



Australian Government

Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards

2022–23 Annual Report

A report on the gender composition of
Australian Government Boards and Bodies

Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards
Report 2022–23 © Commonwealth of Australia 2023

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Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards
Report 2022–23.

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Foreword



As the Minister for Finance, Women and the Public Service, I am pleased to present the Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report 2022 2023 – which confirms the highest representation of women on record at 51.6 per cent of positions.

The Office for Women first investigated the gender balance of Australian Government boards in 2009 – at that time women made up just 33.41 per cent of positions.

We have made great progress, but there is still more to be done.

Women hold only 42.3 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions. At this rate, without targeted action, it could take at least six years to achieve gender balance in these positions.

For the first time since reporting began, we have an understanding of gender balance at the individual

board level. We now know that over 20 per cent of Australian Government boards have less than 40 per cent representation of women.

It is essential that our Government boards and advisory bodies reflect the diversity of the Australian community. This means ensuring that First Nations people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disability are also represented in decision making and advisory spaces.

Our Government is committed to leading the way on gender equality on boards because we know that ultimately, better representation leads to better outcomes for everyone.

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher

Minister for Finance, Minister for Women and Minister for the Public Service

1 Women on Australian Government Boards Report 2008-2009, Trove, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2457588855/view>

Executive summary

The Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report is prepared by the Office for Women each year, and outlines performance against the Australian Government's targets for gender balance on Australian Government boards. These targets are:

- Women should hold 50 per cent of Australian Government board positions overall.
- Women should hold at least 40 per cent of positions on Australian Government boards at the individual board level.

These targets were introduced on 1 July 2016, replacing the previous gender diversity target for women to hold 40 per cent of Australian Government board positions overall. However, until 2022-23, data was only collected for the 50 per cent target.

In the 2022-2023 financial year, the Australian Government continued to meet the target of women holding 50 per cent of overall reportable positions on Government boards. As at 30 June 2023, women held 51.6 per cent of reportable Australian Government board positions, the highest rate of representation on record.

Women also received a majority, with 52.9 per cent, of new appointments to Australian Government boards in 2022-2023.

The 2022-2023 Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report is the first time that Government is able to report on the representation of women at the individual board level. The data collected throughout the 2022-2023 financial year showed that 78.7 per cent of boards have women represented in at least 40 per cent of reportable positions.

2022-2023 data also shows that women held 42.3 per cent of reportable Chair and Deputy Chair positions on Australian Government boards. While an increase of 1.3 percentage points, at this rate of change and without further action, it could take at least six years to reach gender parity in Chair and Deputy Chair positions.

While broader progress has been positive, in 2022-2023 there was a decline in nominations for women made by external organisations. Women received 45.2 per cent of external nominations – a decrease of 1.2 percentage points compared to 2021-2022.

It is important to note that 2022-2023 portfolio level data is not directly comparable to 2021-2022 portfolio level data in this report due to Machinery of Government changes which altered Government portfolio structures.

For more information about what appointments are considered as in-scope for reporting, refer to Appendix A.

Review into Public Sector Board Appointments Processes 2023

In February 2023, the Government announced the appointment of Ms Lynelle Briggs AO to lead a Review into Public Sector Board Appointments Processes. The Review seeks to propose processes to improve effectiveness of Public Sector Boards and bolster integrity. The Government will publish the final Report on the APS Reform website.

Gender balance on Australian Government Boards data

Overall results for reportable positions

As at 30 June 2023, there were 344 Australian Government boards and bodies with 2,208 filled reportable positions. Women filled 1,139 of these positions, or 51.6 per cent.

This result is an increase of 0.2 percentage points since 30 June 2022, when women filled 51.4 per cent of reportable positions on Australian Government boards (1,138 of 2,214 reportable filled positions).

The 2022-2023 financial year was the first reporting period to indicate that gender diverse and/or gender non-conforming people held a small number of positions on Australian Government boards. Whilst data on this group of board members has been included in this report, these responses have not been specifically identified for privacy reasons.

