

# Women's 'New' Life Cycle of Employment and the Policy Gaps

Conference on Labour,  
Employment and Work  
Wellington 28-29 November

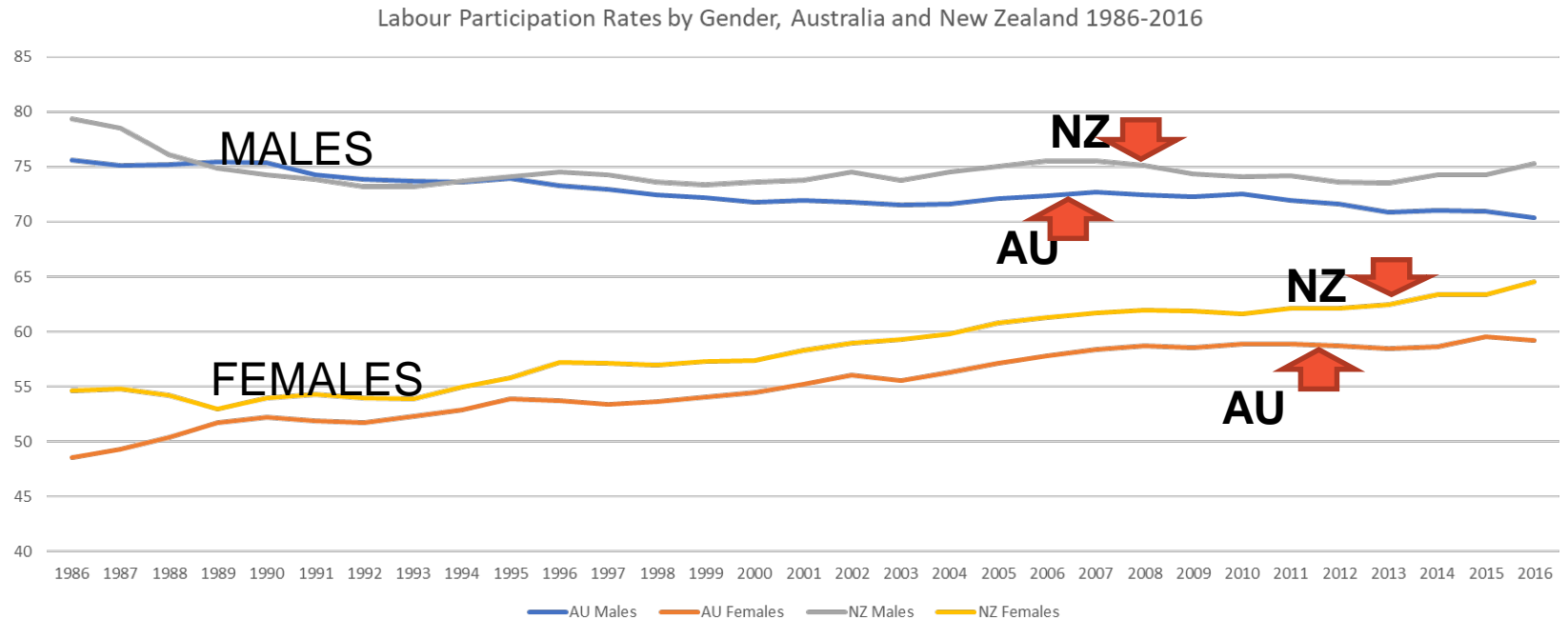
Professor Marian Baird AO



# I plan to cover:

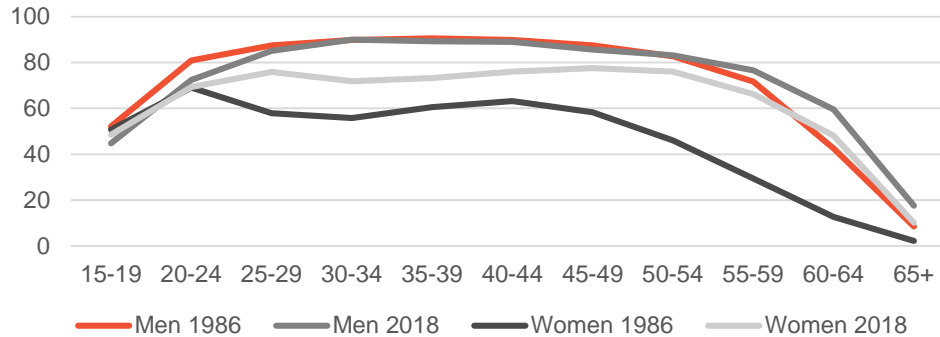
- Labour market trends
- Stages in the life cycle
- Policy responses
- Research areas
- Concluding thoughts

# Participation Rates Australia and New Zealand



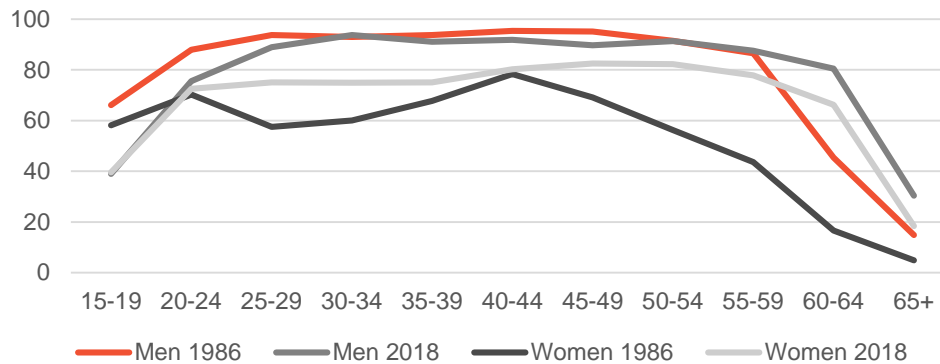
# Employment Rates Over Time

Employment rates, Women and Men, 1986-2018, %, AUSTRALIA



Source: ABS, 6291.0.55.001 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Table 01. Labour force status by Age, Social marital status, and Sex, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.001April%202018?OpenDocument>

