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RESEARCH**

Implementing Policy in the Context of a Choice and Guidance Framework 1/11/2018

Women and Work: 'Choices' over the Life Cycle

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Choice? What choice?



Choice? What choice?



1992
The ACCORD
3% wage trade-off



Women, work and retirement

- We need to discuss policy through a 'gender lens'
- We cannot assume women's labour market attachment is the same as men's
- A life cycle approach helps us understand the differences
- \$\$ at retirement will be different and policy must be considered in this light
- Preferences and constraints: a common theme in modern feminist literature
- Choice is also a fundamental concept of neo-liberal ideology – also seen as risk shifting

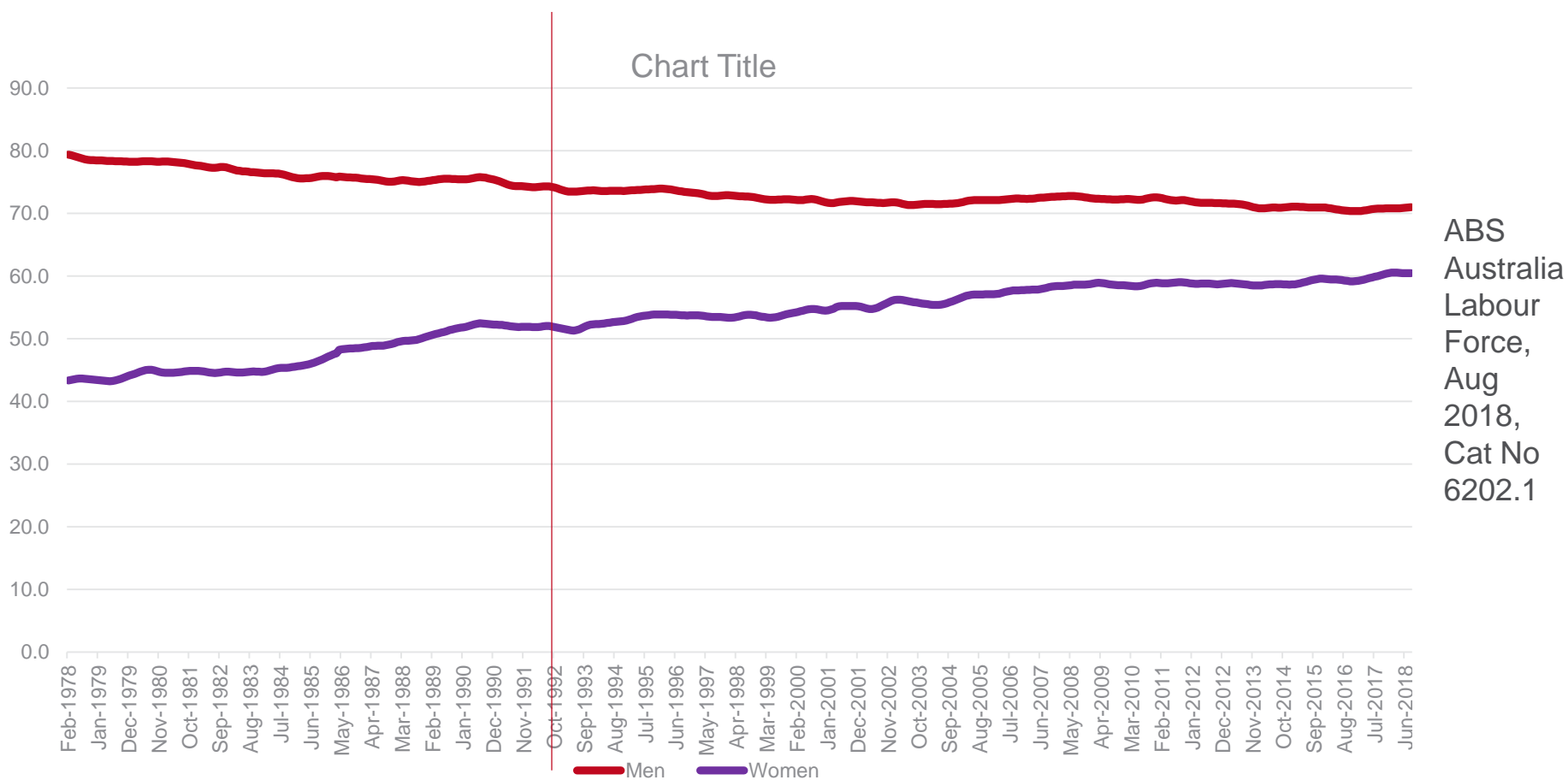


Why are more women in the workforce?

- Women are more educated
- Have different expectations
- Changing **patterns** of work – flexibilities said to suit women
- Financial security concerns
- Shifting industry structures – employers want and need women to work
- **Government GDP concerns – G20 commitment to close the gender gap by 25% by 2025**

