126,750 | $211,200 | 67 | $276,250 | $368,600 | 33 |

Source: Rothman and Tellis (2008)

Despite the projected narrowing of the gap between men’s and women’s superannuation balances the period of the forecast is lengthy and the gap will remain substantial. Moreover, the relativities between income groups is not projected to show improvement. This means that while women continue to be over-represented in lower paid jobs, they will also continue to retire with lower superannuation balances than men. An increase in the compulsory employer contribution to superannuation, even if combined with incentives for women to make voluntary contributions to superannuation, on their own are not likely to be sufficient to increase women’s income in retirement.

## Redressing the balance(s)

Jefferson (2009), after undertaking a review of retirement and pension schemes internationally, found that publicly-administered pension schemes that are independent of employment, tend to deliver more favourable outcomes to women. Jefferson observes that women’s relatively low lifetime earnings contribute to continued gender gaps in retirement incomes. To redress this, some countries have systems of ‘contribution credits’ that provide some recognition for time spent providing unpaid care, usually for children. For example, countries within the European Union with the exception of Denmark and Finland, consider periods of caring for children as ‘contributory’ years for the purposes of pension benefits entitlements. Periods spent caring for other family members (such as elderly parents) can also be a source of potential credits in Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Sweden and the UK.

Whilst such a policy needs to be approached with care so that women’s increased workforce participation is not discouraged, it is desirable that any paid parental leave period should also attract superannuation contributions. This would create one mechanism to improve women’s superannuation balances and contribute to narrowing the differences that result from the compounding effects of lower incomes and fewer years in work. Co-contributions for low income employees by the Commonwealth Government is a positive policy intervention in this area.

The role of the age pension is, however, important in protecting women from poverty in old age and is more heavily relied upon by women than men. In 2009, of all those receiving the age pension, 57.4% were women and of all receiving the single age pension, 71.8% were women (due in part to longer age expectancy).[[51]](#footnote-51) Changes in 2009 to increase the base pension for single pensioners by $60 per fortnight and to introduce a Pension Supplement of $5 per fortnight for all pensioners, will predominantly benefit women, given they represent the majority of single age pensioners.[[52]](#footnote-52) Consideration needs to be given on how to further improve the structure and rate of pension payments so as to benefit those with the least resources including the lowest superannuation balances. Consideration may also need to be given to how the pension income of tenants in social and community housing is treated over the longer term when setting rents, and how increasing the supply of affordable housing may assist pensioners in the private rental market to reduce their housing costs and access better quality housing.

# How involved are women in trade unions in NSW?

Trade unions have historically played an important role in giving a collective voice to female employees, particularly in relation to helping them achieve improvements in their pay and employment conditions. It is therefore useful to look at the trend in union membership among women in NSW. The key results with respect to trade union membership are:

* union membership has fallen from 41% to 21% in NSW in the last 20 years; the fall has been less pronounced amongst women, falling from 35% to 21%
* union membership among female employees in NSW has decreased by 14%; from 35% in 1990 to 21% in 2009
* union density is highest for women in the education and training industry (41%), and for men, in the electricity, gas, water and waste services industry (46%)
* union density for men and women is considerably higher in the public sector (46%) than it is in the private sector (14%)
* women whose pay is set by collective agreement receive better pay outcomes than those who are award reliant; fostering workplace environments that support women to join a union is ultimately likely to bring about improvements in their pay and conditions

## What are the trends in union membership in NSW?

Trade union membership in NSW has been declining over the past two decades, falling from 41% to 21% between 1990 and 2009, as shown in Figure 8.1. A similar trend is evident at the national level where overall trade union density has fallen from 41% to 20% during the same period (ABS, 2009c)[[53]](#footnote-53). The most frequently identified reason for this decline is structural change in the economy, with traditionally unionised workforces, such as those found in manufacturing, making up less of the overall labour force, while growing workforces, such as the service industry, remain under-unionised. However, government reform of labour market institutions also significantly impact union rights and capacity to advocate for employees. Labour reforms have dismantled the centralised system of industrial relations that once protected unions (Wilson, 2004).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Figure 8.1: Trade Union membership in main job by gender, NSW and Australia, 1990-2009, %* |  |

Source: ABS 2009c Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Cat. No. 6310.0, Table 1, Time series, 1990 to 2009

However, patterns between male and female membership in NSW have trended differently within this broad theme of decline. Figure 8.1 shows union membership among female employees in NSW has decreased by 14%; from 35% in 1990 to 21% in 2009. There has also been a large decline in trade union density among male employees in NSW during the same period, down from 46% in 1990 to 24% in 2009. The NSW figures for female employees compares closely to the fall in trade union density for female employees at the national level, down from 35% in 1990 to 19% in 2009.

Union membership is not uniform across industries. Across Australia, it is considerably higher in the public sector (46%) than it is in the private sector (14%). Employees in the education and training industry group, had the highest proportion of trade union membership in their main job (42%), followed by electricity, gas, water and waste services (41%). The industry group with the lowest proportion of trade union membership in their main job was agriculture, forestry and fishing (3%) (ABS, 2009c).

In 2009, trade union density among female employees was highest in the education and training industry (41% in 2009), public administration and safety (29%) and health and social assistance industry (28%). This is shown in Appendix Three which documents the changes in union membership and density by industry for female and male employees from 2006-2009. All of these industries have a high proportion of public sector employment. While a large number of females work in the accommodation and food services industry, in 2009 union density was only 6%, largely reflecting the high levels of short-term, casual and part-time workers in these industries.

While trade union density for female employees overall remained stable from 2006-2009 (at 19%) an increase in trade union density among female employees was evident in six industries. The highest increase was found in the mining industry (up 5% to 9% from 2006 to 2009)[[54]](#footnote-54) and in the arts and recreation services industry (up from 11% to 16% from 2006-2009). The sharpest decline in trade union membership among female employees was found in the electricity, gas, water and waste services industry (down 4% from 2006 to 2009), retail trade (also down 4% during the same four-year period).

Appendix Three also shows the change in union membership and density by industry for Australian male employees. From this table we can see that not only do the density levels by industry vary considerably between male and female employees, but the industries that have experienced either an increase or a decrease in density are quite different for male employees. For male employees, trade union density is highest in the electricity, gas, water and waste services (46%), public administration and safety (46%) and education and training industry (42%). Overall trade union density among male employees declined from 21% to 18% from 2006-2009. Despite this decline, union density increased for male employees in four industries (education and training, arts and recreation services, public administration and safety and health care and social assistance) during this period. In contrast, union density declined by 4% among male employees in four industries (construction, wholesale trade, retail trade and accommodation and food services).

Union membership is also higher among full-time employees than it is among part-time employees. Around one-fifth (22%) of full-time employees and 15% of part-time employees are trade union members. Given that many women are employed on a part-time basis, this partly explains why union membership levels have historically been lower among female employees.

Providing women with a collective voice in the workplace is one important way to bring about improvements in the position of women in employment. As already outlined in Chapter Four on women’s pay, collective bargaining typically delivers better outcomes to women than the Award system or individually negotiated arrangements. Given that collective bargaining largely remains the domain of large, unionised and public sector workplaces, fostering an environment that supports the choices of women either to join a union or not is ultimately likely to bring about improvements in their pay and conditions.

# What are the labour market experiences of different groups of women?

While it is evident from the analysis in previous sections of this profile that women have quite different labour market and employment experiences than men, there is also wide variation in the experiences of particular groups of women. This chapter reviews the experiences of several different groups of women – women with different educational attainment levels, women located in regional or remote areas, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal women and women with disabilities. The key findings with respect to these segments of the female population are:

* the proportion of women in NSW with a non-school qualification has increased from 47.4% in 2001 to 56.8% in 2009, but remains lower than that for males (57.7%)
* the level of women in NSW with tertiary qualifications has increased four-fold between 1991 and 2009 (from 6.9% to 26.6%), surpassing the level of tertiary qualification for men in NSW (22.7%)
* regional differences are strongly apparent with respect to participation and unemployment rates (low female participation rates are evident in the Canterbury/Bankstown, Central Western Sydney, Richmond-Tweed and the Murray regions; high female unemployment rates persist in the Canterbury/Bankstown and Gosford/Wyong regions)
* women who speak Southwest and Central Asian languages at home are the least likely to be employed either full-time (18%) or part-time (13%) and the most likely to be not in the labour force (62%) as a percentage within their own language group
* women in NSW with a disability are less likely than men to enter the labour force, and those who do are far less likely to be working full-time
* Aboriginal women have a vastly different experience of the labour market than non-Aboriginal women; the unemployment among Aboriginal women in NSW declined from 13.9% to 8.8% from 1991 and 2006
* according to the Census data, half of Aboriginal women in NSW remained outside the labour force in 2006
* Aboriginal women are also less likely less likely to be in the labour force, and more likely to be unemployed compared to non-Aboriginal women

## What is women’s level of educational attainment in NSW?

Higher educational attainment levels are strongly linked with better employment prospects and so they become a significant predictor of how well a person might fare in employment. For example, upon retrenchment, those with lower educational attainment (all else being equal) will find it more difficult to find subsequent employment compared with their more highly qualified counterparts. Similarly, new labour market entrants will encounter greater difficulty securing an initial foothold in the jobs market (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010).

Australia is a relatively well-educated nation with Australia ranking within the top ten countries in the world by proportion of population enrolled in tertiary education (OECD, 2007). From 2001 to 2009, the level of people with non-school qualifications rose from just over 47% to 55%. University enrolments and qualifications have grown substantially since 2001. The proportion of individuals with a Bachelors degree or higher has risen to 23% in 2009 (ABS, 2009d).