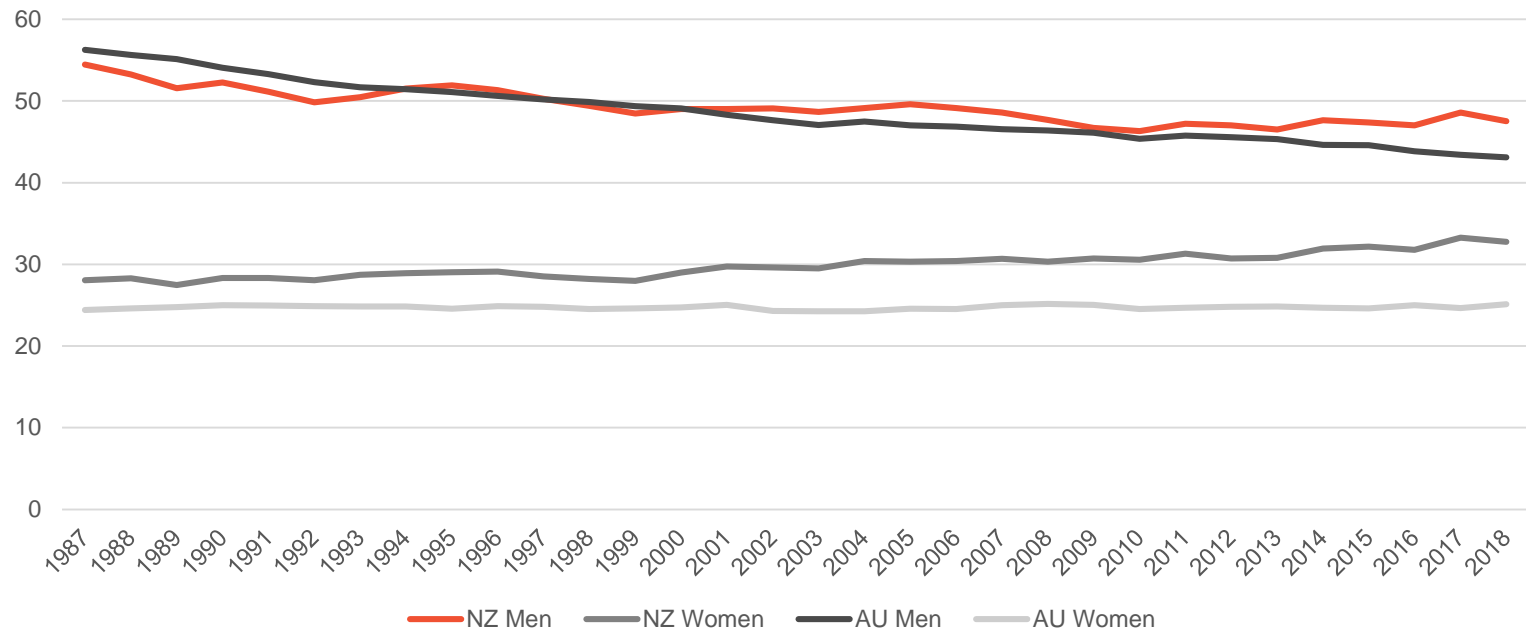
Employment rates, Women and Men, 1986-2018, %, NEW ZEALAND



Source: Stats NZ, Labour market statistics: June 2018 quarter, <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/labour-market-statistics-june-2018-quarter>

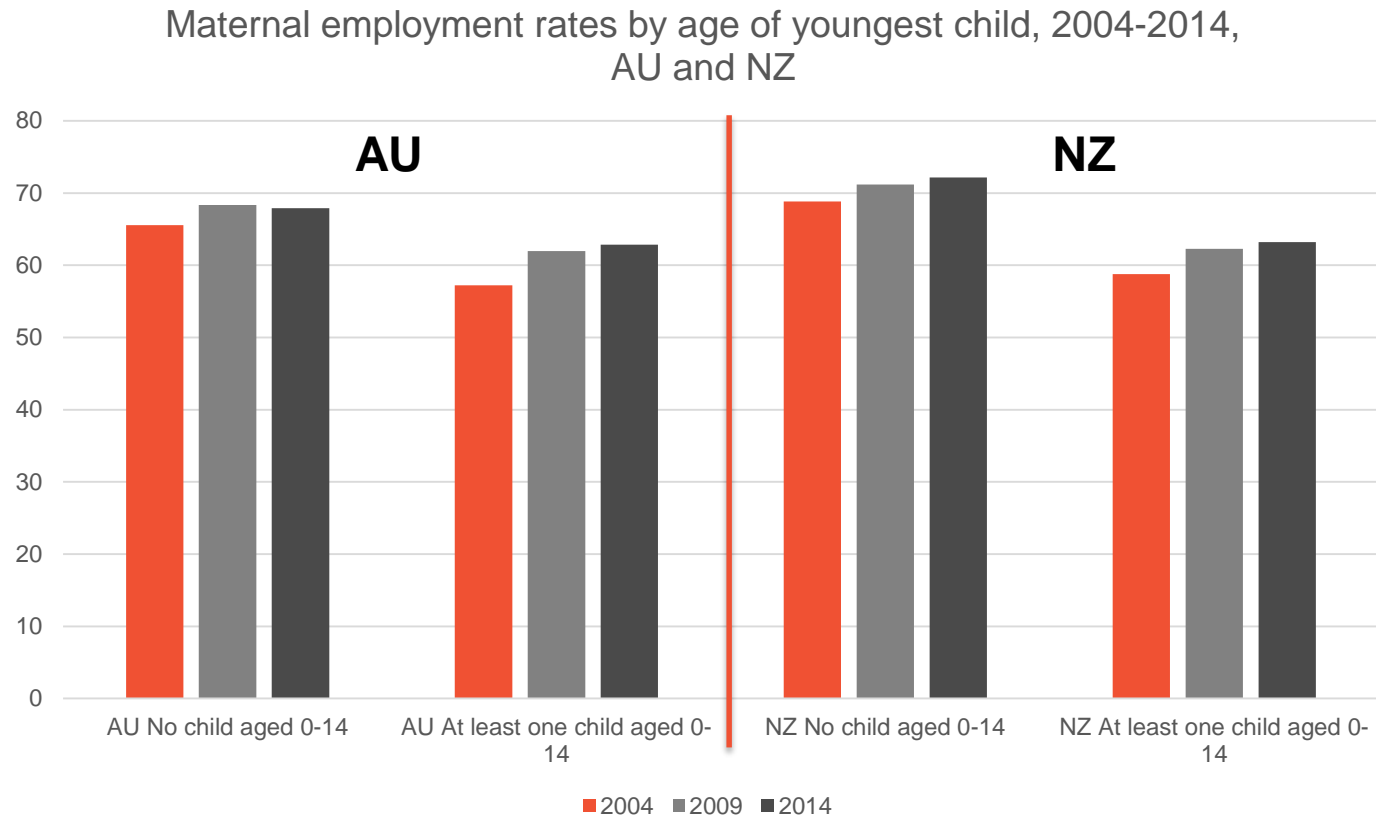
# Full time employment Australia and New Zealand

