

Gender Equity in Australia

What Problem ?

Achieving equity now...

Women represent 50.3% of the Australian population¹

Australia is one of a group of countries ranked #1 for women's educational attainment²

Women comprise 33% of the total membership of Australian Government boards and bodies³

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Demographic Statistics, March 2008*, Catalogue No. 3101.0, ABS, Canberra.

2. World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2007*.

3. Office for Women, *Government Boards Report 2008*, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra, 2008.

Women in Parliament

35.5%

**of Australian Senators
are women**

26.7%

**of the Members of the
House of Representatives
are women**

29.6%

**of elected positions
in the
Australian
Commonwealth Parliament
are held by women**



The Commonwealth Public Service

Women are:

- **57.6%** of Commonwealth Public Service employees and outnumber men in all junior classifications
- **45%** of employees at **Executive Level**
- **37%** of the **Senior Executives**

Some outstanding individual achievements

Australia has **a** woman:

- Governor-General
- Deputy Prime Minister
- Premier of Queensland
- CEO of a Major Bank

3 out of seven High Court Justices are women

4 women in Federal Cabinet



However

On virtually every objective measure,
women in Australia
are behind
and going backwards

The Global Gender Gap Index

Australia's ranking declining year on year

2006	2007	2008
1.Sweden	1.Sweden	1.Norway
2.Norway	2.Norway	2.Finland
3.Finland	3.Finland	3.Sweden
4.Iceland	4.Iceland	4.Iceland
5.Germany	5.New Zealand	5.New Zealand
6.Philippines	6.Philippines	6.Phillipines
7.New Zealand	7.Germany	7.Denmark
8.Denmark	8.Denmark	8.Ireland
9.United Kingdom	9.Ireland	9.Netherlands
10.Ireland	10.Spain	10.Latvia
11.Spain	11.United Kingdom	11.Germany
12.Netherlands	12.Netherlands	12.Sri Lanka
13.Sri Lanka	13.Latvia	13.United Kingdom
14.Canada	14.Lithuania	14.Switzerland
15.Australia	15.Sri Lanka	15.France
	16.Croatia	16. Lesotho
	17.Australia	17.Spain
		18.Mozambique
		19.Trinidad and Tobago
		20.Moldova
		21.Australia

The Global Gender Gap Index

A benchmark of gender-based gaps in access to resources and opportunities in individual countries:

1. Economic participation and opportunity
2. Educational attainment
3. Political empowerment
4. Health and survival

Resulting in country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions, income groups and over time

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McKinsey & Company



Research by

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Laura D. Tyson, **University of California, Berkeley**
Saadia Zahidi, **World Economic Forum**

Australia's Gender Equity Scorecard



Economic participation and opportunity
salaries, participation levels and access to high-skilled employment



Educational attainment
access to basic and higher level education



Political empowerment
outcomes on representation in decision-making structures



Health and survival
life expectancy

Reverse Progress

2003

Australian businesswomen fall behind overseas peers

By Andrew Webster | October 2, 2003

Christine O'Reilly, chief of Gasnet Australia, felt at the "top of a wave" of women moving into the workforce when she graduated 20 years ago.

Australian women have made almost no progress over the past year in breaking into the most senior levels of business management, with executive positions in almost half of Australia's top 200 public companies remaining male preserves.

The Government's equal opportunity agency, EOWA, yesterday published figures showing that women hold just 8.8 per cent of executive management positions, up 0.4 per cent on last year. That equates to about five female managers joining Australia's business elite over the past 12 months.

The census recorded five female CEOs; Theresa Gattung, of Telecom NZ, Gail Kelly, of St George Bank, Christine O'Reilly, of Gasnet Australia, Katie Page, of Harvey Norman, and the Seven Network's Maureen Plavsic, who has since been replaced. ¹

2008

Fewer women on Australian boards, survey shows

Glenda Korporaal | October 29, 2008

Article from: [The Australian](#)

At first glance, the latest survey by the federal Government's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, which shows that the percentage of women in senior executive levels and on boards in Australia is declining, is a depressing one.

But the benefit of the survey, which shows that Australia now trails the US, Britain, South Africa and New Zealand in these areas, may well be that it is a wake-up call for senior management of Australian companies about how far behind they are -- dare one say out of date even -- in their policies for promoting women and encouraging the careers of female employees.

