



# Gender Budget Watch Report 2024-25

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## Introduction

Ending gender inequality and preventing gendered violence requires more than words—it demands investment. Governments across Australia regularly announce commitments to support women’s safety, advance gender equality, and address the drivers of violence. Yet without clear visibility of how budgets allocate funding toward these goals, it is difficult to know whether these commitments are being realised in practice.

We’re pleased to present our third, Gender Budget Watch Report, examining the fiscal year 24-25.

The Report tracks spending across Commonwealth, state and territory budgets to examine how governments are investing in women, gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence (WGEVP). By analysing budget announcements and funding commitments, the report shines a light on where resources are being directed, where progress is being made, and where critical gaps remain.

In our third annual report, we’ve seen a drop in **Commonwealth expenditure on WGEVP from 9% in 23-24 to 6.6% of total appropriations in 24-25**. Our hope that WGEVP expenditure would finally achieve double figures were dashed, as global economic inflationary pressures continue to act as a restraint on government expenditure. **At a state & territory level, however, investment in WGEVP has remained largely stable**, with the exception of the ACT and VIC, which have experienced significant expenditure reduction.

Gender Lens Australia’s Gender Budget Watch Report is self-financed for social impact through re-investment of income raised via our fee for service consulting. We thank the community of public, private and community sector organisations who believe in our work and make our research possible.

Our hope is that through accountability and monitoring our research provides advocates for WGEVP with the evidence they need to argue for an increase in funding for their work.

Tanja Kovac & Dr Maree Overall  
Co-Founders and CEOs  
Gender Lens Australia



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## Why we count

Government budgets are developed within a global economic system designed by men, which dis-counts women's work and services, resulting in investment bias and budgetary inequality.

The Gender Budget Watch Report counts investment in WGEVP to make government expenditure more fair and equitable.

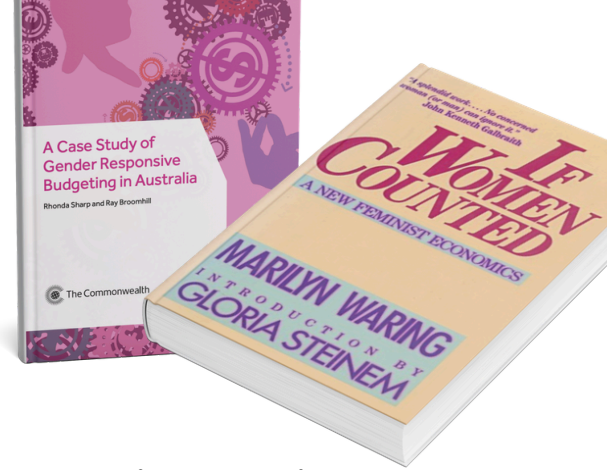
### **Why do government budgets discriminate against women?**

Our current international monetary institutions were established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods conference, an international meeting to develop a new, collaborative economic order in the wake of WW2. 734 delegates attended the conference but only 2 of them were women. 99% of the decision makers were men.

The conference gave birth to new economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank - as well as a new metric - Gross Domestic Product or GDP - by which government's could measure productivity.

While GDP produced a stable, shared fiscal framework, enabling nation-states to estimate tax revenue and commit public spending, it excluded matters relevant to the lives of women from having economic value. Reproductive labour, caring work, the natural resources of the environment, as well as the benefits of circular and sharing transactions, were deemed too difficult to quantify and so excluded from the terms of trade.

The consequences were devastating, impacting women's pay, wellbeing, the gender segregation of industries, under-resourcing of services and the exploitation of the environment.



### **Gender Responsive Budgeting**

In the 1980's, pioneering, gender-based economic theorists, such as Dame Professor Marilyn Waring and Betsy Warrior, began naming (and then correcting) gender biases in GDP and National Accounts. They demanded budgets be "Gender Responsive", applying a gender lens to expenditure on industries, programs, services and infrastructure, as well as macro-economic decisions, so that economies benefitted everyone, including women and children.