Women and Men - % of FT employment out of all employed persons - 1987-2018, Australia & New Zealand



Source: ABS, 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia, Table 1. Labour force status by Sex, Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original, November 2018, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6202.0Jan%202018?OpenDocument>  
 Source: Stats NZ, Labour market statistics: June 2018 quarter, <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/labour-market-statistics-june-2018-quarter>

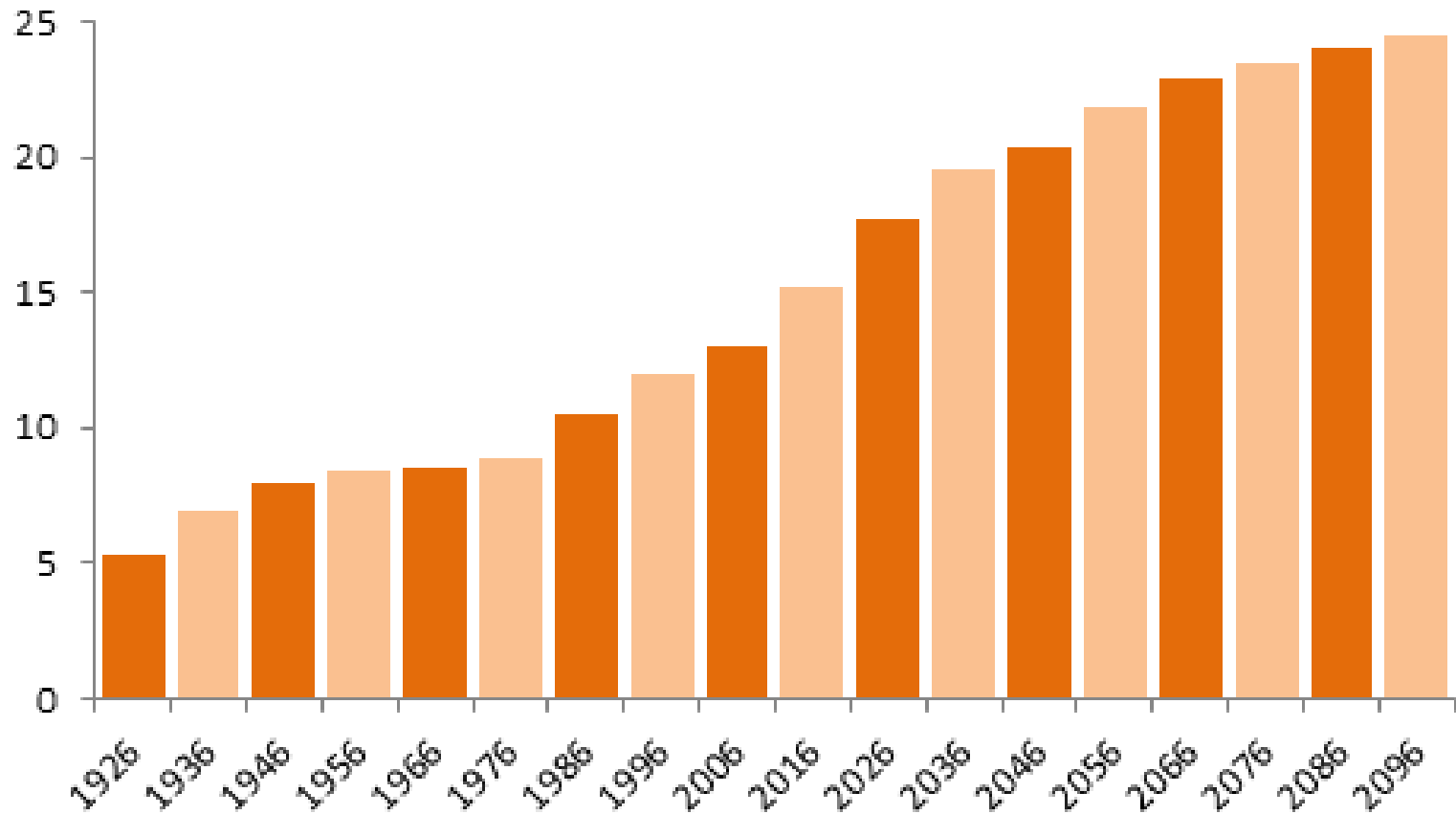
# Maternal Employment



Source: OECD Family Database, <http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>

