Public Service Commission

Gender

Chapter 6

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Women

65.4%

+0.3pp vs 2018

Representation overview

The proportion of women in the NSW public sector has been increasing for more than a decade. Workforce Profile data shows that 65.4% of employees in 2019 were female, compared to 60.6% in 2010.

The NSW public sector continues to employ a higher proportion of women than the broader NSW labour market.[1] Women made up 45.1% of the total NSW workforce in 2010, and 46.5% in 2019. Two of the biggest contributors to female employment in the public sector are the two largest clusters, Education (76.2%) and Health (74.6%). Together they represent 52.5% of female headcount in the sector. The lowest female representation in 2019 was in the Transport cluster (see Table 6.1).

Cluster	Women employed in cluster	Total employees in cluster	Percentage of women in cluster
Customer Service	5,361	8,360	64.2
Education	102,546	134,667	76.2
Health	111,647	149,776	74.6
Planning, Industry & Environment	9,172	21,723	42.3
Premier & Cabinet	2,947	4,786	61.6
Stronger Communities	26,591	58,979	45.1
Transport	7,184	27,270	26.3
Treasury	1,291	2,148	60.1
Total public sector	**266,739**	**407,709**	**65.4**

Table 6.1: Public sector representation of women by cluster, 2019

In 2019, the occupations with the highest proportions of female employees were School Support Staff (82.0% female), Nurses (86.5%) and School Teachers (76.7%). Together these occupations accounted for more than half (53.9%) of female employees in the public sector.

Despite the high level of representation across the sector, women remained under-represented at higher salary levels and as a proportion of overall representation in the sector.

Figure 6.2 shows that there was a consistent trend toward a higher proportion of women in lower paid roles and a lower proportion in higher paid roles, although this dynamic is slowly shifting. Since 2014, the proportion of women in Grade 11/12 roles and Senior Executive roles both increased by 8.0pp. In 2019, 7.0% of men and 2.5% of women worked at salaries above Grade 11/12, unchanged from 2018.

Recruitment

Fewer women applying for roles in higher salary bands has contributed to the gender imbalance in these bands.

In addition to the widening of the gender pay gap this year, data on the number of applications submitted by men and women show there is still a gender imbalance in this regard. Figure 6.3 highlights that more women applied for roles with salaries of less than $94,782, and more men applied for roles above this salary level. There were 2.3 applications from women for every application from a man for roles in the $63,199 to $70,652 salary range. In the higher salary ranges the trend is reversed, and the gap between the number of applications from men and women widened as remuneration increased. The widest point in this range was for Senior Executive Band 1 roles, which attracted 2.2 applications from men for every application from a woman, a similar proportion to that of 2018.

Although fewer women than men applied for roles with higher salaries, their success rate in attaining roles around and above the sector's median salary of $87,926 was higher than for men. Figure 6.4 shows that the success rate among women was on average higher than for men across high-salary roles. However, the difference narrowed to 0.8% for roles in the Senior Executive Band 1 range (the success rate for women was 1.6% compared to 0.7% for men).

Despite more men applying for roles with higher salaries, in 2019 50.6% of appointments to roles with a salary $187,900 or higher were women (see Figure 6.5). This potentially reflects the success of strategies implemented across the sector to address the gender imbalance in senior leader roles.

Senior leader gender equity

The proportion of women in senior leadership roles varied across services and has been increasing since the introduction of the gender parity target. Figure 6.6 indicates the progress that has been made towards the Premier's Priority of achieving 50% senior leadership roles held by women across the sector.

One of the challenges in increasing the proportion of female appointments in higher paid roles is fewer women apply for the roles than men. An average of two-thirds of applicants for senior leadership roles were men. As can be seen in Figure 6.5, while progress has been made in employing more women in executive-level roles, further gains will need to occur. Modelling has confirmed that 6 female appointments is required for every 10 roles to achieve gender equity in this cohort.

