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Tuesday, 8 March 2016

## Gender parity still lacking in Australia's workforce

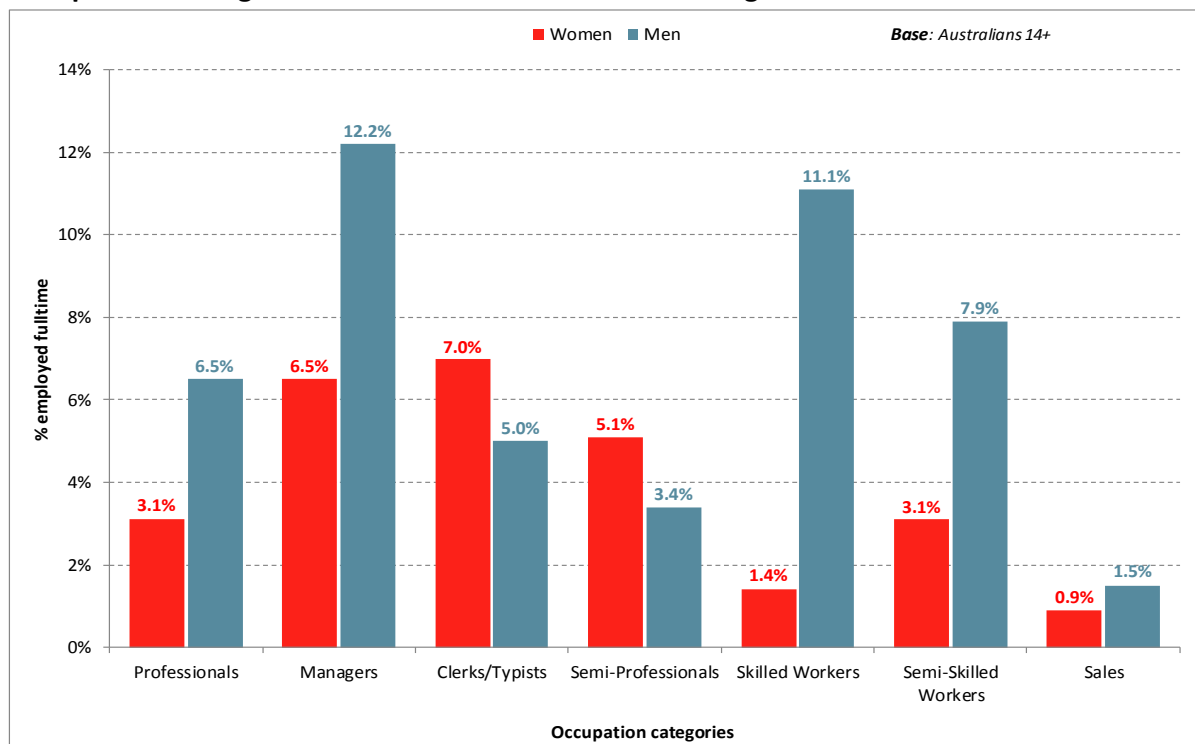
The theme of this year's International Women's Day, Pledge for Parity, can be applied to women's status in social, economic, cultural and political spheres. In recognition of this important day (8 March) and its message, Roy Morgan Research crunched the numbers to assess the current state of gender parity in the Australian workforce. The results reveal that there is still room for improvement.

But first the good news: in the 12 months to January 2016, 54.5% of Australian women were employed, up from 52.5% in the year to January 2006. This increase can be seen in the proportion of women employed part time (26.2%, up from 25.7%) and full time (28.3%, up from 26.8%).

On the other hand, the proportion of employed men has fallen slightly over this period (from 66.8% to 65.6%), driven by a decrease (from 54.6% to 51.0%) in those working full time.

Obviously, with such a discrepancy in the proportions of men and women in full-time employment, many occupations are affected by a dramatic gender imbalance. For example, 6.5% of Aussie men and 3.1% of women work full-time in jobs that fall under the 'Professionals'\* category; 12.2% of men and 6.5% of women hold managerial\* roles; and 11.1% of men and 1.4% of women are employed as skilled workers\*.

### Occupational categories: % of men vs % of women working fulltime in each



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), February 2015 – January 2016 (n=50,212).

The only areas in which women outnumber men are the ‘Clerks/Typists’\* (7.0% vs 5.0%) and ‘Semi-professional’\* (5.1% vs 3.4%) categories.