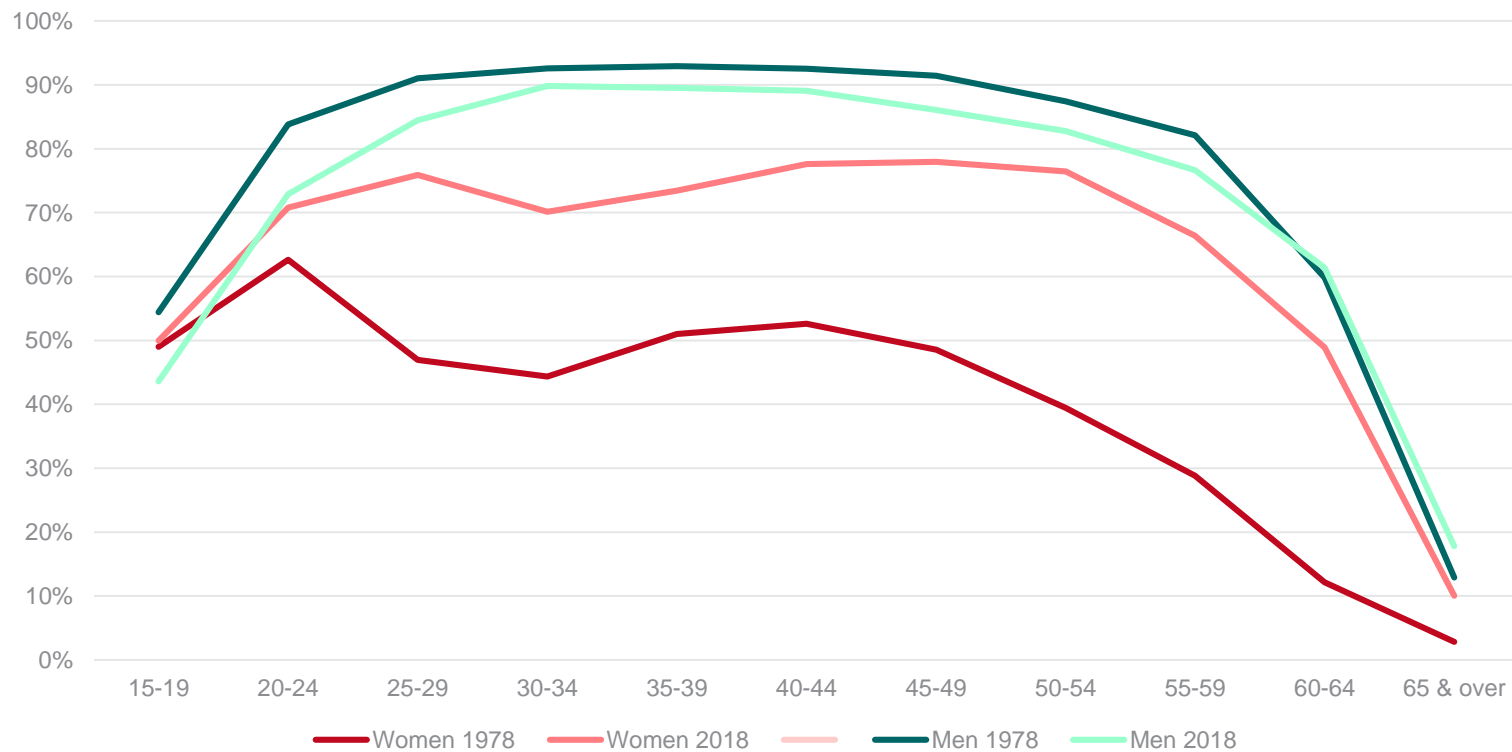


Labour Force Participation rates 1978-2018, by gender, %

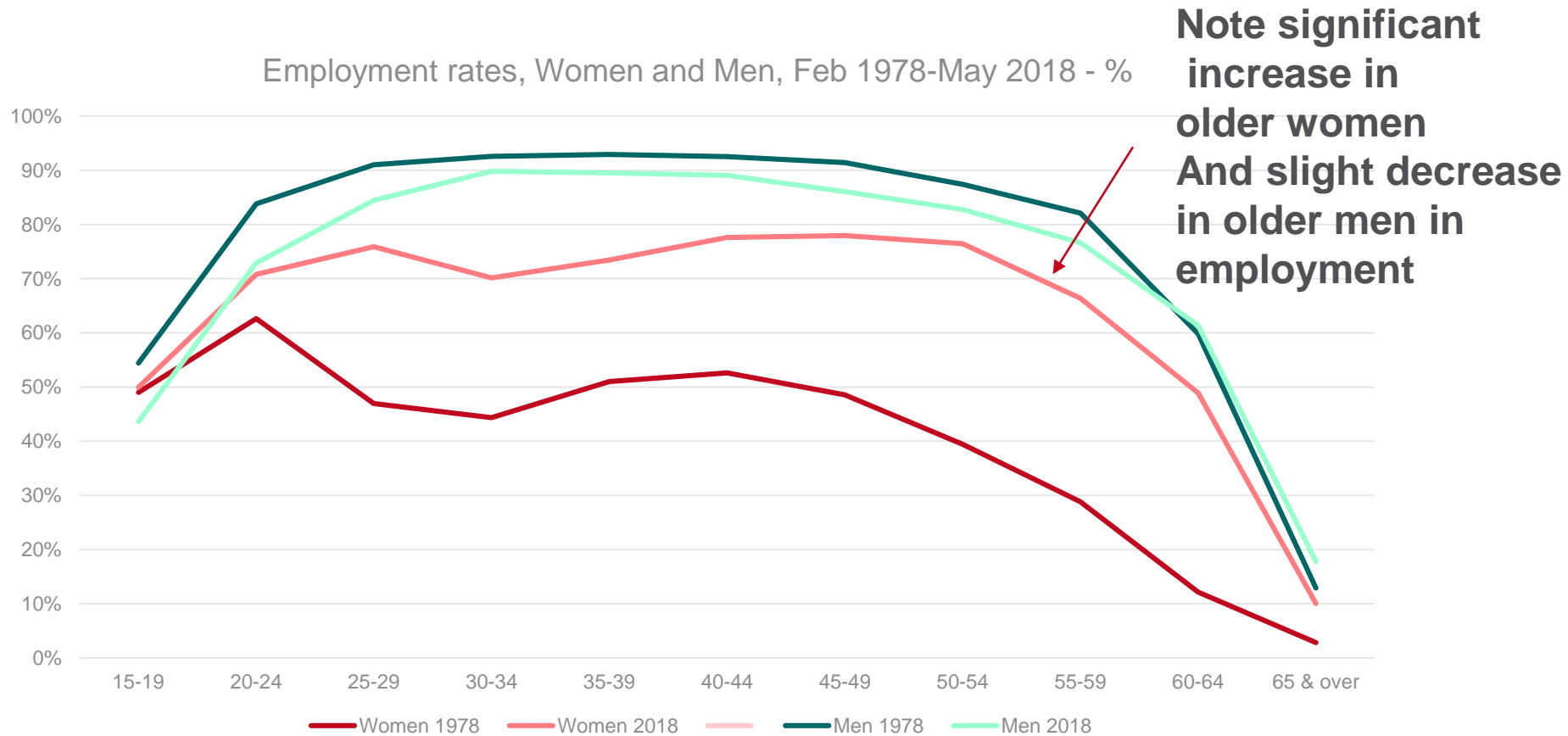


Employment rates, Women and Men, Feb 1978-May 2018 - %, age 15 on

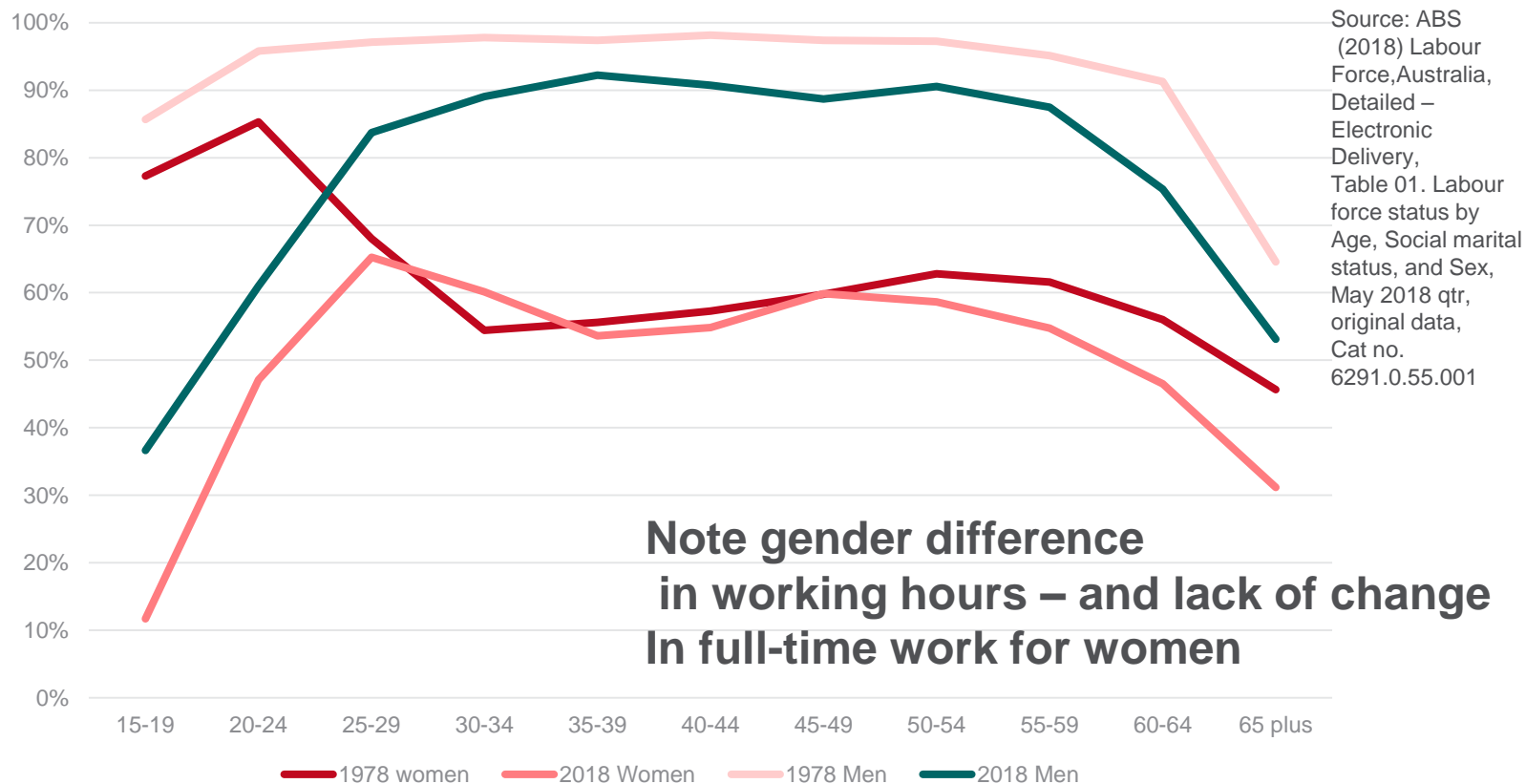
Employment rates, Women and Men, Feb 1978-May 2018 - %