The latest EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership shows that the number of women on boards and executive management positions has not only fallen since 2006 but has, in some cases, gone back to pre-2004 levels.

Conducted by Macquarie University, the census shows that the number of women in the executive ranks of the ASX200 companies has fallen to 10.7 per cent from 12 per cent in 2006 and 11.4 per cent in 2004.

The number of companies with no women executive managers has jumped from 39.5 per cent in 2006 to 45.5 per cent.

Only 55 per cent of ASX200 companies have at least one woman in an executive position, well below the 59 per cent in South Africa, 66 per cent in Canada and 82.5 per cent in the US.

Women in Leadership - ASX 200 – Going Backwards

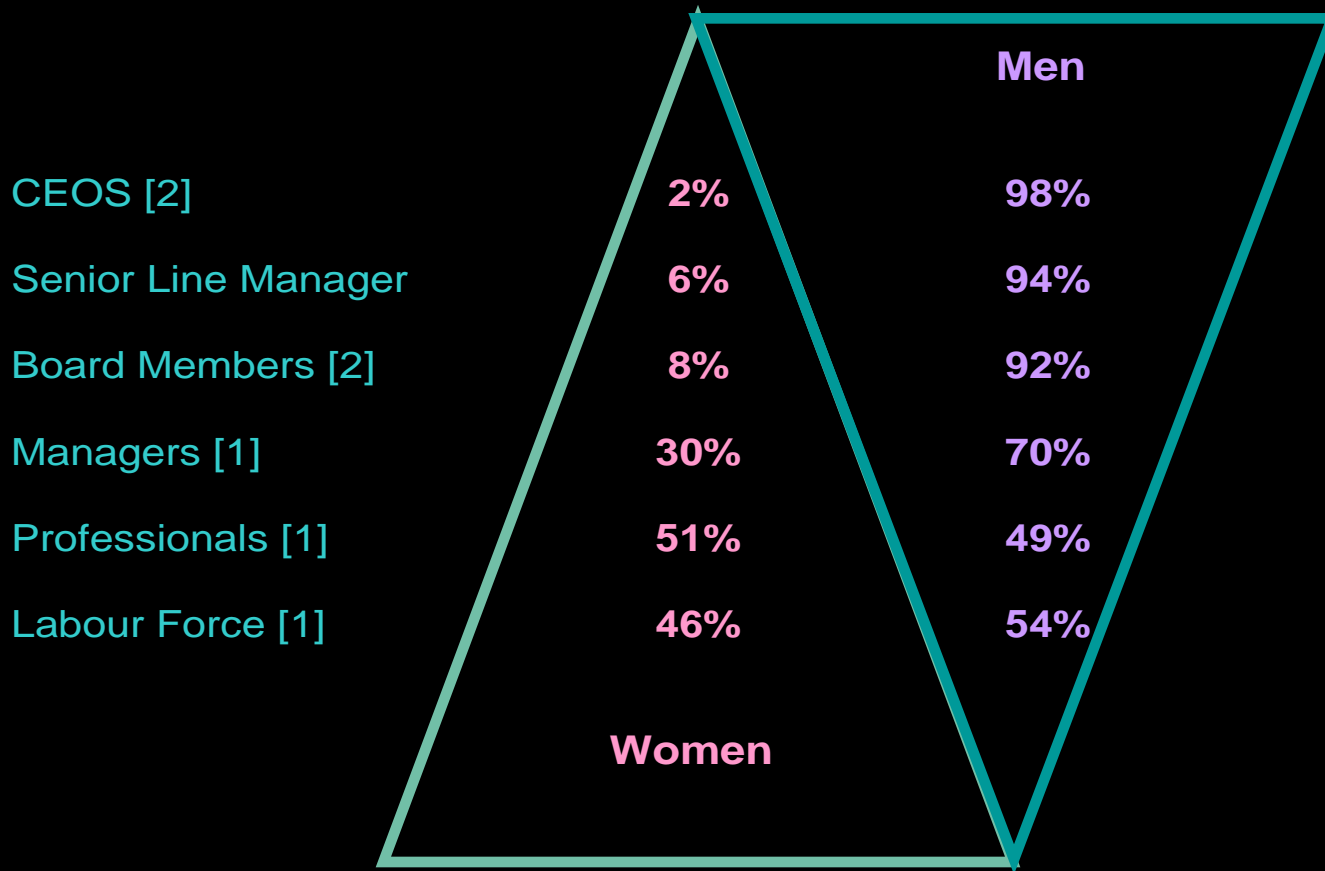


Women in Corporate Australia:

