



This project is supported by the Victorian Government

Gender Equity in Employment

Project Report 2018-2020

*The City of Whittlesea recognise the rich
Aboriginal heritage of this country and
acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the
Traditional Owners of this place*

City of Whittlesea acknowledge and thank all the women who contributed to this research by generously sharing their experiences and giving their time in consultations and focus groups. These women and their families make up the case studies and some even starred in the film! Their stories continue to influence this Project and others.

We would like to acknowledge Barbara Pocock, Natalie Skinner and Philippa Williams for their work at the (former) Centre for Work + Life, University of South Australia and whose book *Time Bomb: work, rest and play in Australia today* (2012) heavily influenced this Project. *Time Bomb* articulated for us the inequitable experiences of work and care and the disproportionate negative impacts on women living in growth areas. Thank you.

We would like to thank Jeanette Pope, Freelance Strategy, Policy, Research for her guidance in the Project and her facilitation of the Work and Life event.

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Background

During the implementation of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2014-2018 (MPHWP) the Health Planning Team became aware of research outlining the differential access to employment for women living in growth area communities and the disproportionate number of women affected by a 'spatial leash' to caring responsibilities compared to men:

"The location of work in relation to home affects who can engage in what types of work. The separation of residential areas from centres of work perpetuates gender stereotypes that constrain and disadvantage women in particular. Women with children are on a tighter 'spatial leash' than men, especially when their children are young and they want to be accessible to them in the event of illness or other needs"¹

Professor Barbara Pocock, Natalie Skinner and Philippa Williams and their work at the (former) Centre for Work + Life, University of South Australia and specifically their book *Time Bomb: work, rest and play in Australia today (2012)* heavily influenced what has now become known as the Gender Equity in Employment Project. *Time Bomb* articulated for us the inequitable experiences of work and care and the disproportionate negative impacts on women living in growth areas.

Families move to growth areas for affordable housing and the security of owning their own home. These residential communities are however a long way from jobs. Once they have moved in, families can find themselves making trade-offs between work and family life that reinforce unequal gender roles.

We included a priority to further explore this emerging research in the MPHWP 2019-2022.

Then, in 2018 we applied for funding from the Free From Violence Local Government Preventing Violence Against Women Grants and were successful.

Over the course of the Project from 2018 to 2020, we held consultations (focus groups and interviews) with local women, developed a short film highlighting these stories, analysed employment data, mapped gendered employment patterns and held an event to workshop ideas for action and develop recommendations to explore levers local government might have to improve women's access to local employment that matches their skills. Going forward into 2021 and beyond, the intention is to share our knowledge with growth area councils and other stakeholders in the hope that together we can advance gender equality in local employment for women.

"We found women trade their careers and financial independence for lower skilled/paid jobs close to home, to be available for caring responsibilities and men trade their caring responsibilities and time with their families for long days with long commutes to maintain their careers."

¹ Timebomb: Work, rest and play in Australia today, P. 90

SECTION 1

Snapshot of the research

The following is a brief overview of some of the research that has informed the Project. A list of the key documents is available in the Appendix.

Working mothers/ carers

The *Australian Work and Life Index (AWLI)* reports have consistently demonstrated that working women experience greater time pressure than men, regardless of working hours. Women with carer responsibilities, whether single or partnered, consistently experience the worst work-life outcomes. Australia is one of the most unequal economically developed countries in terms of the sharing of domestic and care work between women and men, with women doing around twice the amount as men. Combining paid work and care is currently - and likely to remain - a struggle for the majority of women. Women are more constrained by the 'spatial leash' than men - they forgo job opportunities in line with their qualifications, skills and experience because of the need for employment closer to home and care giving responsibilities. It is therefore imperative that meaningful and relevant employment opportunities are available closer to residential areas because evidence suggests that where there is a lack of employment options that are well-remunerated and fulfilling, women will remain primarily responsible for domestic and care work.

Caring responsibilities also mean that women are more likely to work part-time and move in and out of the paid workforce which, combined with pay inequity, results in a gender gap in retirement income and superannuation, as well as a higher economic dependence on men. Further, work-life outcomes are worse for those in female-dominated industries, such as retail, accommodation and food services and education and training. It should also be noted however that research with working carers also highlights the benefits of work including providing relief from care work, personal achievement, social connection, skill development and rewards for their family. Research has also shown mothers in paid work have a positive influence on their children, their daughters are more likely to have careers

with higher paying jobs and their sons spend more time on domestic and care work.

Gender equity and the 'spatial leash'

The following text is an excerpt taken from Pocock, Skinner and Williams (2012), *Time Bomb: Work, rest and play in Australia today*.

"The location of work in relation to home affects who can engage in what types of work. The separation of residential areas from centres of work perpetuates gender stereotypes that constrain and disadvantage women in particular. Women with children are on a tighter 'spatial leash' than men, especially when their children are young and they want to be accessible to them in the event of illness or other needs. Instead of planning communities on the basis of gender equity (equal opportunity for men and women to pursue both employment and care vocations), some communities force a choice between one and the other. The result for families is reinforcement of a traditional division of labour, with many highly educated and skilled women forced to abandon careers and take lower skilled jobs close to home in order to be available to their children. The spatial organisation of work, home and community – and the time it takes to navigate them – has particularly gendered consequences. On the other hand, many men are forced to trade time with their children for long commutes and long working hours. This is particularly evident in new suburbs that are not well integrated with industry, employment or educational opportunities." p.90

In such contexts, workers with caring responsibilities describe a struggle for time. They value arrangements that reduce time demands. Having things located nearby eases time pressures for people and makes them feel more in command of their lives:

I'm five minutes to work, five minutes to school, shopping's five minutes away so you know, it's all good (Female worker, dependent children, PlannedVic)

Access to a range of services – not just 'routine' ones like shops or schools – helps facilitate the management of people's lives, especially the irregular demands of some forms of care:

My father passed away recently ... when he was very ill ... he was only five minutes away and my children's school is five minutes away ... so for me it's ideal. (Female worker, dependent children, Planned SA)

Working dads

The AWLI reports have consistently shown that men tend to work longer hours, and fathers consistently report they work more than they would like. Work-life interference is higher among fathers than compared to men who provide other types of care (such as for their elderly parents). However, it is lower than for the equivalent women.

AWLI reports and research by SGS Planning and Economics show that men travel further to work, have longer commutes and less time to spend on childcare, domestic duties and with their partner. Further, while up to 18 weeks of parental leave is allocated to the primary caregiver (usually the mother), fathers only receive two weeks of Dad or Partner Pay. In contrast, Swedish policy provides incentives for men to take parental leave, including leave that is equally distributed with mothers. Research suggests that the more days a Swedish father takes of parental leave, the more positive an impact it has on their participation in childcare and their satisfaction with their relationship with their children. Further, in countries with small

gender gaps in unpaid work there is higher female employment, reflecting a more equal distribution of caring responsibilities between women and men that enables women's participation in the workforce.

Importance of structural factors

Unhelpful language around the concept of 'work-life balance' has tended to examine the issue at an individual level, implying that work-life balance is achieved by well organised individuals who successfully juggle their commitments. This does not consider differential access to the pre-requisites for work-life balance, such as decent working conditions and relationships, appropriate labour standards, affordable access to childcare, access to transport and reasonable commute times, and a supportive community. Further, traditional ideologies of gender and gender relations have been embedded within Australian policy frameworks that have provided greater financial support to households where women stay at home to care. The introduction of economic disincentives for women engaging in the workforce once they have children have been most prominent with conservative governments, such as under Prime Minister John Howard (1996-2007). These ideologies were embedded into the Family Tax Benefit, Maternity Payment, Child Care Benefit and Tax Rebate. Therefore, State policies and the social values and norms they promote create conditions that facilitate (or undermine) social change around the distribution of care and domestic work and women's access to equal employment opportunities. Social, economic and political structures therefore create the conditions that enable women's economic and social rights to be fully realised.