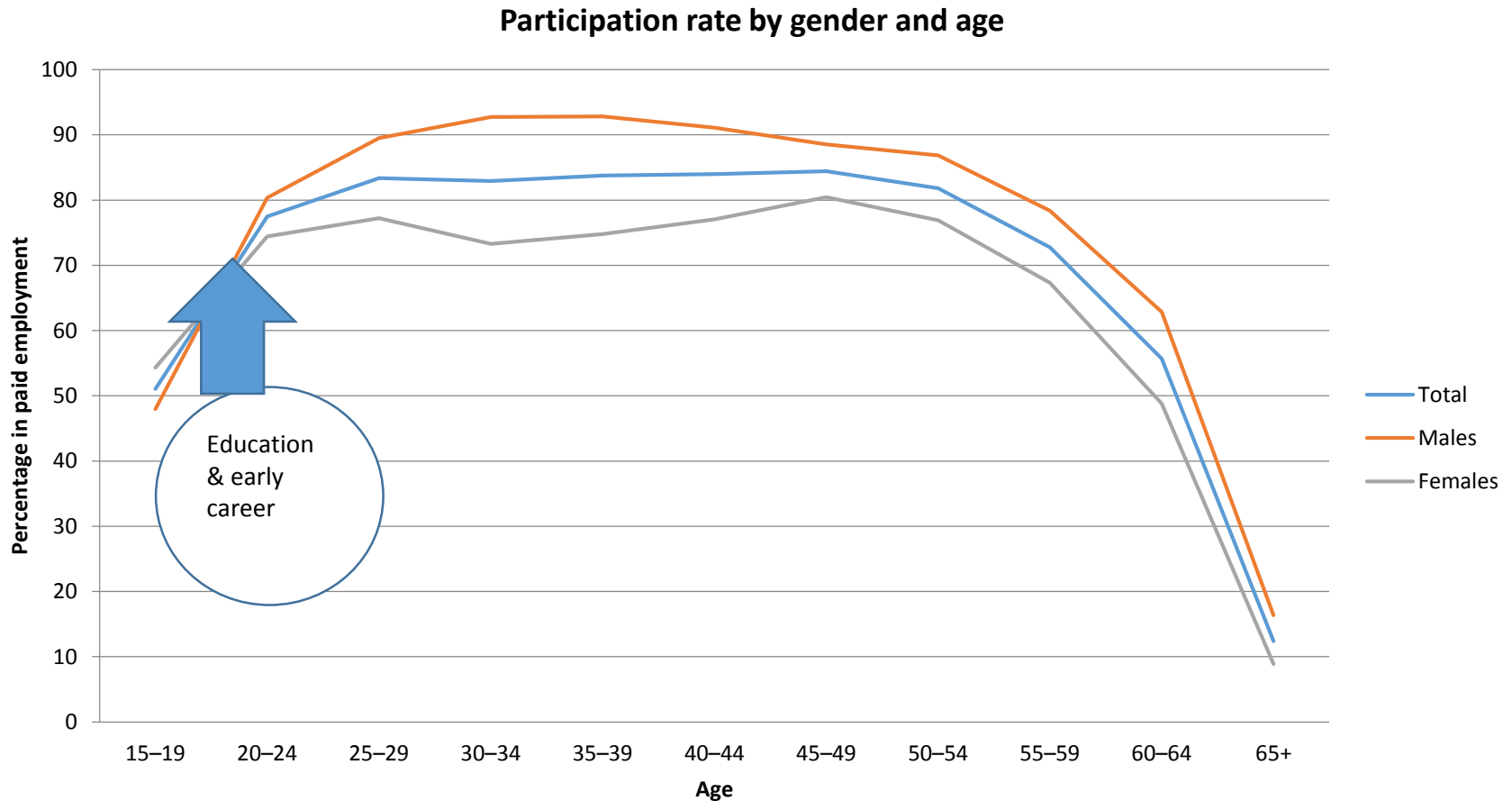
Employment rates, Women and Men, Feb 1978-May 2018 - %, age 15 on



Employment Rates - % Full-time employed of all in employment, Women and Men Feb 1978-May 2018, age 15 on

