**Election 2019 – Young women**

# What are the particular issues for young women?

There are a wide range of issues that currently affect Australian young women. These include (but are not limited to):

* The casualisation of the workforce, high rates of under-employment, increase in the gig economy and increasing unpaid internships make it difficult for young people to find steady, secure employment with access to paid leave and superannuation.[[1]](#footnote-1) The youth unemployment rate is currently 12.6% overall and 12.3% for young women aged 15-24, compared to an unemployment rate of 5.1% for the total population.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling confident or very confident in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after finishing school in a recent study by Mission Australia.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Despite high rates of participation in post-secondary education, young women continue to experience inequity in pay. For example, the gender pay gap is apparent even at graduation - the average gap for recent graduates is 9.4% favouring men; the gender pay gap for some study areas is substantially higher.[[4]](#footnote-4)
* In Australia, women aged 18 to 24 are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual violence compared to women in older age groups and men. Data from the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey found that approximately 1 in 20 women in this age group reported experiencing sexual assault in the last 12 months.[[5]](#footnote-5) Research has shown that 24% of young women aged 18-24 have had a nude or sexual photo/video posted online or sent on without their consent.[[6]](#footnote-6)
* Young women also have the highest rate of assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services, with domestic, family and sexual violence cited as the main reasons for needing help.[[7]](#footnote-7)
* One in four young people are at risk of serious mental illness, and the risk is greater in Indigenous groups and young women.[[8]](#footnote-8) Twice as many females than males were likely to report high levels of concern over coping with stress and mental health in a recent study by Mission Australia.[[9]](#footnote-9)

**Election commitments**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Full implementation | Partial implementation | No or negative response |

The table below sets out how fully parties’ current election commitments address NFAW recommendations:

|  |
| --- |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| The appointment of a Minister for Youth. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
|  |  |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| Funding for a national peak body for young people. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
|  | The Government has not committed to funding a national peak body for young people in the 2019-20 Budget. The national peak, the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, last received funding in 2013. |  |

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| OTHER ELECTION COMMITMENTS |
| Commitment | **Party** | **Comments** |
|  | Choose an item. |  |
|  | Choose an item. |  |
|  | Choose an item. |  |

Authorised by Kate Gunn, Sydney.

1. Brotherhood of St Laurence, March 2017), *Generation Stalled: Young, underemployed and living precariously in Australia.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ABS, *Labour Force, Australia*, January 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mission Australia, 2018, *Gender gaps: Findings from the Youth Survey 2018.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. WGEA, 2017, *Gender Equity Insights 2017: Inside Australia’s Gender Pay Gap*; WGEA, 2018, *Higher education enrolments and graduate labour market statistics.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Australia Bureau of Statistics, *Personal Safety Australia*, 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Office of the eSafety Commissioner, 2017, ‘Image-based abuse: Prevalence & pathways’, <https://www.esafety.gov.au/image-based-abuse/about/research/prevalence-pathways> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Homelessness Australia, 2016, <https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/sites/homelessnessaus/files/2017-07/Young%20People.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Mission Australia and Black Dog Institute, 2017, *Youth mental health report: Youth survey 2012-16.* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Mission Australia, 2018, *Gender gaps: Findings from the Youth Survey 2018.* [↑](#footnote-ref-9)