### **Gender Responsive Budgeting Today**

Today, 60% of OECD nations have some form of gender responsive budgeting (GRB). In Australia, support for and the quality of GRB has varied, depending on political commitment to economic equality by the government of the day. At present, GRB receives strong support from Treasuries, enabling longitudinal comparison of investments.

The Gender Budget Watch Report is the first report of its kind, tracking the quantum of expenditure on women, gender equality and gendered violence prevention at a national, state and territory level.

We count the quantum of investment in WGEVP because our economies and communities depend on women, gender equality and violence prevention receiving a fair share.

We count to make equality easy.

## What we count

### Methodology

The Gender Budget Watch monitors the quantum of government spending commitments related to women, gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence (WGEVP) across Commonwealth, state and territory budgets.

To compile the datasets for this report, the research team reviewed publicly released budget materials for each jurisdiction. This included Women's Budget Statements, budget overview papers, detailed budget measures documents, portfolio statements and relevant government announcements.

Only budget measures included in formal Women or Gender Budget Statements were included in WGEVP quantum analysis. While our researchers acknowledge that such statements have their drawbacks including a lack of consistency across jurisdictions about what initiatives to include, as well as a tendency towards positive reinforcement of government decisions, rather than genuine critique and analysis, at present these statements provide the most consistent, comparable data.

Our analysis has been aligned to key themes in the Commonwealth's *Working for Women: a National Gender Equality Strategy*:

- *Gender-based violence (includes prevention, early intervention & response)*
- *Unpaid and Paid Care (includes support all women performing unpaid care work, as well as women working in caring professions)*
- *Economic Equality & Security*
- *Health*
- *Leadership & Representation*

Because government budget reporting practices vary significantly, some investments may be difficult to identify or may be embedded within broader program funding. As a result, the figures presented in this report should be understood as an indicative overview of identifiable spending rather than a comprehensive estimate of all gender-related government expenditure.

Investments have been tallied and expressed as a percentage (%) of total appropriations.

**Let us girl math, for you.**

**Total WGEVP  
expenditure  
per annum**



**Total appropriations  
per annum**



**% of total  
expenditure  
on WGEVP**





## Tracking Commonwealth \$: 2024-25

### TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS:

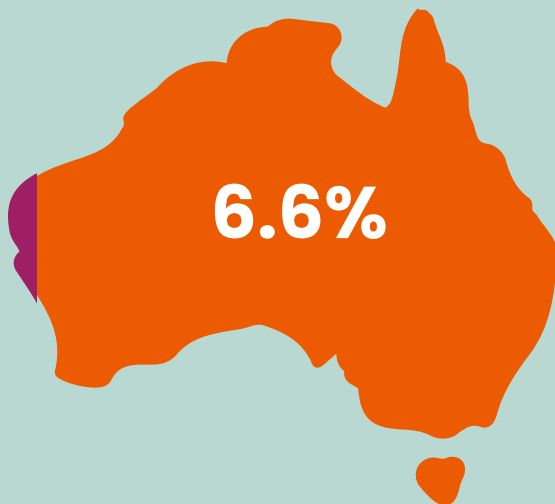
\$715 BILLION

### WGEVP APPROPRIATIONS:

\$47.4 BILLION

### WGEVP

% of total investment ↓



The Federal Government spent a total of \$47.4 Billion on women, gender equality and violence prevention initiatives in the fiscal year 2024-25. This represented 6.6% of total appropriations, a decrease from last year's budget 23/24 (9%). Despite an increase in total government expenditure, the share for WGEVP was down \$20B, with reduced investments in paid and unpaid care contributing to the downward trend.

The biggest single investment in WGEVP was in **housing**, with the Housing Australia Future Fund receiving \$10B and social housing programs \$9.3B.

**Women's economic security** was also a big winner, with \$1.1B for **superannuation** contributions for women receiving government funded paid parental leave.

Another key beneficiary was training sector, with the Commonwealth investing \$12.6B into State & Territory TAFE systems as part of the **National Skills Agreement**. This boost to Vocational Education supports Australia's national economic priorities including gender equality, Net Zero transformation, sovereign energy capability, food security, digital and technology capability and housing supply.