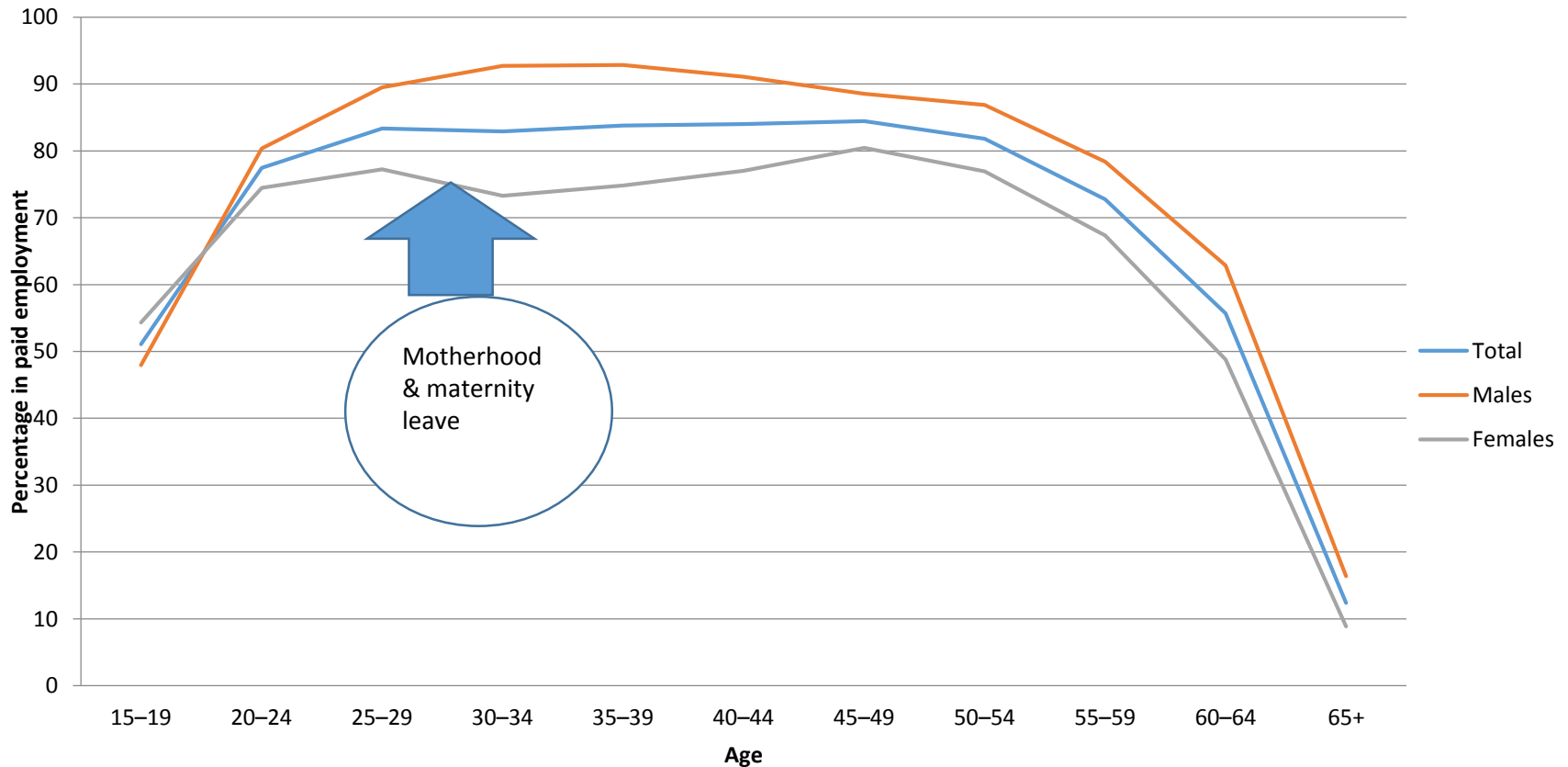


The life cycle of women – Stage 1

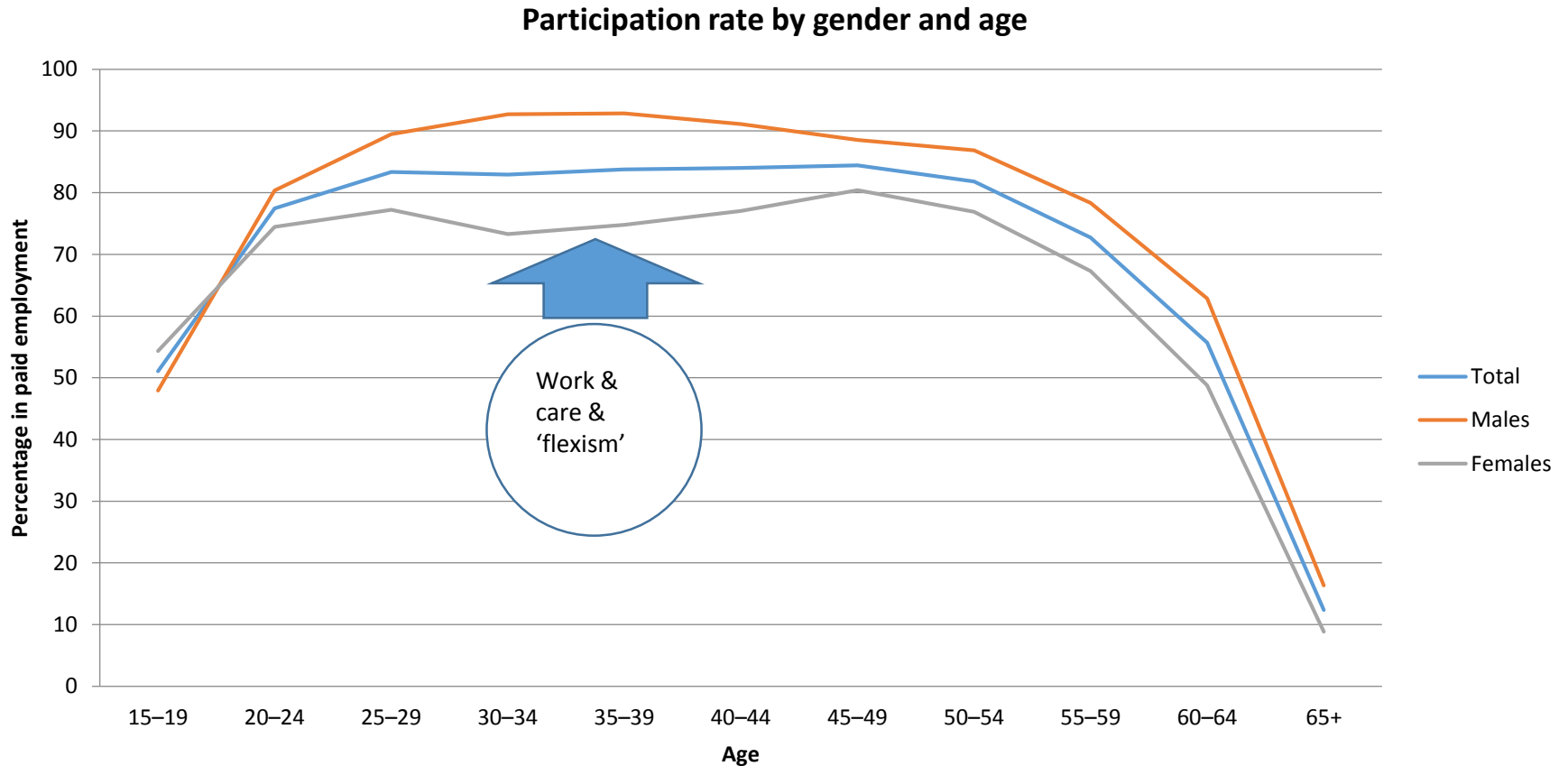


The life cycle of women – Stage 2

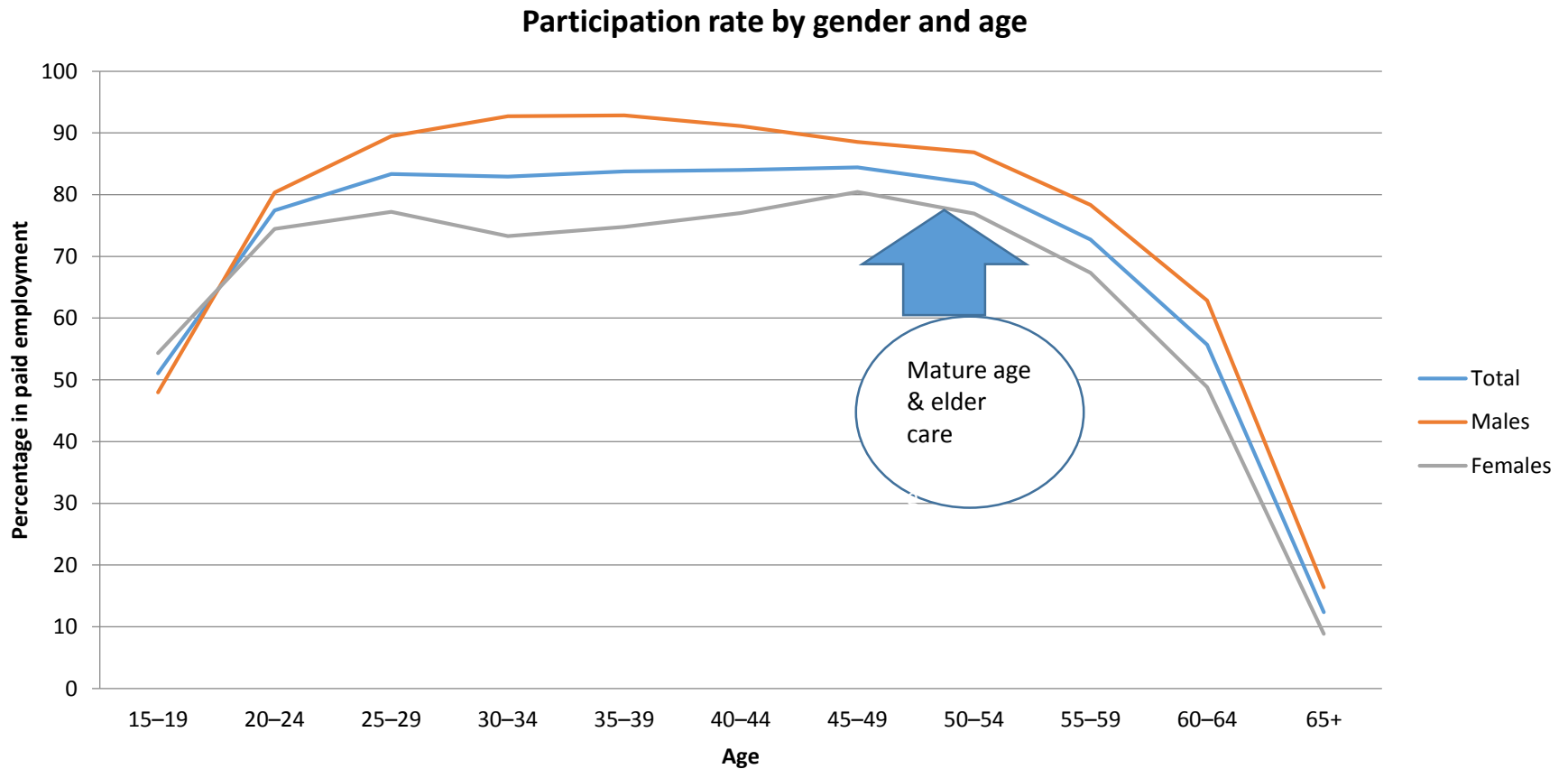
Participation rate by gender and age