Flexible work arrangements and cultural change

Evidence suggests that flexible work arrangements reduce work-life interference. However, men request flexibility much less frequently than women, and are much more likely to have their requests refused. The introduction of the right to request in the *Fair Work Act 2009* has not led to significant change in the numbers of men with flexible work arrangements, reflecting workplace cultures that are resistant and where arbitrary refusals are likely.

Therefore, enabling men to work flexibly (as many would like to do), requires a change in workplace practices. Research from Sweden suggests however, that although men took paid parental leave it did not necessarily alter the division of domestic work, particularly among more traditional relationships where the father may not have taken leave without the incentives to do so. Therefore, this underscores that *cultural* change around gendered norms of care and domestic work is essential for improving work-life outcomes for women. As the 2014 AWLI report states, “this disconnect between changing labour force participation and unchanging gendered patterns of care-giving is likely to account for the consistent observation across AWLI surveys from 2008 to 2014, that women are more likely to experience poor work-life outcomes” (p.2).

Local job creation

The City of Whittlesea is grappling with many of the issues faced by growth area municipalities that stem from rapid population growth and insufficient infrastructure investment to support this growth. The greatest share of Melbourne’s population (46.6 per cent) lives in the outer suburbs, which have experienced 57.7 per cent of Melbourne’s population growth from 2011 to 2016. The City of Whittlesea, located in the outer northern suburbs of Melbourne, is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia. The population is expected to grow by more than 160,000 people (over 50 per cent) by 2041. Much of this growth will be concentrated in the greenfield development areas (planned communities on the outskirts of urban areas).

As travel times from an outer LGA to central Melbourne increase we know:

- Population and job densities decrease;
- The proportion of jobs that are high-tech declines;
- LGA productivity declines;
- The number of people near public transport declines;
- Use of public transport to travel to work declines;
- Car use increases for the trip to work; and
- The proportion of commutes that are longer than two hours increases.

Further, outer growth areas in Melbourne have lower levels of the drivers of social inclusion, wellbeing and health, which impacts the ability of residents to work and be productive and increases social costs, including family violence. Increasing inequality and social, congestion and productivity costs are linked with underinvestment in transport infrastructure, commercial capital (private sector investment), community capital (for example hospitals and schools) and in skills development and knowledge service industries. The Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute calculated that the average shortfall was \$9 billion annually (against the actual annual rate) for the 1992 – 2031 period.

Improving the spatial arrangements of work, transport and support services in the City of Whittlesea can play an important role in promoting gender equity, particularly because the spatial leash prevents women from travelling long distances for work. City of Whittlesea’s job deficit means 70 per cent of workers travel outside the municipality for work and as such, local job creation is a priority and should respond to the skills and qualifications of the existing population as well support the transition to the high skill and knowledge intense services and industries that will characterise the future of work. Transitioning to a more knowledge-based economy in the City of Whittlesea will require investment in high-tech jobs and potentially the development of local agglomerations that drive productivity and attract higher skilled jobs. Innovative practices such as co-working spaces or hubs can also benefit the increasing number of local women with primary caregiver roles who establish their own business as a strategy for gaining more control over their work environment. Further, preparing residents for the future of work will also require improving educational outcomes by reducing barriers to post-school education and delivering targeted strategies aimed at keeping young people in school. Funding for essential community infrastructure and services, such as education, community, recreation, aged care and facilities, public transport and open spaces would also be a key driver of local job creation as well as promoting a thriving, healthy and connected community.

Connection between gender equity in employment and preventing violence against women

In Australia, one woman every week is murdered by a current or former partner and thousands more are injured or live in fear. The social, health and economic costs of violence against women are enormous, with intimate partner violence contributing to more death, disability and illness in women aged 15 to 44 years old than any other preventable risk factor. Further, family violence is the single largest driver of homelessness for women, is a common factor in child protection notifications and results in a police call-out on average once every two minutes across the country.

National and international research has found that violence against women is consistently associated with indicators of gender inequality, which refers to social conditions characterised by unequal value afforded to women and men and the unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunities between them. Gender inequality is perpetuated through structures that organise and reinforce unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men, for example laws and policies; social norms that prescribe gendered expectations of conduct, roles, interests and contributions such as women are best suited to care for children; and the daily practices, behaviours and choices that reinforce these gendered structures and norms for example women sacrificing careers to be primary caregivers. Levels of violence against women are significantly and consistently higher in societies, communities and relationships where there are rigid distinctions between the roles of women and men and between feminine and masculine identities that promote what an 'ideal' woman or man should be such as male breadwinner and female homemaker.

In 2018, Australia was ranked 49th out of 149 countries in the World Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum. In the City of Whittlesea, the VicHealth

Community Indicators Survey in 2015 revealed 29 per cent of women and 49 per cent of men show low support for gender equality in relationships (39 per cent overall compared with the Victorian average of 37 per cent).

"Evidence tells us that people who see women and men as having specific and distinct characteristics are more likely to condone, tolerate or excuse violence against women."

Research also highlights that limits to women's independence or autonomy increases the probability of violence against women. Women also face barriers to economic participation and financial wellbeing due to pay inequity², interrupted work histories (as a result of caring responsibilities), higher representation in lower paying industries and roles, and lower superannuation balances upon retirement. Financial abuse includes behaviours aimed at controlling women's ability to acquire, use or maintain money, credit, property or other economic resources and which harm women's economic security and potential to be financially independent. These contribute to violence against women by making women financially dependent on men as well as socially isolated, which makes leaving violent relationships difficult, especially for those with children. Even where tactics of financial abuse do not occur, the physical and psychological dimensions of family violence have economic impacts and results in financial disadvantage. Women who do leave domestic or family violence contexts can face significant financial stress that places pressure on them to return to those relationships due to the costs of escaping abuse, such as relocating, accumulation of debt, loss of employment and legal costs associated with ending a relationship.

² According to the Whittlesea Annual Household Survey 2017 (p.47), the gender pay gap was 14.3 per cent.

