



Government of South Australia

Premier's Council for Women

What matters to women in South Australia

Report on responses to survey

2014

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The Premier's Council for Women thanks everyone who participated
in the 2014 survey *What Matters to Women*.

Overview

The Premier's Council for Women (the Council) is a high level advisory body established in 2002 to provide leadership and advice to ensure the interests of women are at the forefront of South Australian Government policies and strategies.

The Council's members are influential women with expertise in a range of areas such as health, education, defence, social policy, sport and arts.

The Council believes it is important to offer opportunities for women in South Australia to express their views and raise issues which concern them. In 2007 and 2010 we undertook public consultations which informed the development of our workplan for the following years. A public report *Women in South Australia: Thinking About a Better Future* describing the Council's workplan and summarising the issues women raised in 2010 is available on the Office for Women website www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au

To assist us in developing a program of work for the period 2014-2018 we conducted a survey *What Matters to Women in South Australia*

The survey was launched on 23 May 2014 and closed on 13 June 2014. By the close of the survey 1,396 people had responded. The following report provides a summary of the survey's results.

The Survey

History of consultations

The Premier's Council for Women believes that it should provide opportunities on a regular basis for women in South Australia to express their views and raise issues of concern for them. The Council held public consultations in 2007 where more than 220 women were consulted in Adelaide and Mount Gambier. From these sessions the Council decided to pursue two main areas of work: women's economic status and employment; and women's health, safety and wellbeing.

As a result of the Council's consultations in 2010, where Council members met and spoke with more than 250 women across metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia, the Council focused on five key areas:

- Women's employment and economic status
- Women's leadership
- Women's safety and violence against women
- Women's health and wellbeing
- Women and disabilities.

Online consultations in 2014

The Council decided to conduct a survey for the 2014 consultation process. The purpose of the survey was to identify 'what are the key issues of concern to women in South Australia'. A number of optional demographic questions were included to enable a more nuanced understanding of survey results.

The survey, launched on 23 May 2014, was available through the South Australian Government's Your SAy website. A media release was distributed and the Chair of the Council was invited to participate in a number of radio interviews on the day of the launch.

An email encouraging participation was sent to a range of networks across the government, community and non-government sectors. The email included the weblink to the survey as well as a flyer and a paper-based version of the survey to maximize response. The survey was also promoted through government and

community social media tools including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, wikis and websites and regional newspapers.

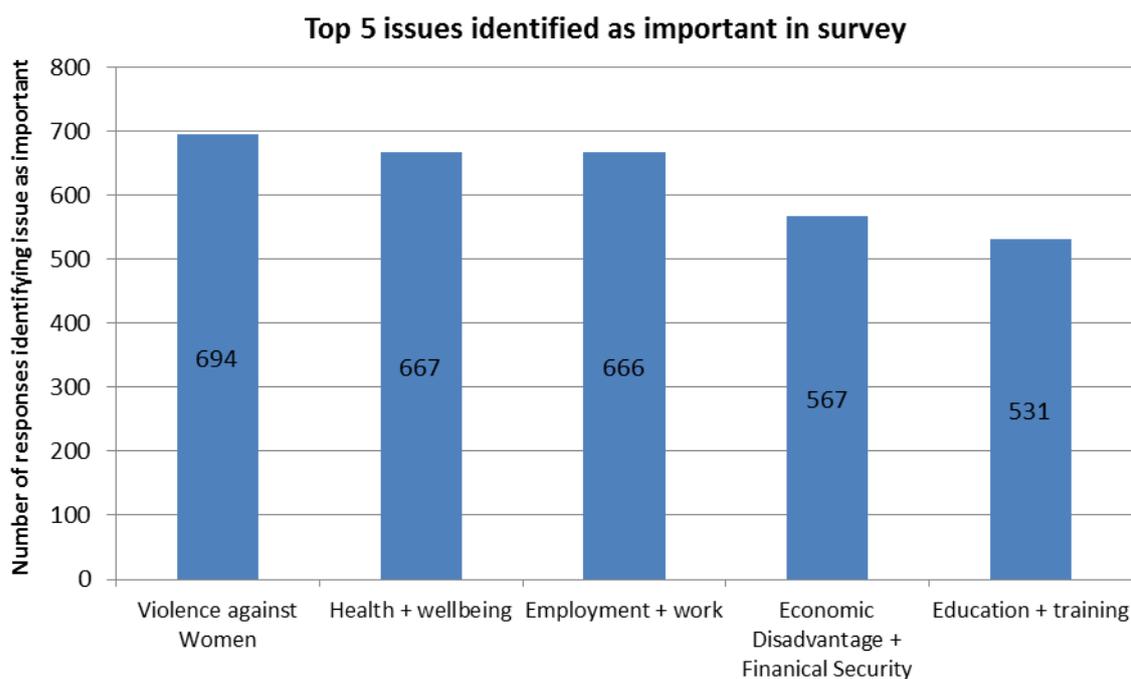
1,396 people responded to the survey. Online surveys were completed by 1,357 people and 39 people posted hard copies of the survey.

