



## Priority area 3 Women's safety

### Feelings of safety

The vast majority of females and males in Queensland largely did not experience physical assault or threat. Only 2.5% of females and 2.3% of males aged 15 years and over experienced physical assault<sup>1</sup> in 2016–17. However, females (2.3%) were slightly less likely than males (3.1%) to experience threatened physical assault<sup>2</sup> (both face-to-face<sup>3</sup> and non-face-to-face incidents<sup>4</sup> such as SMS, email or over the phone).<sup>5</sup>

Most females aged 15 years and over 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.<sup>6</sup>
- 32.6% of females reported feeling safe or very safe walking alone in local area after dark, compared with 69.6% of males.<sup>7</sup>

### Victims of offences

Females were slightly more likely to be the victims of offences against the person – sexual offences, kidnapping and abduction, stalking and life endangering acts<sup>8</sup> – with females making up 51.8% of victims in 2016–17.<sup>9</sup>

Females aged 15–24 years were more likely to be victims of offences against person on a per capita basis in 2016–17:<sup>10</sup>

- Females aged 15–19 years were the most common victims of offences in all age groups for females with the rate of 1,699.8 victims per 100,000 of the female 15–19 years population, compared with 976.6 victims per 100,000 of the male 15–19 years population.

- Females aged 20–24 years were the second largest cohort of victims of offences in all age groups for both females and males at the rate of 1,305.5 victims per 100,000 of the female 20–24 years population, compared with 1,018.5 victims per 100,000 of the male 20–24 years population.

### Sexual offences and stalking

There were a total of 4,751 victims of sexual assault<sup>11</sup> in 2017<sup>12</sup>. Of these victims, females constituted 83.2%. Nationally, 82.4% of sexual assault victims were female.<sup>13</sup>

Of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of sexual assault, 82.3% were women in 2016<sup>14</sup>.

Females in all age groups were considerably more likely than males to be victims of sexual offences with females aged 15–19 years being the most likely to be a victim. In this age group, 89.0% of victims were female in 2016–17.<sup>15</sup>



In 2016–17,  
**8 in 9** victims of  
sexual offences  
aged 15–19 years  
were female.

Of total 2,406 offenders for sexual offences in 2016, 4.9% (or 119) were female and 95.1% (or 2,287) were male:<sup>16</sup>

- Offenders for sexual offences were known to three in four (75.7%) victims in 2016–17, with 40.8% of victims assaulted by family members (a partner,



a former partner, a child or other family members) and 34.9% by acquaintances, friends, neighbours or colleagues.<sup>17</sup>

Females of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin comprised 11.6% of total female victims of sexual assault in 2016.<sup>18</sup> This compares with 7.9% in New South Wales, 5.2% in South Australia and 50.6% in the Northern Territory.<sup>19</sup>

Females made up 78.8% of victims of stalking in 2016–17, with males constituting 81.3% of all stalking offenders in 2016–17.<sup>20</sup>

### Domestic and family violence

Females were less likely than males to breach domestic violence protection orders, with males accounting for 84.9% of offenders for breach of domestic violence protection order offence in 2016–17:<sup>21</sup>

- Total 25,678 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 524 offences per 100,000 persons – 10.8% increase in the number of breach of domestic violence protection order offences from 23,176 offences in 2015–16.
- More than two-thirds (67.6%) of male offenders were aged 20–39 years.

Females were almost four times more likely than males to be killed by a partner, comprising 79.9% of the total 149 victims of intimate partner relationship homicides from 1 July 2006 to 28 February 2018.<sup>22</sup> During this period:

- Almost all (97.6%)<sup>23</sup> females killed within an intimate partner relationship had a previous history of being a victim of intimate partner violence.
- 81.8% of offenders were male in cases of intimate partner homicide involving one homicide victim.
- 19.8% 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 46.2% of all female homicide victims recorded during 2017. By contrast, male victims of DFV-related homicides accounted for 19.0% of all male

homicide victims – nationally 56.7% and 18.9% respectively.<sup>24</sup> Comparable statistics available for other states and territories were 73.7% and 20.8% in New South Wales, 43.5% and 15.5% in Victoria, 70.6% and 22.6% in South Australia, and 73.3% and 17.2% in Western Australia.<sup>25</sup>



Females were

**4x**

more likely  
than males to  
be killed by a  
partner.

