



2022 Women's Report Card

An indicator report of Western Australian women's progress



Priority area: Leadership



Goal: Women's skills, achievements and strengths are valued, enabling them to participate equally in the community, including at leadership levels.

Introduction and scope

This briefing note addresses women's leadership in Western Australia, a key priority area identified in the Western Australian Government's 'Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality' report which is a coordinated approach to addressing gender inequality in WA over the long termⁱ.

Greater diversity in leadership and decision-making roles contributes to positive outcomes for organisations and communities. Research shows that diverse groups make better decisions than

homogenous groups and bring new information and perspectives which can enhance decision-making. Greater gender diversity in leadership can also make institutions and policies more representative.

This chapter focuses on the area of leadership and examines the participation of WA women in leadership roles in the public, business and community sectors, and also elected government positions.

This note should be read in conjunction with the WA Women's Data Insights Platform, which provides a detailed set of metrics for the various indicators over time.

ⁱ Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities. (2021). *Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality*. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/stronger-together-was-plan-gender-equality>



Outcomes

Desired outcomes in the area of leadership include:

- WA women participate fully at leadership levels within organisations
- WA women participate fully in appointed and elected offices
- WA leadership comprises and benefits from the full range of human expertise, experience and skills.

Indicators

The indicators in this chapter contribute to understanding how WA is progressing towards achieving these outcomes:

- Senior positions in public authorities
- Business leadership
- Elected and appointed positions in government
- Community leadership.

Elected and appointed positions in government

Key insight	Description	Change over time																				
<p>In 2021, the share of female representation in the WA Legislative Assembly reached an all-time high of 47.5 per cent (28 out of 59 seats), a 17 percentage point increase from the 2017 State Election.ⁱⁱ</p>	<p>The elected representatives from the WA Labor Party consist of 26 women and 27 men; the Liberal Party one woman and one man, and The Nationals one woman and three men.</p> <p>The Legislative Council recorded a 41.7 per cent share of sitting women in 2021, a fall of 2.8 percentage points (1 seat) since the 2017 State Election, and 5.6 percentage points (2 seats) lower than the peak of 47.2 per cent in 2008.</p> <p>The breakdown of female party representation in the Legislative Council is as follows: the Labor Party, consisting of 13 women and 9 men; the Liberal Party with one woman and 6 men; and one woman from the Legalise Cannabis Party.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women WA Legislative Assembly (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1996</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2005</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>47.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	1996	22	2005	23	2013	18	2021	47.5										
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<p>In 2022, the total share of women holding WA seats in the Australian Parliament rose to an all-time high of 57.1 per cent.ⁱⁱⁱ</p>	<p>This is a 25 per cent increase from the 2019 Federal election.</p> <p>As of July 2020, women held 53.3 per cent of WA seats (8 out of 15) in the House of Representatives.</p> <p>Women held 66.7 per cent of seats (4 out of 6) in the Australian Senate.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women in Aus. Parliament (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2001</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>57.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2001	28	2004	25	2007	33	2010	30	2013	35	2016	35	2019	32	2022	57.1		
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2022	57.1																					
<p>The percentage of women elected as councillors increased from 39.9 per cent in 2017 to 43.5 per cent in 2021.^{iv}</p>	<p>While the proportion of women elected as mayors and presidents reached a peak of 40 per cent in 2011, the share fell to 8.3 per cent in 2017. This did increase again to 38.5 per cent in 2019 before falling to 23.1 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>With a total count of 13 mayors/presidents, it should be noted that small changes in count can lead to large percentage point changes.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women councillors (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2005</td> <td>31.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>38.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>43.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2005	31.5	2007	34	2009	35	2011	40	2013	33	2015	34	2017	40	2019	38.5	2021	43.5
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ii Western Australia Electoral Commission. (2021). *Legislative Assembly – Elected Members*. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.elections.wa.gov.au/elections/state/sgelection#/sg2021/LAElectedMembers>

iii Australian Electoral Commission. (2022). *Election Results – Tally Room Archive*. Government of Australia. <https://results.aec.gov.au/>

iv Western Australia Electoral Commission. (2022). *2021 Local Government Ordinary Elections, Election Report*. Government of Western Australia. https://www.elections.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021_LG_Election_Report%20online%20vf.pdf