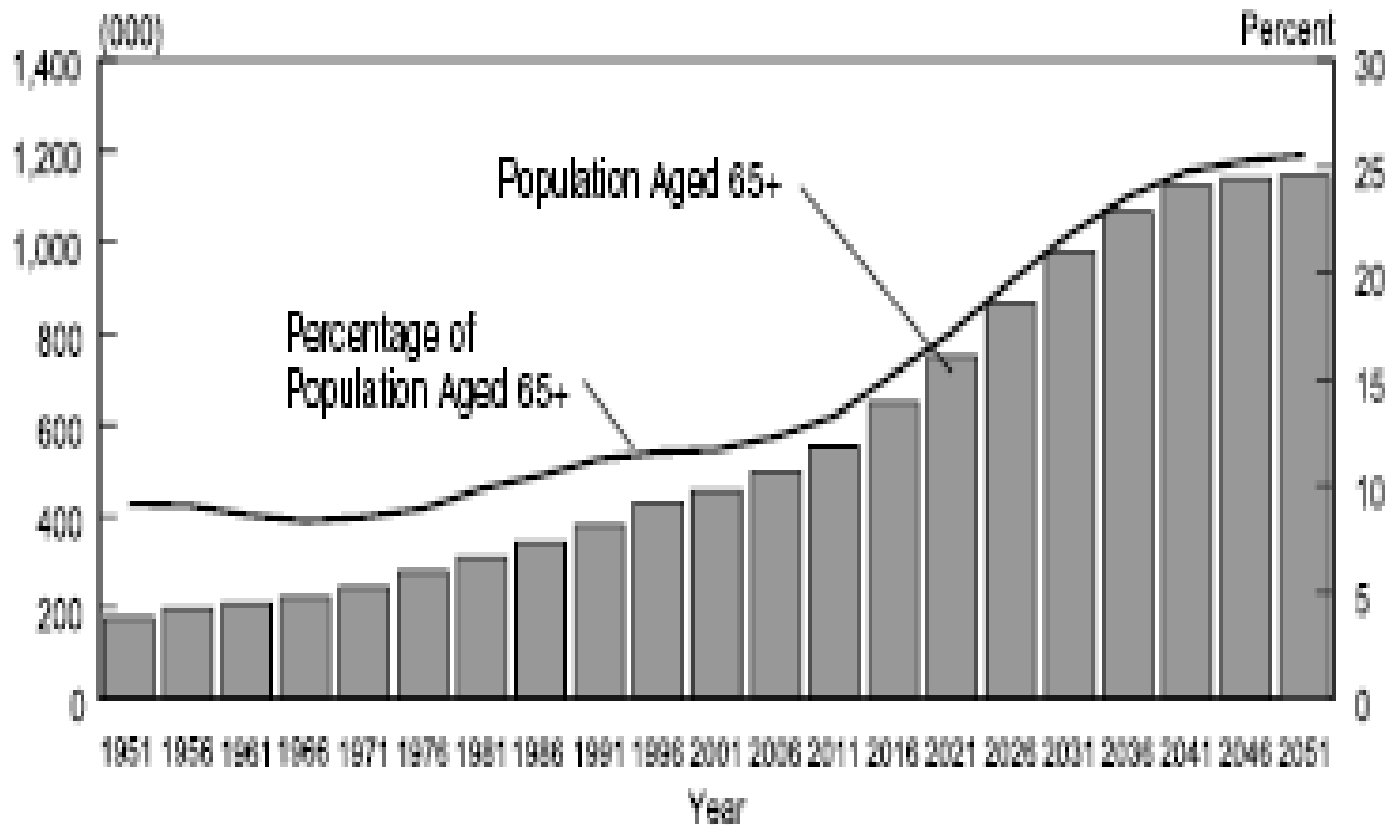
# Ageing population - Australia

Per cent



# Ageing population – New Zealand

## Elderly Population, 1951-2051

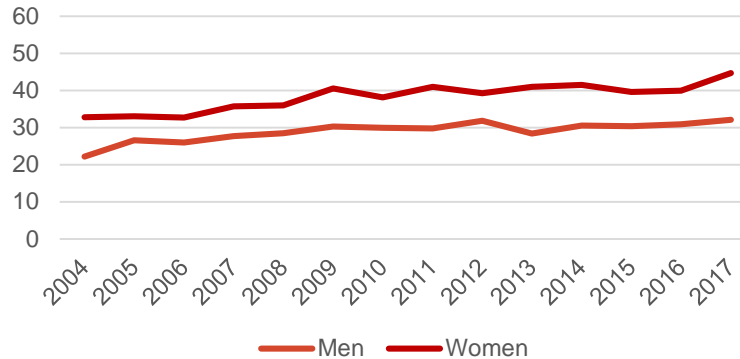


Source: Reprinted from [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/people\\_and\\_communities/older\\_people/pop-ageing-in-nz.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/older_people/pop-ageing-in-nz.aspx)



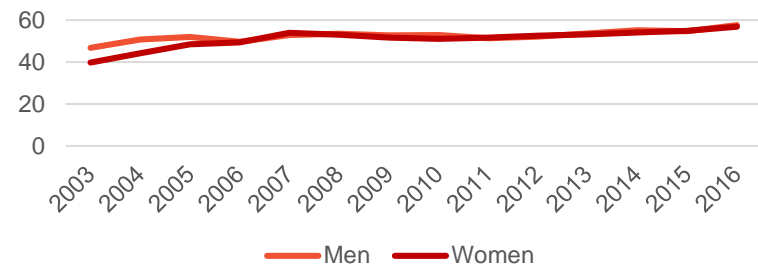
# Education – older and smarter (?)