Gender pay gap

Median remuneration male

$89,928

+3.7% vs 2018

Median remuneration female

$87,926

+2.5% vs 2018

Gender pay gap

2.2%

In 2019, the gap between the median remuneration of men and women in the NSW public sector increased to 2.2% ($2,002) from 1.1% ($950) in 2018. This represents the highest gender pay disparity in 10 years (see Figure 6.7).

The increase in the gender pay gap in 2019 can be largely attributed to changes in gender balance in the lower salary ranges. As shown in Table 6.2, the proportion of females paid below the median salary grew by 6.4% from 2018 while the same growth for males was 4.1pp lower (2.3%). The largest contributors to this change were increases in female General Clerks in schools (+3,029 headcount, 81.2% of increase in $8,000 –<$51,522 salary range) and female school teachers (+2,713 headcount, 67.6% of increase in $63,199 –<$83,403 salary range).

	Change – Males (%)	Change – Females (%)
Below median	2.3	6.4
Median and above	3.7	5.1
All salaries	3.1	5.7

Table 6.2: Change in headcount for salaries below and at or above the median, (non-casual) at census date, 2018–2019

The difference in the growth of female and male employees paid above the median salary was much smaller, with 1.3pp lower growth for men than women. While the 2019 headcount of females increased more than that for males in the higher salary ranges, the change was not sufficient to affect the overall pay gap. The difference in the growth of female and male employees paid above the median salary was much smaller, with 1.3pp lower growth for men than women. While the 2019 headcount of females increased more than that for males in the higher salary ranges, the change was not sufficient to affect the overall pay gap.

Within the government sector, other Crown services had the largest pay gap in 2019. This primarily related to School Support Staff, who made up 50.9% of other Crown services. These employees had a lower median remuneration of $48,588, and 92.6% were female.

In contrast, the median remuneration of women in the Transport Service was 26.9% higher than that of men. This was due to the high proportion of male Bus Drivers (2,624 headcount) with a lower median remuneration of $58,289.

The Public Service was the only other service where the median remuneration of women was higher than that of men. Overall, 55.6% of employees in the Public Service and 47.4% of senior executives were women.

The pay gap in 2019 for senior executive Bands 1-3 was 2.2%, the same level as the non-executive gap. The pay gap decreased across all executive bands in 2019. The largest change was in Band 3, where the gap decreased by 3.6pp.

Only 41.1% of senior executives paid above the median salary were female across the three bands. Band 2 had the lowest representation of females paid above the median salary for the band (34.1%) although the pay gap was narrowest in this band. The level of representation of females paid above the median salary was similar in Bands 1 and 3 (41.2% and 42.4% respectively) although the gap was widest in Band 3.

Employment arrangements

Employment arrangements varied between genders, with women being far more likely to work part time than men (see Table 6.3). Between 2018 and 2019, the proportion of men working part time declined by 0.2% and the proportion of women working part time increased by 0.2%. In 2019, around 35.5% of non-casual female employees in the NSW public sector worked part time compared to 10.7% of male non-casual employees.

	Total males	Male (%)	Total females	Female (%)
Full-time	113,980	42.2	156,310	57.8
Part-time	13,663	13.7	85,920	86.3

Table 6.3: Employment arrangement by gender, non-casual census headcount, 2019

Of the 96 public sector departments and agencies that employed people on a part-time basis in 2019, 82 agencies had at least 75% female part-time employee representation.

Figure 6.11 shows the proportion of part-time employees by gender for each service. In 2019, the NSW Health Service continued to have the highest proportion of men in part-time employment (18.7%) and the second highest proportion of women working part time (42.6%).

Notes

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, 'Table 4. Labour force status by Sex, New South Wales - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original', cat. no. 6202.0, **https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6202.0Sep%202019?O...**
[2]**In scope:** Senior executives in Bands 1–3 in the NSW Government sector, specifically the Public Service Senior Executive and the Aligned Executive Service (Health, Transport and Police). **Excluded:** Any

executives who were not reported under the band structure in the Workforce Profile collection, Senior Executive Band 4, Contractors and non-executive employees with salaries (2019) between $161,707 and $187,900 (whose position falls between Grade 11/12 and Executive Band).