Elected and appointed positions in government (continued)

Key insight	Description	Change over time																						
As of June 2022, women had a 52.5 per cent representation on all State Government boards and committees in WA. ^v	<p>This is up almost 3.5 percentage points on the share of women represented on all WA State Government boards and committees in December 2019 (49.0%), and compares to 41 per cent in 2013.</p> <p>The current state of women's representation on all State Government boards and committees is the highest known on record for WA.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women WA Gov. boards (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2013</td><td>41.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>43.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>43.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>42.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>44.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>47.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>49.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>50.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2021</td><td>52.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2022</td><td>52.5</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2013	41.0	2014	43.0	2015	43.0	2016	42.0	2017	44.0	2018	47.0	2019	49.0	2020	50.0	2021	52.0	2022	52.5
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Notes: Based on most recent data available as of July 2022. Please refer to <http://www.womensreportcard.communities.wa.gov.au/> for the most current data available on various metrics relating to this indicator.

Source: Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre | Based on various data sources.

^v Government of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2021). *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards, Report 2020-21*. <https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/ofw-gender-balance-report-6-dec-2021.pdf>. Government of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2022). Unpublished and Customized Data.

Senior positions in public authorities

Key insight	Description	Change over time																		
<p>Since 2017, there has been a general increase in the proportion of women in public sector leadership in WA, with an increase across all four tiers (SES and Tiers 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3) to 2021.^{vi}</p>	<p>The share of women in the Senior Executive Service tier increased from 34.2 per cent in 2017 to 43.5 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>Tier 1 managers saw the largest increase in women’s representation, from 22.2 per cent in 2017 to 38.7 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>Women also saw a sizeable increase in representation at the Tier 2 management level, from 39.4 per cent in 2017 to 47.5 per cent in 2021. At the Tier 3 level, women saw an increase from 44.5 per cent in 2017 to 51.1 per cent representation in 2021.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women in SES (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2007</td><td>22.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>25.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>27.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>29.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>31.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>34.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>37.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2021</td><td>43.5</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2007	22.2	2009	25.0	2011	27.0	2013	29.0	2015	31.0	2017	34.2	2019	37.0	2021	43.5
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<p>The lowest share of women in senior leadership (indoor work) in WA local government were observed Tier 1 with women’s representation sitting at 15.8 per cent.^{vii}</p>	<p>As of 2021 the highest shares of women in senior leadership in WA local government were observed for Tier 3 indoor workers (44.4%), followed by Tier 2 indoor workers (37.0%) and Tier 2 outdoor workers (18.6%).</p> <p>At the local government level, since 2007, the share of women in senior leadership across all Tiers for both indoor and outdoor work has trended upwards.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women Tier 1 Indoor (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2007</td><td>6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>8.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2012</td><td>7.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>12.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>9.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>11.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>15.8</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2007	6.0	2009	8.0	2012	7.0	2014	12.0	2016	9.0	2018	11.0	2020	15.8		
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vi Government of Western Australia, Public Sector Commission. (2021). *State of the Government Sector Workforce Statistical Bulletins*. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/state-of-the-wa-government-sector-workforce-statistical-bulletins>

vii Government of Western Australia, Public Sector Commission. (2021). *State of the Government Sector Workforce Statistical Bulletins*. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/state-of-the-wa-government-sector-workforce-statistical-bulletins>



Senior positions in public authorities (continued)

