



# *Setting the agenda*

## **A National Strategy for Gender Equality**



## **Join the conversation**



@AustralianLabor



@LaborConnect

**#SettingTheAgenda**

# Foreword

Setting the Agenda is Labor's strategy for a national economic and social priority: equality for the women of Australia.

The march of women through the institutions of power will define the next decade and in Setting the Agenda, Tanya Plibersek and her team have prepared a plan for the next Labor Government.

At the core of this document is the recognition that meaningful progress depends on concrete action and real leadership.

We often talk about wanting our daughters to have the same opportunities as our sons. This is a national strategy to make that a reality.

This document is not a list of good intentions or well-meaning platitudes, this is about real change: closing the gender pay gap, expanding opportunity in education, delivering world-class child care and tackling family violence.

**If the only significant change our nation achieved in the next decade was true equality for the women of Australia: equality in pay, in opportunity and in leadership, then we would be a richer, smarter, fairer, more productive and successful country.**

That's why delivering true equality for the women of Australia will be a national priority for a Shorten Labor Government.

**Bill Shorten**

Leader of the Opposition

**“ This document is not a list of good intentions or well-meaning platitudes, this is about real change: closing the gender pay gap, expanding opportunity in education, delivering world-class child care and tackling family violence. ”**

“  
**If Labor is elected to government, we want to be ready to govern from day one. So we’re setting out our priorities for action. We’re committing to targets for change and we’ve outlined a framework for government leadership.**  
”

Setting the Agenda is Labor’s national plan for action on gender equality. It is our commitment to make gender equality a central priority for a future Labor government.

Australia has been a global leader in advancing women’s rights. I’m proud of Labor’s part in that legacy. But in recent years, progress has stalled. Achieving gender equality is not inevitable and it’s certainly not happening fast enough.

We’ve seen momentum growing around the world and here in Australia. Women are calling for action to break through the barriers to gender equality.

**Achieving equality for women and men is a test of our national character and an essential building block for national prosperity.**

Over the last year, Labor has been holding conversations across Australia. We’ve heard the views of thousands of women. This strategy has been shaped by what you told us we need to do.

If Labor is elected to government, we want to be ready to govern from day one. So we’re setting out our priorities for action. We’re committing to targets for change and we’ve outlined a framework for government leadership. We’ll continue to work throughout 2018 to further develop measures that will deliver on our commitments.

We won’t achieve gender equality overnight, but if we work together we can break through the barriers.

**Tanya Plibersek**  
Deputy Leader of the Opposition  
Shadow Minister for Women

# OUR GOALS

For all Australians to live in a safe society, benefit from economic prosperity, and have access to equal power, resources and opportunity.

For all Australians to be able to live their lives and make real choices, unrestricted by gender stereotypes, discrimination or related barriers.

To change behaviours and attitudes to reduce violence against women and end discrimination.

For gender equality to be a central goal for Australian governments and for governments to lead the way for sustained and enduring change.

## Gender equality will boost our economy

Inequality is a drag on the economy and undermines our national prosperity.

Closing the gap in women's workforce engagement and earnings will improve productivity and boost the national GDP. If we supported Australian women to participate in as much paid work as Canadian women – an extra 6 per cent of women in the workforce – it would grow Australia's annual GDP by \$25 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Gender equality also boosts businesses' bottom lines. A survey of 21,980 firms around the world showed that companies with at least 30 per cent women in leadership positions were 15 per cent more profitable.<sup>2</sup>

## Gender equality prevents violence

There is clear evidence that violence against women is driven by gender inequality.<sup>3</sup> Australia needs a clear and comprehensive strategy to achieve gender equality if we are to end family and domestic violence.

PwC estimates that violence against women costs Australia's economy \$21.7 billion every year. If no further action is taken to prevent violence against women, the costs will add up to \$323.4 billion by 2045.<sup>4</sup>

Violence against women is more common when women do not have equal power, resources and opportunities as men and when their voices, ideas and work are not valued equally by society.<sup>5</sup> People are most likely to support male use of violence when they also agree with sexist attitudes and place a high value on male dominance within relationships.<sup>6</sup>

# Gender inequality across a lifetime

## Girls

Children start to learn and adopt gender stereotyped behaviour from around the age of three.<sup>7</sup> These stereotypes and norms are learnt from families, television, and early childhood education and can change the way children behave and how they feel about themselves – for instance, by reinforcing the myth that girls are vulnerable while boys are strong and independent.