The life cycle of women – Stage 3

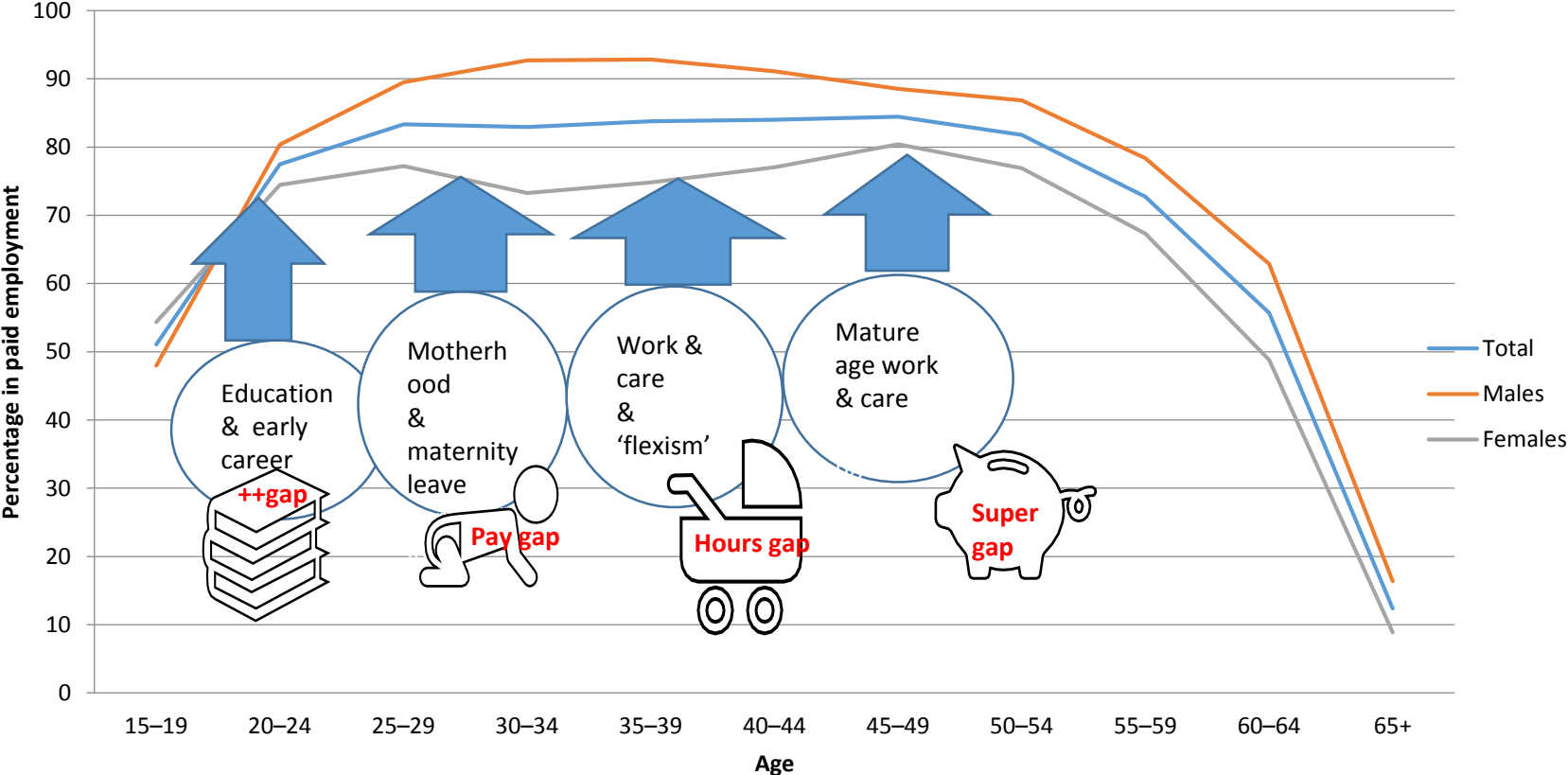


The life cycle of women – Stage 4

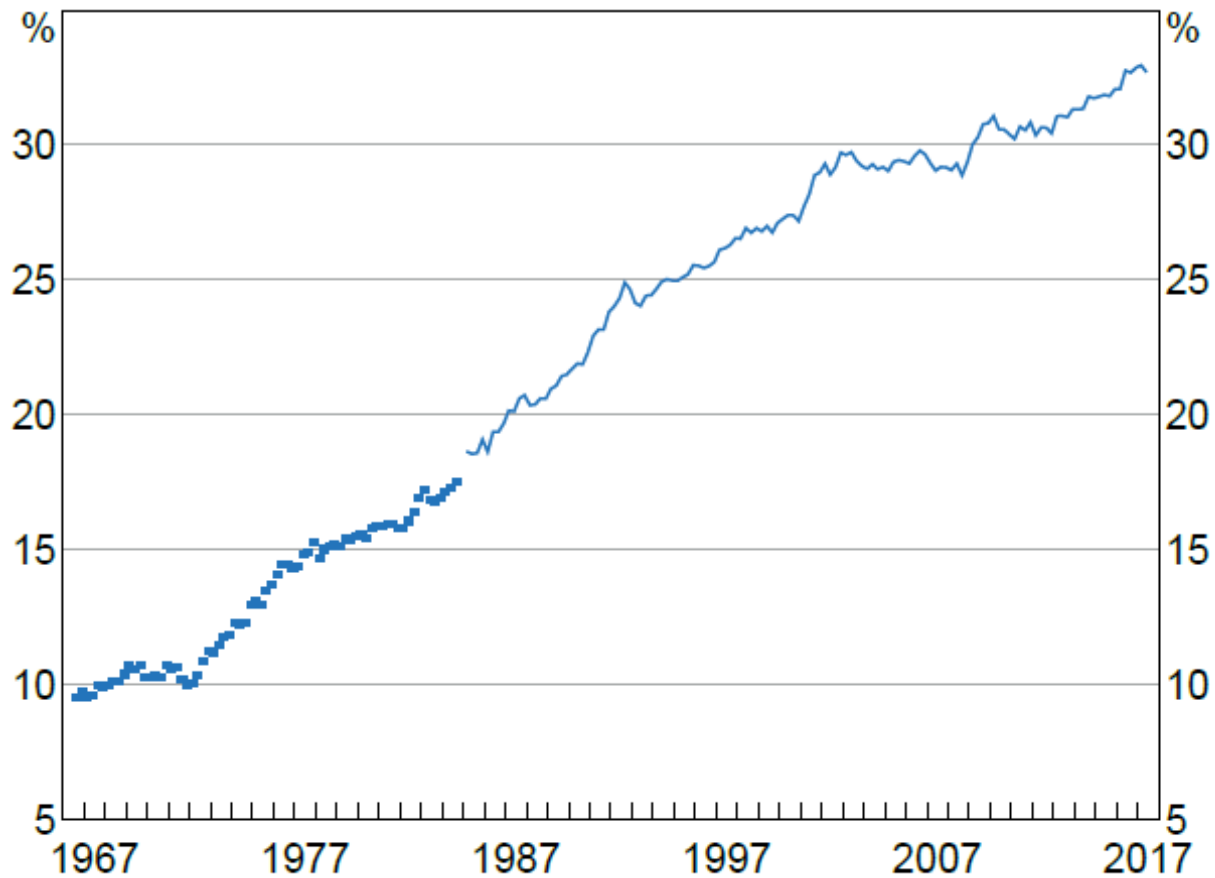


Inequality Markers through the Life Cycle

