



NSW Women's Plan

Fact sheet

Fast facts

In 2010, women made up 50.4% of the NSW population.
The life expectancy for NSW women born in 2008 is 83.9 years.

According to the 2006 Census:

- Just over a quarter of NSW women were born outside Australia.
- Approximately 2% of NSW women identify themselves as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Almost 22% of women in NSW speak a language other than English at home.

Demographics

As at March 2010, the estimated resident population of NSW was 7.22 million people. This comprised 3.58 million males and 3.64 million females.¹

As at June 2009, the median age of the NSW population was 37.1 years - 37.9 years for females and 36.3 years for males. This represented an increase of 0.9 years for males and exactly 1 year for females since 2002 and indicates that NSW has an ageing population.²

2006 Census data shows that of the women residing in NSW, 74.3% were born in Australia and 25.7% were born overseas. The majority of women born overseas came from the United Kingdom, followed by China, New Zealand, the Philippines and Vietnam.³

2006 Census data shows that 21.6% of women in NSW spoke a language other than English at home.⁴

2006 Census data shows that women who identify themselves as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander comprised 2.1% of the NSW female population.⁵

Life expectancy for both women and men in NSW is improving. Women born in 2008 are expected to live for 83.9 years whilst women born in 2001 are expected to live for 81.6 years. The corresponding male figures are 79.2 years and 75.8 years respectively. Whilst females can still expect to live longer than males, the gap has decreased from 5.8 years in 2001 to 4.7 years in 2008.⁶

Life expectancy for Aboriginal women in NSW was estimated, for the period 2005-2007, to be 75 years. This is 7.5 years lower than the life expectancy for non-Aboriginal NSW women which is 82.5 years.⁷

Marriage and Divorce

There were 40,516 marriages and 14,617 divorces

registered in NSW in 2009.⁸ Women in NSW are marrying at an older age. In 2009, the median age at marriage for women in NSW was 28.8, compared to 27.7 in 1999. The median age for men has consistently been 2-3 years higher with men getting married at 31.3 years in 2009, compared to 29.5 years in 1999.⁹

The median age of women at first marriage has risen from 23.8 in 1989 to 27.6 in 2009.¹⁰

In the ten years to 2009, the divorce rate in NSW has averaged 2.2 divorces for every 1000 residents. This figure has remained fairly stable with the highest rate per 1000 residents being 2.9 in 2001 and the lowest rate being 2.0 in 2009.¹¹

In 2009, the median duration of marriages in NSW which end in divorce was 11.2 years.¹²

Fertility and Births

For the period 1999-2009, the average total fertility rate for NSW remained stable at a little over 1.8 babies per woman.¹³

In 2009, there were 92,783 recorded births in NSW – the second highest number of births in 10 years.¹⁴

Between 2000 and 2007 the number of births to teenage women in NSW declined every year, however rose in 2008. The average number of births to teenage women in NSW for the period 1999-2009 was 3,324.¹⁵

Of all births in NSW in 2009, the percentage of births to women 19 years and under was 3.3%.¹⁶

In 2009, the median age of NSW mothers with newborns was 31. For the period 1999-2009 the median age of NSW mothers with newborns rose each year, with the average age for the period being 30.5.¹⁷

For the period 2003-2007, the percentage of NSW births in birth centres averaged 2.4% whilst the percentage of NSW births in hospitals averaged 95.8% (peaking at 96.1% in 2005 and being lowest at 95.2% in 2007). The number of planned

homebirths for the period 2003-2007 averaged 117 and was highest in 2007 with 144.¹⁸

The rate of normal vaginal birth decreased from 62.8% in 2003 to 59.9% in 2007. Over the same period, the caesarean section rate increased from 26.6% to 29% and the rate of instrumental delivery remained steady at 10 to 11%.¹⁹

In 2008, births to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers in NSW totalled 2,596 – 2.7% of all NSW births.²⁰

In 2008, nearly 1 in 5 births to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were to teenage mothers – 19.2%.²¹

Families

The number of families in NSW grew from 1.72 million in 2000 to 1.96 million in October 2008.²²

In October 2008, there were 705,000 lone person households, 737,000 couple families without children, and 909,000 families with dependent children.²³

In 2007, there were 174,700 one-parent families, 84.1% of which were lone mother families and 15.9% which were lone father families.²⁴

In 2006, de facto couple families accounted for 13.2% of all couples, an increase from 11.5% in 2001.²⁵

Education & Training

In 2006, female students made up just over half of all university students in NSW.²⁶