Of the total respondents 1,293 are women living South Australia, with the remaining 103 respondents either living elsewhere (98) or were male respondents (5). Since the focus of the survey was to find out what matters to women in South Australia, in this report we present the responses received from all those women living in South Australia (1,293 responses). Of the 1,293 women in South Australia who responded the demographic information is provided later in this report.

What matters to women?

From a list of 13 issues, women who responded to the survey were asked to select the top 5 issues they considered most important.¹

The top 5 issues identified by the number of responses selected as Most Important and Very Important are violence against women (694 responses received); health and wellbeing (667); employment and work (666); economic disadvantage and financial security (567); and education and training (531).



South Australian women considered the remaining issues as important in the following order – child care (464 responses); women in leadership (435); public safety (425); gender pay gap (378); housing (293); gender stereotypes (243); justice and courts (182); public and community infrastructure (165); other (55).

¹ 1293 women participated in the survey. Some women ranked their top 5 issues and other women ranked all the issues listed. As a result a total of 8,288 responses were received in the survey identifying issues that were important. Therefore the results have been collated by number of responses per issue rather than by the number of respondents.

Why are the issues important?

Women who responded to the survey were requested to provide the reasons behind their selection of top 5 issues. Many expressed a personal connection to their issues, saying that they had been directly impacted or that they anticipate being impacted by the issues in the future.

Other women expressed a broader social concern about their identified issues, while they may not be personally impacted by these issues, they could see the impacts on women in general. Many of these women also identified the interconnectedness between issues. For example the impact of increasing women in leadership could reduce economic disadvantage and the gender pay gap; or if women have access to housing and financial security then health and wellbeing increases.

Some women also identified that improving the status and wellbeing of women would have a society wide positive impact.

Comments provided

The survey also provided a space for open ended responses, especially if key concerns identified included “Public and Community Infrastructure” and/or “Other”. The comments have been summarised under key themes listed below:

Public and Community Infrastructure

- Transport – public transport and safety for cyclists
- Services – public health and accessibility to services
- Open safe spaces
- Women’s roles in society
- Regional and remote areas lacking public and community infrastructure
- Housing
- Employment / Education

Other issues

- Employment and Economic Disadvantage – flexible work arrangements, age discrimination, superannuation and financial disadvantage women face
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander – Rights and Recognition
- Health – reproductive, mental
- Women living with disability
- Family and Carers
- Environment

What actions could have a positive impact on key issues?

Women who responded to the survey were asked to tell the Council what actions they thought could have a positive impact on the issues they are concerned about.

Five key points were identified from the responses to the survey:

1. There is a need for greater public/community awareness and education about negative attitudes and behaviours towards women.
2. A holistic approach is needed to address gender inequality and all issues listed in the survey are interconnected. In particular the linkages between, child care, employment, education, and addressing violence against women were highlighted.
3. Bipartisan support across all levels of government is essential for addressing fundamental issues that underpin persistent gender inequality.
4. Government has a pivotal role to play in enabling cultural change through policy or legislative mechanisms – such as legislation restricting gendered advertising in media, addressing gender pay inequity, quotas/targets to promote gender diversity, etc.