Finally, while there was an increase in funding for women's **leadership and representation**, the majority of this amount went to the Play Our Way initiative, providing **community grants for women's sporting initiatives**.



# Tracking Commonwealth \$ Working for Women – Strategic Themes 2024–25 Budget Year



W4W Priority Area

TOTAL Investment (\$B)

24/25 Key Initiatives (\$B)



**Gender-Based  
Violence**

**\$22.5B**

Housing Australia Future Fund	\$10B
Social Housing	\$9.3B
Leaving Violence Payments	\$0.925B



**Paid & Unpaid  
Care**

**\$1.8B**

Primary Care Health Workforce Scholarships	\$1.6B
Aged Care Award Wage Increases	\$0.08B
Supporting Expentant & Parenting Teens	\$0.0047B



**Economic Equality  
& Security**

**\$18.2B**

National Skills Development	\$12.6B
Superannuation on PPL	\$1.1B
Women in STEM	\$0.038B



**Health**

**\$4.7B**

Cheaper Medicines on PBS	\$3.5B
Mental Health	\$0.88B
Medicare - Gynaecology Listing	\$0.053B

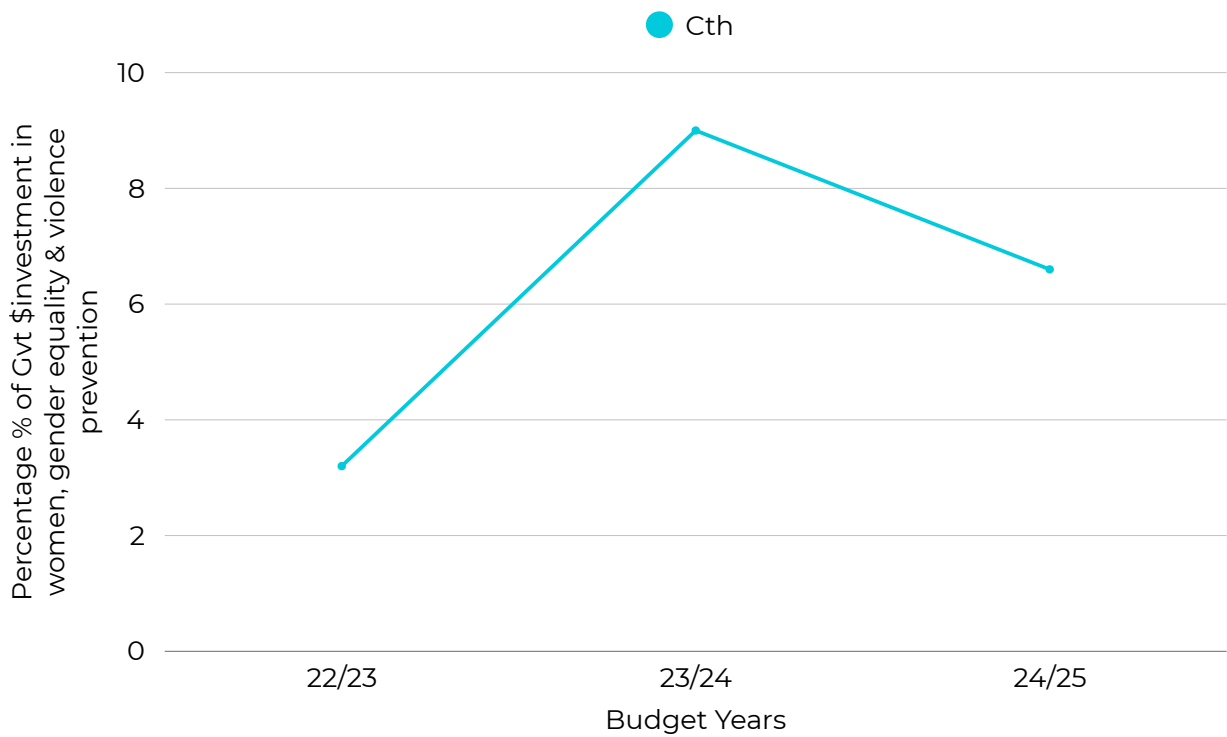


**Leadership &  
Representation**

**\$0.2B**

Play Our Way Women in Sport Grants	\$0.2B
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# Commonwealth Budget Investment in Women, Gender Equality & Violence Prevention over time