Table 1 details the number of boards, number of filled reportable positions, the number, and the percentage of, reportable positions filled by women and the percentage point difference in women's representation from the previous year, since 2017.

Table 1: Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards as at 30 June, from 2017 to 2023

Year	Number of boards	Number of filled reportable positions	Number of reportable positions filled by women	Percentage of reportable positions filled by women	Percentage point change since previous year
2023	344	2,208	1,139	51.6	+0.2
2022	335	2,214	1,138	51.4	+1.8
2021	342	2,315	1,149	49.6	+1.1
2020	343	2,489	1,206	48.5	+0.6
2019	341	2,313	1,109	47.9	+2.1
2018	339	2,530	1,158	45.8	+3.1
2017	337	2,508	1,072	42.7	+2.2

Portfolio results

As at 30 June 2023, ten out of 17 portfolios met or exceeded 50 per cent representation of women on Australian Government boards:

- Social Services (including Services Australia)
- Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Health and Aged Care
- Education
- Employment and Workplace Relations
- Industry, Science and Resources
- Home Affairs
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Treasury
- Foreign Affairs and Trade

Figure 1: Percentage of reportable positions on Australian Government boards filled by women as at 30 June 2023, by portfolio

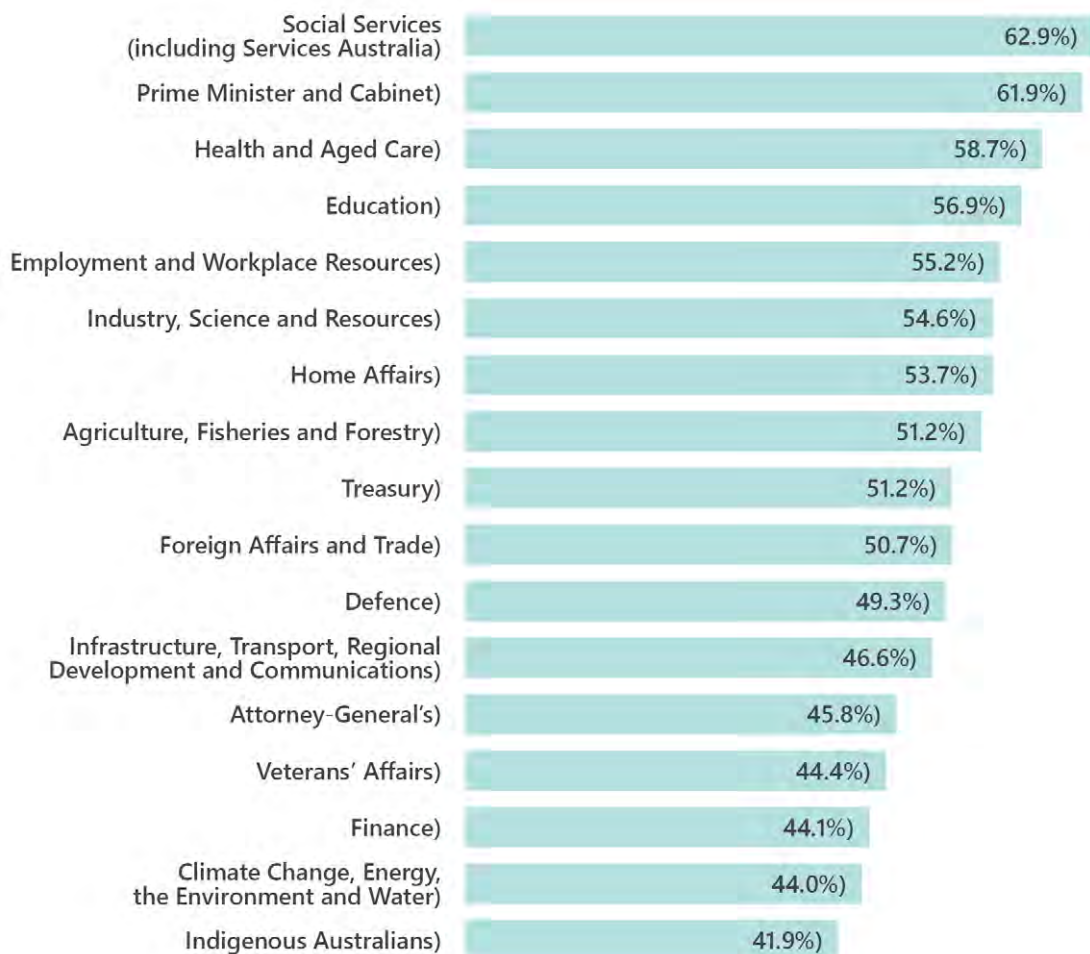


Table 2: Gender balance of overall Australian Government board positions as at 30 June 2022, by portfolio

Portfolio	Number of boards as at 30 June 2023	Number of filled positions as at 30 June 2023	Number of positions filled by women as at 30 June 2023	Percentage of positions filled by women as at 30 June 2023	Percentage of positions filled by women as at 30 June 2022	Percentage point difference since 30 June 2022
Social Services (including Services Australia)	5	35	22	62.9	70.0	-7.1
Prime Minister and Cabinet	4	21	13	61.9	51.6	+10.3
Health and Aged Care	47	479	281	58.7	59.3	-0.6
Education	26	188	107	56.9	52.7	+4.2
Employment and Workplace Relations	8	67	37	55.2	52.7	+2.5
Industry, Science and Resource	21	119	65	54.6	46.7	+7.9
Home Affairs	4	41	22	53.7	48.9	+4.8
Treasury	24	127	65	51.2	46.3	+4.9
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	19	121	62	51.2	46.3	+4.9