The level of non-school qualifications has increased for both males and females, in both NSW and Australia. The percentage of females in NSW with a non-school qualification increased from 47.4% in 2001 to 56.8% in 2009, see Figure 9.1. However compared to males, the levels of non-school qualifications are lower for females at both the state and national levels. In NSW however, the gap in educational attainment between males and females is decreasing. This gap was largest in 2003 at 5.2% (with males at 53.9% and females at 48.7%). The gap was lowest in 2009, at 0.9% (with males at 57.7% and females at 56.8%). Furthermore, while at the national level women continue to have lower levels of non-school educational qualifications than men, for the period from 2001 to 2009, the level of women in NSW with a non-school qualification surpassed the national level of men with a non-school qualification (56.8% of NSW women compared to 56.4% of men nationally).

Research by the Victorian Government (2005) indicates that increasing women’s skill levels early in life will have the greatest impact on labour force participation. The Victorian report suggests women with the fewest educational qualifications should be assisted by ‘policies aimed at increasing skill levels, addressing a potential lack of job contacts, and improving women’s confidence in approaching the job market are likely to be especially important for this group of women.’ In relation to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women, language training may also be of assistance.

*Figure 9.1: Persons aged 15-64 years: Proportion of persons with non-school qualification, %*



Source: ABS 2009d Education and Work Cat. No. 6227.0, 2001-2009

Table 9.1 provides greater detail on the level of highest educational qualification in 2009 by gender (these figures differ from the data for non-school qualifications). Female educational attainment is segmented at both the high and low ends of the qualifications framework at both the state and national level. Just over one-quarter (26.6%) of women in NSW hold a Bachelors degree or higher compared to just over one-fifth (22.7%) of men in NSW.

*Table 9.1: Level of highest educational attainment, as a proportion of persons aged 15-64 years, NSW and Australia, 2009*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NSW | | Australia | |
|  | Females (%) | Males (%) | Females (%) | Males (%) |
| Postgraduate Degree | 4.6 | 5.2 | 3.7 | 4.1 |
| Grad. Dip./Grad. Cert. | 2.4 | 1.6 | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| Bachelor Degree | 19.6 | 15.9 | 18.2 | 16.4 |
| Adv. Diploma/Diploma | 10.5 | 8.0 | 9.9 | 8.7 |
| Certificate III/IV | 10.4 | 20.6 | 10.9 | 16.1 |
| Certificate I/II | 1.4 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.8 |
| Certificate n.f.d. | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Year 12 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 21.3 | 20.5 |
| Year 11 | 4.0 | 4.6 | 7.5 | 7.4 |
| Year 10 or below | 26.5 | 23.1 | 24.2 | 23.1 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

n.f.d. not further defined

Source: ABS 2009d Education and Work Cat. No. 6227.0

The trend in higher education qualification is presented in Figure 9.2. Between 1991 and 2009, compared to men in NSW and the Australian population, the level of women in NSW with higher education qualifications has increased four-fold (from 6.9% to 26.6%), surpassing the level of tertiary qualification for men in NSW (22.7%). However the single largest group of workers in the labour force are those without post-school qualifications. In 2009, persons with Year 12 qualifications or below comprised 39.7% of the labour force. In NSW, just over half (50.8%) of women hold a Year 12 or below qualification compared to slightly less than half of men (48%) with a Year 12 or below qualification.

*Figure 9.2: Persons aged 15 to 64 years, Proportion of persons with higher education qualification, by gender, NSW, 1991 to 2009, %*



Note: Higher education qualification defined as Postgraduate Degree, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate, Bachelor Degree. Time-series discontinuous between 1991-2001 (Census data) and 2002-2009 (Survey of Education and Work).

Source: ABS 2009e Education and Work 2002-2009 ABS Cat. No. 6227.0 20680-Level of Education by Sex - Time Series Statistics (1991, 1996, 2001 Census Years) – Australia and NSW

Trends in persons enrolled in a course of study for males and females, is presented in Figure 9.3. The proportion of women in NSW enrolled in a course of study[[55]](#footnote-55) increased from 50.3% of all enrolled students to 51.6% of all enrolled students in 2009. The increase in levels of educational attainment for women in NSW is in part explained by the relatively high and sustained percentage of females enrolled in a course of study. Between 2001 and 2009, women comprised more than half of all enrolled students in NSW, the highest proportion being in 2006 when 54% of all enrolled students in NSW were women.

*Figure 9.3: Persons aged 15-64 years enrolled in a course of study, NSW, 2001-2009, %*



Source: ABS 2009e Education and Work 2002-2009 ABS Cat. No. 6227.0

Debelle and Swann (1998) suggest that higher levels of educational attainment in Australia have been influenced by strong increases in both the demand for, and supply of, skilled labour. However, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter on women’s pay, despite the significant improvement in the level of educational qualifications held by women, women continue to be paid less than men employed in the same or similar jobs. For example employees without a non-school qualification also tend to earn lower hourly wage rates than people with a non-school qualification, and in general, pay rates increase with qualification level at high, medium and low end wage bands (Wheatley, 2009).

## What is the impact of being located in regional or remote areas in NSW on women’s working lives?

Women residing in rural and regional Australia may face additional employment challenges to those faced by women in urban areas. Employment opportunities for women in these areas may not be as frequent or varied as a result of smaller and less diverse local economies (ABS, 2004b).

Participation rates vary greatly by gender and region. For females in NSW, the highest participation rate is found in Inner Sydney (at 66%) while the lowest participation rate is found in Canterbury/Bankstown (45%). Central Western Sydney, Richmond-Tweed and the Murray regions all have female participation rates of around 50% or lower. Other than for Richmond-Tweed (55% male participation rate), these contrast sharply with the male participation rates, which are at 65% or higher in those regions (ABS 2010g Cat. No. 6291.55.001, June). Details are provided in Table 9.2.

*Table 9.2: Regional participation and unemployment rates, NSW, June 2010, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Participation rate  (%)** | | **Employment rate  (%)** | | **Unemployment rate  (%)** | |
|  | **Female** | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** |
| Inner Sydney/Inner West | 66.1 | 74 | 97.9 | 95.8 | 2.1 | 4.2 |
| Eastern Suburbs Sydney | 57.5 | 69.2 | 98.7 | 96.8 | 1.3 | 3.2 |
| St George/Sutherland | 61.3 | 73.3 | 95 | 95.7 | 5 | 4.3 |
| Canterbury/Bankstown | 44.6 | 65.2 | 87.4 | 89.5 | 12.6 | 10.5 |
| Fairfield/Liverpool/Outer SW Sydney | 52.7 | 72.4 | 95.7 | 91.4 | 4.3 | 8.6 |
| Central Western Sydney | 47.5 | 68.7 | 93.2 | 94.1 | 6.8 | 5.9 |
| North Western Sydney | 59.9 | 77.4 | 92.2 | 94.3 | 7.8 | 5.7 |
| Lower Northern Sydney | 58.6 | 75.7 | 95.5 | 97.7 | 4.5 | 2.3 |
| Central Northern Sydney | 58.5 | 77.1 | 97.9 | 98.2 | 2.1 | 1.8 |
| Northern Beaches | 63.5 | 80.8 | 98.2 | 96.4 | 1.8 | 3.6 |
| Gosford/Wyong | 56.2 | 63.5 | 90.1 | 96.5 | 9.9 | 3.5 |
| Hunter | 54.7 | 70.2 | 96.7 | 95 | 3.3 | 5 |
| Illawarra/South Eastern | 53.1 | 64.0 | 93.7 | 92.9 | 6.3 | 7.1 |
| Richmond-Tweed/Mid North Coast | 49.5 | 55.1 | 95.4 | 92.9 | 4.6 | 7.1 |
| Northern/Far West-NW/Central West | 57.3 | 70.1 | 95.6 | 95.4 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| Murray Murrumbidgee | 51.1 | 74.6 | 92.7 | 94.2 | 7.3 | 5.8 |
| NSW | 55.7 | 70.1 | 94.9 | 94.6 | 5.1 | 5.4 |
| Australia | 58.4 | 72.1 | 94.8 | 95 | 5.2 | 5 |

Note: Regions have been defined according to ABS Standard Geographical Classification for Statistical Regions (SRs)

Source: ABS 2010g Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.55.001, June

Employment and unemployment also vary significantly by gender and region.

Female and male unemployment rates are also set out in Table 9.2. It shows Canterbury/Bankstown (13%), followed by Gosford/Wyong (10%) are currently experiencing the highest rates of female unemployment.

Canterbury/Bankstown is of added concern due to its low participation rates among women. This may be a result of high proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse populations and new arrivals that may experience barriers to labour market participation. Central Western and North Western Sydney, the Illawarra along with the Murray Murrumbidgee regions also have significant female unemployment at over 6%. These regions also suffer higher female than male unemployment in those regions (except the Illawarra). This may partly be explained by the occupational profile of these areas and more broadly limited economic growth in regional areas. However this can only be confirmed through further investigation. Unemployment rates are lowest among women in the Inner suburbs of Sydney, including the Eastern Suburbs and also the Northern Beaches and Central Northern Sydney.

## How do women of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds fare in the labour market?

Many women from a culturally and linguistically diverse background find it difficult to find work. This is influenced by such factors as visa category, English language proficiency, education level, time since arrival and availability of information about services to help them find work. Those in employment are more likely to be found in lower skilled and lower paid jobs than women in the broader population.

Table 9.3 provides census data on the labour force status of women in NSW according to categories of ‘language spoken at home’. Languages are grouped according to the worldwide geographical distinctions indicated in the table. At an overall level, the labour force statistics are fairly comparable across language groups. However, a number of individual findings are notable.

