



Priority area

3 Women's safety

Feelings of safety

Both females and males largely did not experience physical assault or threat, with only 2.4% of females and 2.7% of males aged 15 years and over experiencing physical assault¹ in 2015-16. However, females (3.4%) were slightly more likely than males (2.5%) to experience threatened physical assault² (both face-to-face³ and non-face-to-face incidents⁴ such as SMS, email or over the phone).⁵

Most females were less likely than males to feel safe alone after dark at home or in local area:

- 84.1% of females, compared with 94.1% of males felt safe or very safe at home alone after dark in 2014.⁶
- 32.6% of females reported feeling safe or very safe walking alone in local area after dark, compared with 69.6% of males.⁷

Victims of offences

Females were slightly more likely to be the victims of offences against the person — homicide, assault, sexual offences, robbery, kidnapping and abduction, extortion, stalking and life endangering acts⁸ — with females making up 51.0% victims in 2015-16.⁹

Females in the younger age groups were more likely to be victims of offences against person on a per capita basis in 2015-16.¹⁰ Females aged:

- 15-19 years were the most common victims of offences in all age groups for both females and males at the rate of 1,686 victims per 100,000 of the female 15-19 years population, compared with 901.1 victims per 100,000 of the male 15-19 years population.
- 10-14 years were the second largest cohort of victims of offences in all age

groups for both females and males at the rate of 1,287.8 victims per 100,000 of the female 10-14 years population, compared with 776.9 victims per 100,000 of the male 10-14 years population.

Sexual offences and stalking

Females constituted 82.4% of victims of sexual offences¹¹ in 2015-16¹², and 80.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of sexual assault in 2015¹³. Nationally, 82.3% of sexual assault¹⁴ victims were female in 2015.¹⁵

Females in all age groups were considerably more likely than males to be victims of sexual offences with females in the 15-19 year age group being the most likely to be a victim. In this age group, 89.5% of victims were female in 2015-16.¹⁶



In the 15-19 year age group, **9 in 10** victims of sexual offences were female in 2015-16.

Of total 2,594 offenders for sexual offences in 2015, 95.1% (or 2,468) were male and 4.9% (or 126) were female¹⁷:

- Offenders for sexual offences were known to seven in ten (71%) victims in 2015-16, with 37% of victims assaulted by family members (a partner, a former partner, a child or other family members) and 34% by acquaintances, friends, neighbours or colleagues.¹⁸



Females of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin comprised 11.0% of total female victims of sexual assault in 2015.¹⁹ Comparable statistics available for other states and territories were 7.6% in New South Wales, 7.2% in South Australia and 45.5% in the Northern Territory.²⁰

Females made up 77.2% of victims of stalking in 2015-16, with males constituting 86.6% of all stalking offenders in 2015-16.²¹

Domestic and family violence

Females were almost four times more likely than males to be killed by a partner, comprising 81.9% of the total 138 victims of intimate partner relationship homicides from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2016.²² During this period:

- Almost all (96.5%) females killed within an intimate partner relationship had a previous history of being a victim of intimate partner violence.
- Of individual perpetrators responsible for domestic and family violence homicides, where gender was known, 83.8% were male.
- 17.7% of victims of domestic and family violence homicides were recorded to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.



Female victims of domestic and family violence (DFV)-related homicide and related offences accounted for 45.5% of all female homicide victims recorded during 2016. By contrast, male victims of DFV-related homicides accounted for 14.8% of all male homicide victims – nationally 57.3% and 28.8%.²³ Comparable statistics available for

other states and territories were 68.8% and 30.3% in New South Wales, 54.3% and 23.4% in Victoria, 61.5% and 45.8% in South Australia, and 71.4% and 46.5% in Western Australia.²⁴

Females were less likely than males to breach domestic violence protection orders, with males accounting for 85.9% of offenders for breach of domestic violence protection order offence in 2015-16²⁵:

- Total 22,853 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 472 offences per 1000,000 persons — 39% increase in the number of breach of domestic violence protection order offences from 16,388 offences in 2014-15.
- More than two thirds (68.2%) of male offenders were aged 20-39 years.

Females comprised 73.0% of all Queensland clients seeking government-funded specialist homelessness services due to domestic and family violence as a main reason in 2015-16²⁶ – nationally 80.3%²⁷.