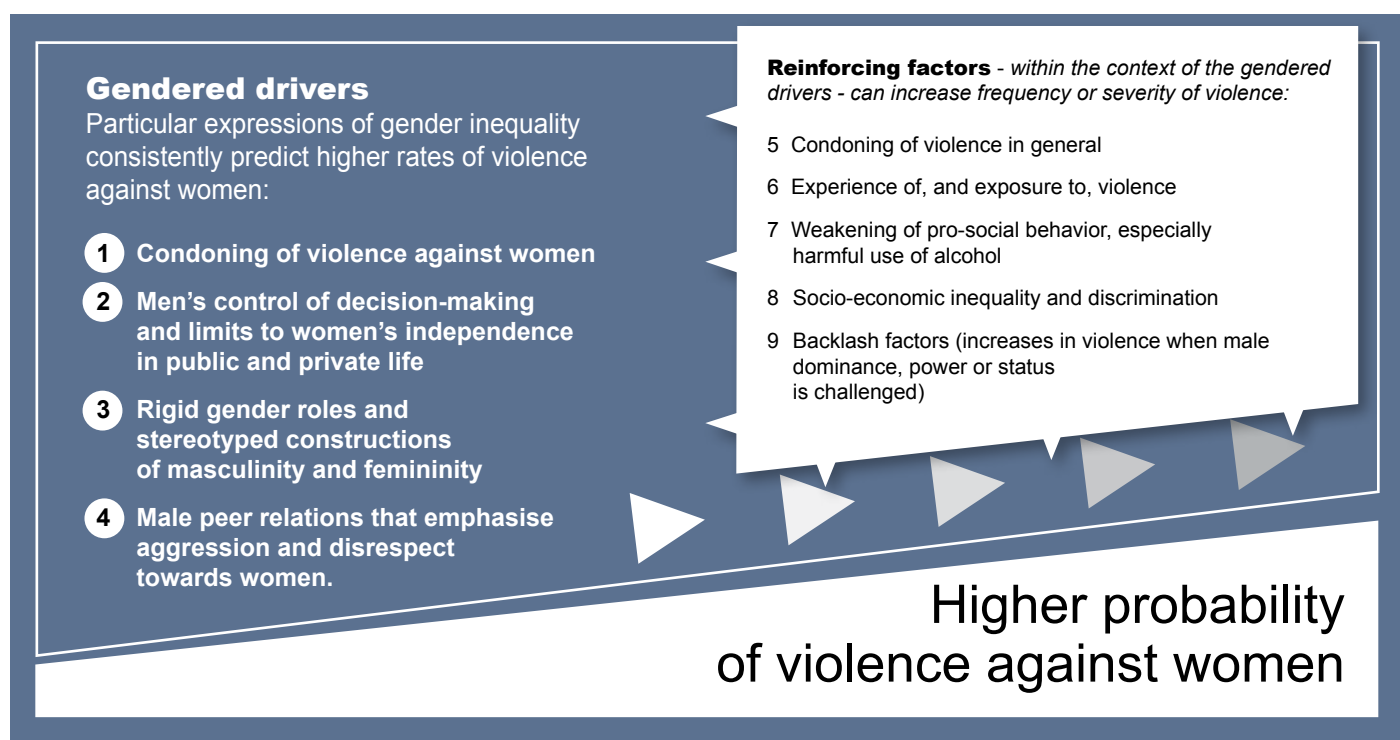
Preventing violence against women is a matter of urgency and can only be achieved through approaches that address the complexities of gendered violence and which promote deep and lasting social transformation. The Our Watch *Change the Story Framework* makes clear that gender inequality is the core of the problem of violence against women and is the heart of the solution. Addressing gender inequality requires engagement and commitment from diverse organisations and institutions, whole communities as well as individual women and men. No single initiative or strategy can address the complexity of gender inequality or violence against women; however they can form an important part of the solution that leads to changes in structures, social norms and daily practices, behaviours and choices that promote gender equality.

“Promoting economic independence is a key primary prevention approach to preventing violence against women, facilitating women’s ability to leave violence and improving community attitudes to gender equality.”

In the context of the City of Whittlesea, where opportunities for local employment are limited compared to employment hubs in the inner city, enhancing women’s financial independence and security is a vital means of equalising access to power and resources, increasing social and economic participation, and promoting social and cultural networks and connections that provide sources of peer support.

“The Gender Equity in Employment Project is therefore a primary prevention strategy that aims to improve social conditions by reducing local employment gaps and increasing the employment of women in local jobs that match their skill sets, challenging the underlying social norms, practices and structures that support the context for violence against women to occur.”

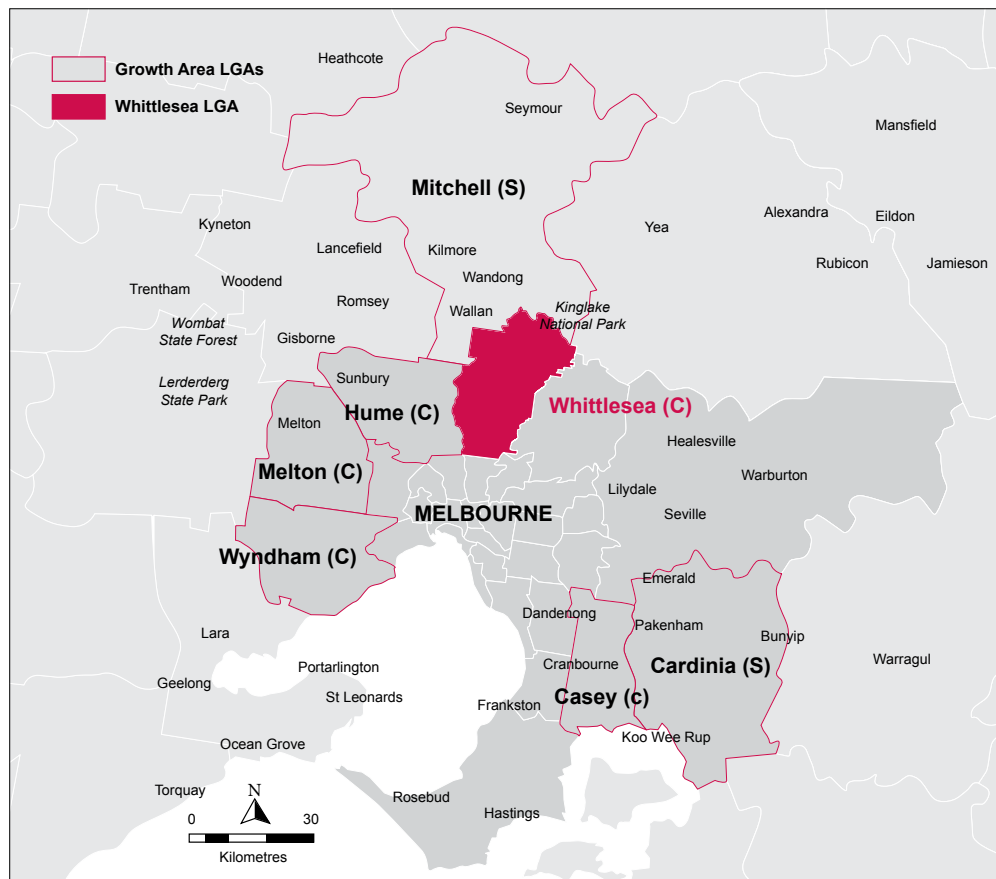
An explanatory model of violence: Change The Story Framework p. 8



SECTION 2

Mapping gendered employment patterns: Indicator analysis

This section reviews indicators to understand the relationship between employment and gender equity. The results for the City of Whittlesea are compared to other Victorian growth LGAs and metropolitan Melbourne.



Indicators for gender equity in employment access that were looked at include:

- Income
- Labour force participation
- Part time employment
- Occupation
- Industry
- Education
- Unpaid childcare
- Distance to work

All data has been drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census 2016) and related to place of usual residence. Analysis and interactive maps³ were prepared by SGS Economics & Planning in an unpublished report *Gender Equity in Employment: City of Whittlesea (2019)*. SGS Economics and Planning has taken all due care in the preparation of this report. However, SGS and its associated consultants are not liable to any person or entity for any damage or loss that has occurred, or may occur, in relation to that person or entity taking or not taking action in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to herein.

Following is a summary of the key findings.