Foreign Affairs and Trade	21	134	68	50.7	52.6	-1.9
Defence	12	67	33	49.3	48.2	+1.1
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	96	373	174	46.6	46.0	+0.6
Attorney-General's	10	48	22	45.8	57.0	-11.2
Veterans' Affairs	6	36	16	44.4	48.2	-3.8
Finance	6	34	15	44.1	47.5	-3.4
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	25	182	80	44.0	46.7	-2.7
Indigenous Australians	10	136	57	41.9	51.6	-9.7
TOTAL	344	2,208	1,139	51.6	51.4	+0.2

New appointments

New appointments are appointments made within the 2022-2023 financial year, (the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023) that were not a reappointment of the same person to the same position.

Of the 612 new appointments made in 2022-2023, 52.9 per cent (324 new appointments) were for women. This is a decrease of 1.5 percentage points since 2021-2022, when women comprised 54.4 per cent of new appointments.

Table 3 shows that in 2022-2023, in seven of 17 portfolios, women received less than 50 per cent of new appointments.

Portfolio	Number of new appointments 2022-2023	Number of women newly appointed 2022-2023	Percentage of new appointments who were women 2022-2023	Percentage of new appointments who were women 2021-2022	Percentage point difference in new appointments between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
Prime Minister and Cabinet	28	23	82.1	53.8	+28.3
Employment and Workplace Relations	25	19	76.0	56.5	+19.5
Finance	3	2	66.7	100.0	-33.3
Education	114	69	60.5	56.5	+4.0
Foreign Affairs and Trade	20	12	60.0	68.0	-8.0
Industry, Science and Resources	22	13	59.1	30.6	+28.5
Defence	7	4	57.1	39.1	+18.0
Treasury	37	21	56.8	45.5	+11.3
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	91	48	52.7	47.3	+5.4
Health and Aged Care	55	29	52.7	65.1	-12.4
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	31	15	48.4	49.2	-0.8
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	48	22	45.8	30.6	+15.2
Veterans' Affairs	11	5	45.5	39.1	+6.4
Home Affairs	7	3	42.9	52.4	-9.5
Social Services (including Services Australia)	10	4	40.0	66.7	-26.7
Indigenous Australians	92	33	35.9	53.8	-17.9
Attorney-General's	11	2	18.2	69.2	-51.0
TOTAL	612	324	52.9	54.4	-1.5

Chair and Deputy Chair roles

As at 30 June 2023, women held 42.3 per cent of reportable Chair and Deputy Chair positions on Australian Government boards.