Firstly, women who speak Southwest and Central Asian languages at home are the least likely to be employed either full-time (18%) or part-time (13%) and the most likely to be not in the labour force (62%). Further, women who speak Southern Asian languages at home are the most likely to be employed full-time (35%) and the least likely to be not in the labour force (38%). However, aside from the ‘other languages’ category, this group also has the highest rate of unemployment (6%).

*Table 9.3: Labour force status of women by languages group (language spoken at home), NSW, 2006*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Employed**  **full-time** | | **Employed**  **part-time** | | **Employed,**  **away from work** | | **Unemployed** | | **Not in the**  **Labour force** | |
|  | *n* | % | *n* | % | *n* | % | *n* | % | *N* | % |
| Northern European | 532,763 | 27.1 | 480,042 | 24.5 | 70,443 | 3.6 | 59256 | 3.0 | 820,402 | 41.8 |
| Southern European | 29,263 | 24.3 | 22,414 | 18.6 | 4,168 | 3.5 | 2735 | 2.3 | 61,919 | 51.4 |
| Eastern European | 16,152 | 26.8 | 10,403 | 17.3 | 2,055 | 3.4 | 1861 | 3.1 | 29,732 | 49.4 |
| Southwest and  Central Asian | 14,893 | 17.5 | 10,993 | 12.9 | 2,740 | 3.2 | 3950 | 4.6 | 52,656 | 61.8 |
| Southern Asian | 15,332 | 34.8 | 7,841 | 17.8 | 1,674 | 3.8 | 2652 | 6.0 | 16,504 | 37.5 |
| Southeast Asian | 26,60 | 34.1 | 12,036 | 15.6 | 2,796 | 3.6 | 4401 | 5.7 | 31,627 | 41.0 |
| Eastern Asian | 37,055 | 28.3 | 22,664 | 17.3 | 3,798 | 2.9 | 6594 | 5.0 | 60,915 | 46.5 |
| Australian Aboriginal | 145 | 21.7 | 104 | 15.6 | 35 | 5.2 | 36 | 5.4 | 347 | 52.0 |
| Other Languages | 4,474 | 29.7 | 2,072 | 13.8 | 736 | 4.9 | 1051 | 7.0 | 6,735 | 44.7 |

Source: ABS 2007a Census of Population and Housing, Cat. No. 2068.0

Participation in the labour force is strongly influenced by proficiency in the host country language. The degree of fluency is a strong predictor of the chances of obtaining and keeping employment and of increased earnings levels (OECD, 2003b; Dustmann and Fabri, 2003). The opportunity to practise the host country language which employment provides reinforces language proficiency and also facilitates social integration. Beiser and Hou (2000), drawing on a 10-year study of the resettlement of South East Asian refugees who arrived in Canada between 1979 and 1981, found that whilst employment increased English fluency for both men and women, it had a particularly beneficial effect on women’s proficiency. As in other research, it is reported that host country language proficiency became an important factor over time – for both women and men – explaining long-term labour force retention and income levels (see also OECD, 2005a).

In 2009, the representation of people whose first language is other than English in the NSW Public Sector was 15.2% (DPC 2009b).

## How do women with disabilities fare in the labour market?

Arguably one of the groups of women with the greatest difficulties in gaining meaningful paid employment is those with disabilities. Of all Australians about one fifth (20%) have a disability (see Glossary for definition) (nearly four million people) – a slightly higher proportion of women than men (ABS, 2003).[[56]](#footnote-56) A small proportion of Australians have a profound or severe core activity limitation (6.3%) (ABS, 2003). Note that this section draws from both the Census and the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC), which use slightly different terminology. Disability status within the Census identifies those with a ‘core activity need for assistance’, which is similar to those with a ‘profound or severe core activity limitation’ within SDAC.

Women with disabilities are less likely to participate in the workforce (that is work or look for work) than women without a disability and men with and without disabilities. For example, in 2003, 47% of women with a disability participated in the labour force. In comparison, 72% of women without a disability and 59% of men with disabilities participated in the labour force, Table 9.4.

*Table 9.4, Labour force participation and unemployment rates of males and females with and without disabilities, 1998 and 2003*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labour force participation**  **(%)** | | **Unemployment rate**  **(%)** | |
|  | **1998** | **2003** | **1998** | **2003** |
| **Females** |  |  |  |  |
| With a disability | 45.5 | 46.9 | 8.6 | 8.3 |
| Without a disability | 71.0 | 72.2 | 8.0 | 5.3 |
| **Males** |  |  |  |  |
| With a disability | 60.3 | 59.3 | 13.5 | 8.8 |
| Without a disability | 89.2 | 88.9 | 7.7 | 4.8 |

Persons aged 15-64 years living in households.

Source: ABS, 1998 and 2003[[57]](#footnote-57), Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, p26; ABS, p35. Cat. No. 4430.0.

The low participation rate may be explained by systemic and attitudinal discrimination in the labour market on the basis of gender and disability, that results in women with disabilities being doubly disadvantaged in their search for employment. Women with disabilities commonly face barriers due to lack of information about the services available to them and their right to use such services. The physical ‘inaccessibility’ of many workplaces also prevents some women with mobility disabilities from accepting otherwise suitable positions (Frohmader 2009).

Table 9.4 shows that the rate of unemployment among women with disabilities remained stable in 1998 and 2003 (at 8.6% and 8.3% respectively). In contrast, for the three comparator groups the unemployment rate fell over the same period[[58]](#footnote-58). Census data shows the extent of full-time and part-time employment amongst those who do and do not require assistance with core activities: about 56 percent of women who require assistance with core activities and who are in work, work part-time, compared to about 43% of women who do not require assistance, Table 9.5.

*Table 9.5: Labour Force Status by disability status by gender, NSW, 2006, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Has need for assistance with core activities | | Does not need assistance with core activities | | Not stated | |
|  | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| *Employed* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Worked full-time | 1.5 | 3.3 | 28.7 | 53.1 | 15.7 | 27.0 |
| Worked part-time | 3.0 | 4.2 | 23.9 | 11.9 | 15.6 | 6.9 |
| Employed, away from work | 0.9 | 1.3 | 3.7 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 5.0 |
| *Unemployed* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Looking for full-time work | 0.3 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 3.2 | 1.6 | 2.8 |
| Looking for part-time work | 0.5 | 0.7 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 0.9 |
| *Not in the labour force* | 93.9 | 89.5 | 40.3 | 26.5 | 60.7 | 57.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2007a, Census of Population and Housing 2006, Cat. No. 2068.0, Disability and Labour Force Status

The severity of a person’s disability (defined as the level of core activity restriction) affects both the level of labour force participation and the unemployment rate. Those with profound disabilities have the lowest participation rates, with less than one-fifth (15.2%) of people in this category participating in the labour force in 2003. Participation rates are higher among those people with mild restrictions and those with schooling or employment restrictions, as shown in Table 9.6.

*Table 9.6: Labour force participation and unemployment rates of people with disabilities, by type of restriction, 1993, 1998 and 2003*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Core Activity Restriction** | **Labour force participation rate (%)** | | | **Unemployment rate**  **(%)** | | |
|  | 1993 | 1998 | 2003 | 1993 | 1998 | 2003 |
| Profound | 19.9 | 18.9 | 15.2 | 20.9 | 7.4 | 13.9 |
| Severe | 39.9 | 40.2 | 35.8 | 22.2 | 11.6 | 9.5 |
| Moderate | 42.9 | 46.3 | 47.9 | 18.0 | 13.1 | 7.6 |
| Mild | 51.3 | 56.5 | 50.6 | 18.5 | 9.3 | 7.7 |
| Schooling or employment restriction | 56.2 | 46.4 | 44.9 | 27.6 | 12.9 | 11.5 |
| All persons with restrictions | 46.5 | 49.3 | 47.7 | 21.0 | 11.7 | 9.9 |

Source: ABS, 2003 Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, Cat. No. 4430.0.

Table 9.7 displays 2006 Census data on the labour force status of women in NSW with a profound or severe disability. Comparisons to the population without disabilities are provided.[[59]](#footnote-59)

*Table 9.7: Labour force status by disability status(a), women, NSW, 2006*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Has need for assistance with core activities | | Does not need assistance with core activities | |
|  | *n* | % | *n* | % |
| *Employed, worked:* |  |  |  |  |
| Full-time(b) | 2,023 | 1.4 | 672,298 | 28.2 |
| Part-time | 4,130 | 2.8 | 561,740 | 23.6 |
| Employed, away from work(c) | 825 | 0.6 | 54,393 | 2.3 |
| Hours worked not stated | 403 | 0.3 | 32,129 | 1.3 |
| Total employed | 7,381 | 5.1 | 1,320,560 | 55.4 |
| *Unemployed, looking for:* |  | *0.0* |  | *0.0* |
| Full-time work | 419 | 0.3 | 39,859 | 1.7 |
| Part-time work | 624 | 0.4 | 41,076 | 1.7 |
| Total unemployed | 1,043 | 0.7 | 80,935 | 3.4 |
| Total labour force | 8,424 | 5.7 | 1,401,495 | 58.8 |
| Not in the labour force | 130,384 | 88.6 | 944,482 | 39.6 |
| Labour force status not stated | 8,384 | 5.7 | 37,220 | 1.6 |
| Total | 147,192 | 100.0 | 2,383,197 | 100.0 |

(a) Disability is defined by the 'Core Activity Need for Assistance' variable. People with a profound or severe disability are defined as needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more), or old age.

(b) 'Employed, worked full-time' is defined as having worked 35 hours or more in all jobs during the week prior to Census Night.

(c) Comprises employed persons who did not work any hours in the week prior to Census Night.