On average, girls receive 11 per cent less pocket money than boys.<sup>8</sup>

## Adults

Women, on average, earn around \$25,000 dollars less each year than the average man.<sup>12</sup>

The typical Australian woman spends between five and 14 hours a week doing unpaid house work compared to fewer than five hours for men.<sup>13</sup>

Half of Australian mothers experience discrimination during pregnancy, while on parental leave or when returning to work.<sup>14</sup>

More and more women identify as part of the ‘sandwich generation’, with caring responsibilities for children and also aging parents.<sup>15</sup>

## Young Women

As girls get older, their confidence decreases. By the time girls reach early adulthood, only half agree that they have ‘every opportunity to become a leader’, compared with three quarters of 10 to 14 year olds.<sup>9</sup>

98 per cent of teenage girls think they are not treated equally with boys.<sup>10</sup>

And almost half of girls think gender is the biggest barrier to their chances of becoming a leader.<sup>11</sup>

## Older Women

The cumulative impact of pay inequity and unpaid care work, means that women retiring today do so with around half the superannuation savings of men.<sup>16</sup>

Women over 55 are the fastest growing group falling into homelessness – usually following a lifetime of hard work and raising families. It is projected that more than 500,000 women will face housing stress over the next two decades.<sup>17</sup> The number of older women forced to couch surf has almost doubled in the last four years.<sup>18</sup>

# Gender inequality doesn't just impact women

Harmful ideas and stereotypes about what it takes to be a 'real man' can also be damaging to young boys who grow up having to conform to unhealthy stereotypes. Boys don't perform as well at school and university as girls. Young men are more likely to engage in risky behaviour like drinking too much alcohol, taking illegal drugs, or driving dangerously. Three times as many men die in car accidents.<sup>19</sup>

Men are less likely to talk to a friend or seek help when they're struggling or to go to a doctor when they need to. Many men would like to take a greater role raising their children but feel social pressure to be the breadwinner for their families or are unable to access flexible work arrangements.

For men, this pressure to conform can add up to lower life expectancy, bad health, lower education levels, and less time with their families.

There are also many LGBTQI Australians and people who identify as trans or gender-diverse whose identities fall outside traditional gender roles, for whom traditional gender norms and stereotypes can be harmful.

LGBTQI Australians are more likely to experience mental health problems, verbal and physical abuse and cyber-bullying, and are three to 14 times more likely than other Australians to attempt suicide.<sup>20</sup> They are also less likely to find support services that meet their needs.

# What you told us

In 2017, Labor's Status of Women Caucus Committee held the Setting the Agenda national conversation on gender equality.

We heard from thousands of women around Australia who attended community meetings, took part in an online survey, made a submission or whose views were represented as members of women's organisations. Thirty five community meetings, workshops and roundtables were held with more than 500 women across every state and territory and in cities, rural and regional areas.

The top five priorities identified across the country were:

- **Ending violence against women and girls**
- **Closing the gender pay gap**
- **Preventing sexual harassment**
- **Supporting marginalised women**
- **Improving access to reproductive rights and health care**

Participants also called on governments to take gender equality seriously and make sure that policies, laws and budgets are working to achieve equality.

First Nations women, culturally diverse women, and women with disabilities emphasised the connection between gender inequality, racism, and discrimination based on ability and highlighted the need to develop policies that recognise the overlapping nature of disadvantage.

This national gender equality strategy is informed by the diverse views and experiences of the women who participated in the Setting the Agenda consultations. Feedback from the consultation has been shared with the Labor's Shadow Ministry and will continue to shape our policy development.

Participants told us that national leadership and extra resources are needed to reduce rates of domestic and family violence and help people escaping domestic and family violence.

Many women shared stories of harassment or discrimination in the workplace and said it was unacceptable that women continue to be paid less for work of equal value. The superannuation gap and women's poverty in retirement was a major concern for many participants.