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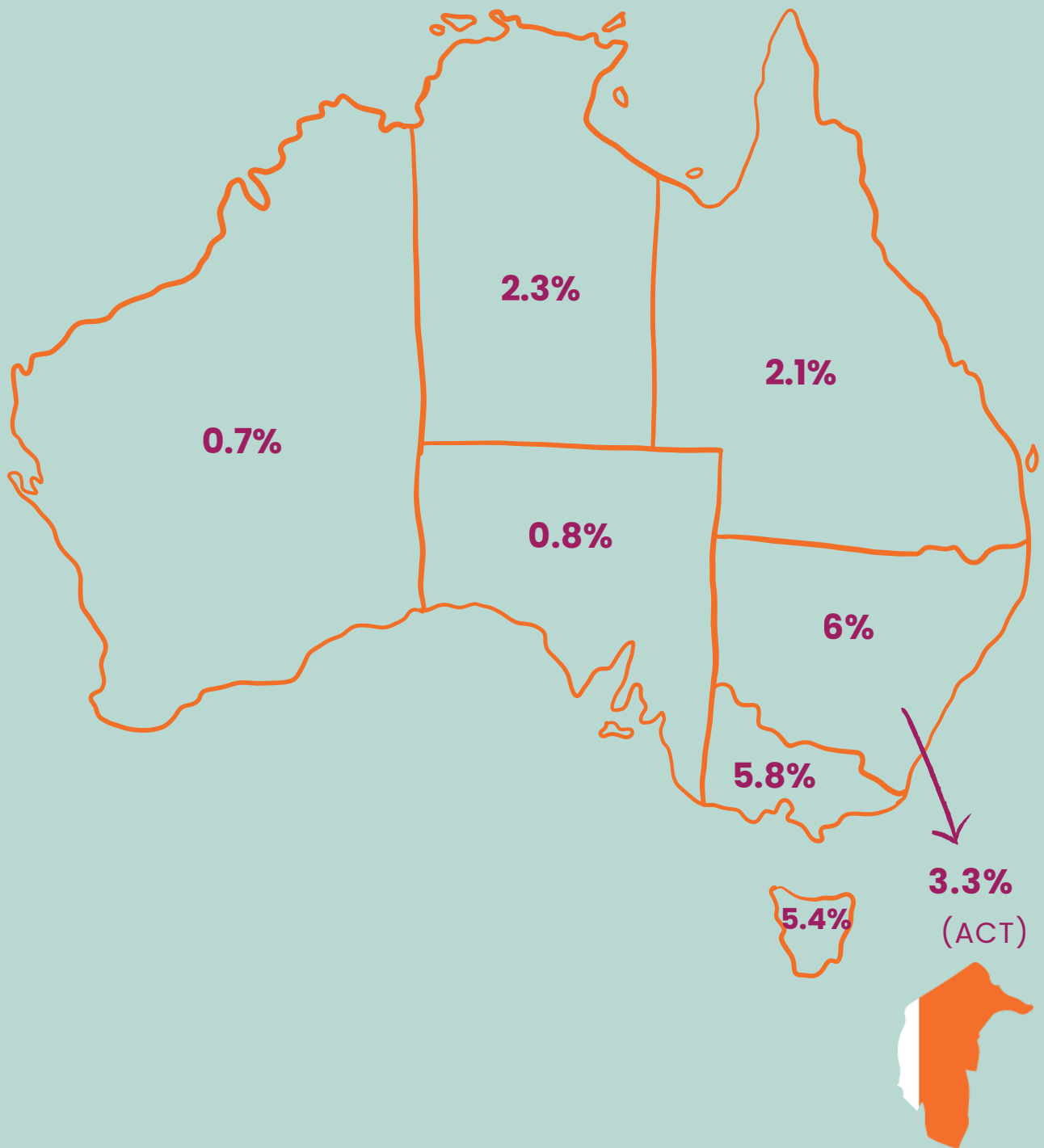
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# Tracking State & Territory \$ 2024-2025