- Chair only 4 ASX 200 boards
- are 8.3% of Board Directors
- 2% of Chief Executive Officer
- 5.9% of Senior Line Management
- 10.7% Executive Management

**45.5 % of ASX 200 companies have
NO women
in management at all !**

Leadership in Corporate Australia, in 2009



[1] Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2009, 6291.0.55.003

[2] EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership 2008

Undervalued and Undermined

There are fewer women running our big companies and fewer women on boards. And those (women) on boards are apparently undervalued and undermined

Yet there is a significant body of recent research linking company performance and the proportion of women in senior board and management positions. Catalyst, the U.S. think tank, has demonstrated that those companies with more women on the board or in senior management tend to perform better than do their peers.

Furthermore, a recent French study focussing on the current financial crisis supports this view, noting that companies with more women in senior management have held their share prices better than those with few female executives ²

But it is on a board with three or more female directors where the increased likelihood of women's voices and ideas being really heard and substantial changes in boardroom dynamics become really noticeable ¹

1. Agender in the Boardroom, Egon Zehnder International, Melbourne, <http://www.egonzehnder.com/global/thoughtleadership/hottopic/id/78402633/article/id/83700080/publication/id/83700081/article/id/83700080/publication/id/83700081>

2. Diversity in the boardroom, Egon Zehnder International, Melbourne <http://www.egonzehnder.com/global/thoughtleadership/hottopic/id/78402633/article/id/83700080/publication/id/83700081>

The Discrimination includes Pay



A recent report from EOWA revealed that women:

- CEOs receive **67%** of male salaries,
- CFOs receive **49%** of male salaries ¹

Women lawyers experience a **62% pay gap** and it starts in the first year ²

Women in Australia are paid **84.3 cents** in the male dollar full time adult ordinary earnings

¹ Catherine Fox, "Female executives working for half pay" *Australian Financial Review* January 25-28, 2008 p. 9 Read the report:
[Http://www.eowa.gov.au/Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/2006_Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/Top_Earner_Report/FINAL_REPORT.pdf](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/2006_Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/Top_Earner_Report/FINAL_REPORT.pdf)

² Sue Dunlevy, "Women lawyers not equal" *Daily Telegraph* 12 August, 2009 p. 3

The Long Term Costs

**Australia ranks #41 in the global index
of women's workforce participation**

So What ?

- Women's superannuation is half that of men
- Leading to an acute vulnerability to poverty in retirement
- The gap will remain a problem for coming generations

How unfair can it be ?

Over a life-time
of working, a woman will
earn almost **one million
dollars less than a man** ¹

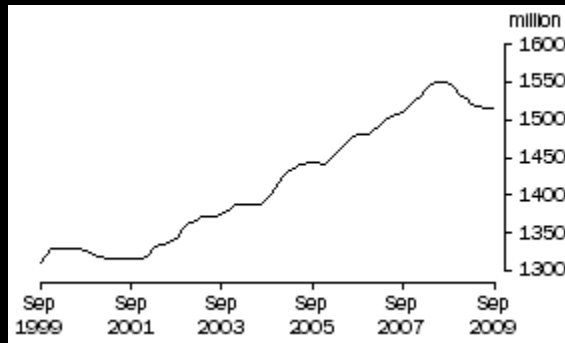


Women are
**two and half times more likely to
live in poverty**
in their old age than men ¹

Related Work Life Balance

WORKING HOURS IN AUSTRALIA

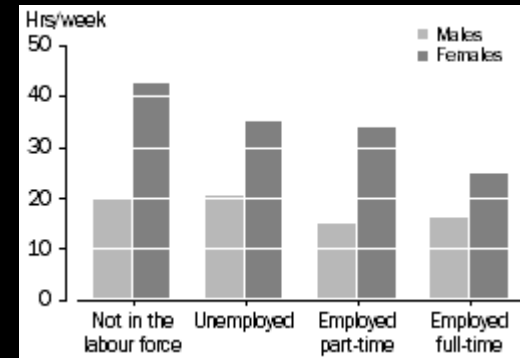
The trend estimate of total aggregate hours worked rose from 1,312 million in September 1999 to stand at a high of 1,551 million in July 2008



In nearly 60% of couple families, one or both parents usually worked some hours between 7pm and 7am.