We heard that Australia won't achieve gender equality until caring responsibilities are shared equally between men and women.

People believed that educating young people was necessary to change harmful attitudes towards women and girls.

# Setting the Agenda: A National Strategy for Gender Equality

*Setting the Agenda: A National Strategy for Gender Equality* sets out Labor's priorities to tackle gender inequality in government. It is a framework for sustained, enduring action based on extensive consultations, national and international evidence and advocacy from women's organisations.

Labor's proposed national gender equality strategy will commit Australian governments to action in five priority areas where work is needed to break down the barriers to gender equality:

- 1. Violence against women**
- 2. Economic security and independence**
- 3. Family and care responsibilities**
- 4. Leadership and representation**
- 5. Health and wellbeing**

To drive change, Labor is committed to setting targets and indicators for the short and long term. Targets work. They commit us to a goal, let us track our progress and hold us accountable.

In government, we will take measurable action and report on Australia's progress through an annual update to the Parliament. The national strategy will be updated periodically as we move closer to achieving gender equality.

Our proposed strategy also outlines a framework for gender responsive policy making in government to make sure that the decisions governments make align with our national goal of achieving gender equality.

We won't achieve gender equality overnight or in a single term of government, but progress towards equality should not depend on the government of the day. So Labor will also develop options for a national Gender Equality Act so that efforts to promote gender equality remain more consistent across governments.

Developing a national gender equality strategy is an ongoing process. This paper sets out a draft framework for government leadership.

If Labor forms government, we want to be ready for action from day one, so we'll continue to work in partnership with women's organisations, community groups, experts, unions and employers to develop further measures to promote equality.

Labor's full suite of gender equality policies and updated gender equality strategy will be released throughout 2018 and in the lead up to the next election.

# Setting targets

The real power of targets is the way they focus minds and drive cultural change. Committing to a target is a statement that something is important and you agree to be judged on it.

Around the world, targets have been successful in driving improved representation in politics and business. Targets help us to stay on track and achieve long-term goals.

Labor set a target for 30 per cent of winnable seats to be held by women in 1994. As we met that target, we lifted it to 40 per cent, then 50 per cent. With targets, we raised the proportion of women in the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party from 14 to 47 per cent. Without targets, over the same period, representation of women in the Liberal Party went from 14 per cent to just 22 per cent.

## **The Setting the Agenda strategy commits Labor to:**

- Take measureable action to close the gender pay gap and report annually to Parliament on our progress
- Work in partnership with the states and territories to set a family and domestic violence reduction target to guide the Fourth National Action Plan
- Reduce the gap in women's workforce participation by 25 per cent by 2025
- Raise representation of women on government boards to 50 per cent within the first term of government
- Boost the representation of women in Chair and Deputy Chair positions on government boards to 40 per cent by 2025
- Set a stretch target of 50 per cent representation of women in senior public service roles by 2025

In government, Labor will refine and set a series of additional targets. To help set ambitious and achievable targets, we will conduct a stocktake of available gender indicators and create a baseline to track improvements.

We will require all Federal Government Departments to set, and publically report on, gender indicators for all relevant policy areas.

# People experience inequality differently

Women don't all experience gender inequality in the same way. For many people, the impact of gender inequality is compounded by the way that gendered barriers interact with other forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

We can't achieve gender equality if we don't focus on the different needs of First Nations women, women from culturally diverse backgrounds, women with disabilities, women living in rural, regional and remote areas, older women, and trans and gender diverse people.

Labor's strategy will work to eliminate interacting forms of discrimination and disadvantage. We will make sure the needs of diverse groups of women are addressed under each of the priority areas and that specific programs cater for marginalised women.