Source: ABS 2007, Census of Population and Housing 2006, Cat. No. 2068.0

Just 5% of women with a profound or severe core activity restriction in NSW were employed in 2006, compared to 55% of those without a core activity restriction. Around one-quarter of women with such a profound or severe core activity restriction who worked were employed full-time. A smaller proportion of women with a profound or severe core activity restriction were unemployed and looking for work (0.7%) than was the case in the overall female population (3.4%). However, a large majority (89%) of women with a profound or severe core activity restriction were not in the labour force – well over double the corresponding proportion for women without such a core activity restriction (40%).

### Working in the NSW public sector with a disability

In 2008, the percentage of people with a disability in the NSW Public Sector was 3.9%. This represented a slight decline on the previous three years, where the percentage had fluctuated at just under 5%.[[60]](#footnote-60) In terms of headcount figures, the percentage of people with a disability requiring work-related adjustment was 1.15% in 2008. Once again, this was slightly lower than the level for the three preceding years (Griffith, 2009: 6).

## How do Aboriginal women fare in the labour market?

Aboriginal people make up a small proportion of the total Australian population (at around 2% in the Census in 2006), however they are one of the most socially disadvantaged groups in society (ABS 2007a). This disadvantage flows into their experience in the labour market. This is particularly the case for Aboriginal women who have much lower participation rates than non-Aboriginal women and Aboriginal men. They also predominate in low-skilled and low-paid occupations.

The age profile of Aboriginal Australians is quite different to the population structure of non-Aboriginal Australians. Much greater proportions of the Aboriginal Australian population are found in age groups less than 20 years, compared with corresponding proportions in the non-Aboriginal population, and lower proportions are found in age groups 40 years and over. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is relatively young. In 2008, almost half (49%) of the Indigenous population was aged less than 20 years and a further 16% were aged between 20 and 30 years. Just 3% of the Indigenous population were aged 65 years and over in 2008 (ABS 2008d ). Using the 2006 Census as a basis for comparison, at 30 June 2006, the median age of the Aboriginal population was 21 years. In contrast, in the non-Indigenous population, there were more people in the older age groups compared with the younger age groups, and the median age was 37 years. Aboriginal Australians also have a lower life expectancy than non-Aboriginal Australians. For example, in 2008 the median age at death for Aboriginal women in NSW was 63.8 years compared to 84.2 years for Non-Aboriginal women (ABS 2009f). Further, the average age of having a first child is younger for Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women. For example, the median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who registered a birth in 2008 was 24.7 years, six years lower than the median age of all mothers (30.7 years) (ABS 2010h). These factors are among those that impact the employment patterns of Aboriginal women.

In terms of absolute numbers, NSW (148,200) has the largest Aboriginal estimated resident population, followed by Queensland (146,400), Western Australia (77,900) and the Northern Territory (66,600) (ABS 2007b).

Using ABS estimates, there were 196,500 Aboriginal people in the labour force (that is, employed or unemployed) in 2009, representing just over half of the total Aboriginal population aged 15 years and over, or a participation rate of 55.5%. Compared to 2005, the participation rate has not changed significantly (56.5%). In NSW, there were 56,200 Aboriginal people in the labour force in 2009, with a participation rate of 54.4%. Once again, the participation rate among Aboriginal people in NSW has been quite stable between 2005 and 2009, as shown in Table 9.8.

Table 9.8 shows that between 2006 and 2009, the unemployment rate among Aboriginal people was higher in NSW than it was nationally. In 2009, the unemployment rate stood at 21% among Aboriginal people in NSW and 18% at the national level. Close to half (45.6%) of Aboriginal people in NSW remain outside the labour market, a slightly higher level than for Australia (at 44.5%). When the employment to population ratio among Aboriginal females is examined, we can see that it has decreased from 44.1% in 2006 to 40% in 2009. There has also been a decrease in the employment to population ratio among Aboriginal males, down from 56.9% in 2006 to 51.3% in 2009. The employment to population ratio among Aboriginal people in NSW is lower than the national average (down to 43.1% in NSW and 45.5% for Australia in 2009).

The participation rate of Aboriginal women in NSW in 2008 is much lower than it is among Aboriginal men in NSW (at 46.4% compared to 69.5%), Table 9.9 This is also the case at the national level (55.8 % and 68% respectively). Related to this, the unemployment rate in NSW was lower among Aboriginal women than it was among Aboriginal men (9.9% and 14.2%). This same gap was found at the national level where the unemployment rate among Aboriginal females was less than a percentage point higher than it was among Aboriginal males (at 14.7% and 13.8%).

*Table 9.8: Labour force status for Aboriginal persons aged 15 years and over by gender, Australia (female and male) & NSW (total only), 2005 to 2009, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
| *Total employed (‘000)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 65.6 | 72.7 | 69.2 | 72.0 | 72.1 |
| Male | 82.9 | 89.8 | 91.6 | 91.2 | 89.1 |
| All Australia | 148.5 | 162.5 | 160.8 | 163.2 | 161.2 |
| All NSW | 43.7 | 44.1 | 42.2 | 42.7 | 44.5 |
| *Total unemployed (‘000)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 11.8 | 11.9 | 11.8 | 12.4 | 15.4 |
| Male | 16.0 | 14.3 | 13.9 | 14.7 | 20.0 |
| All Australia | 27.8 | 26.2 | 25.7 | 27.1 | 35.4 |
| All NSW | 7.5 | 8.1 | 10.3 | 9.8 | 11.8 |
| *Labour force (‘000)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 77.4 | 84.6 | 81.0 | 84.4 | 87.5 |
| Male | 98.9 | 104.0 | 105.5 | 105.9 | 109.1 |
| All Australia | 176.4 | 188.6 | 186.5 | 190.3 | 196.5 |
| All NSW | 51.2 | 52.2 | 52.5 | 52.5 | 56.2 |
| *Not in Labour Force (‘000)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 82.2 | 80.1 | 88.8 | 90.6 | 92.8 |
| Male | 53.7 | 53.9 | 57.5 | 62.5 | 64.6 |
| All Australia | 135.9 | 134.0 | 146.4 | 153.1 | 157.4 |
| All NSW | 39.9 | 42.1 | 44.8 | 47.8 | 47.1 |
| *Civilian population aged 15 years and over (‘000)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 159.6 | 164.7 | 169.8 | 175.0 | 180.2 |
| Male | 152.7 | 157.9 | 163.0 | 168.4 | 173.7 |
| All Australia | 312.3 | 322.6 | 332.9 | 343.4 | 353.9 |
| All NSW | 91.1 | 94.3 | 97.3 | 100.3 | 103.3 |
| *Unemployment rate (%)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 15.2 | 14.1 | 14.6 | 14.7 | 17.6 |
| Male | 16.2 | 13.7 | 13.2 | 13.8 | 18.3 |
| All Australia | 15.8 | 13.9 | 13.8 | 14.2 | 18.0 |
| All NSW | 14.7 | 15.5 | 19.6 | 18.7 | 21.0 |
| *Participation rate (%)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 48.5 | 51.4 | 47.7 | 48.3 | 48.5 |
| Male | 64.8 | 65.9 | 64.7 | 62.9 | 62.8 |
| All Australia | 56.5 | 58.5 | 56.0 | 55.4 | 55.5 |
| All NSW | 56.2 | 55.4 | 53.9 | 52.3 | 54.4 |
| *Employment to population ratio (%)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 41.1 | 44.1 | 40.7 | 41.1 | 40.0 |
| Male | 54.3 | 56.9 | 56.2 | 54.2 | 51.3 |
| All Australia | 47.6 | 50.4 | 48.3 | 47.5 | 45.5 |
| All NSW | 47.9 | 46.7 | 43.3 | 42.5 | 43.1 |

Source: ABS, 2010i Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6287.0, 2009

From Table 9.9 we can also see that in both NSW and at the national level, Aboriginal women have lower levels of employment, higher unemployment and many more of them are not in the labour force in comparison to non-Aboriginal women in NSW. [[61]](#footnote-61) The same is found for Australia. In fact, in 2008 Aboriginal women and men in NSW are both more than four times likely than non-Aboriginal women to be unemployed.

*Table 9.9: Labour force status of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, NSW and Australia, 2008, %*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NSW(a)** | | | **Australia(a)** | | |
|  | **Female**  **%** | **Male**  **%** | **Total**  **%** | **Female**  **%** | **Male**  **%** | **Total**  **%** |
| *Employed* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal | 36.5 | 55.3 | 45.5 | 41.1 | 54.2 | 47.5 |
| Non-Aboriginal | 52.8 | 66.4 | 59.5 | 55.3 | 70.0 | 62.1 |
| *Unemployed* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal | 9.9 | 14.2 | 11.8 | 14.7 | 13.8 | 14.2 |
| Non-Aboriginal | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| *Not in the labour force* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal | 53.6 | 30.7 | 42.6 | 51.8 | 37.1 | 44.9 |
| Non-Aboriginal | 44.5 | 30.5 | 37.6 | 42.2 | 28.4 | 35.4 |
| All |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Non-Aboriginal | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(a) NSW data comprises aggregated figures from August 2008 to April 2009. Australia data is from August 2008.

Source: ABS 2008d, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008, Cat. No. 4714.0;

ABS 2010i, Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 62870DO001, 2009; ABS 2010c, Labour Force, Australia, Cat. No. 6202.0, August

Table 9.10 provides a comparison between 1991 and 2006 Census data on the labour force status of Aboriginal women in NSW.