Attainment of Bachelor Degree level and above by sex, 2004-2017, %, AUSTRALIA



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2017) Education and Work, Australia, May 2017. Cat. no. 6227.0. Table 27

Proportion of the population aged 25 to 34 years with a level 4 certificate(1) or higher qualification 1991-2016, % - NEW ZEALAND

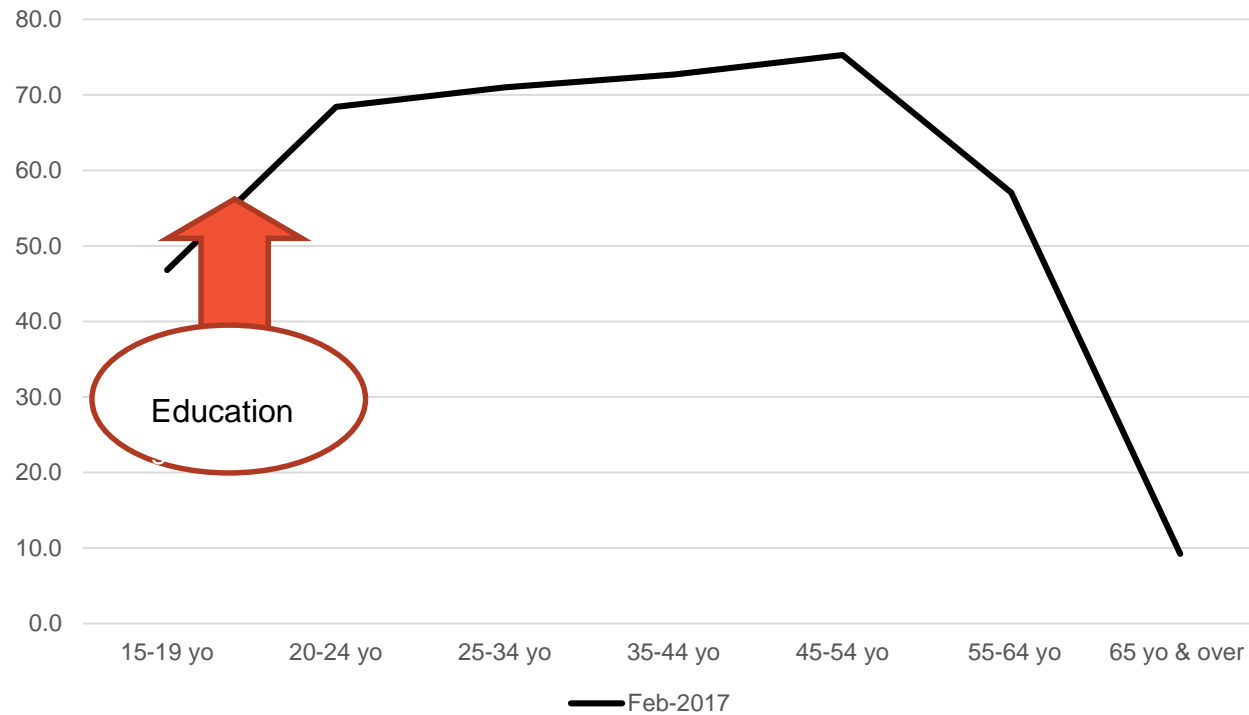


Source: Ministry of Education; data provided by Statistics New Zealand, [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education.aspx)

## Women and education

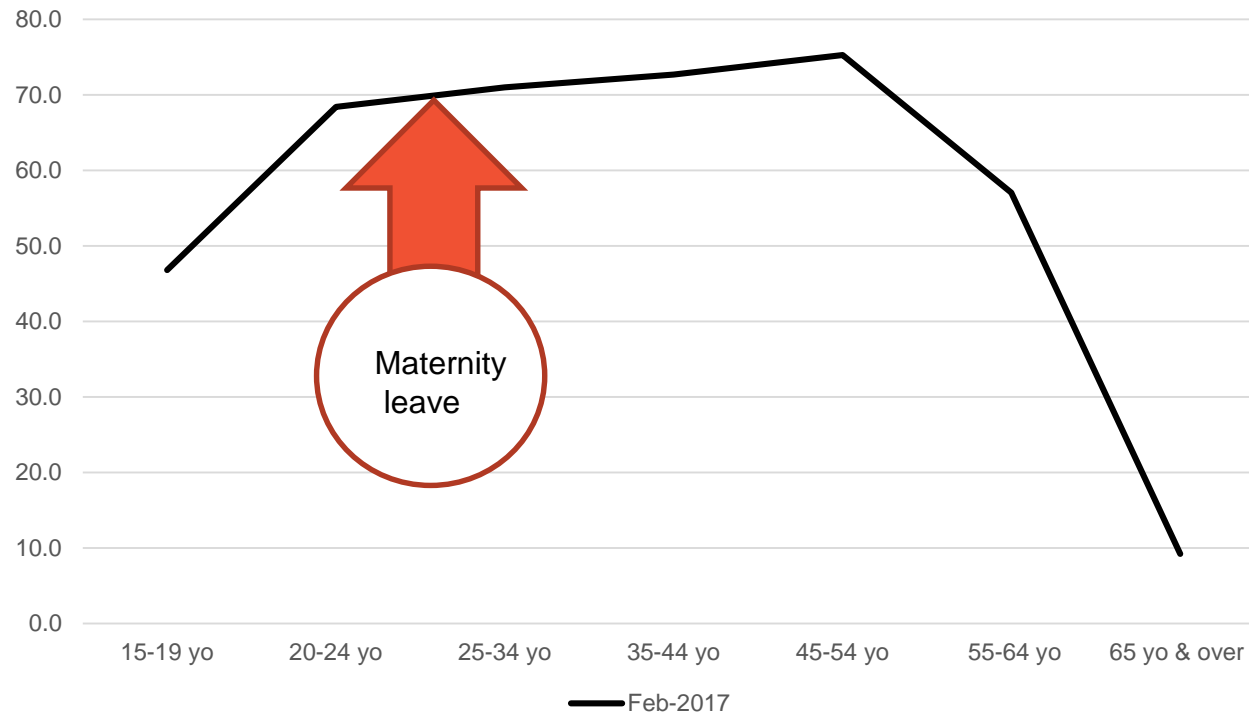
- Supply side:
  - Women are more educated
  - Have different expectations
  - Financial security concerns
- Demand side:
  - Changing patterns of work – flexibility
  - Shifting industry structures – growth in education, health and related sectors
  - Government *GDP* concerns – seek women