This result is 1.3 percentage points higher than the 30 June 2022 result, when women held 41.0 per cent of reportable Chair and Deputy Chair positions.

Figure 2 details the portfolio results for the gender balance of reportable Chair and Deputy Chair positions as at 30 June 2023.

Figure 2: Percentage of reportable Chair and Deputy Chair positions filled by women, as at 30 June 2023

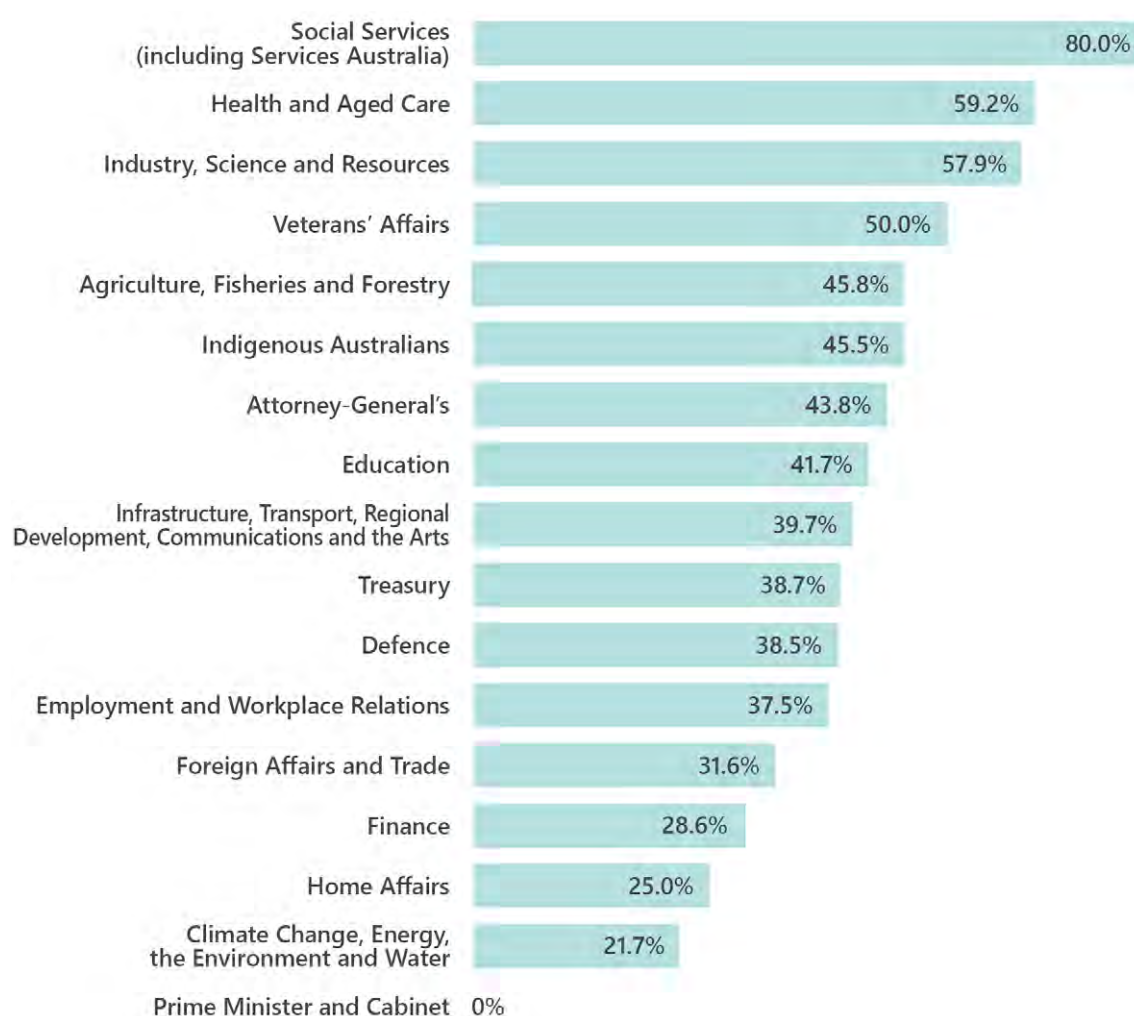


Table 4: Gender balance of Chair and Deputy Chair positions as at 30 June 2023, by portfolio

Portfolio	Number of Chair and Deputy Chair positions	Number of Chair and Deputy Chair positions filled by women	Percentage of Chair and Deputy Chair positions filled by women
Social Services (including Services Australia)	5	4	80.0
Health and Aged Care	49	29	59.2
Industry, Science and Resources	19	11	57.9
Veterans' Affairs	8	4	50.0
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	24	11	45.8
Indigenous Australians	11	5	45.5
Attorney-General's	16	7	43.8
Education	24	10	41.7
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	146	58	39.7
Treasury	31	12	38.7
Defence	13	5	38.5
Employment and Workplace Relations	8	3	37.5
Foreign Affairs and Trade	19	6	31.6
Finance	7	2	28.6
Home Affairs	4	1	25.0
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	23	5	21.7
Prime Minister and Cabinet	2	0	0.0
TOTAL	409	173	42.3

External nominations

External nominations refer to nominations made by an individual, an organisation or a number of organisations who are not the Australian Government Minister responsible for approving the appointment, or a member of their department. This may include a state