Participation rate by gender and age



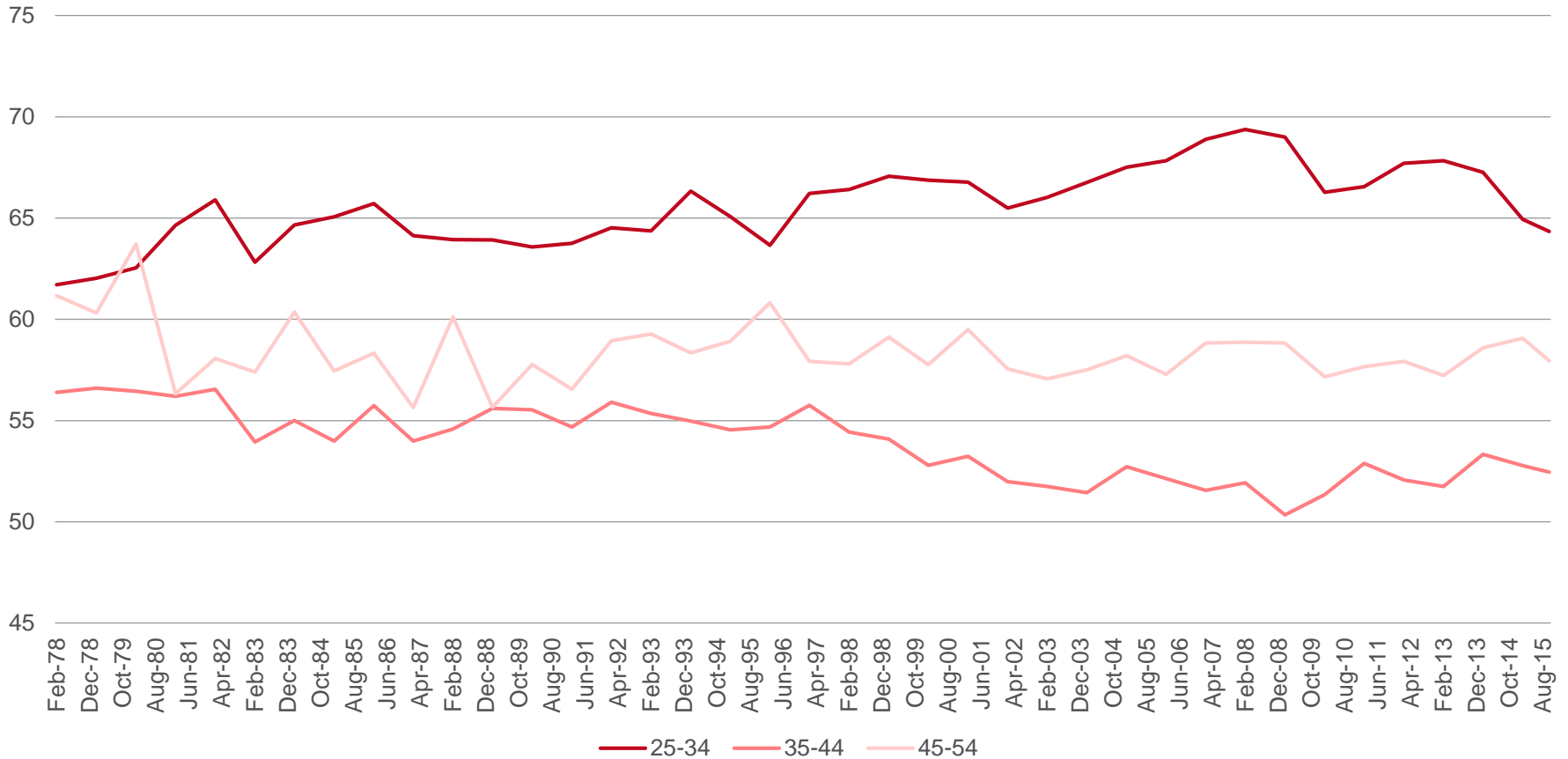
Part-time employment share



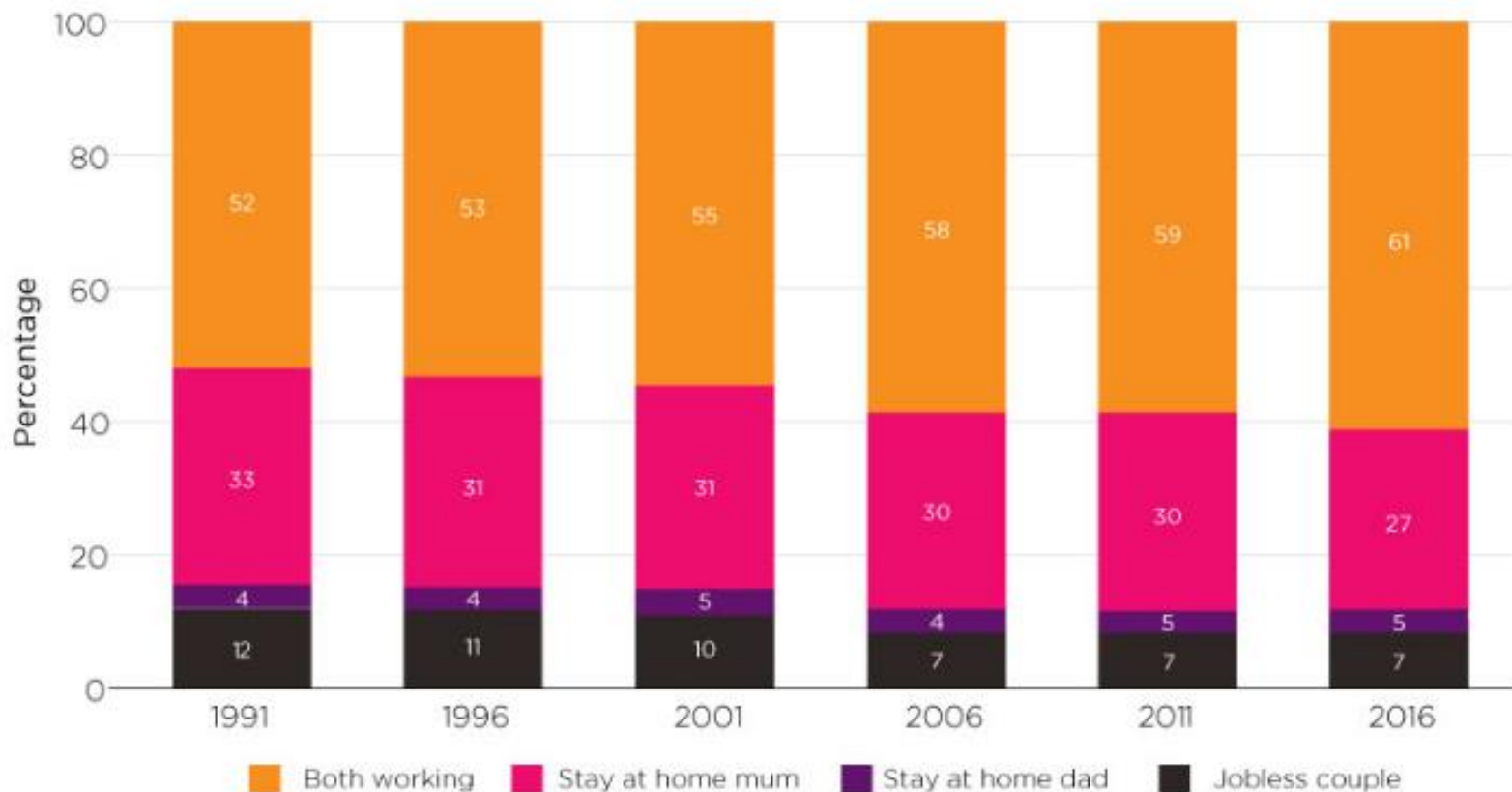
Cassidy & Parsons
(2017)
'The Rising Share
of Part-time
Employment',
Reserve Bank of
Australia

