

# **Public Accounts and Estimates Committee**

## **Inquiry into Gender Responsive Budgeting**

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**Department of Premier and Cabinet**

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# Victorian Government commitment to Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

## *Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy*

Through *Safe and Strong* in 2016, the Government committed to place a gender lens on policies, budgets and service delivery including through:

- Gender Budget Statements, from the 2017-18 Budget
- developing and piloting gender impact assessment tools in policy, program, service delivery and budget development

As part of *Safe and Strong*, the Government also committed to legislative change to promote and improve gender equality across government functions.



## Achievements so far

- ✓ *The third Gender Equality Budget Statement was delivered in 2019-20*
- ✓ *Three Government departments piloted a gender impact assessment (GIA) toolkit in 2018-19*
- ✓ *10 local councils and eight public entities are further piloting the toolkit in 2019-20*
- ✓ *The Gender Equality Bill was introduced to Parliament in November 2019 and will require entities to promote gender equality across policies, programs and service delivery, including by undertaking GIAs*

## Gender Responsive Budgeting - background

**Gender Responsive Budgeting** analyses the impact of budgets on gender equality and provides a process for adapting budgetary decision making and priority setting.

### *Why do we need Gender Responsive Budgeting?*

Evidence shows that gender-neutral approaches to policies, programs and services do not always result in equal outcomes:

- differences in the lives of women, men and gender diverse persons mean that policy, program and service needs are different
- women may experience gender inequality differently on the basis of their age, race, disability, religion, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender identity, caring responsibilities or other attributes
- women often do not have the same access as men to decision-making processes, resources or economic and social opportunities
- gender interacts with circumstances to affect an individual's experiences in many ways

*For example, your gender can impact your experience of:*

*Using public space*



*Natural disasters*



*IT security and privacy*



*Health and medical care*





## Case study: GRB in action in Austria

- In 2009, Austria's Constitution was amended to **require gender budgeting** at all levels of government
- With the legal foundations set, Austria introduced gender responsive budgeting in 2013
- Austria's gender responsive budgeting initiative is focused on **addressing perceived gender inequalities**. It requires that every line ministry in the federal government sets at least one gender-related objective out of a maximum of five outcome objectives, which is then related to specific tasks
- Austria has established a **comprehensive framework** for integrating gender perspectives into budgeting, and uses tools such as gender needs assessment, baseline analysis, ex ante and ex post gender impact assessments, and gender-disaggregated incidence analysis
- The focus on gender has led to a recent **reform of the income tax system** to reduce the higher effective tax rate on secondary earners. This reform is designed to encourage women's labour force participation and increase the number of women working full time, which will work to reduce the gender pay gap (currently 21.7% in Austria)

# Gender Budget Statements

## Getting on with the job

Victorian Budget 17/18



## Gender Equality Budget Statement

On 5 December 2016, Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy *Safe and Strong* was released, initiating landmark reforms to deliver gender equality, and address sexism and violence against women.

The Victorian Government is leading the way towards gender equality with sustained, enduring and measurable action. The Victorian Budget 2017/18 includes a range of initiatives demonstrating the Victorian Government's commitment to equality for all Victorians.

### Victorian Government is a leader on gender equality

The Victorian Government is embedding gender equality in all of its decisions and actions, as well as modelling gender equality in the workplace, and ensuring efforts to improve gender equality are sustained over time. The Budget provides:

- \$50.7 million to deliver the Government's Strategy for the Prevention of Family Violence to promote gender equality and shift the attitudes and behaviours that cause family violence, including establishing a Prevention Agency
- \$2.5 million to expand a women's Victorian Government Leadership Program



### Victorians live free from gendered norms, stereotypes and expectations

The Victorian Government is challenging the gender norms, attitudes and behaviours that support gender inequality, the economy and that society is not limited by gender and that all Victorians are equally rewarded for their contribution in society. The Budget provides:

- \$6.2 million to drive female participation in sport by increasing representation on sporting boards, expanding the number of female sporting projects and promoting female role models, leaders and coaches
- \$1.4 million to promote women's self-employment opportunities and business skills
- \$11 million to improve financial security for vulnerable women through financial literacy programs

## GENDER EQUALITY BUDGET STATEMENT

Victorian Budget 18/19



The Andrews Labor Government is leading the way when it comes to gender equality.

And because Victorian women deserve to know we are releasing our second Gender Equality Budget Statement.

It's one of many reforms included in *Safe and Strong*, Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy.

At its heart, *Safe and Strong* provides the long-term vision we need to create a more equal Victoria and address the gendered barriers that continue to hold women back.