# The 'new' life cycle of women – stage 1



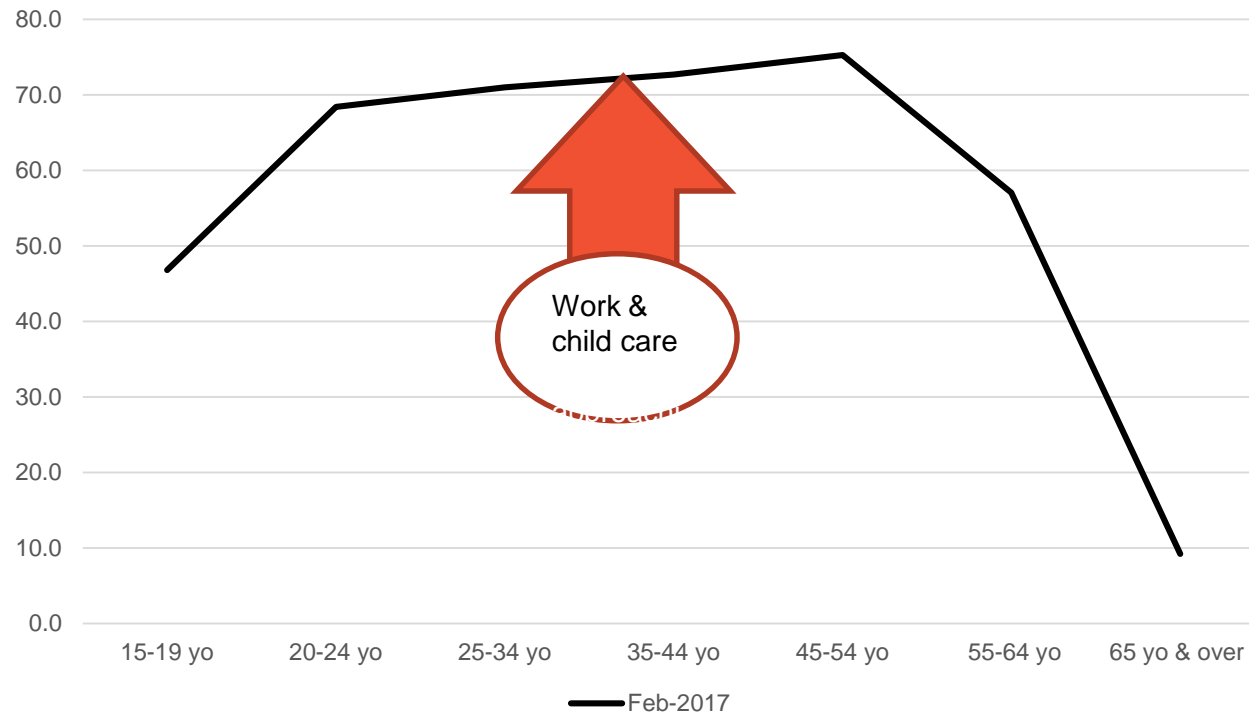
ABS 2017 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Deliver, Cat No. 6291.0.55.001, Feb 2017 data original

## The 'new life cycle' of women – stage 2



ABS 2017 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Deliver, Cat No. 6291.0.55.001, Feb 2017 data original

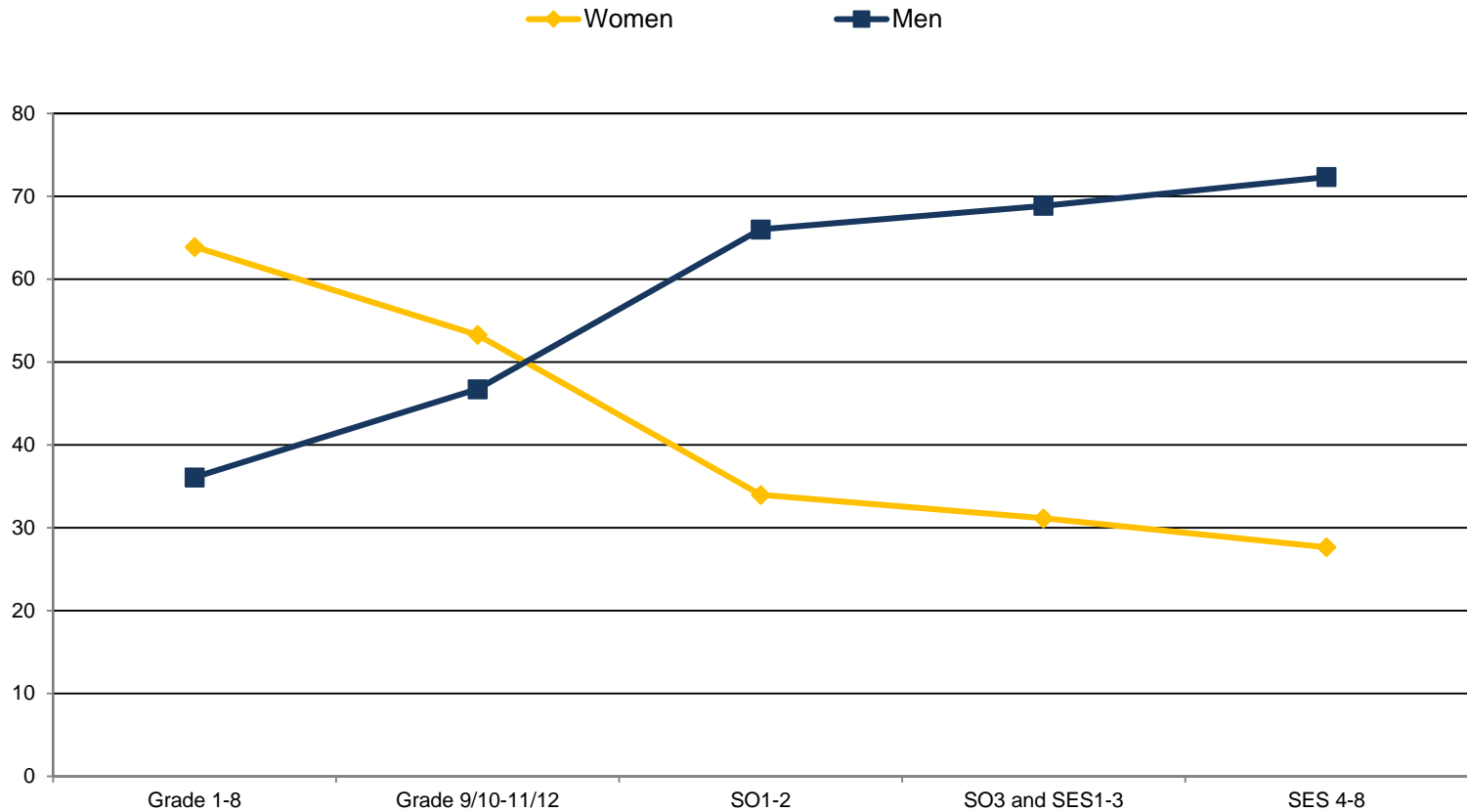
## The 'new life cycle' of women – stage 3