First Nations women are **34 times more likely to be hospitalised** as a result of family violence than non-Indigenous women.<sup>21</sup>

First Nations women make up **34 per cent of the female prison population but only 2 per cent of the total adult female population** – many First Nations women are imprisoned for low-level offending.<sup>22</sup>

Women from culturally diverse communities are less likely to report violence, can experience **more barriers to accessing services and are less likely to leave** a family violence situation than other Australian women.<sup>23</sup>

Migrant women participate in the workforce at lower rates, face **higher unemployment and their earnings are low relative to their skills** and experience.<sup>24</sup>

Women with a **disability are 40 per cent more likely** to experience family violence.<sup>25</sup>

**Ninety per cent of women with an intellectual disability** have been sexually abused.<sup>26</sup>

Rural women working in **agriculture earn 25 per cent less than men** and hold only 14 per cent of management roles.<sup>27</sup>

Australian women living in rural and regional areas often have to **travel long distances or interstate** to access reproductive health services.<sup>28</sup>

Older women are significantly **more likely to be victims of elder abuse** than men.<sup>29</sup>

## During the Setting the Agenda consultations, you told us we need to:



Support First Nations women to address the unacceptably high rates of family and domestic violence they experience and to access culturally appropriate, community led services.



Remove the additional challenges migrant and refugee women face seeking employment, education and health care services. These extra challenges are caused by language barriers, racism and discrimination, insecure visa status, social isolation and a lack of culturally responsive services.



Ensure that women with disabilities are able to participate fully in Australian society, including in education, work and employment and have equal rights to safety and reproductive choice.



Ensure trans and gender diverse people are able to access appropriate support services that meet their specific needs.



Work with women in rural and regional areas to ensure they have access to health services and leadership opportunities within their communities.



Tackle rising rates of homelessness and elder abuse among older women.

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

There is no clearer symbol of continuing gender inequality than the epidemic of violence and harassment against women.

This violence – or the threat of it – isolates, excludes, injures and traumatises women. Violence can prevent women from participating fully in Australian society. It is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children.

To ensure women's safety, we must address violence in all its forms, including domestic and family violence, sexual assault or harassment, forced marriage, elder abuse, cyber-harassment, emotional or financial abuse, reproductive coercion, and street harassment.

## To end violence against women we need to:

Maintain a strong focus on preventing violence, including through support for the national prevention agencies, OurWatch and ANROWS.

Work with the community to shift harmful attitudes and behaviour, including through Respectful Relationships education.

Place a national focus on the prevention of sexual harassment in our workplaces, on university campuses, at residential colleges and online.

Properly fund women's specialist services, including homelessness and legal services, so women escaping violence have a place to feel safe and get the support they need.

Make the court system work better for victims and survivors of sexual harassment and assault.

Ensure the family law system works to protect victims and survivors of family violence.

Strengthen women's financial security so the consequence of escaping an abusive relationship is not poverty or homelessness.

Ensure policies and programs work for victims and survivors with special vulnerabilities, including migrant women, First Nations women, women with disabilities and LGBTIQ people.



## The latest research shows<sup>30</sup>:

**1 in 3 Australian women** have experienced physical violence since the age of 15

There has been a **13 per cent increase in partner violence** against women since 2012. In 2016 alone, over 210,000 Australian women experienced violence at the hand of a current or former partner.

1 in 2 Australian women have been sexually harassed in their lifetime. **In 2016 alone 1.6 million women** were sexually harassed.

## Labor has already committed to:

Set targets to reduce violence with stakeholders and the states and territories in the first year of a Labor government. These targets would guide the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children.

Take national leadership to ensure universities and residential colleges are providing a safe environment for their students, free of sexual assault and harassment.

Include 10 days paid domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards.

Provide \$43 million to reform the court system so victims of violence cannot be cross-examined by perpetrators.

Provide \$88 million over two years for a new Safe Housing Fund to increase transitional housing options for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, young people exiting out-of-home care and older women who are at risk of homelessness.

Criminalise the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and introduce protections against digital surveillance.

# ECONOMIC SECURITY AND INDEPENDENCE

Many women experience forms of economic disadvantage and discrimination throughout their lives. The cumulative effect is that women retire with around half the superannuation balance of men.<sup>31</sup>

Women's participation in the workforce is increasing, but simply aiming to get more women into the workforce isn't enough if they are under-employed or stuck in casualised, undervalued roles. Female-dominated industries – particularly those centred on care work – pay lower wages. This gender segregation in the economy is one of the driving causes of the gender pay gap, which has fluctuated between 15 and 19 per cent for the past twenty years. Over this period, the trend has been a widening, rather than a closing of the pay gap.