Key insight	Description	Change over time																								
<p>As of 2020, women only occupied 18.8 per cent of Tier 1 management positions in Government trading enterprises and other public authorities in WA, albeit an all-time high.^{viii}</p>	<p>This represents a 6.3 percentage point increase from the share reported in 2018 (12.5%).</p> <p>From 2009 to 2020, women's representation in Tier 1, 2 and 3 management positions in other WA public authorities increased by 8.3, 8.0 and 9.6 percentage points, respectively.</p> <p>Women now occupy 28.8 per cent of Tier 2 management positions in other public authorities in WA. Women's representation in Tier 3 fell from 30.3 per cent in 2018 to 28.4 per cent in 2020, but remains well above the 18.8 per cent share reported in 2009.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women Tier 1 (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2010</td><td>10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2012</td><td>6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>12.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>12.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>12.5</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>18.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>18.8</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2010	10.0	2011	10.0	2012	6.0	2013	10.0	2014	6.0	2015	6.0	2016	12.0	2017	12.0	2018	12.5	2019	18.0	2020	18.8
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<p>2021 saw a significant change in WA's Vice-Chancellors in public universities (4) in WA, with the composition changing from 75 per cent women to 25 per cent women (Tier 1 leadership).</p>	<p>Women's representation in Tier 2 leadership in WA public universities suffered in 2020, falling from 46.7 per cent in 2009 to 33.3 per cent in 2020, the lowest level recorded since 2015 (29.4%).^{ix}</p> <p>Tier 3 leadership was comprised of a 47.2 per cent share of women in WA public universities, driven by a 4.3 percentage point increase over the year to 2020.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women Tier 2 (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2008</td><td>35.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2010</td><td>38.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2012</td><td>40.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>35.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>29.4</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>45.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>47.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>33.3</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2008	35.0	2010	38.0	2012	40.0	2014	35.0	2015	29.4	2016	45.0	2018	47.2	2020	33.3						
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Source: Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre | Based on various data sources.

viii Government of Western Australia, Public Sector Commission. (2021). *Unpublished and Customized Data*.

ix Government of Western Australia, Public Sector Commission. (2021). Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Annual Report, 2012 to 2020. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/director-of-equal-opportunity-public-employment-annual-reports>. Government of Western Australia, Public Sector Commission. (2022). *Unpublished and Customized Data*.

Business leadership

Key insight	Description	Change over time																				
<p>Women’s representation in CEO positions across Australian companies has increased from 16.3 per cent in 2016 to 19.4 per cent in 2021.^x</p>	<p>Board chair positions for women also increased, rising from 12.9 per cent in 2016 to 18.2 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>The proportion of women board members increased from 26.6 per cent in 2016 to 33.4 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>The share of female directors rose from 24.7 per cent in 2016 to 31.3 per cent in 2021.</p> <p>Furthermore, representation in key management personnel in Australian companies increased for women from 28.5 per cent in 2018 to 34.5 per cent in 2021.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women CEOs Australia (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2014</td><td>15.5</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>15.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>16.3</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>16.8</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>17.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>17.5</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>18.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2021</td><td>19.4</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage (%)	2014	15.5	2015	15.2	2016	16.3	2017	16.8	2018	17.2	2019	17.5	2020	18.2	2021	19.4		
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<p>There has been a general decline in the number of women who are enterprise owner-managers with employees from a peak of 31,640 in December 2017 to 25,100 as of May 2022.^{xi}</p>	<p>With declines too in the number of male enterprise owner-managers with employees during the period between December 2017 and May 2022, the proportion of owner-managers with employees in WA who are women actually increased slightly from 31.2 per cent in December 2017 to 32.0 per cent in May 2022. This proportion is in line with that displayed at a national level.</p> <p>There has been a steady increase over time in the number of women who are enterprise owner-managers without employees in WA, albeit with a slight decline from the peak of 54,890 observed in May 2021 to 49,190 as of May 2022.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Female managers, total (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Percentage (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Jan-2019</td><td>35.5</td></tr> <tr><td>Jun-2019</td><td>36.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Nov-2019</td><td>35.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr-2020</td><td>38.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-2020</td><td>40.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Feb-2021</td><td>42.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Jul-2021</td><td>35.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Dec-2021</td><td>32.0</td></tr> <tr><td>May-2022</td><td>32.0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Percentage (%)	Jan-2019	35.5	Jun-2019	36.0	Nov-2019	35.0	Apr-2020	38.0	Sep-2020	40.0	Feb-2021	42.0	Jul-2021	35.0	Dec-2021	32.0	May-2022	32.0
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 Source: Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre | Based on various data sources.

