

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004171

Senator Moore asked on 30 May 2017 on proof Hansard page 75

Question

Gender participation gap - base rates and assumptions

Senator MOORE: Ms Parker, you said: 'In 2014 Australia announced it would reduce the gap between women's and men's labour force but participation rates by 25 per cent by 2025. That means lifting women's participation by at least three percentage points. Two-thirds of that goal had been met in January 2017.' Could the agency please provide the base rates and assumptions used to make this calculation? What were the women's and men's labour force participation rates and the size of the gender gap in participation at the time the commitment was made? And what were the women's and men's labour force participation rates and the size of the gender gap in participation in January 2017?

Ms Parker: In terms of the gender pay gap at the time—I am not sure I have that with me—
Senator MOORE: That can go on notice.

Answer

In 2014 Australia led the G20 to set a goal to reduce the labour force participation gap between men and women by 25 per cent by 2025. The goal was based on 2012 working aged (15–64) participation rates to allow comparison across G20 countries.

In 2012, the participation rate for working aged men in Australia was 82.5 per cent and for working aged women, it was 70.4 per cent. The participation gap was 12.1 percentage points.¹ For Australia to meet the G20 goal, this participation gap needs to be reduced by 3 percentage points (that is, down to 9.1 percentage points) by 2025. The most recent ABS Labour Force data (May 2017) shows a gender participation gap of 10.4 per cent.²

In January 2017, the participation rate for working aged men was 82.0 per cent and for working aged women, it was 71.8 per cent. The gender participation gap in January 2017 was 10.1 percentage points. The gap closed by 2 percentage points compared with 2012, or in other words, two-thirds of the requirement to meet the goal was met.³

¹ Source: ABS (2017), Labour Force, Australia, May 2017, cat. No. 6202.0, persons 15-64 years, seasonally adjusted yearly average data

² Source: ABS (2017), Labour Force, Australia, May 2017, cat. No. 6202.0, persons 15-64 years, seasonally adjusted data

³ Source: ABS (2017), Labour Force, Australia, May 2017, cat. No. 6202.0, persons 15-64 years, seasonally adjusted data