Pay inequity, and the time women take out of the workforce for family responsibilities, drive the gap in women's retirement incomes. Older single women are now the fastest growing group of people falling into homelessness.

## The latest research shows:

The average woman working full time will **earn around \$25,000 less every year** than the average man. That adds up to \$600,000 of lost pay over a lifetime of work.

Women working in **female-dominated industries earn, on average, \$40,000 less** than men working in male-dominated industries.<sup>32</sup>



## To strengthen women's economic security and independence, we need to:

Take a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to tackling gender pay inequity so we can make measurable progress to close the gap.

Address the systemic undervaluation of labour in traditionally female-dominated industries.

Make sure our industrial relation system is equipped to address pay inequity.

Work with employers to eliminate pay discrimination.

Support women's participation in education and training, particularly women who face multiple barriers to employment.

Support women studying and working in non-traditional industries and fields.

Implement policies to address the gender gap in superannuation balances and improve women's retirement incomes.

Tackle the issue of older women's poverty and rising homelessness.

Support women's financial literacy and explore protections against financial abuse.

## Labor has already committed to:

Take measurable action to close the gender pay gap and report regularly on Australia's progress through an annual statement to Parliament.

Support the G20 target to reduce the gender gap in workforce participation by 25 per cent by 2025.

Restore penalty rates, cuts to which have disproportionately impacted women on low incomes.

Include 10 days paid domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards.

Make sure procurement rules are implemented effectively to ensure all companies awarded government contracts meet the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's requirements.

# FAMILY AND CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

For Australia to achieve gender equality in the workplace or improve women's representation in leadership positions, we also need to change the way we share family responsibilities and unpaid caring work.

Women's careers are disproportionately affected by pregnancy and care responsibilities. Parenting patterns in Australia are slowly changing and many Australian men want to spend more time looking after their children. But men are twice as likely to have their request to work flexible hours knocked back and are more likely than women to be overlooked for promotion if they are working flexibly.<sup>33</sup>

To double the pressure, there is now a "sandwich generation" of women who are caring for their elderly parents at the same time they are raising families. Women make up 70 per cent of unpaid carers for the elderly, people with a disability and people with long term health conditions.<sup>34</sup>

## The latest research shows:

**1 in 2 mothers report experiencing discrimination** while pregnant, on maternity leave or after returning to work.<sup>35</sup>

For every hour of unpaid housework men do each week, **women do two to three hours.**<sup>36</sup>



## To achieve change we need to:

Better value care work, including by calculating the contribution of unpaid caring work to the Australian economy.

Strengthen access to flexible work arrangements and ensure that opportunities are equally available to women and men.

Explore options to offer parents more choice and flexibility in how they use their parental leave entitlements.

Work with companies to improve the offering of 'shared care' parental leave packages.

Make sure families can access affordable, high quality early childhood education that meets their needs.

Improve access to outside hours school care and activities to support parents' participation at work.

Maintain fair government-sponsored paid parental leave, including 'Dad and Partner Pay'.

## Labor has already committed to:

Provide \$15.2 million to restore the Time Use Survey so we can calculate the contribution of unpaid caring work to the Australian economy.

Work with the Australian Public Service and the Community and Public Sector Union to promote more flexible working arrangements for women and men across the APS.

# LEADERSHIP, REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

Ideas about women and men's roles are learnt early in life, at home, at school and from the media. Gender stereotypes shape the choices boys and girls believe they can make and the way they behave in relationships.