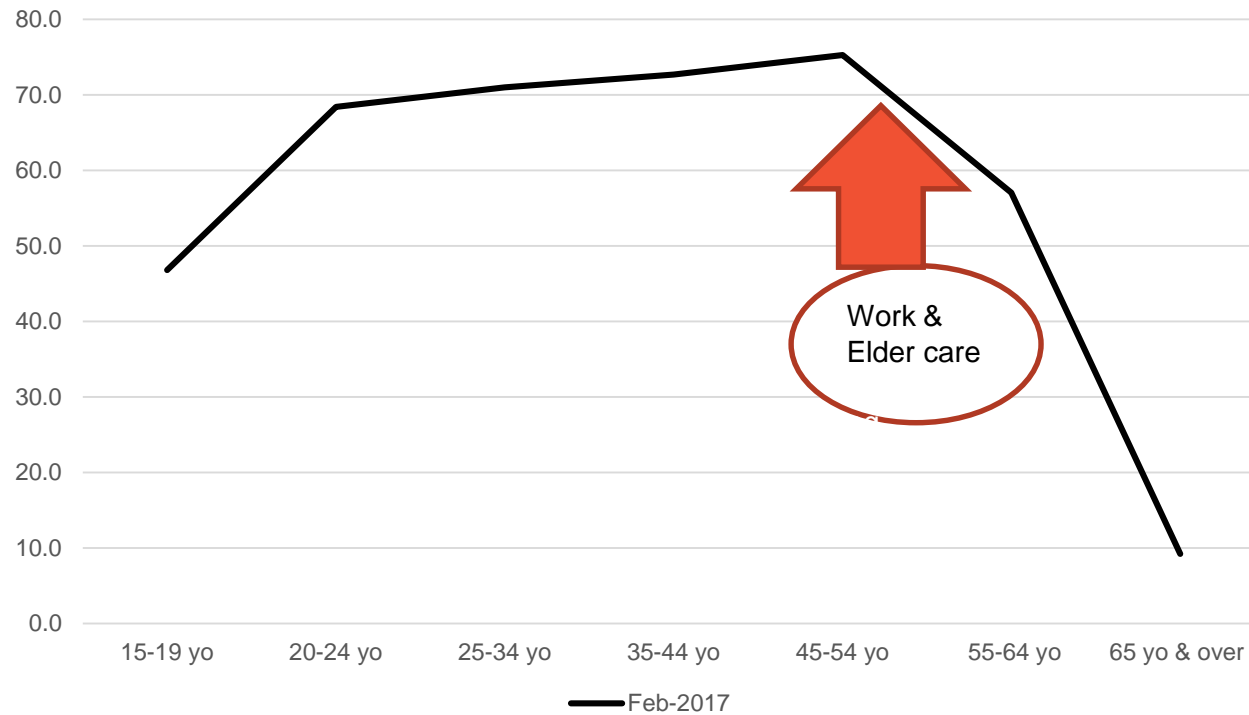
ABS 2017 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Deliver, Cat No. 6291.0.55.001, Feb 2017 data original