Females accounted for 68% of all alleged victims of elder abuse reported to the Elder Abuse Helpline in 2015-16.²⁸

Discrimination and other forms of violence

Of 508 complaints accepted and dealt with by the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission in 2015-16, illegal discrimination on the basis of pregnancy accounted for 21 (or 4.1%) complaints.²⁹

Most trafficked people³⁰ identified in Australia have been women working in the sex industry, although recently an increasing number of men and women is trafficked into, or exploited within, other industries, or exploited within intimate relationships.³¹

Australia provides support services for trafficked people through the Support Program. Females comprised³²:

- 76.3% of total 80 clients who were on the Support Program in 2015-16
- all clients supported through the Support Program due to exploitation in sex industry (in 2015-16) and forced marriage (in 2014-15).



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- ¹ Includes being pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, kicked, bitten, choked, shot, burnt; being hit with something such as a bat; and being dragged or hit deliberately by a vehicle, assault which happens in the line of work. Excludes incidents that occurred during the course of play on a sporting field or organised sport; verbal abuse; incidents where the person did not encounter the offender face-to-face; incidents of sexual assault or threatened sexual assault which also involved physical assault.
- ² A verbal, written and/or physical threat to inflict physical harm where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out. Threatened assault may occur face-to-face or via non face-to-face methods (such as SMS, email or over the phone). Includes any threat or attempt to strike the person which could cause pain; situations where a gun or other weapon was left in an obvious place (including fake or toy guns/weapons where the threatened person thought it was real) or if the person knew the perpetrator had access to a gun (including toy guns, starter pistol, etc.). Also includes incidents where the person was threatened in their line of work. Excludes any incident of name calling or swearing which did not involve a physical threat, and threats that resulted in an actual assault.
- ³ Any verbal and/or physical threat to inflict physical harm, made face-to-face, where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out. Excludes any incident where the person being threatened did not encounter the offender in person (e.g. threats made via telephone, text message, e-mail, in writing or through social media).
- ⁴ Any threat to inflict physical harm where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out, and where the victim did not encounter the offender face-to-face (e.g. via telephone, text message, e-mail, in writing or through social media).
- ⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Crime victimisation, Australia, 2015-16*, 2017, 'Populations, Table 26 Populations, by states and territories', cat. no. 4530.0.
- ⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017, *General social survey, summary results, Australia, 2014*, 'Table 3.3 All persons, selected personal characteristics – by state and territory', customised data.
- ⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁸ The Queensland Police Service broadly categorises the following offences as 'Offences Against the Person': homicide, assault, sexual offences, robbery, kidnapping and abduction, extortion, stalking and life endangering acts.
- ⁹ Queensland Police Service, 2016, *Annual statistical review 2015-16*.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹¹ An offence of a sexual nature including a prescribed sexual offence. Includes rape, attempted rape and other sexual offences.
- ¹² Queensland Police Service, 2016, *Annual statistical review 2015-16*.
- ¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2015*, 'Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories, Table 17 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2015', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ¹⁴ Includes physical contact, or intent of contact, of a sexual nature directed toward another person where that person does not give consent, gives consent as a result of intimidation or deception, or consent is proscribed (i.e. the person is legally deemed incapable of giving consent because of youth, temporary/permanent (mental) incapacity or there is a familial relationship).
- ¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2015*, 'Victims of crime, Australia, Table 2 Victims, sex and age by selected offences, 2010-2015', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ¹⁶ Queensland Police Service, 2016, *Annual statistical review 2015-16*.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *ibid.*
- ¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2015*, 'Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories, Table 17 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2015', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ²⁰ *ibid.*
- ²¹ Queensland Police Service, 2016, *Annual statistical review 2015-16*.
- ²² Queensland Courts, 2017, *Queensland domestic and family homicide statistical overview*.
- ²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2016*, 'Table 22 Victims of family and domestic violence-related offences by sex, states and territories, 2014–2016', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ²⁴ Users should be aware that data about victims of domestic and family violence-related offences may be reflective of changes in reporting behaviour or police detection. As a result, caution should be exercised when interpreting these results, or making comparisons across the states and territories.
- ²⁵ Queensland Police Service, 2016, *Annual statistical review 2015-16*.
- ²⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, *Specialist homelessness services 2015-16, Supplementary tables - Queensland*, 'Table QLD Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2015-16, adjusted for non-response', cat. no. HOU 283.
- ²⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, *Specialist homelessness services 2015-16, Supplementary tables - National*, 'Table Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2015-16, adjusted for non-response', cat. no. HOU 283.
- ²⁸ Elder Abuse Prevention Unit, 2016, *Highlight report: 2015-16 financial year*.
- ²⁹ Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland, 2016, *Annual report 2015-16*, pages 23-24.
- ³⁰ The term 'trafficked people' is used as a general term that encompasses all victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices.
- ³¹ Commonwealth of Australia, 2016, *Trafficking in persons: the Australian government response 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016*, the eighth report of the interdepartmental committee on human trafficking and slavery.
- ³² *ibid.*