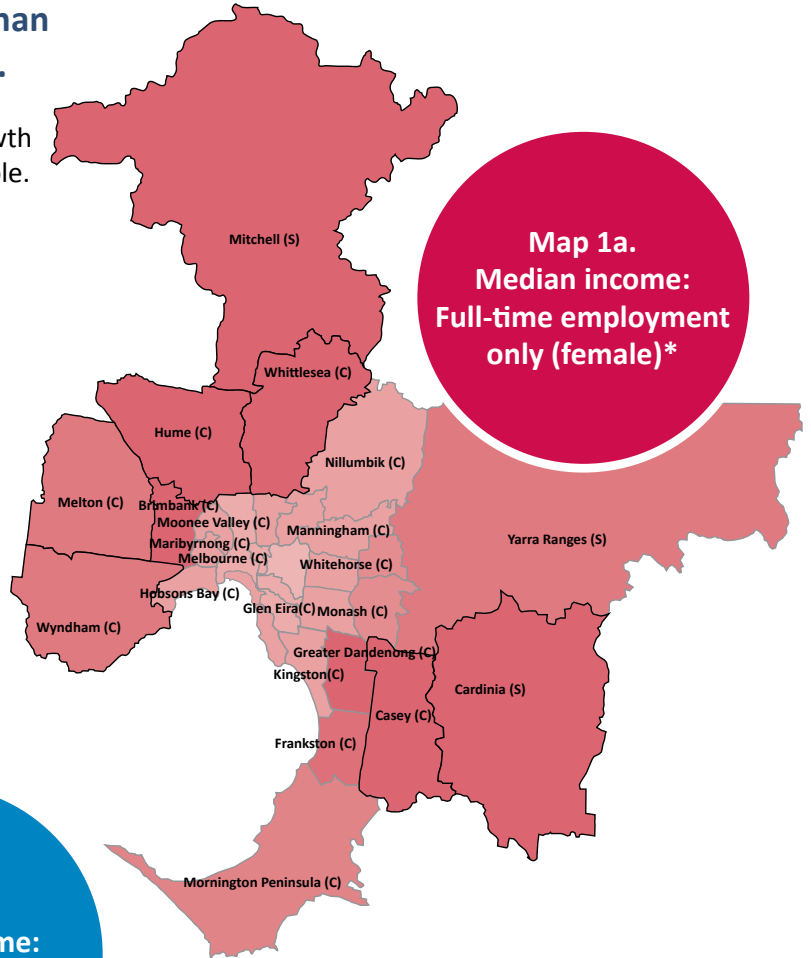
³ Interactive data dashboard: <https://public.tableau.com/views/GenderEquityandEmployment/mapsseries?:showVizHome=no&:embed=true#2>

Income

Men consistently earn higher incomes than women across metropolitan Melbourne.

Incomes for both women and men are lower in growth areas than across metropolitan Melbourne as a whole.

Map 1a.
Median income:
Full-time employment
only (female)*



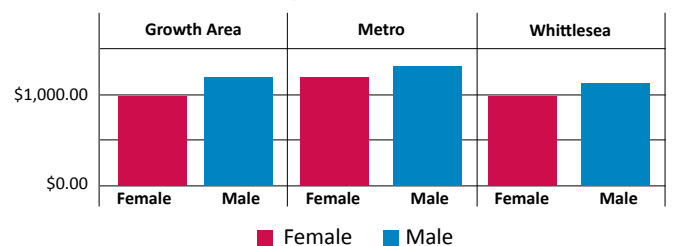
Map 1b.
Median income:
Full-time employment
only (male)*



Table 1. Median income by growth LGA, full-time employment only

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	\$ 1,038.92	\$ 1,214.97
Casey	\$ 1,017.29	\$ 1,171.57
Hume	\$ 1,025.99	\$ 1,155.71
Melton	\$ 1,070.30	\$ 1,226.77
Mitchell	\$ 1,046.00	\$ 1,211.00
Whittlesea	\$ 1,038.49	\$ 1,183.18
Wyndham	\$ 1,077.36	\$ 1,252.02

Region / Gender



Labour force participation

A greater percentage of women across metropolitan Melbourne do not participate in the labour force compared to men (38 per cent compared to 28 per cent).

Rates of female non-participation are higher in the City of Whittlesea (42 per cent) than in other growth areas (38 per cent).

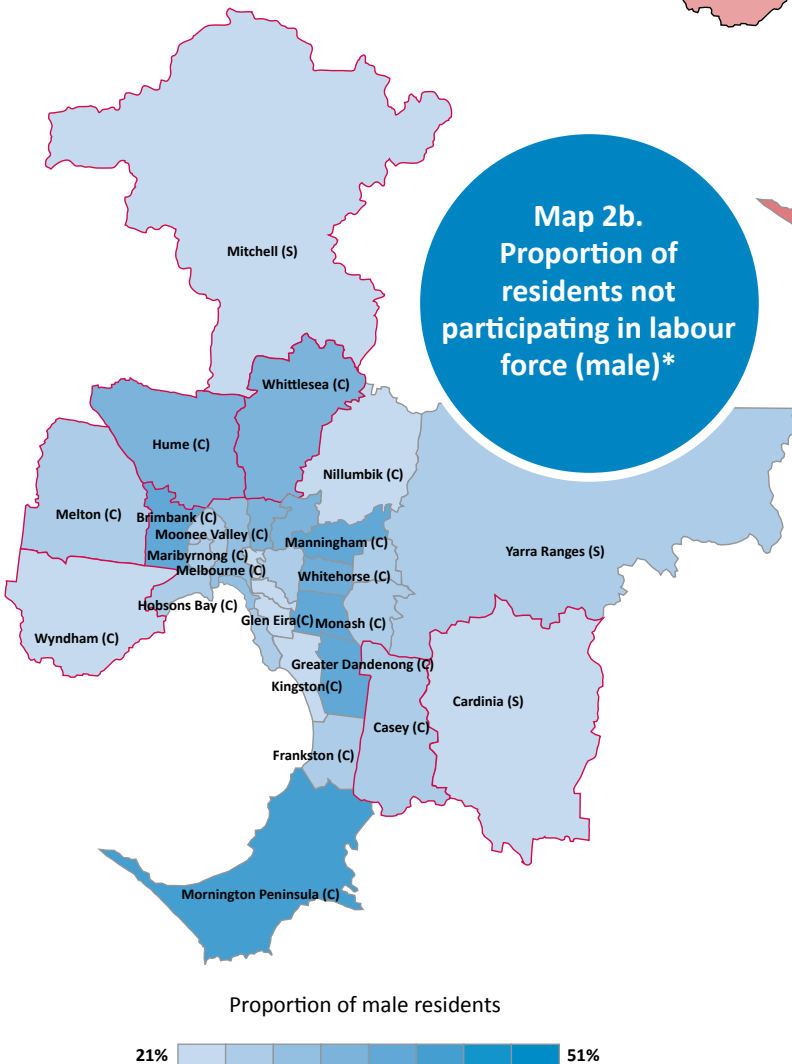
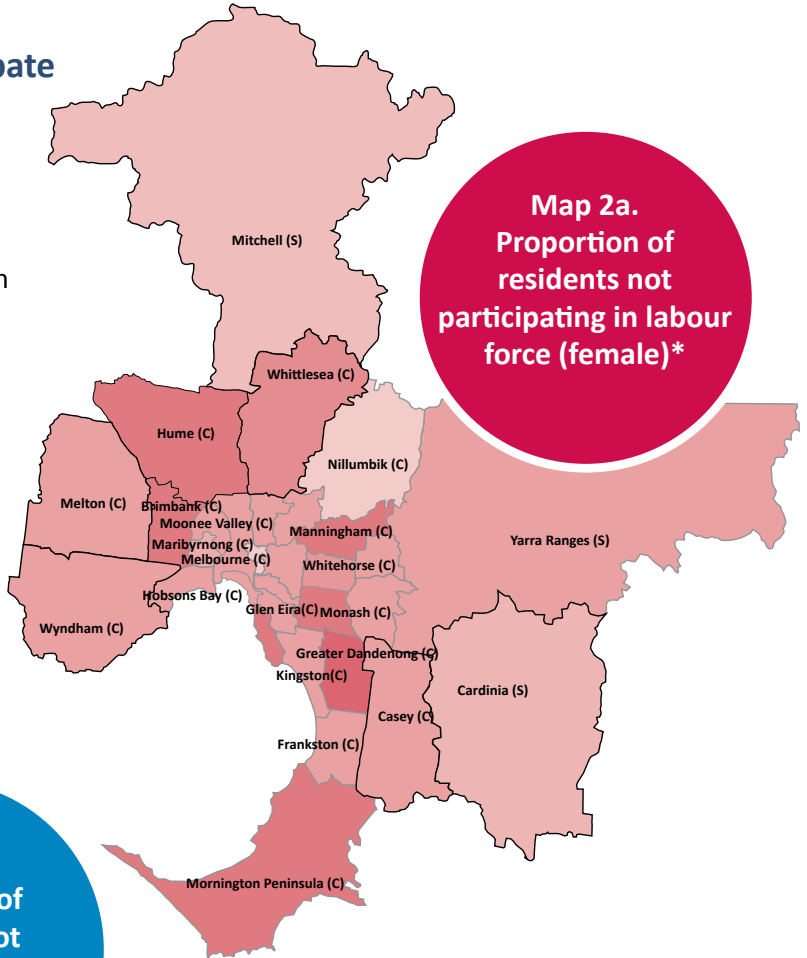
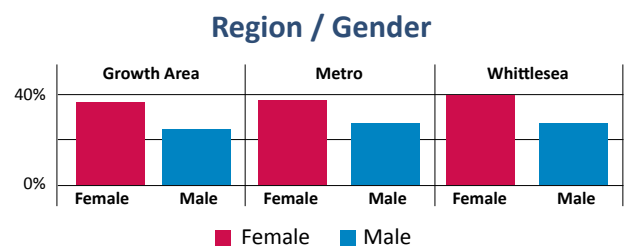