Full-time female employment

Full-time employed women out of all employed females (%) 1978-2015

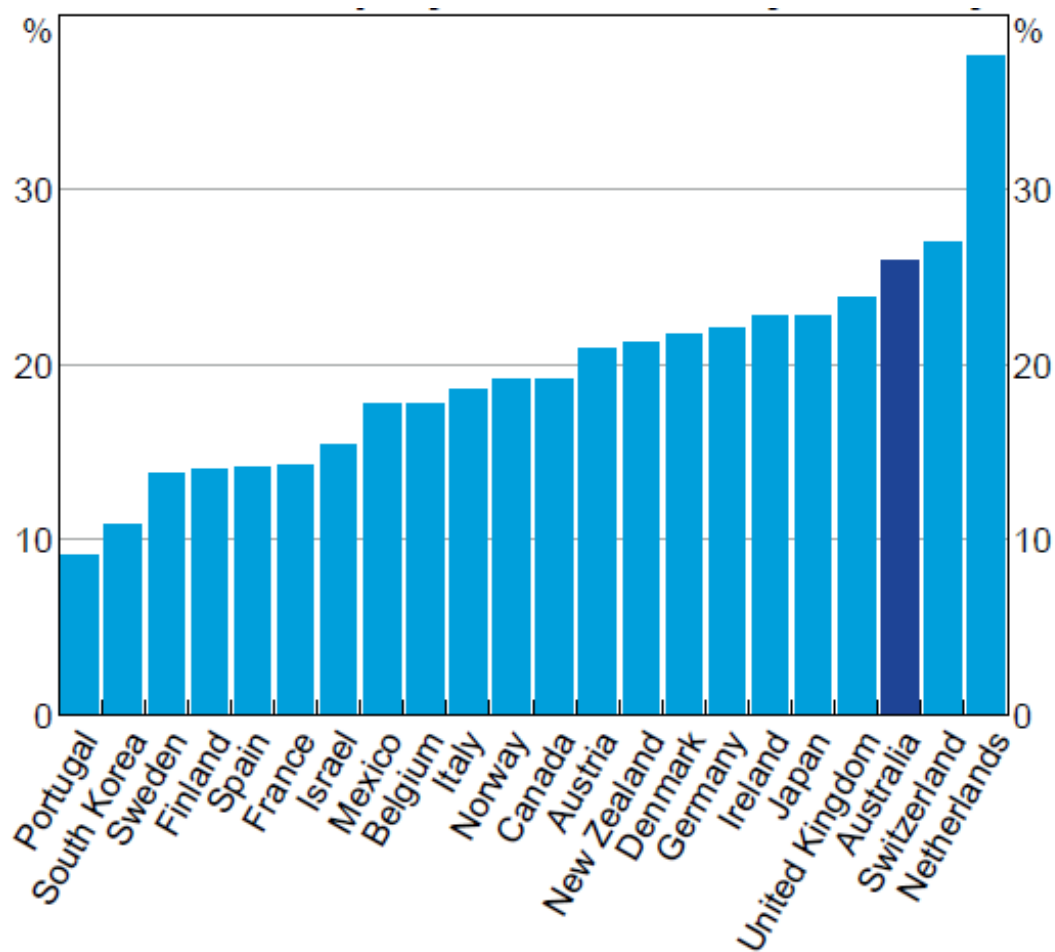


Parents' working arrangements, 1991-2016, couples with a child under 18



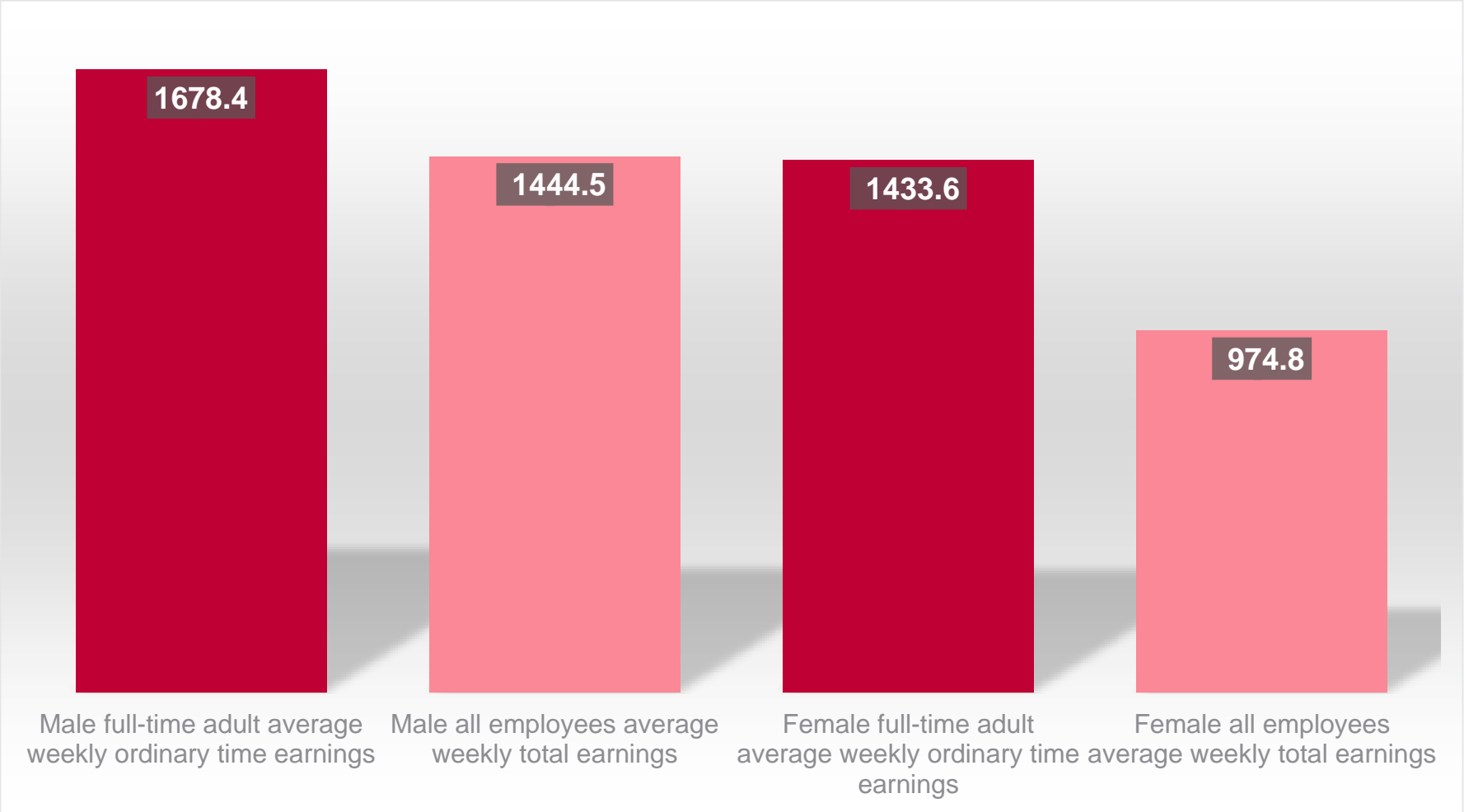
AIFS (2018)
from 2011 and
2016 Census
data, [AIFS
website](#)