Of all Queensland clients seeking government-funded specialist homelessness services, due to domestic and family violence as a main reason, 72.3% were female in 2016–17<sup>26</sup> – nationally 80.3%.<sup>27</sup>

Females accounted for 68.0% of all alleged victims of elder abuse reported to the Elder Abuse Helpline in 2016–17.<sup>28</sup>

### Discrimination and other forms of violence

Of 685 complaints accepted and dealt with by the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission in 2017-18, illegal discrimination on the basis of pregnancy accounted for 18 (or 2.6%) complaints.<sup>29</sup>

Most trafficked people<sup>30</sup> identified in Australia have been females working in the sex industry, although recently an increasing number of males and females are trafficked into, or exploited within, other industries, or exploited within intimate relationships.<sup>31</sup>

Australia provides support services for trafficked people through the Support Program. Females comprised:<sup>32</sup>

- 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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- <sup>1</sup> Includes being beaten, pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, hit with an open hand or fist, kicked, bitten, choked, stabbed, shot, burnt, being hit with something such as a bat or being dragged or hit deliberately by a vehicle. Includes assault that occurred while the person was at 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, and incidents of sexual assault or threatened sexual assault which also involved physical assault.
- <sup>2</sup> 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.
- <sup>3</sup> 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).
- <sup>4</sup> 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).
- <sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Crime victimisation, Australia, 2016-17*, 'Populations, Table 26 Populations, by states and territories', cat. no. 4530.0.
- <sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, *General social survey, summary results, Australia, 2014*, 'Table 03. State and Territory, Table 3.3 All persons, selected personal characteristics – by state and territory', customised data, cat. no. 4159.0.
- <sup>7</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>8</sup> The Queensland Police Service categorises the following offence subdivisions as 'Offences Against the Person': homicide (murder); other homicide; assault; sexual offences; robbery and other offences against the person.
- <sup>9</sup> Queensland Police Service, 2017, *Annual statistical review 2016-17*.
- <sup>10</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>11</sup> 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).
- <sup>12</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2017*, 'Victims of Crime, Selected offences, states and territories, Table 7 Victims, age by selected offences and sex, 2017', cat. no. 4510.0.
- <sup>13</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2017*, 'Victims of crime, Australia, Table 2 Victims, sex and age by selected offences, 2010-2017', cat. no. 4510.0.
- <sup>14</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2017*, 'Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories, Table 20 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2016', cat. no. 4510.0.
- <sup>15</sup> Queensland Police Service, 2017, *Annual statistical review 2016-17*.
- <sup>16</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>18</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2017*, 'Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 'Table 20 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2017, cat. no. 4510.0.
- <sup>19</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup> Queensland Police Service, 2017, *Annual statistical review 2016-17*.
- <sup>21</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup> Queensland Courts, April 2018, *Queensland domestic and family homicide statistical overview*.
- <sup>23</sup> This consists of 95.1% where victim only and 2.4% where victim and perpetrator
- <sup>24</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2017*, 'Victims of FDV Related offences, Table 22 Victims of family and domestic violence-related offences by sex, states and territories, 2014–2017', cat. no. 4510.0.

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- <sup>25</sup> 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.
- <sup>26</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, *Specialist homelessness services 2016-17, Supplementary tables - Queensland*, 'Table QLD Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2016-17, adjusted for non-response'.
- <sup>27</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, *Specialist homelessness services 2016-17, Supplementary tables - National*, 'Table Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2016-17, adjusted for non-response'.
- <sup>28</sup> Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) (2018). *Year in review*. Brisbane: UnitingCare Queensland.
- <sup>29</sup> Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland, 2018, *Annual report 2017-18*, page 23.
- <sup>30</sup> The term 'trafficked people' is used as a general term that encompasses all victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices.
- <sup>31</sup> 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.
- <sup>32</sup> *ibid.*