Table 2. Proportion of growth LGA residents not participating in labour force

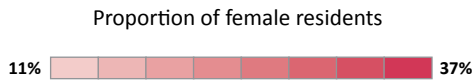
LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	36%	24%
Casey	39%	25%
Hume	46%	31%
Melton	39%	26%
Mitchell	29%	20%
Whittlesea	42%	29%
Wyndham	38%	23%



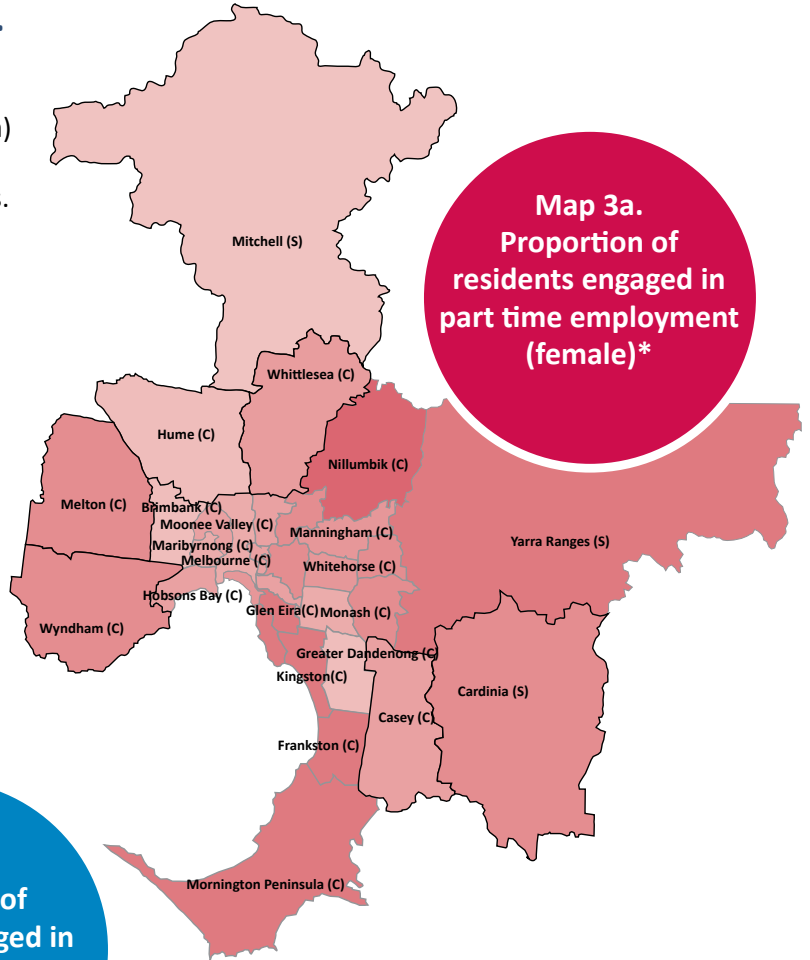
Part-time employment

More women than men work part time.

However, the western and northern growth LGAs (Wyndham, Melton, Mitchell, Hume and Whittlesea) show a trend of lower rates of women working part time when compared with other metropolitan LGAs.



*Proportion of residents engaged in part time employment (Census 2016)



Map 3b.
Proportion of residents engaged in part time employment (male)*

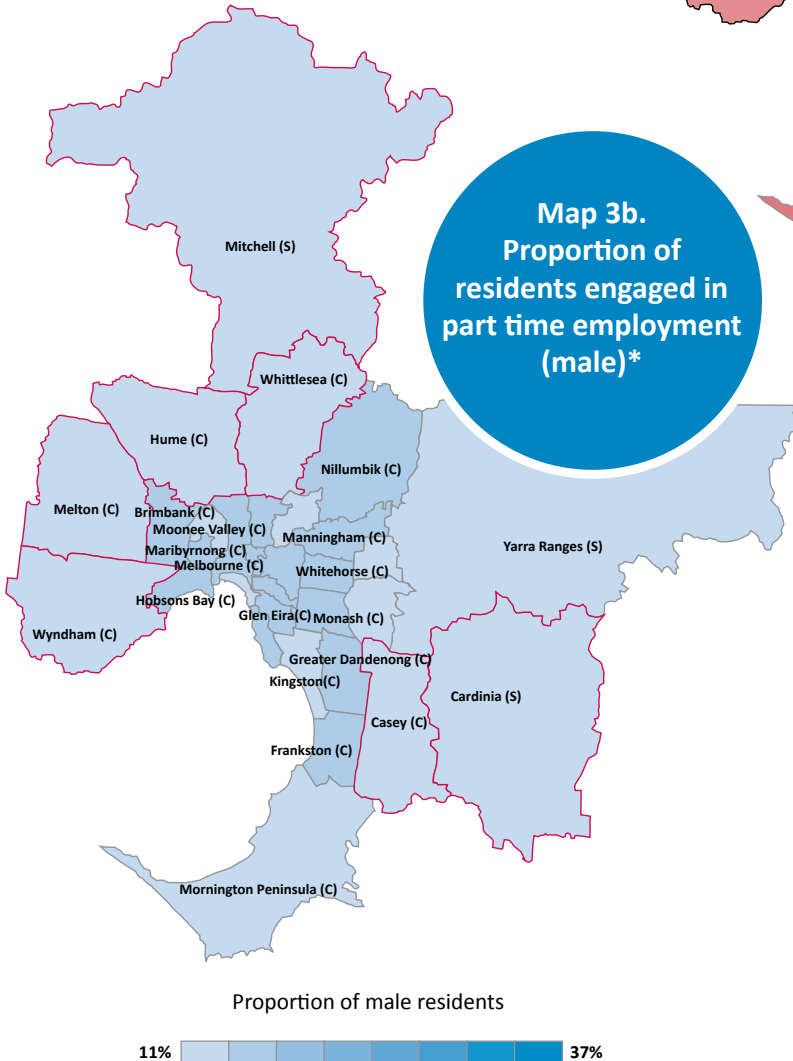
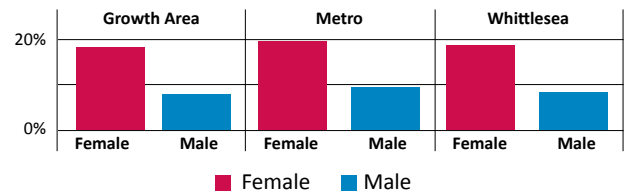


Table 3. Proportion of growth LGA residents engaged in part-time employment

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	30%	12%
Casey	26%	13%
Hume	23%	14%
Melton	26%	12%
Mitchell	20%	8%
Whittlesea	26%	13%
Wyndham	24%	13%

Region / Gender



Occupation

A lower proportion of women work in more highly skilled jobs in growth LGAs compared to metropolitan Melbourne.