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# **% Share of State/Territory Budgets allocated to Women & Gender Equality & Violence Prevention 2024-2025 Budget Year**



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# Budget Investment in women & gender equality and violence prevention over time

## ACT

The ACT has seen the biggest drop in investment in WGEVP from 9.6% of appropriations in 23/24 down to 3.3% in 24/25, as pressures on the ACT budget caused by the inflationary cost of living bites into government service provision. For detailed outline of investments see [ACT Women's Budget Statement](#)

## NT

The NT issued their first Women in the Territory [Fact sheet produced in 24/25](#) with a 25% uplift in spending on WGEVP. The biggest increase being in programs to address gendered violence at \$100m almost doubling the previous year.

## SA

Last report, the SA Budget did not calculate spending on WGEVP as a separate report. It is pleasing to see more detail in their 24/25, influenced by the [Office of Women's Investing in Equality Analysis](#). This highlighted the large drop in funding for WGEVP to less than 1% of total appropriations.

## VIC

WGEVP share of annual appropriations in Victoria decreased with actual \$ spend less than half the previous year. Although the proportion of prevention investment to response jumped to 19% with renewal of Respectful Relationships. For more detail on WGEVP investments see Victorian Gender Equality Budget Statement [24/25](#)

## NSW

NSW investments are steady, with a small increase from 5.3% of appropriations in 23/24 to 6% in 24/25. For detailed investments see [NSW Gender Equality Budget Statement](#)

## QLD

Queensland produces a high quality women's budget statement. It's investment in WGEVP is tracking downwards. *For detailed investment see [Qld Women's Budget Statement](#)*