Genuine, substantive and ongoing consultation with women was expressed as a key mechanism to ensure that women's voices are heard in all aspects of policy making and implementation.

Priorities for the Premier's Council for Women

The Council is continuing to analyse the information received from the survey. As the Council considers the information provided by the women who participated in the survey it will also consider the current policies and programs implemented through Federal, State and Local Governments and non-government organisations.

It is important the Council does not duplicate work already implemented through the above mentioned bodies and that Council members identify areas of work where they can be influential advocates on behalf of women in South Australia.

The Council's final work plan for 2014-2018 will prioritise issues based on a combination of survey responses, the Council's areas of strategic influence and its ongoing monitoring of the work undertaken through all levels of government and community.

The Council will also continue to identify opportunities to engage with and consult women in South Australia to ensure it truly represents the needs of women in South Australia across different ages, groups and communities.

Who responded to the survey?

1,396 people responded to the survey. Online surveys were completed by 1,357 people and 39 people posted hard copies of the survey.

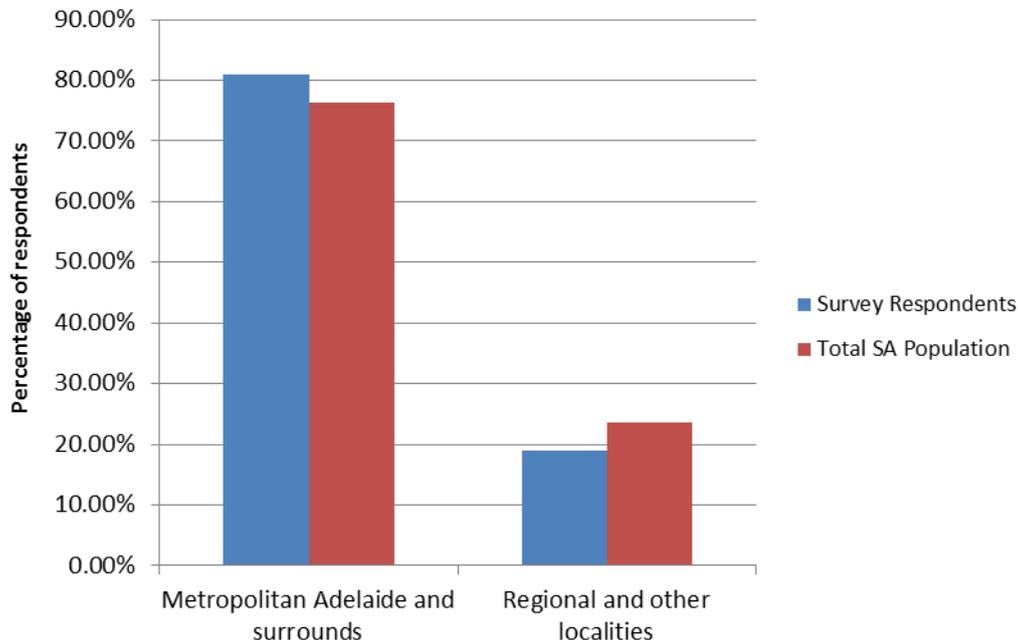
Of the total respondents 1,293 are women living South Australia, with the remaining 103 respondents either living elsewhere (98) or were male respondents (5). Since the focus of the survey was to find out what matters to women in South Australia, in this report we present the responses received from all those women living in South Australia (1,293 responses).

Of the 1,293 women in South Australia who responded, demographic information is provided below.

N.B. It was not mandatory to complete the demographic questions and some women chose not to provide all or any demographic information. Information displayed is based on responses received for each category and the number of responses received is stated.