or territory government or a non-government organisation and extends to appointment processes where it is either legislated or accepted practice for nominations to be provided to the Minister by external bodies. Not all nominations made by external bodies result in the appointment of that nominee, as multiple nominations may be received for the same vacancy.

In 2022-2023 (for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), women received 71 of 157 external nominations, equating to 45.2 per cent. This is 1.2 percentage points lower than in 2021-2022, when women received 46.4 per cent of external nominations.

Table 5 lists the 62 external organisations that nominated candidates for a position on an Australian Government board in 2022-2023, the number of nominations given, and the number of and percentage of nominations given for women.

Table 5: External nominations for Australian Government board positions received in 2022–2023, by nominating organisation

Nominating Organisation	Number of nominations given 2022-2023	Number of women nominated 2022-2023	Percentage of nominees who were women 2022-2023
Australian Capital Territory Government	2	0	0.0
New South Wales Government	14	4	28.6
Northern Territory Government	2	1	50.0
Queensland Government	11	7	63.6
South Australian Government	4	2	50.0
Tasmanian Government	3	2	66.7
Victorian Government	8	3	37.5
Western Australian Government	4	1	25.0
New Zealand Government	5	2	40.0
Minister for Communications	2	1	50.0
Minister for Workplace Relations	1	0	0.0
Tasmanian Minister for Health	1	0	0.0
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	2	0	0.0