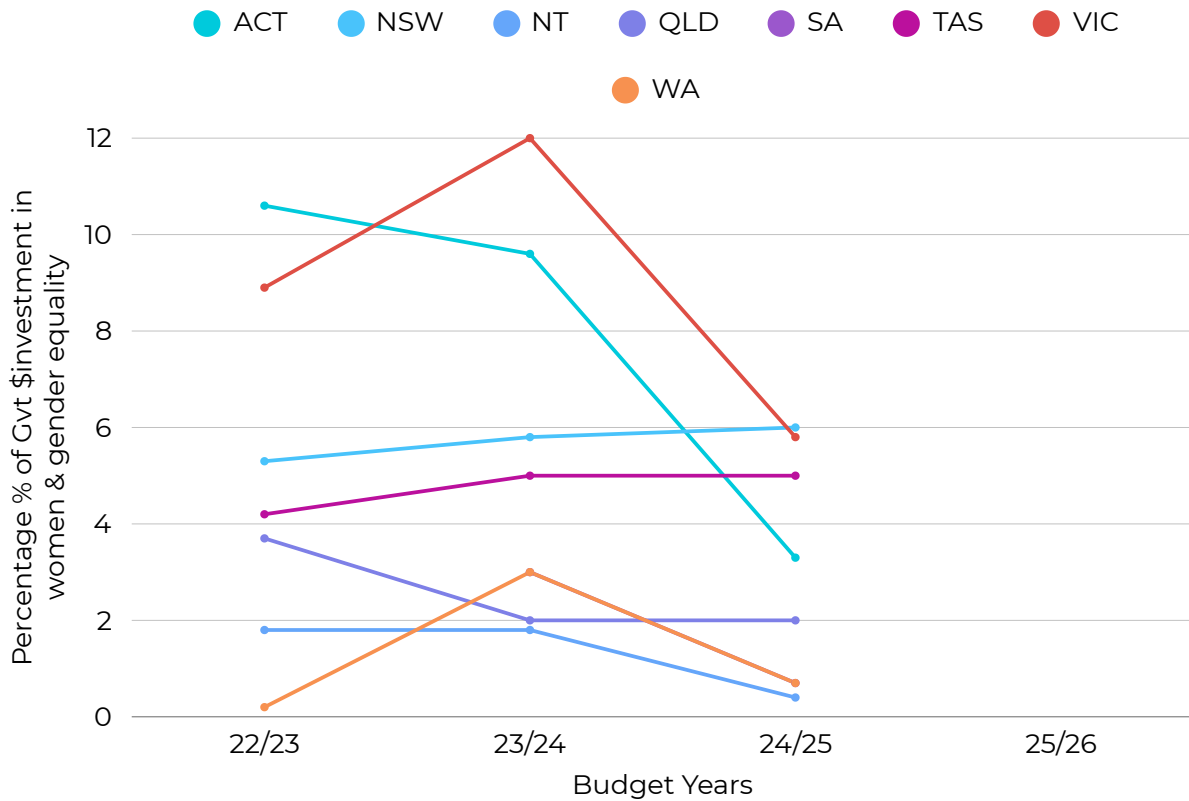
## TAS

Tasmania recorded a rise in spending mainly due to its response to an inquiry for change for children but no further spending on women's safety. Further details are in the [Gender Budget Statement 24/25](#).

## WA

WA's investment in WGEVP reduced greatly with a much smaller spend on health infrastructure and minimal investment for women specific programs. There continues to be an absence of women and gender-based budgetary analysis and reporting. [Full WA Budget is here.](#)

## % of Budget Investment in women & gender equality and violence prevention over time 22–25



Both ACT and VIC dramatically reduced % investment in WGEVP in 24/25. For the first time, NSW overtook VIC as the highest State/Territory investor. WA, which already under-invests, dropped further to a paltry 0.7% of total expenditure. TAS & Qld % share remains steady.

There is evidence that as inflationary pressures tighten government spending, WGEVP expenditure is vulnerable to cuts. In circumstances where investment is already low compared to other areas of spending, reductions can have dramatic consequences.

## Spotlight on Victoria – Tracking women’s policy

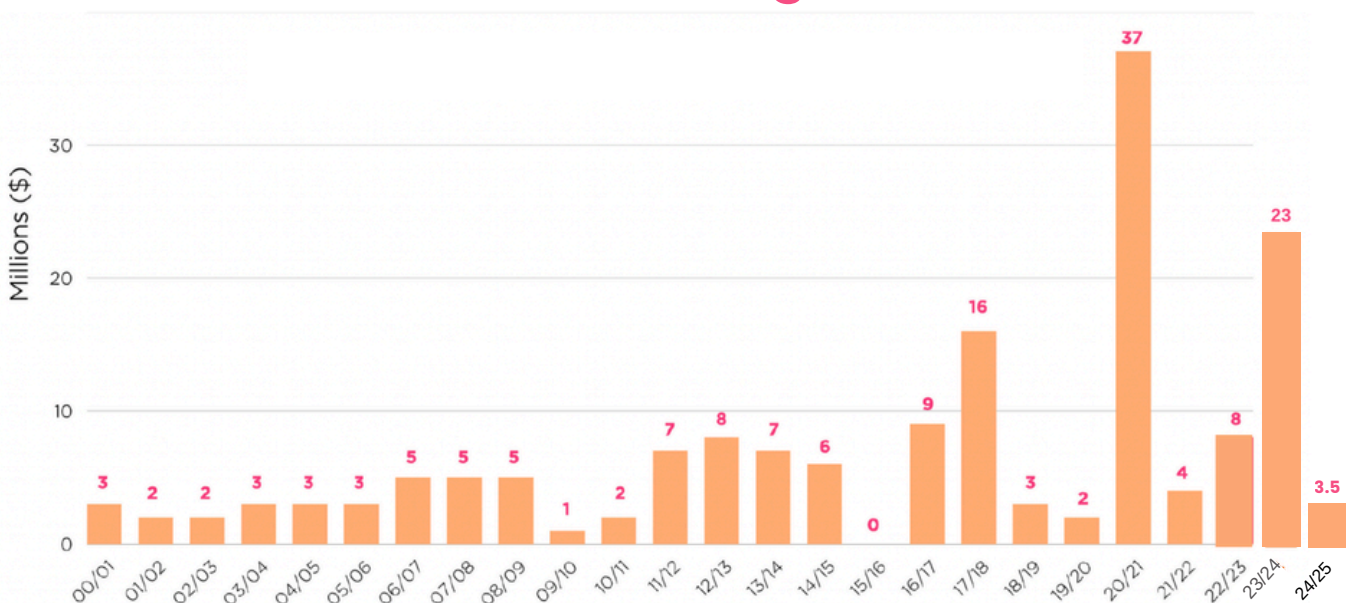
Every year, we place a special spotlight on investment in women’s policy in Victoria, as transparently outlined in *Victorian Budget Paper 3: Service Delivery*, to highlight detailed budgetary and policy decision-making at a sub-national level.