TIME SPENT ON HOUSEHOLD WORK BY SEX AND STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT - 2006

However, women working full-time spent almost 65 hours in a combination of paid work and household work (total work)



- Average hours per week by all persons for primary activities
 - Aged 15-64 years
- Source: 2006 Time Use Survey

Women in Australia



- Are **45.1%** of the workforce in Australia
- **Earn 66 cents** of what men earn (when part-time work is included)
- Are **systematically denied** leadership opportunities in corporate Australia

So where did Australia go wrong ?

- 1) We thought the hard work was done in the 80s
- 2) We believed the Australian 'fair go' attitude would be enough and agreed to soft targets and self monitoring 25 years ago
- 3) We failed the management basics - setting targets, monitor milestones and taking corrective actions



One of Australia's most prominent business leaders says it may be necessary to bring in quotas for women in business

The chief executive of the Business Council of Australia, Katie Lahey, says “ the results of a study of female leadership in Australia's top 200 companies are shocking and indicate that the radical notion of quotas should be on the agenda”. ²



Commenting on voluntary targets:

“Committing to targets and to tracking and then publishing the results is:

- It's the right thing to do
- It's the fair thing to do
- It's in the nations interests

Only when women take their place in relevant numbers will corporate Australia demonstrate bold leadership, irrevocably change corporate culture, significantly enhance our reputation and deliver shareholder value”
Helen Lynch ¹



¹ Women on Boards Conference, Sept 2009

² ABC News, October 2008

The Nordic Experience

NORWAY'S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Spring 2003 - Proposition to Parliament to introduce the 40% quota for an “under represented gender” covering 500 PLCs and all state-owned and inter-municipal companies in Norway

November 2003 - Norwegian parliament voted for the law with a majority (amendment added later to enable courts to dissolve a company if it was found not to be complying with the law)

Spring 2008 - Most PLC's had complied with the new law In 2003. 7% of their boards were made up of females and by July 2008 it had increased to 39% ¹

Why Quotas Were Needed

- Women were increasingly filling top positions in politics, academia, management, public services but NOT in the powerful boardrooms of private enterprises
- Even conservative circles were impatient.... Nothing seemed to change, old boys networks prevailed

“For this I think quotas or targets are important because I think they can help in changing the stereotypes”.

Ines Alberdi, Executive Director, UNIFEM, August 2009

Where are we now?

- Self governance by corporations - for the last 25 years - has brought us to where we are today
- The EOWA's compliance and reporting on equal opportunity has not had a positive impact

What Action Must Be Taken ?

- Establishment of enforceable targets
- No less than 40% and no more than 60% of any gender- is provided as a guideline by the United Nations - UNIFEM
- An empowered governance body is necessary to enforce compliance
- Action is required immediately (given it is likely to take 7-10 years to address the imbalance)



Corporate Inertia

We need to ask the question: “Why is it that the business sector, usually so focused on achievable, time bound and measurable outcomes is so reticent to apply these to issue of gender equality?” ¹



“I look back and think I was wrong. I look at what’s happened and say nothing has changed; the rules and how work is, are still set by men and it is very difficult for women to participate”

Margaret Jackson ²

¹ “Is there merit in quotas? The Australian context”, Sept 2009, Elizabeth Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner and Commissioner responsible for Age Discrimination, Australian Human Rights Commission

² Editors Note Boss Magazine, October 2009

Affirmative Action

Julia Gillard and Barack Obama benefited from affirmative action:

- Obama to get into Harvard
- Gillard to finally get pre selection for a seat in parliament

Why can't we do the same to give women a fair opportunity to participate in Australian companies?



Lets get started !



Comments and Responses

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