Part-time Employment Share by Country, OECD figures for 2015

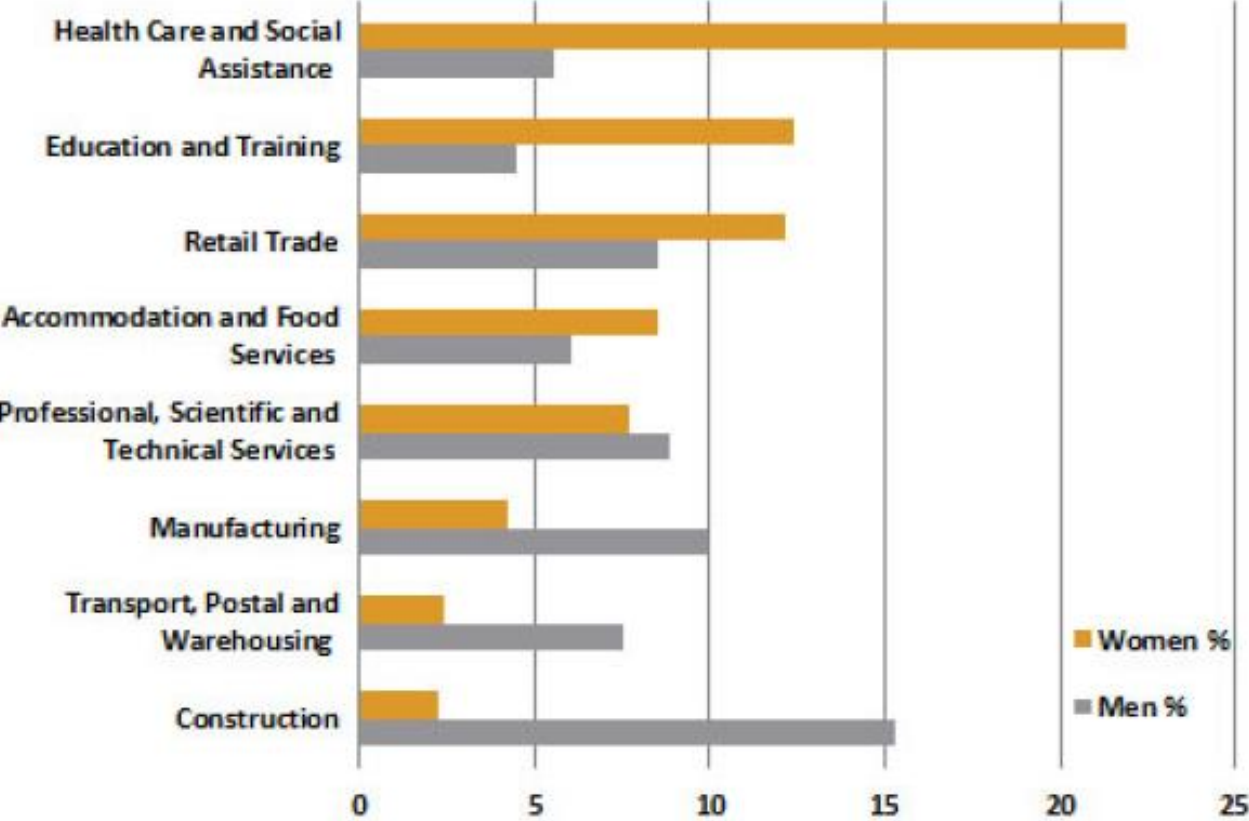


Cassidy & Parsons (2017)
 'The Rising Share of Part-time Employment',
 Reserve Bank of Australia

The Gender Pay Gap – May 2018



Men's and women's top five industry shares, with comparison data—2017

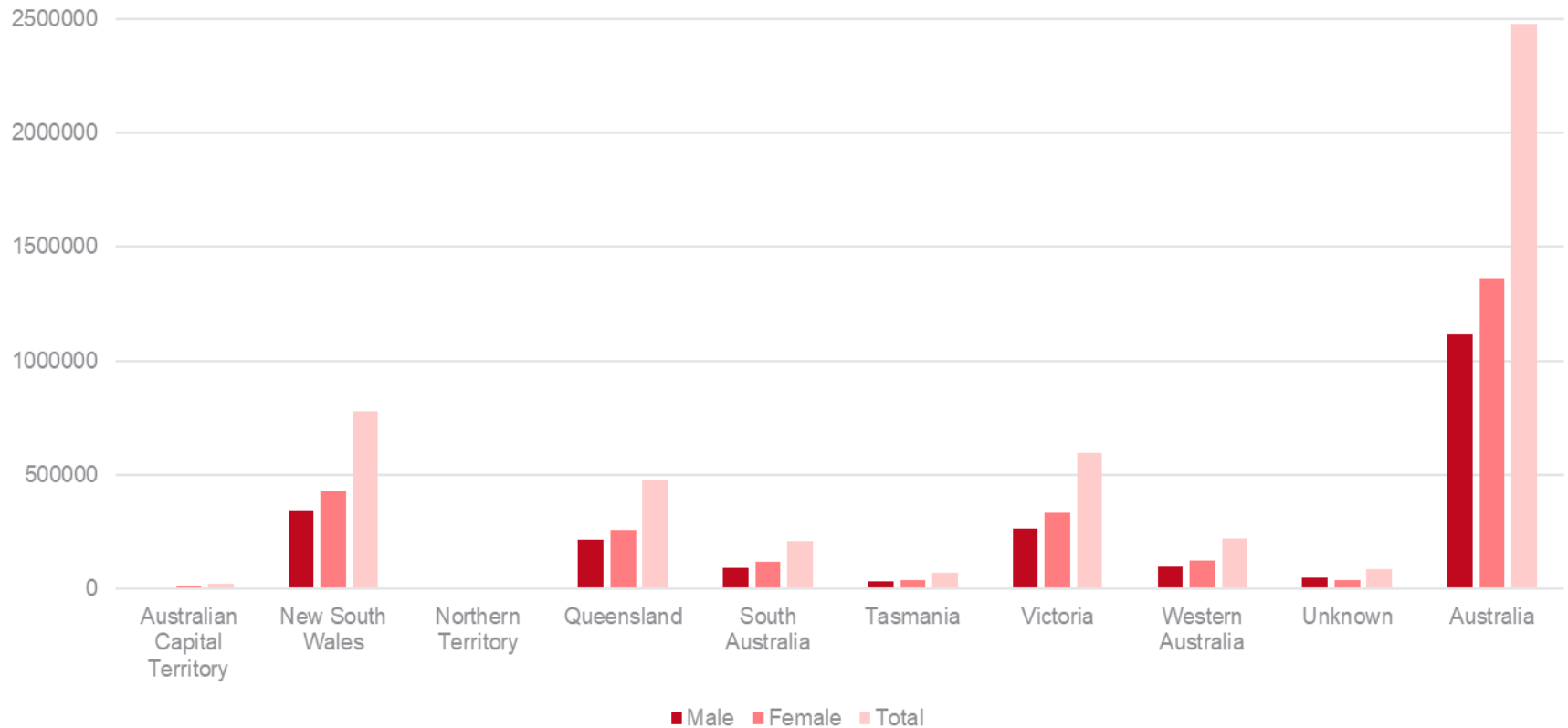


Vandenbroek (2018) 'Employment by industry statistics', Parliament Library

2016: the average woman aged 65+ received \$2K more in government pensions than the average man aged 65+

(Source: Survey of Income and housing 2015-16)

Age pension payment recipients by payment type by state and territory by gender, June 2018



How can we increase women's retirement savings?

- Remove the \$450 threshold (also an incentive for employers to fragment jobs)
- Close the gender pay gap while women are at work
- Close the care gap throughout the life cycle
- Value 'women's jobs' appropriately
- Labor's policy*:
 - Super contributions for women on Paid Parental Leave (18 weeks) and men on Dad & Partner Leave (2 weeks)
 - Estimate women with 3 children will have extra \$30K in retirement
 - Grattan Institute cautions**:
 - Policy would have only marginal effect on women's retirement incomes
 - Biggest beneficiaries will be wealthier women
- HREOC***: provide earned income tax credits (EITCs) for low-wage working parents
- Revise Age Pension for single women who rent****

Close the Gender Gap

- Closing the gender gap between men's and women's wages will make the greatest impact on retirement balances*
- In the last decade the size of the super balance gap has almost halved. In 2016, women's balances at age 60-64 were 64% lower than men's; down from 117% ten years earlier.
- But can they ever be equal given care gaps, institutional structures and life cycle gaps?



* Chomik, R. *Retirement income in Australia: Part III – Private resources*, CEPAR research brief, November 2018

Thank You

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