Nominating Organisation	Number of nominations given 2022-2023	Number of women nominated 2022-2023	Percentage of nominees who were women 2022-2023
National Indigenous Australians Agency	2	0	0.0
Office for Women	3	2	66.7
Chief of the Australian Defence Force	2	0	0.0
Queensland Government - Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water	1	1	100.0
State and Territory Health Chief Executives	1	0	0.0
South Australia Arid Lands Landscape Board	2	0	0.0
Skills Senior Officials Network	1	1	100.0
Pharmaceutical Society of Australia	1	1	100.0
Pharmacy Guild of Australia	2	1	50.0
Health Consumers of Rural and Remote Australia	1	1	100.0
Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia	1	0	0.0
Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute	7	4	57.1
Australian Local Government Organisation	1	0	0.0
Australian National University	1	0	0.0
Community Housing Industry Association	1	0	0.0
Customer Owned Banking Association	1	1	100.0
Grattan Institute	1	0	0.0
Housing Industry Association	4	1	25.0
Master Builders Australia	3	2	66.7
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association	2	1	50.0
National Shelter	1	0	0.0
Planning Institute of Australia	2	0	0.0
PowerHousing Australia	2	2	100.0
Property Council of Australia	5	1	20.0
Urban Development Institute of Australia	4	0	0.0
Australian Industry Group	2	1	50.0

Nominating Organisation	Number of nominations given 2022-2023	Number of women nominated 2022-2023	Percentage of nominees who were women 2022-2023
Business Council of Australia	2	1	50.0
Australian Council of Trade Unions	8	4	50.0
National Farmers' Federation	1	0	0.0
Australian Resources and Energy Employer Association	1	1	100.0
Maritime Industry Australia Limited	1	1	100.0
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	6	6	100.0
Independent Schools Australia	1	0	0.0
The Healing Foundation	4	2	50.0
Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation	2	2	100.0
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Link-Up Service	2	2	100.0
ACT and NSW Stolen Generations Council	2	2	100.0
The United Ngunnawal Elders Council	2	2	100.0
Australian Institute of Petroleum	1	0	0.0
Truck Industry Council	1	0	0.0
Bioenergy Australia	1	1	100.0
Australian Automobile Association	1	0	0.0
Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries	1	0	0.0
Professionals Australia	1	0	0.0
Clean Air Society of Australia and New Zealand	1	0	0.0
Desert Channels Queensland Group	2	1	50.0
Territory Natural Resource Management	1	1	100.0
Conservation Council of South Australia Inc., Queensland Conservation Council and Arid Lands Environment Centre	1	0	0.0
Business Council of Australia and Property Council of Australia	1	1	100.0
TOTAL	157	71	45.2

Expanded data

During the 2022-23 Financial Year, the Office for Women collected new data to understand women's representation on individual Australian Government boards and in disaggregated Chair and Deputy Chair positions.

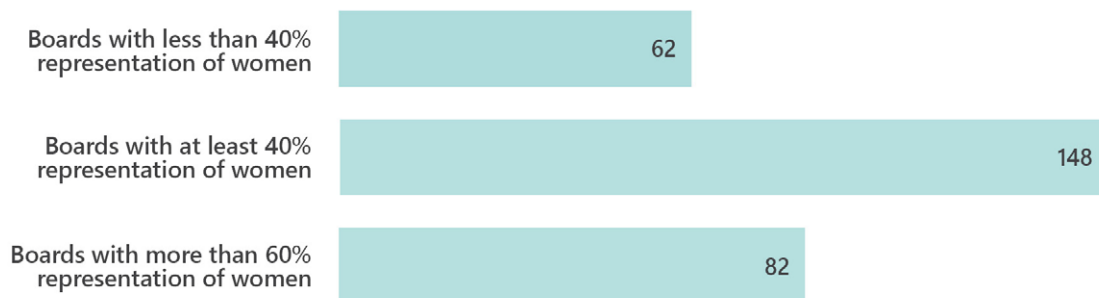
Individual boards

The 2022-2023 financial year was the first year where individual board data was collected and reported on to understand the representation of women at the individual board level.

As at 30 June 2023, 292 total individual boards were reported across Government. Of these boards, 230 have women holding at least 40 per cent of positions (78.7 per cent of Australian Government boards).

Of the 292 Australian Government boards, 82 (28.1 per cent) have women holding over 60 per cent of reportable positions.

Figure 3: Representation of women on individual boards as at 30 June 2023, whole-of-government level



Disaggregated Chair and Deputy Chair data

The 2022-2023 financial year was the first year where disaggregated Chair and Deputy Chair data was collected and reported on.