Over 30 per cent of young girls believe their gender is a barrier to a career in politics compared to only four per cent of boys. Young girls are also concerned that women are treated unequally in the media and are valued more for their looks than their abilities.<sup>37</sup>

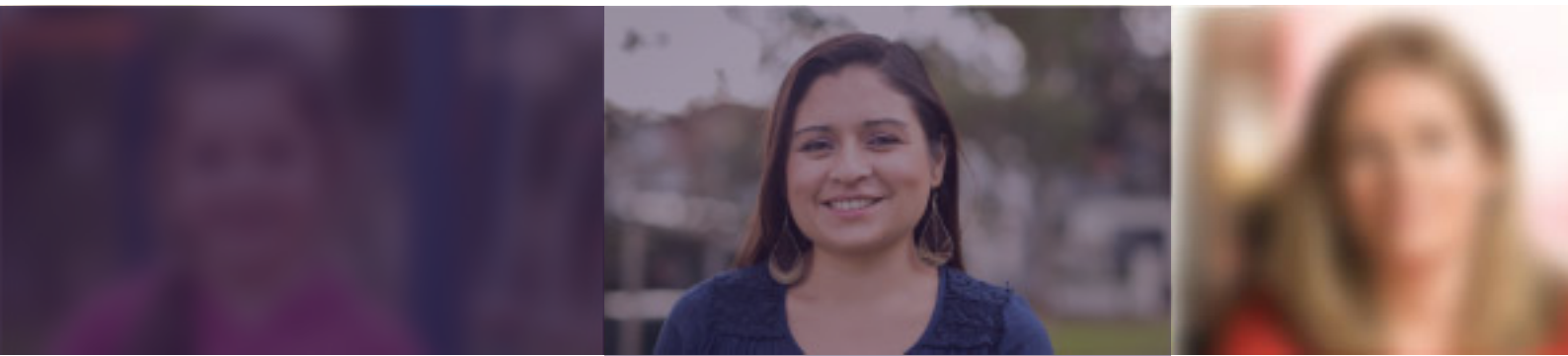
Another barrier to women's representation comes when women can't participate safely in the public sphere, including online. One in three young Australian women don't feel safe in public spaces at night and women are often subject to violent, sexualised harassment when they share their views online.<sup>38</sup>

## The latest research shows:

Women make up only **28 per cent of the judiciary and 32 per cent of federal parliamentarians** (47 per cent in the Federal Labor Party).<sup>39</sup>

Just **5 per cent of ASX200 CEOs** and 26 per cent of corporate board members are women.<sup>40</sup>

Despite major success on the world stage, women's sport only received **7 per cent of televised sports coverage** in Australia. That lack of coverage means less funding, less sponsorship and lower salaries.<sup>41</sup>



## To combat women's under-representation and misrepresentation in public life, we need to:

Build long term cultural change by challenging the damaging impact of stereotypes and objectification early. This means respectful relationships education in schools, encouraging boys and girls to study non-traditional subjects, and providing jobs and careers advice that doesn't pigeon-hole young people based on their gender.

Challenge out-dated or objectifying representations of women in Australian media and make sure women's stories are told through our media, arts and culture.

Recognise women's achievements and contributions to Australian society, including through Australian Honours and other awards.

Support the greater representation of women in all facets of Australian society, through targets and a range of regulatory and education measures. This means support to achieve the 50:50 vision for diversity on local councils and promoting diversity in corporate Australia, including in appointments to boards and at the executive level.

Ensure that all Australian federal courts reflect the society that we live in.

## Labor has already committed to:

A fifty per cent target for women's representation in the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party by 2025.

A 50 per cent gender diversity target for government boards to be achieved within the first term of a Labor government.

A 40 per cent target for Chair and Deputy Chair positions on government boards by 2025.

A stretch target of 50 per cent representation of women in senior public service roles by 2025.

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Gender is one of the key determinants of health and longevity. Women and men face different risks to their health and interact with the health care system differently.

Women visit the GP twice as often as men, and are also more likely to attend a specialist, but cost factors are more likely to limit a woman's access to health care. Women are twice as likely to have to delay seeing their GP or filling a script because of the cost.<sup>42</sup>

Women continue to struggle with health concerns related to their reproductive and maternal health including endometriosis, pre- and post-natal depression, breast and ovarian cancer.

Meanwhile, men are more likely to engage in risky behaviour like drinking too much alcohol, taking illegal drugs, or driving dangerously. Three times as many men die in car accidents.<sup>43</sup> Men are more likely to work in dangerous occupations, exposing them to greater risk of injury or death, and are also more likely to be overweight or obese.