- Importantly, we've backed up our commitment with significant investments, including:
  - A record \$1.9 billion to stop the scourge of family violence, the largest investment by any Australian Government in history
  - Implementing 30 days of paid family violence leave in the Victorian public service
  - Identifying the Public Sector Gender Pay Gap and implementing policies to address it

From health to economic opportunity, this Budget invests in the policies and programs to make our state stronger, fairer and more equal.

*Natalie Hutchins*  
Natalie Hutchins  
Minister for Women

### Ending gender inequality

Everyone deserves to have access to the services they need, and to participate in community life and employment, free from discrimination.

Since the release of Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy *Safe and Strong* in 2016, we have delivered landmark reforms that address gender inequality, sexism and violence against women. Through *Safe and Strong*, we are leading the way towards gender equality with sustained, enduring and measurable action.

This second Gender Equality Budget Statement is a demonstration of our ongoing commitment to ensuring gender equality is at the centre of all our policies and programs. It highlights a range of new initiatives funded in the Victorian Budget 2018/19 that will benefit women and address disadvantage and discrimination.

Ending gender inequality will support the health, wellbeing and economic security of all Victorians.

### Leadership, empowerment and cultural change

All Victorians must be visible, have an equal voice and occupy decision making roles, not only at work, but in communities, sport, media and the arts. After meeting its target of gender equity on government boards, the Andrews Labor Government is now targeting the barriers women face to being leaders through:

- \$8.0 million for improving gender equality in Victoria through the continued implementation of *Safe and Strong*, in the public sector, private sector workplaces, sporting organisations and other settings
- \$1.2 million grant to the Queen Victoria Women's Centre to fund restoration and additional funding for maintenance



# Gender Impact Assessment and Pilots

The Victorian Government recently piloted a GIA toolkit across a number of Victorian Public Service departments. In 2019-20, **the toolkit is being piloted in 10 local councils and 8 public entities**. Consideration of their outcomes will be concluded in the first quarter of 2020, and **these findings will inform guidance materials for Bill implementation**.

GIA pilot – government  
departments

GIA pilot – councils and  
public entities

GIA guidance materials under  
the Gender Equality Bill



A Guide to  
Conducting  
Gender Impact  
Analysis

- Guidance materials will be developed to support defined entities to meet their obligations under the Bill.
- The GIA toolkit will inform these materials, which will be available before entities obligations commence in March 2021

# The benefits of GRB – Gender Impact Assessments

## Gender impact assessment has economic and social benefits for women, gender diverse people and the broader community

- It helps to **increase participation by women**. This benefits society through access to additional skills and experience, enhanced purchasing power, increased tax revenue and reduced demand for welfare assistance.
- Policies, programs and services are **better targeted to community needs**. For instance, to enable women from low socioeconomic backgrounds to take full advantage of employment training programs, assistance may be necessary in childcare and transport. Such programs increase women's potential and help them move off welfare benefits.
- **It doesn't just address gender equality but other forms of inequality**. Outcomes for migrant and refugee communities, LGBTI communities, Aboriginal communities and women with a disability all benefit.
- It supports **gender equality more broadly**. International evidence demonstrates that organisations with at least 30 per cent women in leadership positions were 15 per cent more profitable (Peterson Institute for International Economics).
- It broadens the focus of economic analysis by raising **different questions and issues**. E.g., the issue of women's over-representation in lower paid and unpaid work can be examined in terms of the structural barriers that limit women's opportunities, rather than viewed as a woman's choice.
- Government and community organisations **are better able to identify the impacts of policies, programs and services** on people of all genders, including inequities and inequalities between genders and unintended consequences.

## GRB best practice and future opportunities

### International evidence suggests the following approaches to maximise the effectiveness of GRB:

- GRB should be underpinned by:
  - Gender impact assessment
  - effective tools, resources, engagement, leadership and accountability
  - a focus on promoting gender equality through fiscal policy
  - a strong evidence base – organisations should collect gender disaggregated data to ensure development of gender responsive policies
- Intersectional considerations should be embedded in GRB to ensure that individual experiences of gender inequality are not compounded by other forms of discrimination
- Implementation is more effective when GRB initiatives are supported by an overarching gender equality plan or strategy

Victoria is already leading on GRB initiatives, however further opportunities could be considered in implementation of the Bill and over the longer term, including:

- greater consideration of women's workforce participation and labour market challenges, the impacts of the gender pay gap, women's experience of poverty and family violence
- analysing Victorian Government investment in addressing gender inequality (similar to the current Gender Budget Statement)
- understanding the impacts of government investment on women's economic security and wellbeing (which the current Gender Budget Statement has started to do)
- reviewing the impact of savings measures (reducing costs or reducing services) on outcomes for women

### Future opportunities for GRB in Victoria