As at 30 June 2023, women hold 122 of 292 reportable Chair positions, or 41.8 per cent, and 51 of 117 reportable Deputy Chair positions, or 43.6 per cent.

Figure 4: Gender balance of Chair and Deputy Chair positions (disaggregated), as at 30 June 2023



Appendix A

Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Reporting Guidelines

The Australian Government remains committed to gender targets for Australian Government boards, which have been in effect since 1 July 2016. The targets call for women to hold at least 50 per cent of Australian Government board positions overall, and that women and men should both hold at least 40 per cent of positions at the individual board level.

To measure the Government's progress against these targets, the Office for Women publishes this Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website.

This reporting measures the representation of women on Australian Government boards across four metrics:

1. Overall positions on Australian Government boards – reported at the whole-of-government and portfolio level.
2. New appointments to Australian Government boards – reported at whole-of-government and portfolio level.
3. Chair and Deputy Chair positions on Australian Government boards – reported at the whole-of-government and portfolio level.
4. External nominations to Australian Government boards.

Chair and Deputy Chair positions

Board members holding Chair or Deputy Chair positions, or functional equivalents, contribute towards this metric. Equivalent roles can include, for example, Chief or Deputy Chief Convenors and Commissioners.

New appointments

New appointments are those made over the 2022-2023 financial year, which fulfil all of the criteria above, but do not require the successful candidate to have been formally working in the role as at 30 June 2023. Reappointments of the same candidate to the same position do not contribute towards the new appointment metric, only to the overall gender balance metric and the Chair and Deputy Chair gender balance metric (if applicable).

External nominations

External nominations refer to nominations made in the 2022-2023 Financial Year, by either an individual, an organisation or a number of organisations who are not the Government Minister responsible for approving the appointment, or a member of their department.

External nominations can include, but are not limited to, nominations made by a state or territory government, an overseas government, the Australian Senate or House of Representatives, non-government bodies, departments and agencies that are not the relevant portfolio agency and Ministers that are not the relevant portfolio Minister.

External nominations do not include nominations made by a Minister's department, the relevant board or its chair, or by two or more Ministers where one is the relevant portfolio Minister.

Both successful and unsuccessful nominations are within the scope of the Gender Balance Annual Report and contribute to the external nominations gender balance metric.

Scope of the reporting

Boards

Some Australian Government Boards do not fall within the scope of the Gender Balance report. To be in scope, a board must meet two conditions.

Condition One -

The board must be either:

A body covered by the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act) (further information can be found at <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/structure-australian-government-public-sector/pgpa-act-flipchart-list>)

- A ministerial advisory committee
- A review committee, whose members are appointed by a Minister or the Cabinet
- A Commonwealth statutory authority.

Condition Two -

At least one appointment to the board must be approved by any of the following representatives of the Australian Government:

- The Prime Minister
- One or more Commonwealth Ministers
- The Governor-General in Council
- The Cabinet.

Australian Government boards that fall outside the scope of gender balance reporting include Royal Commissions, Commonwealth Courts and tribunals.

Positions

Gender balance data is reported on a positions basis. Not all positions on Australian Government boards are within the scope of the Gender Balance report, including positions which are:

- Elected with no formal Government approval
- Nominated by a third party with no formal Government approval (these positions are captured in external nominations data only, see below)
- Of a particular office holder to a particular board or committee, as required by legislation (e.g. a Minister serving as the Chair of a board)
- For employees engaged under the Public Service Act 1999 or other enabling legislation for purposes beyond serving on a Commonwealth decision-making or advisory board, committee, council or similar (e.g. ex-officio appointments of senior public servants), or acting appointments of six-months or less.

Where a board has a mixture of in-scope and out-of-scope positions, the board and its in-scope positions are included in the Gender Balance Annual Report. Out-of-scope positions do not contribute to the number of filled positions or to the Report and are not analysed.