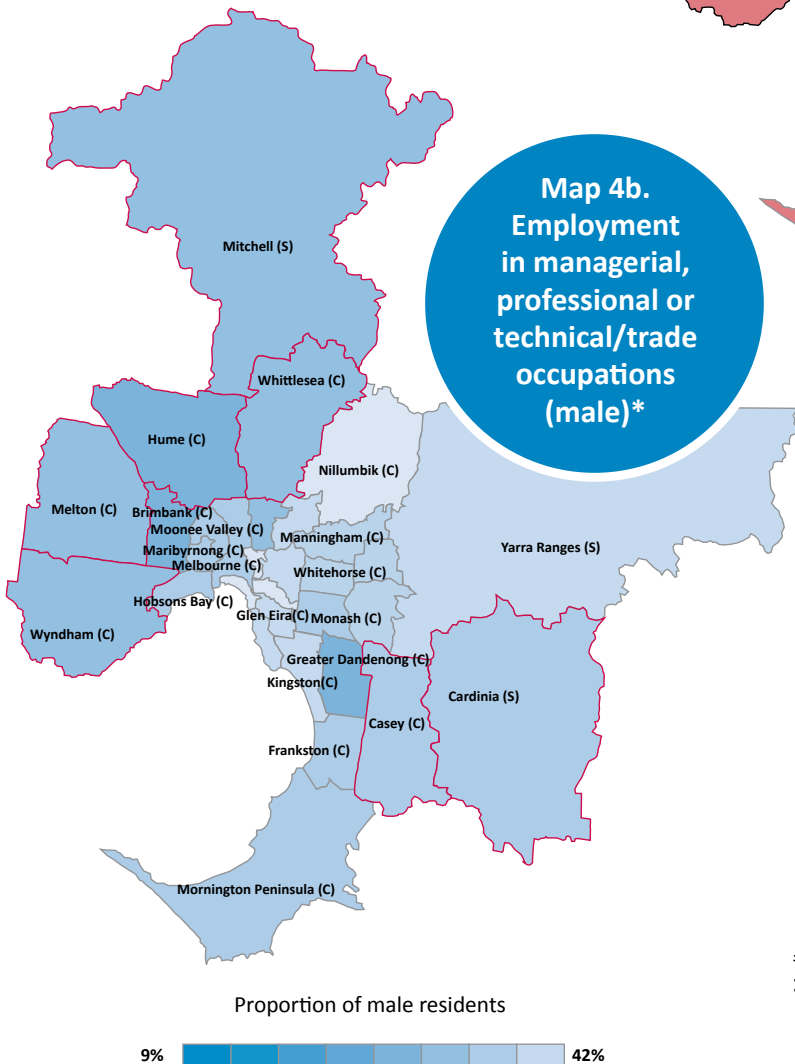
The western and northern growth LGAs show particularly low rates of employment in these types of jobs.



Map 4a.
Employment in managerial, professional or technical/trade occupations (female)*

Proportion of female residents
9% 42%

*Employment in managerial, professional or technical/trade occupations (Census 2016)

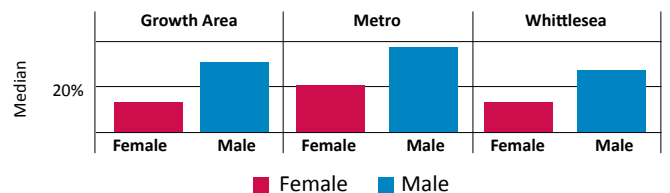


Map 4b.
Employment in managerial, professional or technical/trade occupations (male)*

Table 4. Proportion of growth LGA residents employed

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	14%	28%
Casey	13%	26%
Hume	11%	21%
Melton	12%	23%
Mitchell	13%	25%
Whittlesea	13%	24%
Wyndham	13%	24%

