

Introduction

economic Security for Women (eS4W) is one of six National Women's Alliances funded by the Australian Government through the Office for Women in the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

The women's organisations that make up eS4W are united in the belief that economic wellbeing and financial security are essential ingredients to achieving equity for all women. The ability to achieve positive economic outcomes impacts on all aspects of women's lives including their family, education, health, employment, retirement, housing and personal safety and can enable women to act on informed choices.

economic Security4Women is seeking a commitment from all political parties and independent representatives in both the House of Representatives and the Senate that the next Australian Government will adopt the principle that all reports, policy recommendations, legislation and program details include an analysis of their impact on women in Australia including women who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, women with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and women living in regional, rural and remote locations.

We are seeking a commitment to the gender analysis of policy directions by Ministers and the adoption of gender responsive budgets by government departments with auditing performed by the Departments of Treasury and of Finance in consultation with Office for Women and the National Women's Alliances.

Geographic Labour Mobility: Commissioned study

With this in mind we also request that the Productivity Commission make every effort to assess the impact on women and of women of geographical labour mobility within Australia and its role in a well-functioning labour market.

Our submission - made in haste - is in relation to impediments and enablers to meet the changing needs of Australia's workforce, in particular, as women increase their rates of workforce participation.

Firstly, to enable geographic mobility of a worker with caring responsibilities, male or female, guaranteed access to support services needs to be able to move with them. Without these services, workers with caring responsibilities will be excluded from growth industries and areas and the labour market will function less effectively. The geographic mobility of a worker with a partner who assumes the primary care role will also be enhanced if attention is paid to the delivery of support services that encourage families to remain intact and move with the worker, supporting the development of communities and local economies that will benefit from the economic development that is attracting the labour in the first instance.

Secondly, to enable geographic mobility across state and territory borders a national system of professional registrations and trade-based licensing needs to be developed and implemented. This is related to the need for national trades based curricula within the national TAFE system.

Thirdly, the supply of affordable and appropriate housing supply needs to be guaranteed to enable workers to move for job and career prospects. Differentiated stamp duty on homes across states/territories can be another influencing factor.

Finally, the lack of transferability of leave entitlements across occupations and industries will continue to act as a disincentive.

All these factors point to the need for a national approach to geographic labour mobility that transcends labour markets and reinforces the need for the impacts of work and industry to be considered within a larger social context.