# Digression: Percentage of women and men in each grade for all NSW Public Sector

\* The scissor split

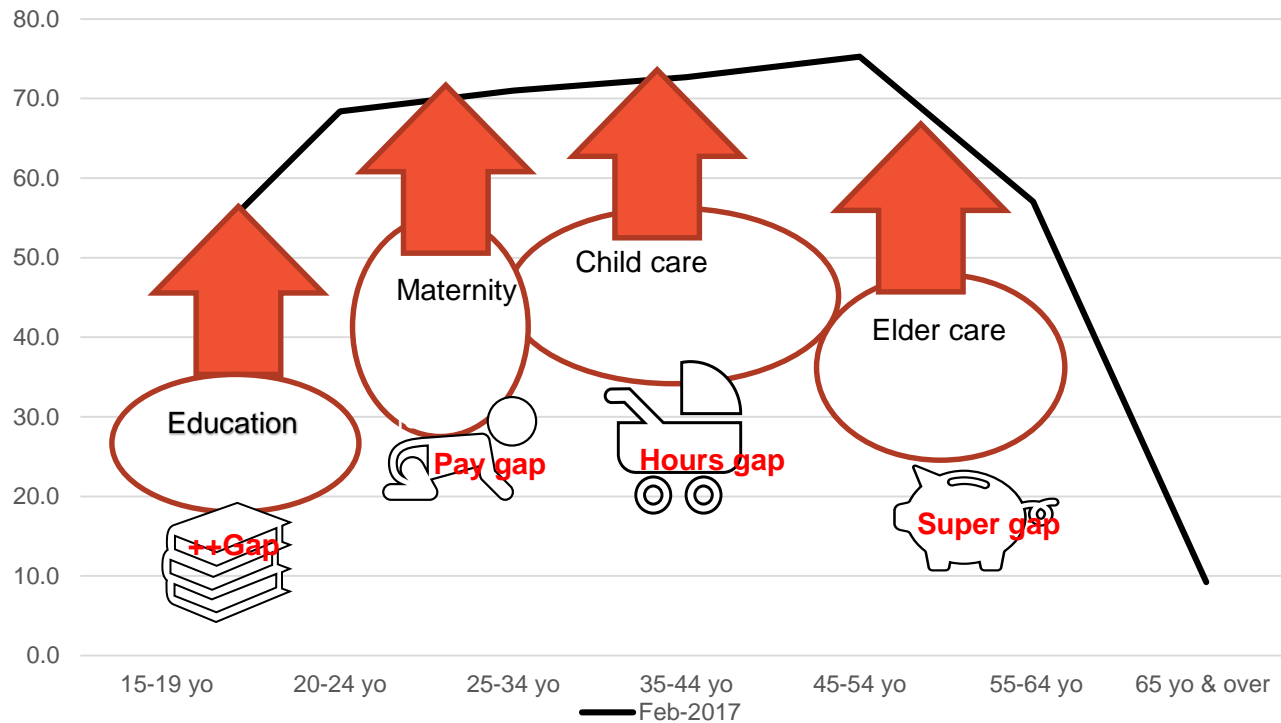


## The 'new life cycle' of women – stage 4



ABS 2017 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Deliver, Cat No. 6291.0.55.001, Feb 2017 data original

# Equality Markers in Female Life Cycle



ABS 2017 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Deliver, Cat No. 6291.0.55.001, Feb 2017 data original



# Inequality markers

## Gender Pay Gap

- Major focus of attention
- WGEA recent data on private sector
- 14.6% GPG average full-time earnings

## Hours of work

- 60% return part-time after maternity leave
- Short part-time hours (around 20) compared to Sweden, France

## Superannuation

- 20-24yos no gap in median super balances; grows to 22% for 30-34yos, to 34% for the 35-39 age group and to 50% at 40-44.
- The gap peaks at 60-64 at 67%.

# Summary - Major gaps in Australia

## + Education

- Participation
- Hours
- Pay
- Care
- Superannuation
- Leadership

## How has government responded?

- National Employment Standards *Fair Work Act*:
- Carers, persons with a disability, those aged 55 or over and parents with the responsibility to care for a child have the legal right to request flexible working arrangements from their employer (FWO, 2017).
  
- Federal Govt: ‘Women’s Economic Security Statement’ (20.11.18)
  - 1. Workforce participation
  - 2. Earning potential
  - 3. Economic independence
  
- ALP policy
  - Provide superannuation on Parental Leave Pay
  - Improve TAFE for women
  - Remove pay secrecy clauses in employment contracts

# The Workplace Gender Equality Agency

- Independent government agency:
- Private sector employers with 100+ employees must report - on a range of measures, including pay gap, occupations, leadership positions
- Pay equity audits to be reported; and are being undertaken
- Public awareness and education
- GPG showing slight reduction this year to 14.6%

# Policy Gaps

- **Care – Men!:** use or lose it, well paid leave & super payments (for both parents)
- **Care –** increase in childcare at much reduced cost [Women’s Budget Group modelling of more & better paid] & in access to aged care assistance [see final slide]
- **GPGs:**
  - effective equal pay laws & enforcement; changing objectives of the FWAct
  - requiring publishing a defined list of GPGs by named companies (over 100 employees) - to give impetus to employers to follow up on STEM initiatives and encouraging men into non traditional jobs;
  - GPG plans with route map to change and effective monitoring & enforcement
- **Flexible work:** strengthening rights to care friendly FWA including the right to certainty of hours (nos & time)
- **Retirement:** maintaining a decent Age Pension and:
  - increase in super to 12% ASAP;
  - a contribution for all carers below an agreed level of accumulation pathway;
  - increase in the Low Income Superannuation Tax Offset (formerly LISC);
  - elimination of the \$450 pcm earnings threshold for em’ers to pay super;
  - a range of fee free periods & discounts to assist carers especially those with low balances

# Work and Care Policies: Some Developments

- September 2018: Fair Work Commission agrees to new clause in all modern awards for employees who are parents or carers. **Employers will now have to justify their decision for refusing an employee's request for flexible working arrangements.**
- October 2018: UK government flags making it mandatory for employers to consider – and advertise – whether a job can be done flexibly.



# Organisation level responses

- Most innovative level for responses, although the test is in the implementation.
- **Flexibility for all**
  - ‘All Roles Flex’ (Telstra); ‘Yes Flex’ (Aurecon); ‘Flex Better’ (Medibank);
- Crown resorts, Department of Environment, Land and Water (Vic); PwC Australia; NSW Transport Cluster; Unilever Australia and New Zealand; Westpac Group

<https://sydney.edu.au/business/our-research/research-groups/women-work-leadership/projects-and-resources.html>

- **New policies for mothers:**
- To reduce the GPG: Goldman Sachs offering London staff emergency nannies to look after unwell children and elderly care;
- and if they have to work overseas, will ship mothers’ breast milk home to their children.\*

# Concluding thoughts

- Importance of women to GDP and the care economy/society
- Life cycle approach shows significant shifts in women's labour market involvement
- Policy lags - need a whole of government approach
- Dilemmas of responsibility for care – for young and elderly
- Inter-linkage of age and stage over the life course → systemic change needed, individuals alone can't make up for the gaps.
- Some organisations making change.



# Thank you