*Table 9.10: Employment status by Aboriginal labour force status and gender, NSW, 1991 & 2006*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1991 Census** | | | **2006 Census** | | |
|  | **Males** | **Females** | **Persons** | **Males** | **Females** | **Persons** |
| Employed (a): |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Full-time (b) | 30.5 | 15.2 | 22.6 | 31.2 | 17.6 | 24.1 |
| Part-time | 8.8 | 11.3 | 10.1 | 11.4 | 18.1 | 14.9 |
| Total employed | 42.6 | 28.6 | 35.4 | 42.5 | 35.7 | 39.1 |
| Unemployed | 25.6 | 13.9 | 19.5 | 11.9 | 8.8 | 10.3 |
| Total labour force | 68.2 | 42.5 | 54.9 | 54.4 | 44.5 | 49.2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not in the labour force | 29.1 | 53.2 | 41.5 | 40.0 | 50.8 | 45.7 |
| Not stated(c) | 2.8 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 5.6 | 4.7 | 5.1 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(a) For Census purposes, persons participating in the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) are classified as 'employed'.

(b) In 2006, 'full-time' is defined as having worked 35 hours or more in all jobs during the week prior to Census night. In 1991, 'full-time' is defined as having worked 35 hours or more in the main job during the week prior to Census night.

(c) Includes persons who did not state their labour force status.

Source: ABS 1993 Census of Population and Housing 1991, 2101.0; ABS 2007a, Census of Population and Housing 2006 Cat. No. 2068.0

Table 9.10 shows that Aboriginal women in NSW are far less likely than Aboriginal men to be employed on a full-time basis (at 17.6% in 2006 compared to 31.2% of Aboriginal males), with little change in the gap from 1991 to 2006. As is the case among non-Aboriginal women, part-time employment is higher among Aboriginal females than it is among Aboriginal males (at 18.1% and 11.4% respectively in 2006). Typically, Aboriginal households include extended family members to a greater extent than non-Aboriginal families and these individuals play a greater role in parenting and decision making. Grandparents and extended family members often play an active role in child care. This cultural tradition may go some way towards explaining the low participation rates of Aboriginal women in NSW.

Employment was proportionally higher among Aboriginal males (55.3%) than Aboriginal females (36.5%) in NSW in all age groups in 2008. Notably, there are large differences in the employment rates of females and males at different ages. For example, amongst Aboriginal people aged 15 to 24 years, just over half (50.6%) of males yet less than one-third (28.9%) of females were employed. Similarly, among those aged 35 to 44 years almost two-thirds (65.5%) of males and just over half (50.5%) of females were in paid employment. (All data for 2008, ABS 2008d)

A high proportion of Aboriginal people in NSW live in urban areas which has some association with labour market participation. For example in 2006, 42% of the Aboriginal population in NSW lived in major cities. A further 33% lived in Inner Regional areas, 19% lived in Outer Regional areas. Only 4% and 1% respectively lived in Remote and Very Remote areas (ABS (2007b)).[[62]](#footnote-62) In 2008, the unemployment rate was highest among Aboriginal people living in the major cities of NSW (at 12.8% compared to 11.8% for NSW overall). However a higher proportion of Aboriginal people living in remote or very remote locations in NSW were not in the labour force (47% compared to only 37.1% among Aboriginal people living in major cities of NSW). Table 9.11 indicates the labour force status of Aboriginal people by remoteness, using the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey.

*Table 9.11: Labour force status of Aboriginal people by remoteness, NSW, 2008*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Major cities** | | **Inner/outer regional area** | | **Remote/Very remote** | | **Total NSW** | |
|  |  | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** | **‘000** | **%** |
| Employed | | 20.7 | 50.1 | 20.8 | 41.8 | 2.4 | 44.0 | 43.9 | 45.5 |
| Unemployed | | 5.3 | 12.8 | 5.6 | 11.4 | 0.5 | 9.0 | 11.4 | 11.8 |
| Total labour force | | 26.0 | 62.9 | 26.4 | 53.2 | 2.9 | 53.0 | 55.3 | 57.4 |
| Not in the labour force | | 15.3 | 37.1 | 23.3 | 46.8 | 2.5 | 47.0 | 41.1 | 42.6 |
| Total | | 41.3 | 100.0 | 49.7 | 100.0 | 5.4 | 100.0 | 96.4 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2008d, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, Cat. No. 4714.0

The distribution of employment for Aboriginal women by occupation in 2006 is displayed in Table 9.12. Approximately one-quarter (23.5%) of the female Aboriginal labour force in NSW were employed as community and personal services workers and a further one-fifth (20.7%) as clerical and administrative workers. The third most common occupational category for Aboriginal women in NSW was ‘professionals’ (17%). In comparison, male Aboriginal workers in NSW are more likely to be employed as labourers (25.4%), technicians and trades workers (20.9%) and machinery operators and drivers (at 14.5%).

When we compare the occupational profile of Aboriginal women with other female workers in NSW for 2008, we find that Aboriginal women are half as likely to be employed in managerial occupations as non-Aboriginal women (5.5% compared to 10.3%). Aboriginal women in NSW are also less likely than non-Aboriginal women to be employed in professional jobs (17% compared to 24.3%) and more likely to be employed as community and personal service workers (23.5% compared to 12.3%).

*Table 9.12: Occupation by Aboriginal status and gender, NSW, 2006*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Aboriginal** | | | **Non-Aboriginal** | | |
|  | **Males** | **Females** | **Persons** | **Males** | **Females** | **Persons** |
| Managers | 7.1 | 5.5 | 6.3 | 16.7 | 10.3 | 13.7 |
| Professionals | 9.0 | 17.0 | 12.8 | 18.8 | 24.3 | 21.4 |
| Technicians and trades workers | 20.9 | 4.1 | 13.0 | 21.5 | 4.3 | 13.6 |
| Community and personal service workers | 9.0 | 23.5 | 15.9 | 5.2 | 12.3 | 8.5 |
| Clerical and administrative workers | 5.3 | 20.7 | 12.6 | 6.8 | 25.7 | 15.5 |
| Sales workers | 4.4 | 12.1 | 8.1 | 7.1 | 12.8 | 9.7 |
| Machinery operators and drivers | 14.5 | 1.6 | 8.4 | 10.7 | 1.4 | 6.4 |
| Labourers | 25.4 | 12.3 | 19.2 | 11.2 | 7.2 | 9.4 |
| Inadequately described/Not stated | 4.2 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2007a, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, Cat. No. 2068.0

The industry profile of employment for Aboriginal women is similar to that of non-Aboriginal women, with the main industries employing both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women being health care and social assistance, education and training and retail trade. Table 9.13 indicates the distribution of employment for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and men by industry in 2006.

*Table 9.13: Aboriginal employment by industry and gender, NSW, 2006, % of Aboriginal/ Non Aboriginal workforce*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Female** | | | **Male** | | |
|  | **Aboriginal**  **(%)** | **Non- Aboriginal (%)** | **+/-** | **Aboriginal (%)** | **Non- Aboriginal (%)** | **+/-** |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 1.2 | 1.7 | -0.6 | 4.7 | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Mining | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 1.7 | 1.2 | 0.5 |
| Manufacturing | 3.6 | 5.7 | -2.1 | 12.3 | 12.9 | -0.5 |
| Electricity, gas, water and waste services | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| Construction | 1.3 | 2.2 | -0.9 | 12.7 | 11.7 | 1.0 |
| Wholesale trade | 1.9 | 3.7 | -1.8 | 4.1 | 5.6 | -1.5 |
| Retail trade | 11.8 | 13.7 | -1.9 | 6.7 | 8.9 | -2.3 |
| Accommodation and food services | 10.1 | 7.7 | 2.3 | 5.2 | 5.5 | -0.3 |
| Transport, postal and warehousing | 2.0 | 2.5 | -0.5 | 7.2 | 7.1 | 0.1 |
| Information media and telecommunications | 1.1 | 2.2 | -1.1 | 1.4 | 2.6 | -1.2 |
| Financial and insurance services | 2.3 | 5.8 | -3.5 | 0.9 | 4.4 | -3.5 |
| Rental, hiring and real estate services | 1.5 | 1.9 | -0.4 | 1.0 | 1.6 | -0.6 |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 3.3 | 7.4 | -4.1 | 2.2 | 7.4 | -5.2 |
| Administrative and support services | 4.4 | 3.5 | 0.9 | 3.4 | 2.7 | 0.7 |
| Public administration and safety | 9.2 | 5.3 | 3.9 | 10.6 | 6.6 | 4.1 |
| Education and training | 14.1 | 11.4 | 2.7 | 5.2 | 4.3 | 0.9 |
| Health care and social assistance | 22.8 | 17.6 | 5.2 | 6.9 | 4.3 | 2.6 |
| Arts and recreation services | 1.5 | 1.4 | 0.1 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 0.7 |
| Other services | 3.2 | 3.5 | -0.4 | 3.7 | 4.0 | -0.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Source: ABS 2007a, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, Cat. No. 2068.0

Table 9.13 indicates that while health care and social assistance is the main industry of employment for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women, over one-fifth of Aboriginal women are employed in this industry (22.8%) compared to 17.6% of non-Aboriginal women. Compared to non-Aboriginal women, greater proportions of Aboriginal women are employed in public administration and safety (9.2% of Aboriginal women compared to 5.3% of non-Aboriginal women) and accommodation and food services (10.1% of Aboriginal women compared to 7.7% of non-Aboriginal women) and education and training (14.1% of Aboriginal women compared to 11.4% of non-Aboriginal women). Compared to non-Aboriginal women, Aboriginal women are underrepresented in professional, scientific and technical services (3.3% of Aboriginal women compared to 7.4% of non-Aboriginal women), financial and insurance services (2.3% of Aboriginal women compared to 5.8% of non-Aboriginal women) and manufacturing (3.6% of Aboriginal women compared to 5.7% of non-Aboriginal women).

However the largest differences in industry of employment are by gender, which cut across Aboriginality. For both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals, greater proportions of men are employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, construction and transport, postal and warehousing. Greater proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women are employed in retail trade, accommodation and food services, education and training and health care and social assistance, compared to men.