Our comparative data analysis in the Victorian women’s portfolio commenced during time as Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor for Australia’s First Family Violence Prevention & Women’s Minister during 2015–2017, to support advocacy – in and outside government – to boost investment in women and gender equality, particularly post the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the development of Victoria’s first Gender Equality Strategy, *Safe & Strong*.

We continue our monitoring and reporting for the same reasons.

Women’s Policy line item is the only expenditure directly in the Victorian Women’s Ministerial portfolio control. The average spend on women’s policy over 25 years is \$6.7M per year. With rare exceptions, it does not achieve double figures.

## Women’s Policy Portfolio Investments in the Victorian Budget 2000 – 2025



Significant increases to women’s portfolio in Victoria are aligned to key policy initiatives and legislative reform. \$16M in 17/18 reflects investment in the first Victorian Gender Equality Strategy, \$37M in 20/21 relates to the establishment of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, while 23/24 reflects election commitments to provide free pads and tampons in public places.

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## Conclusions

Investment in women, gender equality and violence prevention initiatives have reduced in the 24/25 budget cycle, as inflationary pressures and global economic insecurity continues to see Governments constrain spending to meet debt repayment obligations, while prioritising cost of living relief to households.

While women are beneficiaries of cost of living tax breaks and direct payments, they are also experiencing reductions in key gender-based service provision and program investment, which further entrench inequalities. WGEVP programs and services – which already receive less than they need – suffer more when government budgets become tight.

Until this cycle, Victoria has managed to cushion the WGEVP sector from the impact of its budget deficit. It will be interesting to see over the next 12 months whether Victoria slumps further as an economic leader in equality investment or bounces back.

Some jurisdictions, particularly WA and the NT are clearly under investing in WGEVP. They need to prioritise more effective gender responsive budgeting processes and analysis to improve outputs and outcomes.

Budget monitoring is a powerful accountability tool. Public budgets reflect political priorities. What governments choose to fund—and what they do not—shapes the services available to communities and the progress that can be made toward equality and safety.

By systematically tracking these investments, we hope our Gender Budget Watch Report supports the WGEVP sector, informing public debate, strengthening advocacy, and encouraging more sustainable funding that matches the scale and urgency of gender inequality and violence in Australia.


To further support budget awareness and advocacy across the WGEVP sector in 2025, we are again hosting our FREE **Gender\$ Webinar Series** throughout August.


We look forward to seeing you at forthcoming sessions.


# Gender\$ Webinar Series


## Coming in August 25

### Understanding Government Budget Cycles & How to read a Budget



 **Date**  
Wednesday 13 August

 **Time**  
1-2pm



**FREE**

Tanja Kovac  
Dr Maree Overall  
Co-Founders & CEOs

[Link in bio](#)

### Introduction to Gender Responsive Budgeting



What is it and how to use it in your advocacy

 **Date**  
Wednesday 20 August

 **Time**  
1-2pm



**FREE**

**Presenters**  
Tanja Kovac  
Dr Maree Overall  
Co-Founders & CEOs

**Register:**  
[Link in bio](#)

### Crafting a Gender-based Budget Bid and Business Case



 **Date**  
Wednesday 27 August

 **Time**  
1-2pm



**FREE**

**Presenters**  
Tanja Kovac  
Dr Maree Overall  
Co-Founders & CEOs

**Register:**  
[Link in bio](#)

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