x Government of Australia, Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2022). *WGEA Data Explorer*. Government of Australia. https://data.wgea.gov.au/industries/1#governing_bodies_content

xi Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Catalogue No. 6291, Labour Force, Detailed, Table EM6a, May 2022 release. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release>



Community leadership and civic awards

Key insight	Description	Change over time																
<p>Between 2018 and 2022, women's representation as CEOs in community sector organisations in WA increased from 67 per cent to 72 per cent.^{xii}</p>	<p>Women are well represented as CEOs in community sector organisations across most organisations by annual turnover size.</p> <p>The share of women CEOs tends to decline as annual organisational turnover reaches the higher levels. The share of women CEOs steadily declines from 86 per cent for community sector organisations with an annual turnover of \$120K to \$500K, to 59 per cent for community sector organisations with an annual turnover of \$2.5m and above.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women CEOs (%) by Annual Turnover</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Annual Turnover</th> <th>Women CEOs (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><\$120k</td> <td>83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$120k to \$500k</td> <td>86</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$500k to \$2.5m</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>\$2.5m</td> <td>59</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Annual Turnover	Women CEOs (%)	<\$120k	83	\$120k to \$500k	86	\$500k to \$2.5m	71	>\$2.5m	59						
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<p>As of 2021, the representation of women at the executive level of UnionsWA stood at 44.8 per cent.^{xiii}</p>	<p>This has remained unchanged since 2018, but is up 6 percentage points on the share reported in 2003 (38.5%).</p> <p>The proportion of female delegates to UnionsWA at the council level has gone up by 16 percentage points since 2003 and now stands at 41.3 per cent.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Women on Executive (%) over Time</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Women on Executive (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2003</td> <td>38.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2006</td> <td>37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>44.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>44.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Women on Executive (%)	2003	38.5	2006	37	2009	40	2012	41	2015	42	2018	44.8	2021	44.8
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<p>WA had an equal gender balance representation among the <i>Australian of the Year Awards</i> (AOTY) awards finalists for 2022, each recording eight finalists.^{xiv, xv}</p>	<p>Women comprised 75 per cent (3 out of 4 finalists) of WA 2022 Young Australian of the Year finalists. In contrast, 25 per cent (1 out of 4 finalists) of WA 2022 Local Hero finalists were women.</p> <p>There was an even 50 per cent share of male and female nominees for the WA 2022 Australian of the Year and WA 2022 Senior Australian of the Year finalists.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Gender Balance of Nominees</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Women</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Men</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender	Percentage	Women	50%	Men	50%										
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xii Western Australia Council of Social Services. (2022). *Unpublished and Customized Data*.

xiii UnionsWA. (2022). *Unpublished and Customized Data*.

xiv Auspire. (2022). *WA Finalists for 2022 Australian of the Year Awards Announced*. Auspire. <https://auspire.org.au/news/wa-finalists-for-2022-australian-of-the-year-awards-announced/>

xv Australian of the Year Awards. (2022). *2022 Awards*. NADC. <https://cms.australianoftheyear.org.au/recipients/listing/2022>

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August 2022
ISBN: 978-1-925757-21-7

This report was written by: Alan Duncan, Daniel Kiely and Silvia Salazar from the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre at Curtin Business School.

It can be cited as: Duncan, A., Kiely, D., and Salazar, S., (2022), *2022 Women's Report Card: An indicator report of Western Australian women's progress*, Summary Briefing Note - Health and Wellbeing; Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, August 2022. A report prepared by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre for the Department of Communities, Government of Western Australia, 2022.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Dr Elaine Dowd, Senior Strategy Officer, Department of Communities, for her ongoing advice, and assistance with data collection and stakeholder engagement. Special thanks to Alex Buckland and Austen Peters for their research assistance.

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