Biddle, et al (2008) state that different distributions across occupations and industries between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations can indicate a mismatch of skills or even discrimination by employers in hiring practices. However, Biddle et al (2008) found that both the level of occupational and industry segregation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers declined between 2001 and 2006, based on Census data. Biddle, Taylor and Yap (2009) examine whether Aboriginal employment in the private sector has expanded between 2001 and 2006. Although it does not set out an analysis by gender, it does look at developments for Aboriginal people by geographical location. They conclude that Aboriginal employment rates show an absolute improvement and have also improved in comparison to the non-Aboriginal population. Dubbo showed notable success and in relation to work in the private sector so did Queanbeyan, Coffs Harbour, and Tamworth. The gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment worsened in Sydney. They speculate that human capital characteristics (primarily) and potentially race discrimination may affect outcomes in highly urban areas.[[63]](#footnote-63)

A national consultation consisting of focus groups and interviews with Aboriginal people to obtain their views on what private sector employers should do to improve Aboriginal employment was undertaken by The Diversity Council Australia in partnership with NAB in 2009 (Constable 2009). These consultations identified steps which would lead to cultural change (and thus affect recruitment and retention) within organisations, for example mentoring new Aboriginal employees and providing cultural education for managers. Flexible working arrangements appropriate to promoting Aboriginal employees’ work-life balance was specifically recommended. As a result, flexibility around leave to attend funerals and other traditional ceremonies could help Aboriginal employees balance paid employment with their family responsibilities. Whilst women’s issues were not specifically addressed, several participants suggested that employment programs similar to the school-based traineeship program would be helpful in addressing the employment barriers facing older Aboriginal job seekers, particularly those living in rural and regional areas.

Education is a key factor in influencing women’s participation in employment. In 2008, an equal proportion of Aboriginal males and females had completed Year 12 or equivalent, at 15.9%. A slightly lower proportion of Aboriginal females than males had completed Year 10 level, which was reflected in the higher proportion of Aboriginal females who had completed schooling to Year 9 or below, Table 9.14.

*Table 9.14: Highest year of school completed and non-school qualifications held by Aboriginal people by gender, NSW, 2008*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** |
| *Education* |  |  |  |
| Highest year of school completed |  |  |  |
| Year 12 or equivalent | 15.9 | 15.9 | 15.9 |
| Year 10 or 11 | 42.3 | 39.5 | 40.8 |
| Year 9 or below | 41.8 | 44.8 | 43.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| *Whether has a non-school qualification* |  |  |  |
| Has a non-school qualification | 30.9 | 32.5 | 31.7 |
| No non-school qualification | 69.1 | 67.5 | 68.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| *Whether currently participating in formal education* |  |  |  |
| Currently studying | 20.5 | 19.6 | 20.0 |
| Non-school institution | 12.0 | 9.7 | 10.9 |
| Secondary school | 8.3 | 9.9 | 9.1 |
| Not currently studying | 79.7 | 80.4 | 80.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS 2008d National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008 Cat. No. 4714.0, NSW, Table 10

While Aboriginal females were slightly more likely than Aboriginal males in NSW to have completed a non-school qualification (at 32.5% compared to 30.9%) around four-fifths (80%) of non-Aboriginal people in NSW were not currently undertaking study when surveyed in 2008.

From Table 9.15 it can be seen that younger Aboriginal people were more likely than older Aboriginal people to have completed Year 12, reflecting an upwards movement in educational attainment in the Australian population. Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of Aboriginal people aged 20 to 24 years (which generally excludes people still at secondary school) who had completed Year 12 or equivalent increased from 28% to 31%.

*Table 9.15: Highest year of school completed by Aboriginal status, Australia, 2008*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Aboriginal persons** | | | | **Non-Aboriginal persons** | | | |
|  | **15-19 yrs** | **20-24 yrs** | **25-64 yrs** | **Total** | **15-19 yrs** | **20-24 yrs** | **25-64  yrs** | **Total** |
| Year 12 or equivalent | 14.1 | 31.3 | 21.0 | 21.2 | 31.2 | 76.2 | 53.7 | 53.8 |
| Year 10 or 11 | 49.1 | 47.6 | 44.4 | 45.8 | 47.9 | 20.5 | 35.9 | 35.5 |
| Year 9 or below | 36.7 | 21.1 | 34.6 | 33.1 | 20.9 | 3.4 | 10.4 | 10.7 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total persons aged 15 to 64 years (000s) | 59.3 | 44.5 | 207.3 | 311.3 | 1,362.9 | 1,435.3 | 10,828.9 | 13,627.1 |

Source: ABS 2008d National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008 Cat. No. 4714.0

When the school completion rates of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in 2008 are compared, we find that while just over two in ten (21.2%) Aboriginal people aged 15-64 years had completed Year 12 whereas more than half (53.8%) of non-Aboriginal people had done so. Of Aboriginal people aged 20-24 years (which generally excludes people still at secondary school), 31.3% had completed Year 12 or equivalent, which is less than half the completion rate of non-Aboriginal people (76.2%).

In 2008, almost one-third (32.9%) of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over had a non-school qualification, Table 9.16. Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of Aboriginal people who had a non-school qualification increased from 26% to 32.9%. The proportion of Aboriginal people with non-school qualifications remains much lower than the proportion of non-Aboriginal people, where more than one half (54.3%) of non-Aboriginal persons held non-school qualifications in 2008. Of Aboriginal people aged 25-64 years (which mostly includes people who have completed their studies), two-fifths (40.2%) had a non-school qualification, compared to three-fifths (61.3%) of non-Aboriginal people in the same age group.

*Table 9.16: Non-school qualifications by Aboriginal status, Australia, 2008*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Aboriginal persons** | | | | **Non-Aboriginal persons** | | | |
|  | **15-19 yrs** | **20-24 yrs** | **25-64 yrs** | **Total** | **15-19 yrs** | **20-24 yrs** | **25-64 yrs** | **Total** |
| Has a non-school qualification (d) | 10.3 | 29.5 | 40.2 | 32.9 | 7.3 | 46.4 | 61.3 | 54.3 |
| Year 9 or below | 89.7 | 70.5 | 59.8 | 67.1 | 92.7 | 53.6 | 38.7 | 45.7 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total persons aged 15 to 64 years (000s) | 59.3 | 44.5 | 207.3 | 311.1 | 1,362.9 | 1,435.3 | 10,828.9 | 13,627.1 |

(a) Data from the 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey

(b) Data from the 2008 Survey of Education and Work

(c) Non-school qualifications refer to education attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education.

(d) Includes levels not determined.

Source: ABS 2008d National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008 Cat. No. 4714.0

In summary, many Aboriginal women in NSW remain outside the workforce. For those in employment, they are concentrated in low-skilled and low-paid occupations and industries, as identified in Chapter 4. While improving the quality of jobs and access to affordable child care are key policy issues for non-Aboriginal women in NSW; the key priorities for Aboriginal women are somewhat different. They primarily relate to job creation, particularly in the private sector. For those Aboriginal women in employment, it is about fostering career development opportunities to assist them to move into better paid and better quality jobs. It is also about introducing flexible working arrangements that take into account the Aboriginal culture and customs. Increasing educational outcomes among Aboriginal women also remains an important way to help improve their employment outcomes.

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# Appendices

## Appendix One: Data Sources Used

*ABS, Labour Force Surveys*

This series contains estimates of the civilian labour force derived from the Labour Force Survey component of the Monthly Population Survey. The Labour Force Survey is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (currently approximately 29,000 houses, flats, etc.) and a list sample of non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), and covers approximately 0.33% of the civilian population of Australia aged 15 years and over.

Additional data was drawn from Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.001, and Detailed Labour Force Survey, Cat. No. 6291.003.

*ABS, Average Weekly Earnings and Employee Earnings and Hours*

Two data sources relating to income measures are the Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) survey and the Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) Survey. Table M.3 outlines the differences in the series and the associated income measures.

*Table M.3: Comparison of AWE and EEH Surveys*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Average Weekly Earnings  (AWE) Survey** | **Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) Survey** |
| *Key Series Produced* | Average weekly total earnings (AWTE) for full-time adult employees and all employees. Average weekly ordinary (excludes overtime) time earnings (AWOTE) for full-time adult employees. | Average weekly earnings for all employees. Average weekly earnings for full-time adult non-managerial employees. Also provides average hourly earnings. |
| *Designed to Measure* | Level estimates of weekly earnings and the distribution of earnings. | earnings and the distribution of earnings. Level estimates of weekly and hourly earnings and the distribution of earnings. |
| *Frequency/ Type of data source* | Quarterly business survey. | Two-yearly business survey. |
| *Benefits* | Quarterly time series (original, seasonally adjusted and trend estimates available). | Provides detailed job information allowing analysis by industry, occupation, hourly rates etc. Source of distributional data (e.g. quartiles). |
| *Limitations* | Few cross-classificatory items | Survey run infrequently |

The AWE survey provides a frequent time series, but data are only available for full-time adult employees and all employees, and can only be cross-classified by a small number of variables, such as sex, state, sector, and industry. The EEH survey is run every two years and provides a large number of variables important in the analysis of weekly earnings, including: managerial/non-managerial status; state; sector; level of government; industry; occupation; employer size; sex; full-time/part-time status; adult/junior status; and type of employee (e.g. permanent/fixed-term contract or casual). The EEH survey therefore supplements AWE survey data by providing detailed information on the composition and distribution of employee earnings and hours.

*ABS Census of Population and Housing*

The Census of Population and Housing aims to accurately measure the number of people in Australia on Census Night, their key characteristics, and the dwellings in which they live.