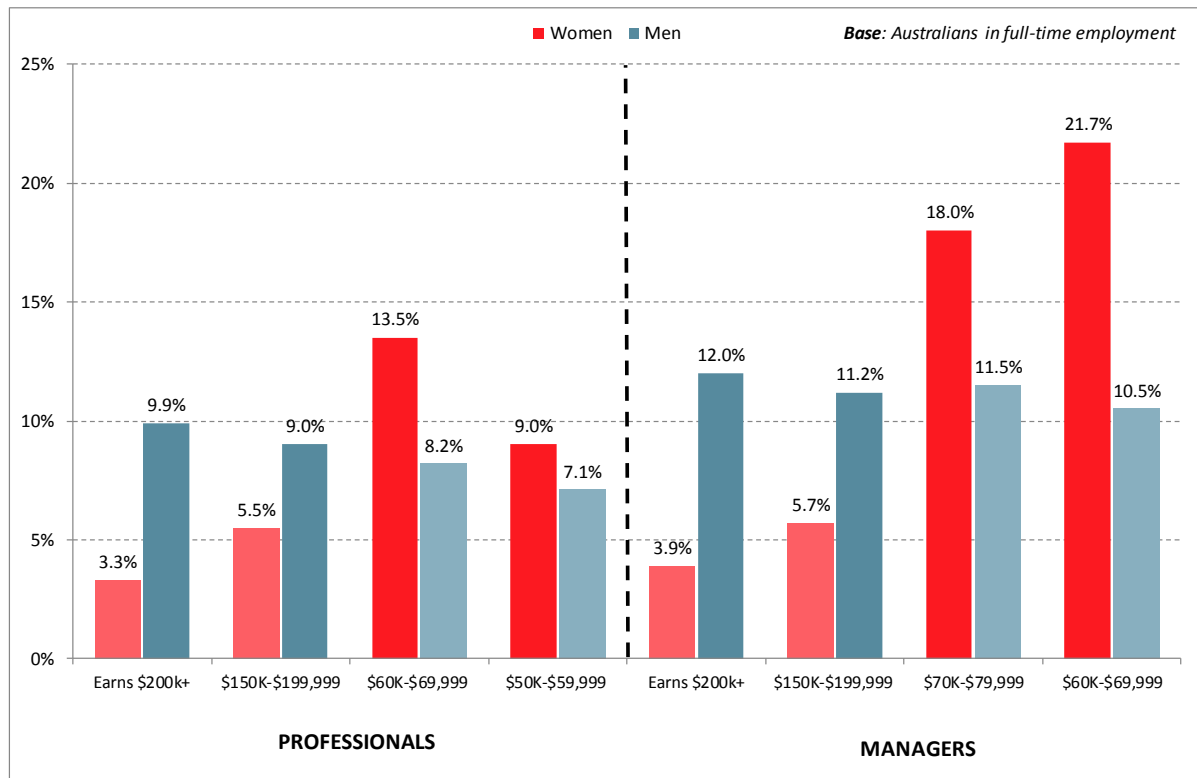
*The salary situation*

Not only are women under-represented in most occupational categories, our data confirms that they also tend to earn less than their male colleagues.

The ‘Professionals’ category is a case in point. Whereas 9.9% of men employed full-time in jobs that fall within this category earn \$200,000 or more per annum, only 3.3% of full-time women do. Within the same category, 9.0% of men and 5.5% of women earn between \$150,000 and \$199,999, while 7.3% of men and 7.1% of women earn between \$130,000 and \$149,999.

Among the lower salary echelons (under \$70,000), however, this pattern reverses, with women featuring more prominently. Whereas 8.2% of men employed full-time as Professionals earn between \$60,000 and \$69,999, that figure rises to 13.5% of women.

**Annual incomes: men vs women employed full-time in same occupations**



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), February 2015-January 2016 (n=17,650).

Similar salary disparity exists in other occupational categories, with full-time Managerial roles being another glaring example. The gulf between the proportion of male and female managers earning high-end salaries is a case in point: 12.0% of men and 3.9% of women employed full-time as managers earn \$200,000+, while 11.2% and 5.7% respectively earn \$150,000-\$199,999.

When it comes to lower salary ranges, the tables are turned once more: 21.7% of female managers and 10.5% of male managers earn between \$60,000 and \$69,999, for instance.

Even within the 'Semi-professional' category, in which more women than men are employed full time, the salary bias is in favour of male employees.

**Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*"The issue of gender parity in the workforce is a complex and contentious topic, with no cut-and-dried solutions and plenty of issues that warrant further investigation and discussion. The fact that men in full-time employment outnumber women so resoundingly is one of these issues, seeing as it results in women being woefully under-represented in some professions. How to achieve a more even gender balance in the workforce is a question that employers and government must address for starters, potentially exploring better child-care options for working mothers, for example, as well as flexible working hours and conditions.*

*"Furthermore, there is no logical reason why women and men employed full-time in the same occupation should be paid different salaries. Yet Roy Morgan Research's latest data confirms that this is often the case, which, while not surprising (this is a topic which attracts widespread media coverage, after all) is not exactly encouraging or understandable, either.*

*"Although these findings are top-level breakdowns of occupational categories rather than specific professions, they still speak volumes about salary discrepancies between male and female full-time workers in related fields, in which men outnumber women in the higher income ranges and women outnumber men in the lower ranges.*

*"In conclusion? International Women's Day's theme for 2016, 'Pledge for Parity' rings very true for the Australian workforce indeed..."*

**NB: Breakdown of Occupation Classifications**

**Professionals:** all senior government and corporate officials, lawyers, doctors, architects, engineers, school principals

**Managers:** company directors, partners, company executives, manufacturers, managers. Also includes white-collar workers on salaries above \$60K – eg, field officers, investors, health inspectors, stockbrokers, merchant bankers

**Clerks/typists:** white-collar administrative workers, eg. secretaries, draughtsmen, postal officers, librarians, accounts clerks

**Sales:** all people directly involved in selling

**Semi-professional:** any occupation requiring extensive training/education in that particular field and all artistically-minded occupations, eg. teachers, SR Nurses, social workers, photographers, clergy, writers, musicians

**Skilled workers:** Trades requiring apprenticeships or formal training, eg. builders, mechanical engineers, carpenters, butchers, electricians

**Semi-skilled workers:** blue-collar work requiring training, eg. factory workers, couriers, construction workers, childcare workers

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's employment data, please contact:**

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### **Margin of Error**

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2