Location

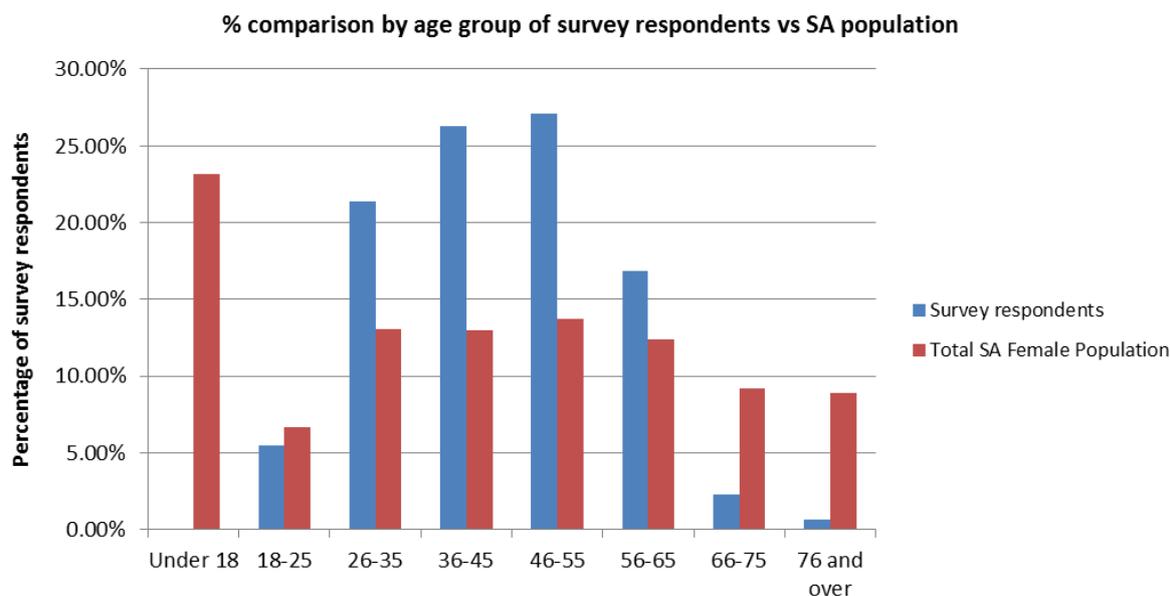
80.99% of women respondents live in metropolitan Adelaide and surrounds and 19.01% live in regional and other localities. This result reflects the total South Australian female population where 76.34% live in metropolitan Adelaide and surrounds and 23.66% of the total female South Australian population live in regional and other localities of South Australia.²



² The estimated resident population for South Australia at 30 September 2013 was 1,674,693 and 844,401 of the state population were female². The majority of residents (1,278,432) live in the greater Adelaide region. ABS 3101.0 Australian Demographics Report September 2013

Age

The majority of women respondents were aged 26 – 55 years, with only one respondent under the age of 18.



Disability

The number of women respondents who identified as living with a disability was 6.42% compared to 17.30% of the total Australian female population identified as living with a disability.³

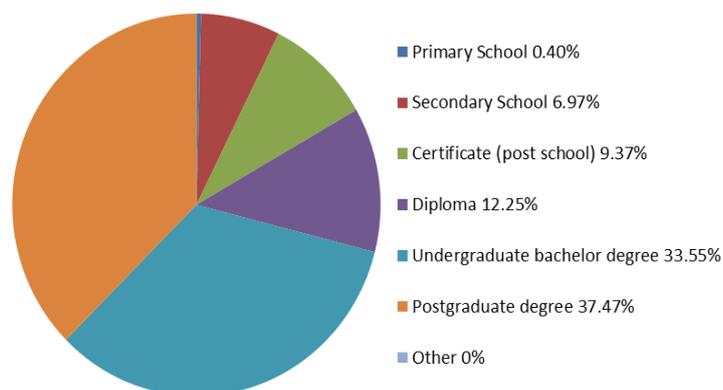
Cultural identity

14 (1.08%) women identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (2.23% of total SA female population identify as ATSI) and 1,118 (86.6%) women identified with a particular cultural group.