*ABS, Childhood Education and Care Survey*

This survey presents estimates of child care arrangements and early childhood education and learning, compiled from the Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS). The child care estimates include type of care usually attended by children under 13 years of age at the time of interview, the hours of care, cost, and demand for care, together with information about the employment and income characteristics of the parents. The early education estimates include children aged 3 to 6 years who usually attended preschool programs in a preschool and/or a long day care setting, usual hours of attendance and cost. For children aged 4 to 8 years attending school at the time of the interview, estimates are presented of parental assessments of the children's adjustment to school together with care and preschool attendance in the two years prior to school enrolment. Estimates are also provided on the nature and extent of parental involvement in selected informal learning activities for children aged 0-8 years.

*ABS, Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*

Presents information about the distribution of weekly earnings of employees, their entitlement to paid leave (paid holiday, paid sick, paid long service and paid maternity/paternity leave), superannuation contributions made by employer on behalf of employee, and trade union membership. The statistics were compiled from the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership (EEBTUM) Survey conducted throughout Australia in August 2009 as a supplement to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Questions were asked of all employees in their main job except for those who worked solely for payment in kind in their main job.

*ABS, Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation*

Presents results from the 2007 Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation which collects detailed information about employment arrangements, working patterns, work and caring, retirement and retirement intentions, superannuation coverage and other characteristics.

*ABS, Forms of Employment*

Presents information about the nature of employment arrangements in the Australian workforce. It also presents information about different types of employment which can be cross-classified by characteristics such as hours worked, industry and occupation and demographic characteristics. The statistics were compiled from data collected in the Forms of Employment Survey, conducted throughout Australia in November 2009 as a supplement to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Questions were asked about employment arrangements in the main job of all employed people, except those who were contributing family workers in their main job.

*ABS Disability, Ageing and Carers survey*

The aims of the survey are to:

* measure the prevalence of disability in Australia
* measure the need for support of older people and those with a disability
* provide a demographic and socio-economic profile of people with disabilities, older people and carers compared with the general population
* estimate the number of and provide information about people who provide care to older people and people with disabilities

The survey collected the following information from the three target populations:

* people with a disability – information about their long-term health conditions, need for and receipt of assistance, use of aids and equipment such as wheelchairs and hearing aids, and participation in community activities
* older people (i.e. those aged 60 years and over) – information about their need for, and receipt of assistance, and participation in community activities
* people who care for persons with a disability and older people – information about the type of care they provide, the support available to them, and the characteristics of carers and some effects that the caring role has on their lives

*ABS, Managing Care and Work Survey*

This survey presents information on the relationship between people's unpaid caring responsibilities and their work situation during the six months prior to the survey. Topics covered include:

* frequency of care and selected characteristics of the care recipient
* sector of employment
* type of work arrangements used to care for someone
* type of work arrangements wanted to use to care for someone
* reasons could not use desired work arrangements
* changes made to work arrangements in order to care for someone
* whether main reason for self employment was due to caring
* main source of income if not looking for paid work due to caring responsibilities

*ABS, Locations of Work survey*

This survey collects information about the types of places where people work with particular focus on people who worked at home. The survey provides information about employed people, aged 15 years and over, who were at work in either their main or second job in the reference week. Further details were collected about their locations of work and the number of locations at which they worked and the working arrangements of people who worked at home. It also presents information about the use of information technology, leave entitlements and the main reason for working at home.

*ABS, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)*

The survey provides information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations of Australia for a wide range of areas of social concern including health, education, culture and labour force participation.

*ABS, Surveys of Education and Work*

This survey collects information about the educational experience of persons aged 15-64 years, and persons aged 65 to 74 who are in the labour force or marginally attached to the labour force, especially in relation to their labour force status. Information collected in the survey includes: labour force characteristics; participation in education in the year prior to the survey, and in the survey month; type of educational institution; level of education of current and previous study; highest year of school completed; level of highest non-school qualification; level of highest educational attainment; transition from education to work; enrolment experience; selected characteristics of apprentices and trainees; and unmet demand for apprenticeships and traineeships.

*Australia at Work Study*

While ABS cross-sectional data are extremely useful in understanding, at the aggregate level, the employment experiences of women, longitudinal data adds a rich overlay on what change, if any, has occurred in the working lives of the same group of women over time.

Australia at Work is a national longitudinal telephone survey of people aged 16 to 58 years who were in the Australian labour force in March 2006 (i.e. prior to the implementation of the *Work Choices* legislation on 27 March 2006). The data is weighted to reflect the population by sex, age, location, labour force status and trade union membership. The first three waves of study have been analysed (between March and July in 2007, 2008 and 2009) to examine various aspects of work quality, including:

* patterns in and out of the labour market
* changes in self employment versus employee status
* patterns of permanent, fixed term contract and casual employment
* paid employment and child care responsibilities
* usual and paid hours of employment
* patterns of full-time and part-time hours of work
* working time preferences
* control over working hours
* hourly rates of pay and weekly wages
* opportunity to, and actual negotiation of, pay and other conditions of employment
* paid employment and carer responsibilities
* attitudes to job security

*Australian Work and Life Index*

The Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI) is a national survey of work–life outcomes amongst working Australians. AWALI commenced in 2007 and has been repeated annually by the Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia. The study involves a survey based on random sample of all working Australians, with a focus on work–life issues, specifically the extent that work interferes with responsibilities or activities outside work and vice versa, 'time strain', Work-to-community interaction, satisfaction with overall work–life 'balance, and time pressure.

*Career Experience Survey*

Gathers information about the career experience of employees. It provides insights into the career opportunities of Australian workers including information on employees with family responsibilities and on issues such as workplace flexibility and barriers to career development. Statistics were compiled from data collected in the Career Experience Survey conducted throughout Australia in November 2002, as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS).

*Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey*

The Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey is a household panel survey which has followed several thousand households since 2001 to examine ‘economic and subjective well-being, labour market dynamics and family dynamics’. The HILDA Survey is designed and managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne.

*Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*

Presents information about the labour force characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Information on labour force characteristics is presented by state or territory, remoteness, males and females, and age. The estimates are compiled from the monthly Labour Force Survey, conducted throughout Australia by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Results from each monthly collection have been combined to produce annual estimates.

## Appendix Two: Average Weekly Earnings by Industry

*Figure A.1 Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, by industry, 1994-2009*



Source: Cat. No. 6306.0

## Appendix Three: Union Membership by Industry

*Table A.1, Changes in union membership and density by industry by gender, Australia,   
2006-2009*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total membership in 2009 (‘000s) | Change since 2006 (‘000s) | | Density in 2009\* (%) | Change in density since 2006 (%) | |
| *Manufacturing* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 168.7 | | -20.3 | 25% | | -1% |
| Female | 27.3 | | +0.95 | 11% | | Stable |
| *Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 44.4 | | +7.9 | 46% | | Stable |
| Female | 4.7 | | +0.72 | 20% | | -4% |
| *Construction* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 117.9 | | -11.6 | 20% | | -4% |
| Female | 2.4 | | -0.32 | 3% | | -1% |
| *Wholesale Trade* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 19.8 | | -7.6 | 7% | | -4% |
| Female | 2.9 | | -1.36 | 2% | | -1% |
| *Retail Trade* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 57.7 | | -18.1 | 12% | | -4% |
| Female | 102.2 | | -19.24 | 17% | | -4% |
| *Accommodation and Food Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 9.9 | | -8.1 | 3% | | -4% |
| Female | 23.0 | | -2.38 | 6% | | -1% |
| *Transport, Postal and Warehousing* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 120.2 | | +8.3 | 34% | | -1% |
| Female | 32.3 | | +5.31 | 26% | | +1% |
| *Information Media and Telecommunications* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 22.7 | | -5.1 | 19% | | -1% |
| Female | 9.8 | | -2.13 | 12% | | -1% |
| *Financial and Insurance Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 14.1 | | -0.5 | 8% | | -1% |
| Female | 33.3 | | +0.33 | 17% | | Stable |
| *Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 5.2 | | -0.5 | 7% | | Stable |
| Female | 4.2 | | +1.58 | 5% | | +2% |
| *Professional, Scientific and Technical Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 16.3 | | 0.0 | 5% | | Stable |
| Female | 6.8 | | +0.13 | 2% | | Stable |
| *Administrative and Support Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 10.2 | | -0.2 | 8% | | -1% |
| Female | 13.8 | | +4.58 | 9% | | +3% |
| *Public Administration and Safety* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 159.5 | | +15.3 | 46% | | +3% |
| Female | 84.5 | | -2.62 | 29% | | -2% |
| *Education and Training* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 98.6 | | +22.1 | 42% | | +6% |
| Female | 222.7 | | +32.03 | 41% | | +1% |
| *Health Care and Social Assistance* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 59.1 | | +12.0 | 26% | | +3% |
| Female | 252.6 | | +30.86 | 28% | | -1% |
| *Arts and Recreation Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 13.3 | | +4.9 | 18% | | +6% |
| Female | 12.5 | | +5.93 | 16% | | +5% |
| *Other Services* |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 16.7 | | -3.3 | 9% | | -2% |
| Female | 8.5 | | -0.25 | 6% | | -1% |
| *Tota*l |  | |  |  | |  |
| Male | 898.4 | | -95.2 | 18% | | -3% |
| Female | 845.7 | | +53.28 | 19% | | Stable |

Notes: Data for Agriculture, forestry and fishing and Mining excluded because of standard error warnings on ABS estimates.