## The latest research shows:

Women experience common mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety at **two times the rate of men**;<sup>44</sup> however, 3 out of 4 suicides are by men.<sup>45</sup>

**Abortion remains a crime for half the women** in Australia and one in three women seeking a termination have found high cost a barrier to accessing services.<sup>46</sup>



## To fix the disparity in women and men's health outcomes we need to:

Devise a national women's health policy that addresses women's health needs throughout their life-cycle and acknowledges gender as a key determinant of health, and a national men's health policy that does the same.

Establish programs and policies to reduce the gap in life-expectancy between men and women, including support to improve men's mental health and reduce suicide rates.

Improve access and affordability of reproductive health care in Australia to support women's

reproductive choice, including through: better sex education; access to long-acting removable contraceptives; and availability of abortion through the public health system.

Improve women and men's health through investment in life-saving research.

Support young people to improve body-image, mental health and wellbeing and reduce risk-taking behaviour.

Improve trauma-informed mental health care for people who have experienced family violence or other forms of abuse.

## Labor has already committed to:

Invest \$20 million in the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute to facilitate the establishment of a Breast Cancer Metastasis and Dormancy Research Initiative.

Provide \$12 million towards Ovarian Cancer Australia's National Action Plan for Ovarian Cancer Research, potentially preventing 2500 cases of breast cancer and 800 cases of ovarian cancer.

Fund BRCA gene testing so women can find out and act if they are at a significantly heightened risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

Provide \$1 million to build a Tasmanian reproductive health hub to ensure Tasmanian women don't need to travel interstate to have a surgical abortion.

# Leadership in Government

Labor is committed to prioritising gender equality in government. The national gender equality strategy supports this goal by establishing a framework for gender responsive policy and decision making.

Government policies and many of our choices on taxation, spending and saving are not gender neutral.

There is growing awareness in the global community – championed by the OECD and IMF – that many of the disparities and inequalities between men and women have become embedded in the allocation of public resources.

Decisions by governments can exacerbate gender inequality, but they can also bring about positive change. Gender-responsive policy making is a tool we can use to make sure government decisions promote gender equality.

Gender responsive policy making for Australian governments is a central part to our national gender equality strategy and making sure we meet our targets.

## Labor is committed to:

### Strengthening the role of the Office for Women

Labor will place the Office for Women at the centre of a new program of gender responsive policy making. The Office for Women will form a hub of technical expertise and will provide oversight of all policies that impact on the social and economic wellbeing and participation of Australian women.

### A gender lens on policy

Labor will introduce a gender impact assessment on all cabinet submissions and new policy proposals identified by the Office for Women to assess how policies will impact on women and gender equality objectives. We will take an intersectional approach to consider policy impacts on women who experience multiple disadvantage.

### Gender responsive budgeting

Labor will bring back the annual Women's Budget Statement to assess the impact of new budget measures on women and examine how the allocation of public resources affects gender equality.

### Working with the APS

Federal government departments will be required to set and report on gender indicators across all portfolio areas. The Office for Women will work with the Secretaries' Equality and Diversity Council to ensure that all public service leaders' key performance indicators specifically include diversity.

### Measuring and reporting on progress

Labor will report on progress against the gender equality targets and indicators through an annual update to Parliament and will provide greater transparency about the impact of government policies and budgets on women.

### Meet Australia's international responsibilities

Labor will align our gender equality reporting with Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality, participate in the UN Committee for the Status of Women, and continue to meet our responsibilities under the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

## Working together

Government leadership and commitment is crucial, but gender equality cannot be achieved by the Commonwealth government alone.

All Australians can play a role to help achieve gender equality – as individuals, in our families, workplaces and social lives.

Labor will work with community groups, employers, unions, schools, universities, churches, sporting groups and women's networks, organisations and advocacy groups to drive change.

To ensure women's voices are heard in government, Labor will boost funding to the six National Women's Alliances, which represent over 180 women's organisations. The Alliances will continue to take the lead in bringing forward the views, voices and issues of Australian women, in particular, women from marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

A Labor government will also reconvene a Ministerial Council on Gender Equality with relevant Ministers in state and territory governments to ensure collaboration and cooperation on the national agenda to eliminate inequality. The Ministerial Council will include a meeting with the Annual Forum of National Women's Alliances to enable better information sharing on issues affecting women at all levels of government.