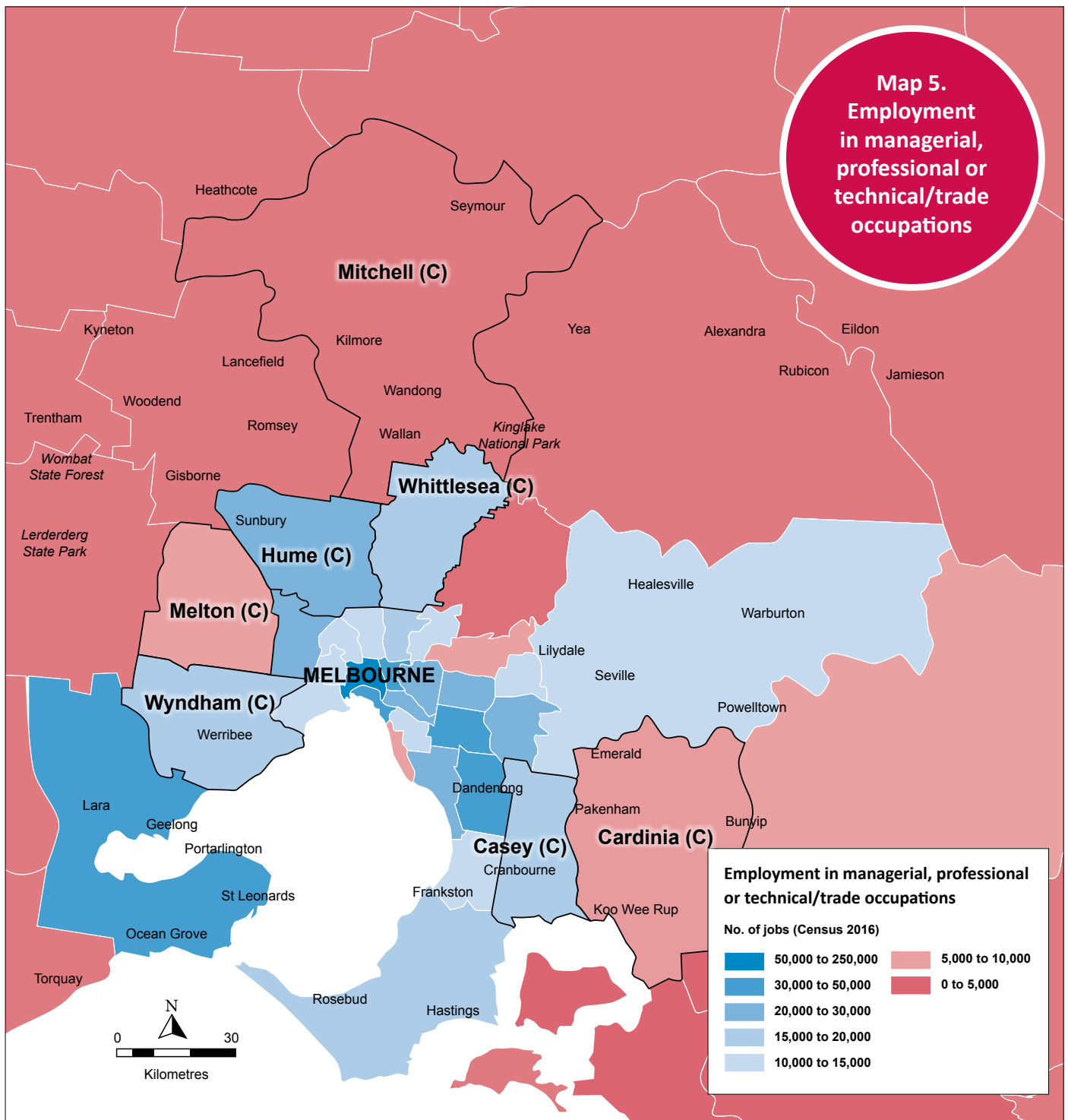
Region / Gender



Job locations

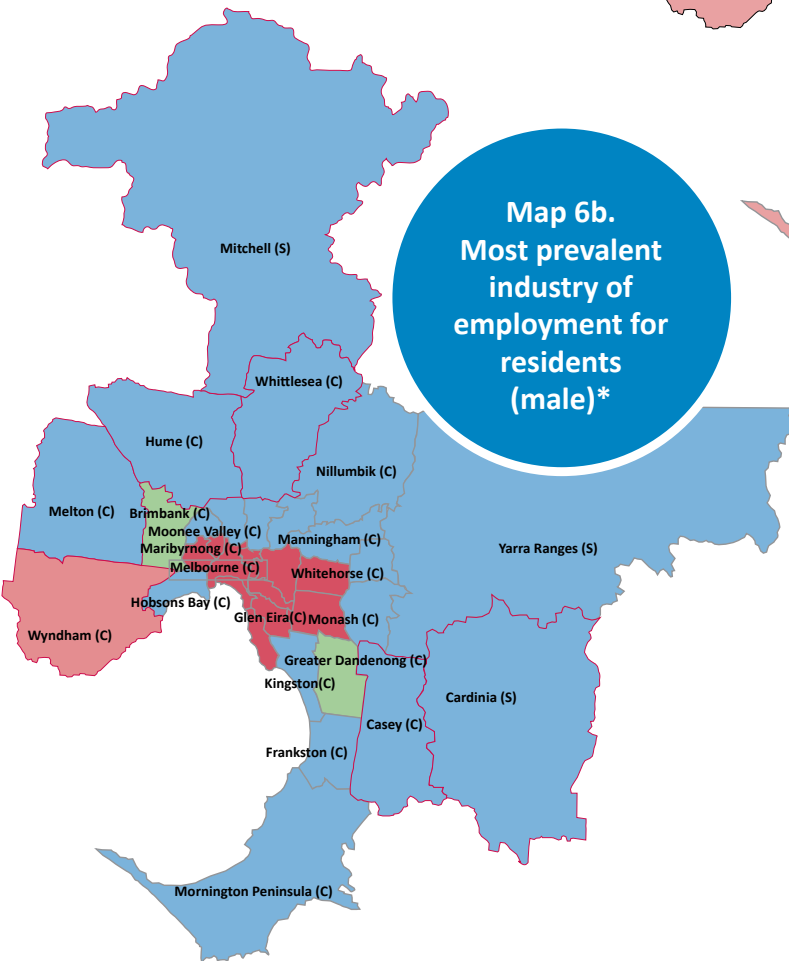
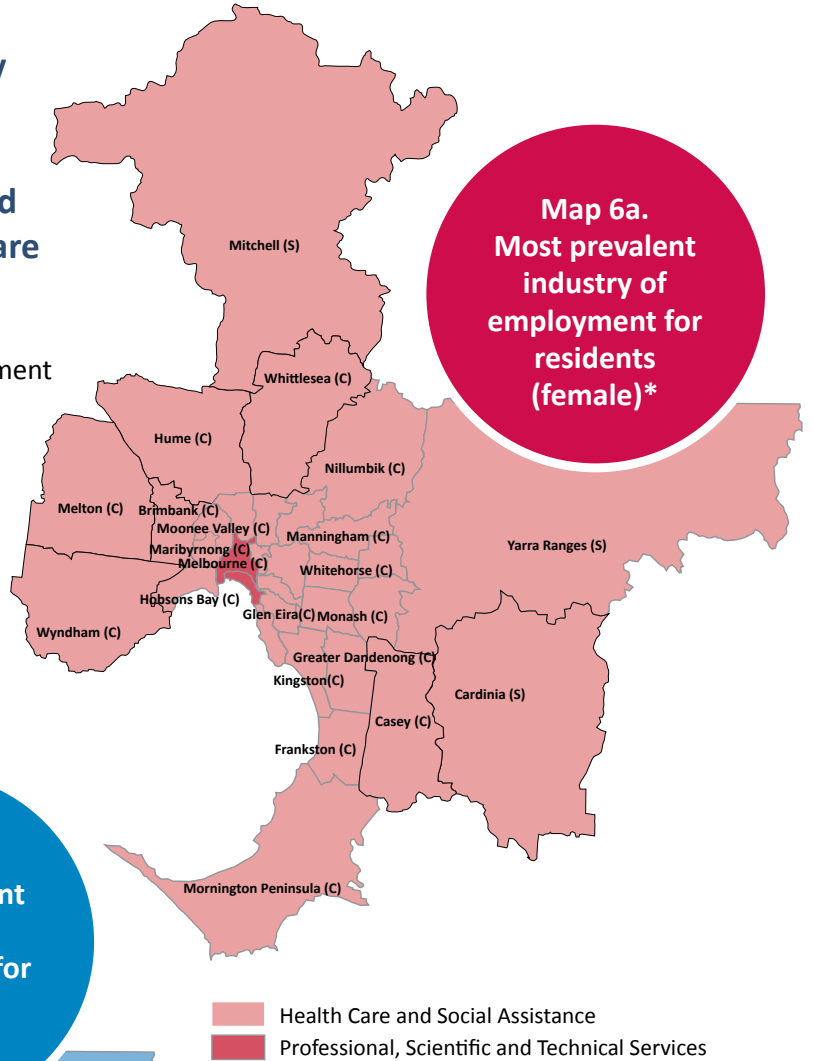
There are more highly skilled jobs (jobs in managerial, professional and technical/trade) in the south and west of metropolitan Melbourne.

Residents in the City Whittlesea and other northern and western growth LGAs need to travel further to access concentrations of skilled jobs



The most prevalent industry of employment for women who live in City of Whittlesea and other growth LGAs is Health Care and Social Assistance (including work in hospitals, medical and other health care services, residential care services and social assistance services).

LGAs where the most prevalent industry of employment is Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, are located closer to the central city.