In 2009, the year 7 to year 12 apparent retention rate for girls in NSW schools was 76.5%, compared to 66.3% for boys.²⁷

In 2009, women were only slightly outnumbered by men at TAFE in NSW. Around 51% of students were male, and 49% were female.²⁸

In 2009, 26.6% of NSW females aged 15-64 had

attained a Bachelor Degree or higher compared to 22.7% of males.²⁹

As at October 2010, 37% of people in apprenticeships, existing worker traineeships or new entrant traineeships were female, whereas 63% were male.³⁰

Participation in vocational education and training can be highly gendered by industry. In October 2010, females accounted for 87% of people training for the Community Services & Health industry and 68% of people training for the Retail and Wholesale industry whilst women accounted for less than 20% of people training for the Automotive; Building and Construction; Forest; Manufacturing; Mining; Transport and Distribution; Utilities & Electro Technology; and Furnishing, Light Manufacturing & Textile industries.³¹

At October 2010, there were significantly less females undertaking apprenticeships (11.5%) than males (88.5%).³²

Health

Women in NSW have a life expectancy of around 84 years, compared to 79 years for men.³³

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women in NSW have a life expectancy of 75 years, compared to 70 years for men.³⁴

More than three quarters of NSW women have a long term health condition.³⁵

Over a fifth (approximately 22%) of women in NSW have some form of mental health disorder, slightly more than men (approximately 18%).³⁶

As at 2008, compared to men, NSW women were experiencing higher rates of anxiety (18% compared with 11% of males) and affective disorders (7.5% compared with 5.2% of males).³⁷

Between 2002 and 2006, the leading cause of death in NSW for both men and women was cardiovascular disease, which was responsible for 37.2% of all deaths in NSW residents (40.2% of

female and 34.4% of male deaths). Cancers were the next most common cause (25.5% of females and 30.9% of males) followed by respiratory diseases (8.7% of females and 9% of males).³⁸

In 2006, the leading causes of cancer deaths for women in NSW were breast (16.1%), lung (15.4%), and colorectal (9.7%) cancer. Together, these accounted for 41.2% of cancer deaths.³⁹

In 2006, 17.3% of NSW females aged 16-24 were smoking daily or occasionally, compared to 19.1% for males.⁴⁰

Of all behavioural risk factors, tobacco use (including passive smoking) is responsible for the

greatest burden of premature death and disability for both men and women in NSW.⁴¹

Women are less likely to be physically active than men. In 2007, 62.1% of women participated in sport or recreational activity, compared to 65.4% of men.⁴²

In 2007, 44.7% of females in NSW aged 16 and over were overweight or obese, compared to 58.8% of males in the same age bracket.⁴³

The consumption of vegetables is low for both men and women, with below 15% of men and women eating the recommended amount of vegetables in 2007.⁴⁴

References

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³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006), *2006 Census Community Profile Series: New South Wales*, Catalogue no. 2001.0, ABS, Canberra. Available: <http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/>.

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009), *Deaths Australia 2008*, Catalogue no 3302.0, Canberra. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3302.0Main+Features12009?OpenDocument>.

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⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (November 2009), *Births, Australia, 2009*, Catalogue no 3301.0, ABS, Canberra. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3301.0Main+Features12009?OpenDocument>.

¹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁸ NSW Health (June 2010), *New South Wales: Mothers and Babies 2007*, NSW Department of Health, Sydney. Available: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/227/issue/5809.htm>, accessed 15/11/2010.

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (November 2009),

Births, Australia, 2008, Catalogue no 3301.0.

²¹ *Ibid*

²² Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2010), *NSW State and Regional Indicators*, September 2010, Catalogue no. 1338.1, ABS, Canberra. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1338.1Main+Features1Sep%202010?OpenDocument>. Note: the ABS defines a family as two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household.

²³ *Ibid*

²⁴ *Ibid*

²⁵ *Ibid*

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008), *Australian Social Trends*, Catalogue no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4102.02008?OpenDocument>.

²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010), *Australian Social Trends*, Catalogue no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features1Sep%202010?OpenDocument>. Note: the apparent attention rate refers to the number of full-time students in Year 12 divided by the number of full-time students in the first year of secondary school when the Year 12 cohort began secondary school. Care should be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates as they do not account for students repeating a year or migrating into or out of the relevant school student population.

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⁴³ NSW Health (2008), *The Health of the people of New South Wales - Report to the Chief Health Officer 2008*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*