Of those 1,118 women only 153 women provided a response about specific cultural group: Greek (29), Italian (12), German (6), Chinese (6), Filipino (4) and Croatian (4) were the predominant cultural groups identified. Also specified were Maltese, Estonian, Celtic, Kurdish, Turkish, Irish, Ukrainian, Russian, Vietnamese, Hungarian, Malaysian, Sudanese, Indian, Macedonian, American, Fijian, Lithuanian, Irish, French, Moroccan, Norwegian, Latvian, Polish, Maori, Serbian, Swiss, Tamil, Afghan, Scottish. The remaining respondents did not specify which cultural group they identify with.

Education

1,249 (96.6%) women responded to the question about the highest level of education. Of those responses the majority have undertaken tertiary education.



³ Source: [ABS Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009](#) (cat. no. 4430.0)

Employment

The survey asked women a number of questions about their current employment status:

Are you currently employed?

If yes, is your work paid or unpaid?

If you are employed which category best describes your employment?

Full-time / Part-time / Job-share / Shift-work / Casual hours

What is your occupation?

Based on Australian & New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations

Not all women responding to the survey provided information to all the questions about their employment status.

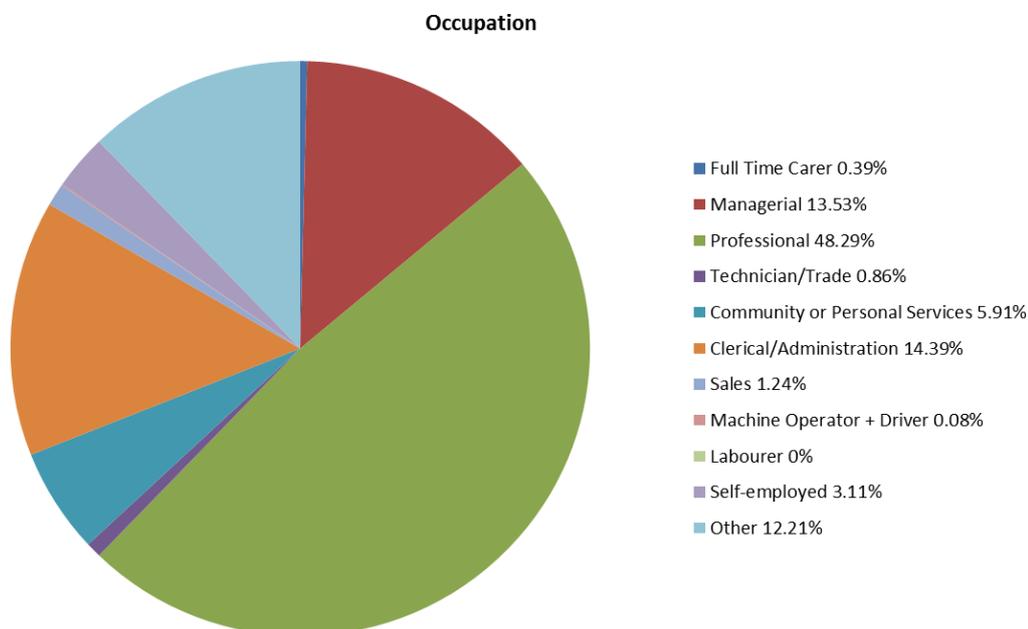
1,171 (90.6%) women said they are employed, 120 (9.3%) said they are not employed and 2 (0.1%) women did not provide information about their employment status.

Of the total number of those employed 1,126 (96.2% of the 1,173) indicated they are in paid employment; 8 (0.7%) in unpaid employment; 37 (3.1%) women did not provide information.

Of the 1,171 women who are employed, only 2 did not provide information about their category of employment. The remaining 1,169 women indicated their category as

Full-time	68.97%
Part-time	31.03%

1,171 employed respondents provided a response about their occupation as follows:



*NB some women indicated multiple categories e.g. Professional and Self-Employed

Women who selected "Other" occupations included: education/school services officer/teacher (25), doctor/nurse/medical/health sector (11), Government/public servant (13), academic/lecturer/researcher (6), and other miscellaneous occupations including farming, tour guides, fishery manager, children's parties, editor.