Source: ABS Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, 6310.0, Table 3a

1. The remaining 12.9% include independent contractors and business operators. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The employment rate is all persons 15 years and over who worked for one hour or more; were employees who had a job but were not at work or were employers or own account workers, who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work; as a proportion of the population aged 15 years and over within the same group. Labour force participation includes the population of persons who are not employed, but also actively looking for work or waiting to start a new job, as well as those who are employed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A standard definition of a recession is a decline in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for two or more consecutive quarters. According to this definition the recent economic downturn did not meet this definition of recession. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplaces census of women in leadership positions found the percentage of ASX200 companies with male-only boards had increased, from 51% in 2008 to 54% in 2010. Some financial institutions have taken some measures to attempt to redress this inequity, for example the ANZ implementing a $4000 childcare allowance for employees who are primary caregivers who return to work after having a child. See http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/news/boards-to-increase-women-numbers-by-2012/story-e6frg90f-1225935094310. The Australian Stock Exchange has also provided revised guidelines for listed companies to diversify their workforces. see: http://www.asx.com.au/compliance/education\_research/diversity.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Shewring (2009) in her study of female manual trades persons concluded that paths into non-traditional occupations for women included informal networks and, critically, employer support. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For this reporting, self-employed includes Owner Managers of Incorporated Entities (OMIEs) and Owner Managers of Unincorporated Entities (OMUEs). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Men’s part-time employment has grown particularly in the under 24 age group (to combine work with studying) and in the 55 and over age group (in the transition to retirement). Factors leading to the overall growth of part-time work in the economy are addressed below. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See table 4.3 in Chapter 4 identifying these industries as relatively low paid but with low gender pay gaps owing to the high award reliance by employees in them. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See table 4.3 in Chapter 4 identifying health care as having a high gender pay gap. Over half the employees in these four industries are women and up to 80% in health. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See table 2.2, Chapter 2; Austen et al. (2008: 17) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See table 2.2, Chapter 2; Austen et al. (2008: 17) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See for example, Campbell et al. (2008) for a discussion about solicitors; Whittard (2003) for a discussion of the finance industry. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Only 46% of female carers are employed but of these the part-time share is 63%. Male carers have a 55% employment rate with 13% working part-time (ABS, 2003) – Census data indicates 73.5% of male carers work with 17.7% working part-time; for women the figures are 58.5% and 49.5% [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Hours worked refers to total hours per week. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See also Strazdins et al. (2007:214) using their parental job quality index, the authors report full-time working mothers scored poorly/less well in terms of coping and self reported health levels compared to their part-time counterparts. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The question in the survey asks respondents how much they agree or disagree with the statement: ‘I have control of my working hours’. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The ‘Female breadwinner’ category is defined as women with a partner, with the partner not currently working. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Connolly and Gregory, 2007 (who calculate that up to 29% of women from professional corporate management jobs and 40% in intermediate level jobs experience downgrading when moving to part-time work; this effect is worse for women in high skill occupations who have changed employers when switching to part-time work). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. At 554; see also studies into the police (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007) and solicitors (Campbell at al., 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. At 554, quoting a former manager returning to work part-time. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Acknowledging the influence on this choice by the factors described earlier. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. As described in the report of the NSW Office for Women's Policy Roundtable on Quality Part-time Work, access on 21 August 2010, at: http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/women\_and\_work/new\_south\_wales\_quality\_part\_time\_work\_round\_table [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. For example, see DIIRD (2005: 58); Bardoel et al. (2007); Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Charlesworth and Cartwright (2007); Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007) regarding a manufacturing organisation and part of Victoria Police respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. As well as modern awards and enterprise agreements. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Twelve months applies where the employer has less than 15 employees. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey is a household panel survey which has followed several thousand households since 2001 to examine ‘economic and subjective well-being, labour market dynamics and family dynamics’, accessed 10 October 2010 at: <http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/hilda/> [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Subject to transitional arrangements until 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Age patterns in casual employment are also significant as many employees under 24 are casuals combining education and employment. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See the Glossary for definitions of full-time and part-time. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Australia at Work 2007, 2008 and 2009 indicate movement from permanent to casual status is very low [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Includes all NSW Public Service Departments and Agencies, Public Sector Agencies and State Owned Corporations [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Includes all local government authorities, and departments and agencies created by, or reporting to, the Commonwealth or State/Territory Parliaments [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Data not available at the NSW level. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The Australian Services Union (ASU) has lodged an application with Fair Work Australia to test the provisions of the new legislation on aged care workers. The case will be heard late in 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. A collective agreement is an agreement between a group of employees, or their representatives, and an employer which sets the terms of employment and is usually registered with a Federal or State industrial tribunal or authority (ABS 2008b Cat. No. 6306.0) [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The NES also provides for two days’ unpaid carer’s leave as required for both permanent and casual employees and two days’ unpaid compassionate leave for casuals as required. Casuals may be eligible for long service leave under NSW legislation. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The remaining 12.9% include independent contractors and business operators. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Senate enquiry submissions into *Paid Parental Leave Bill 2010* Stewart, and Baird and Heron, accessed 10 October 2010: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac\_ctte/paid\_parental\_leave/submissions.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See government guidance accessed on 10 October 2010 at: http://www.familydaycare.com.au/forms/Aust\_paid\_parental\_leave\_scheme.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. EOWA Survey on Paid Maternity Leave, Sex-based Harassment Initiatives and the Gender Pay Gap, 2009, accessed on 10 October 2010 at: http://www.eowa.gov.au/Information\_Centres/Media\_Centre/Media\_Releases/2009\_EOWA\_Alcoa\_Survey/2009\_Alcoa\_Survey\_Final.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. This data is taken from the ABS Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership (EEBTUM), Cat. No 6310.0 August 2009. The data provided previously in this chapter is taken from the Forms of Employment ABS survey in November 2009 which is considered more reliable in relation to overall proportions of those able to access paid parental leave. This data from EEBTUM still provides useful information about the distribution of paid parental leave across sector, industries, occupations and hours though the amount available maybe greater than it indicates. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. See: http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/3552-monday-11-october-local-government-in-nsw-leads-the-way-with-paid-parental-leave-.asp?intSiteID=1 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Care giving statistics in the Census relate to respondents aged 15 years and over. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Caregiving statistics in the *Managing Care and Work* survey relate to individuals aged 18 years and over. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Accessed on 10 October 2010 at: http://www.polsis.uq.edu.au/parental-leave/level1-report.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Defined as including annual, sick and carers’, flex, parental and long service leave. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The Superannuation Guarantee (SG) was introduced in 1992 and the system reached maturity in 2002 when the prescribed amount of the compulsory employer contribution reached 9% of wages. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. See the Australian Tax Office website, accessed on 5 Nov 2010 at: <http://www.ato.gov.au/businesses/content.asp?doc=/content/00249857.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Superannuation coverage includes persons who currently had employer or business or personal or spouse contributions separately or in some combination or had superannuation to which no contributions were currently being made. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. The Pension Review Report 2009 (Harmer Review) at 10-11, accessed on 14 October 2010 at: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/corp/BudgetPAES/budget09\_10/pension/Documents/Pension\_Review\_Report/PensionReviewReport.pdf  
    Women’s lack of other financial resources is reflected in the fact that for women receiving a pension, 64.5% of them received the maximum rate compared to 61% of male pensioners, see the FAHCSIA website, accessed on 14 October 2010 at:  
    http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/statistical/Documents/stp4/sec2.htm#t1 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Effective from September 2009 with $20.30 for couples (maximum rates and additional to indexation increases), accessed on 14 October 2010 at: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/payments/Pages/pension\_changes.aspx [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. The latest ABS data (August 2009) on trade union membership shows that the overall proportion of employees in Australia who were trade union members in their main job increased from 19% to 20% from 2008 to 2009. This was an increase of 82,200 from the previous year and this was the first time overall union membership increased for many years (ABS 2009c, Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Cat. No. 6310.0, August). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Note: This increase came from a low base as female employment in the mining industry is traditionally low. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Course of study is any study being undertaken that will lead to formal certification, issued by a relevant approved body, in recognition that a person has achieved learning outcomes or competencies relevant to identified individual, professional, industry or community needs. If the respondent was still attending school their level of study was recorded as their current year of schooling. If the respondent had left school and was enrolled in study for a qualification they were asked the level of the qualification. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. 19.8% of all males and 20.1% of all females report having a disability. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers was last released in 2003. Release of preliminary data from the most recent survey will occur in December 2010, and the full report in April 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. A number of regulatory changes have occurred since 2003 when the data on labour force participation of persons with disabilities was last conducted, which may have influenced employment rates of people with disabilities, most particularly the introduction of the job capacity assessment for recipients of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and increases to the Mobility Allowance. Individuals are eligible for the DSP if they are not able to work for 15 hours or more per week at or above the relevant minimum wage or be reskilled for such work for at least the next 2 years because of their illness, injury or disability; are working under the Supported Wage System, or are permanently blind. The Supported Wage System incorporates a process of productivity-based wage assessment, where pay rates are set at an assessment of an individual’s productivity level. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Labour force participation figures from the Census differ from those in the ABS labour force surveys. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. 4.6% in 2005, 4.8% in 2006 and 4.5% in 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Caution must be taken when comparing the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. The Aboriginal population has a younger age structure than the non-Aboriginal population, which can make direct comparisons misleading. Another reason for caution when comparing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal estimates is the geographical distribution of the two populations. At the national level, about one-quarter (22%) of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over lived in remote areas in 2009. In comparison, only 2% of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 year and over lived in remote areas in 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. The ABS has five major categories of Remoteness Area: Major Cities, Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. See also Booth, Leigh and Vaganova (2009: 15) whose ‘large-scale audit discrimination experiment…sending fake CVs to employers, to obtain an experimental measure of the relationship between job call-backs and the racial sound of the applicant’s name. We find clear evidence of discrimination, with Chinese and Middle Easterners both having to submit at least 50% more applications in order to receive the same number of call-backs as Anglo candidates. Aboriginal applicants also suffer a statistically significant level of discrimination, though the effects are smaller.’ http://people.anu.edu.au/andrew.leigh/pdf/AuditDiscrimination.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-63)