## WHERE TO NEXT?

Labor will seek feedback from women's organisations and other stakeholders on the proposed national gender equality strategy.

We will continue to develop and release policies on the priority areas identified through the strategy.

We will release our comprehensive gender equality policy in the lead up to the next election.

If Labor forms government, we will implement gender responsive policy making practices in the first year of government.

And we will do a stocktake of available gender data, and set specific targets and indicators to measure and report on our progress.

# Notes

1. Game-changer: economic reform priorities for Australia, Grattan Institute, 2012
2. Is gender diversity profitable? Evidence from a global survey, Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2016
3. OurWatch, Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia, 2015
4. A high price to pay: The economic case for preventing violence against women, PwC, 2015
5. Preventing violence before it occurs : A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria, VicHealth, 2007
6. National Survey on Community Attitudes to Violence against Women, 2009 and Policy Brief 3: International Evidence Base, OurWATCH, 2014.
7. Children's search for gender cues, Carol Lynn Martin and Diane Ruble, 2004
8. Australian Pocket Money Survey, Heritage Bank, 2015
9. The Dream Gap: Australian Girls' Views on Gender Equality, Plan International Australia, 2017
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. Gender Equity Insights 2018: Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap, WGEA, 2018
13. Census 2016
14. Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review, AHRC, 2014
15. Anthony Keane, Family Pressure Keeps Retirement Savings on Hold, Herald Sun, 30 Sep 2017
16. Not So Super, For Women, Per Capita, 2017
17. Equality Rights Alliance, Ageing Women & Housing Fact Sheet, 2016
18. Homelessness Australia, Hidden Homelessness on the Rise, 2017
19. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Men's Health Data, 2016
20. LGBTI people, mental health and suicide, BeyondBlue, 2013
21. Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators, Productivity Commission, 2009
22. Over-represented and overlooked: the crisis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's growing over-imprisonment, Human Rights Law Centre and Change the Record, 2017
23. Hearing her Voice: report from the kitchen table conversations with culturally and linguistically diverse women on violence against women and their children, Department of Social Services, 2015
24. Hidden Assets: partner migration, skilled women and the Australian workforce, AMES, 2016
25. Partner Violence Against Women With Disabilities, Brownridge, 2006
26. Partner Violence Against Women With Disabilities, Brownridge, 2006 and Australian Cross Disability Alliance submission to Senate Inquiry into Violence, Abuse and Neglect against People with Disability in Institutional and Residential Settings, 2015
27. Gender Equity Insights 2018: Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap, WGEA, 2018
28. Shakar et. al., Access, equity and costs of induced abortion services in Australia: a cross-sectional study, 2017
29. Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2016
30. ABS Personal Safety Survey 2016
31. Women's Economic Security in Retirement: Perspective Paper, WGEA, 2015
32. Senate Inquiry into Gender Segregation in the Workforce and its Impact on Women's Economic Equality, 2017
33. The Power of Flexibility, Bain and Company, 2016
34. Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market, Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2016
35. Australian Human Rights Commission, Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review, 2014
36. ABS Census 2016
37. She Leads Survey, Plan International Australia, 2016
38. A Right to the Night, Plan International Australia and Our Watch, 2016
39. Composition of Australian Parliaments by Party and Gender: a quick guide, Parliamentary Library, 22 February 2018ABS Patient Experience Survey
40. Senior Executive Census, Chief Executive Women, 2017 and Gender Diversity on Boards Quarterly Report, AICD, December 2017
41. Women in sport - What's with the gap?, The Line, [www.theline.org.au](http://www.theline.org.au)
42. ABS Patient Experiences in Australia Survey, 2016-17
43. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Men's Health Data, 2016
44. National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2007
45. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Causes of Death, 2016
46. Shakar et. al., Access, equity and costs of induced abortion services in Australia: a cross-sectional study, 2017





Authorised T Plibersek, 267 Cleveland St Redfern NSW 2016