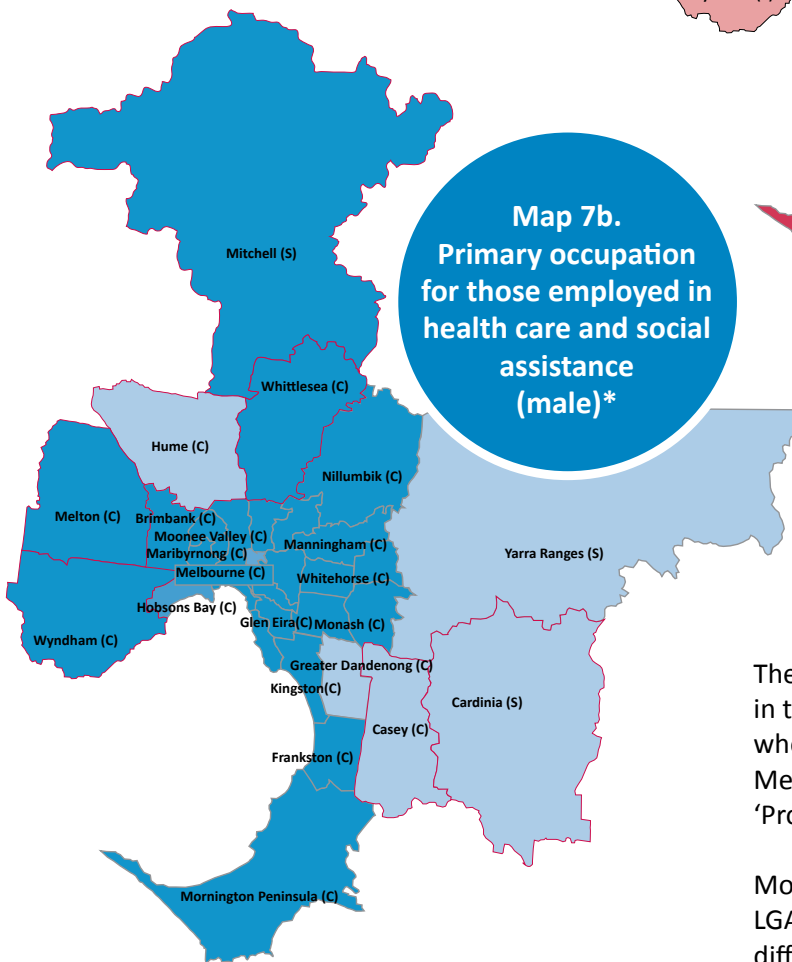
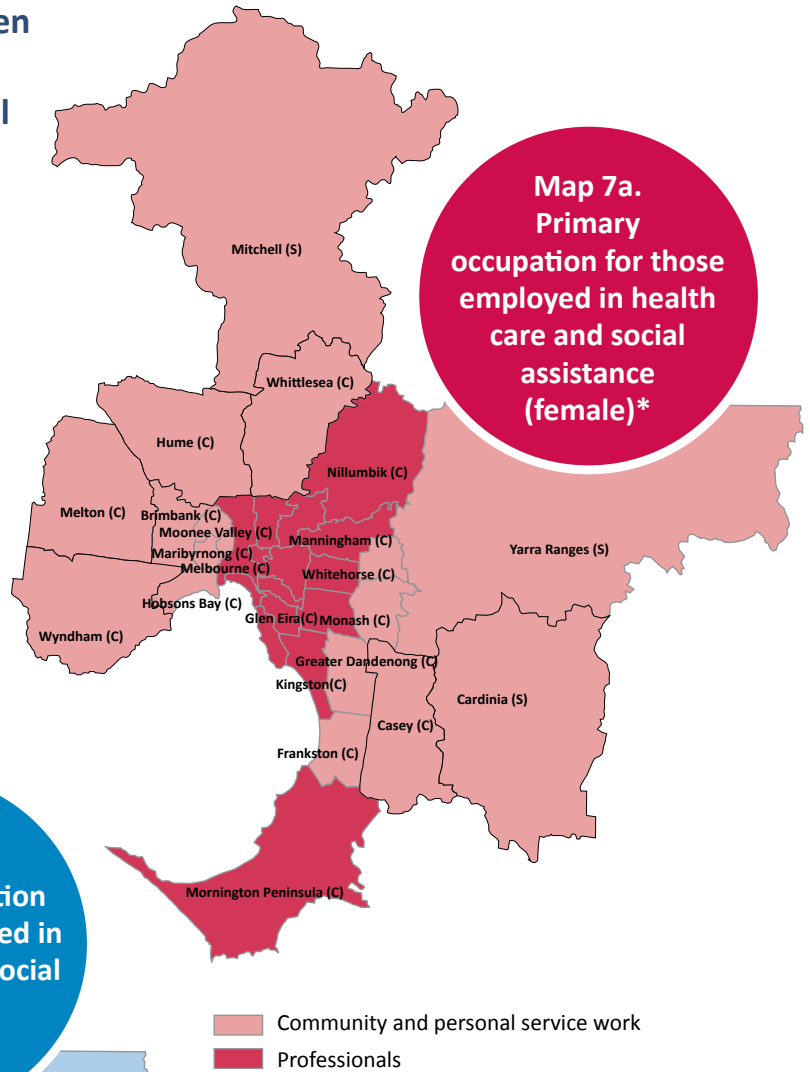


*Most prevalent industry of employment for residents (Census 2016)

Prevalent occupations in health

The most prevalent occupation for women who live in the City of Whittlesea and are working in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is 'Community and Personal Service Worker'

Whereas for men working in the same industry the most prevalent occupation is 'Professional'. This is largely consistent with other outer ring and growth area LGAs (excluding Nillumbik and Mornington Peninsula).



*Primary occupation for those employed in health care and social assistance (Census 2016)

The primary occupation for those women employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry who live in inner and middle suburbs of Metropolitan Melbourne, Mornington Peninsula and Nillumbik, is 'Professional, Scientific and Technical Workers'.

Mornington Peninsula and Nillumbik, as Interface LGAs, contrast in results with growth LGAs due to their different age, income and education profiles.

Education

Women consistently have higher levels of tertiary education than men across metropolitan Melbourne.

Levels of tertiary education are considerably lower for women and men in growth LGAs, including the City of Whittlesea.

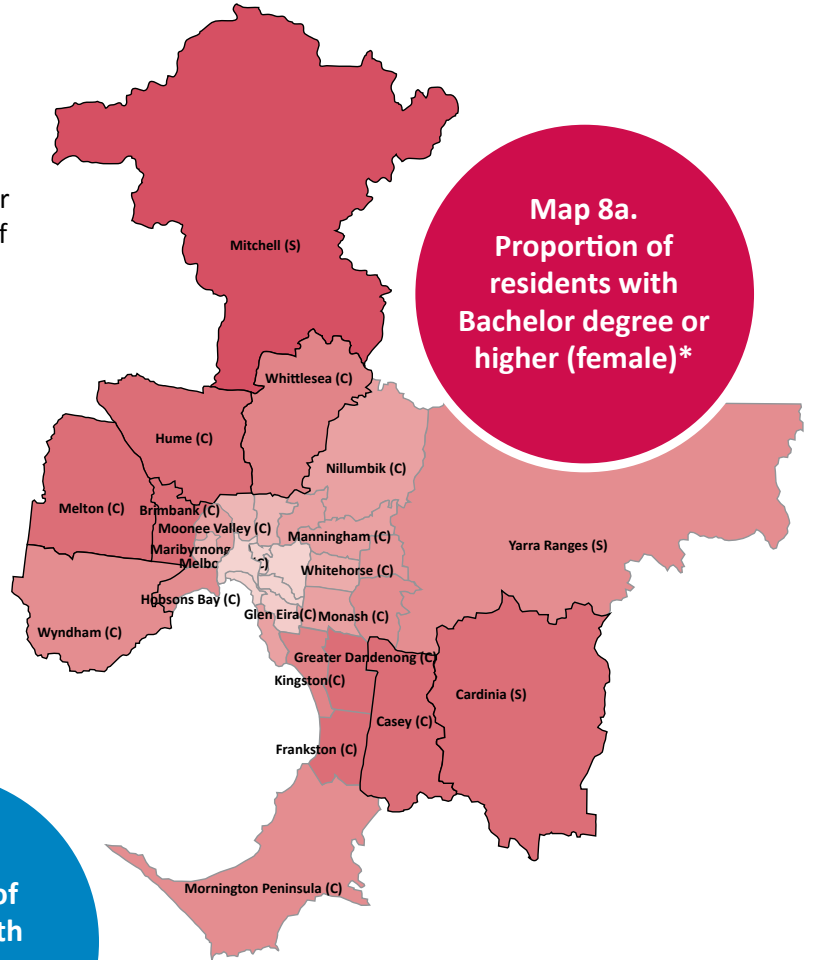
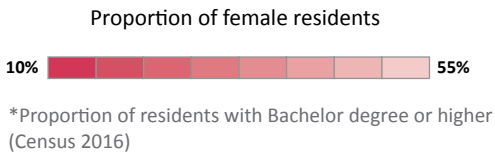
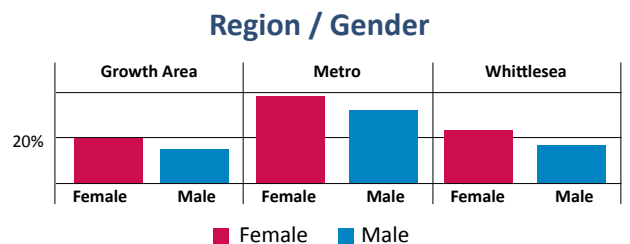


Table 8. Proportion of growth LGA residents with Bachelor degree or higher

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	18%	12%
Casey	20%	16%
Hume	18%	14%
Melton	20%	15%
Mitchell	11%	6%
Whittlesea	22%	18%
Wyndham	28%	25%

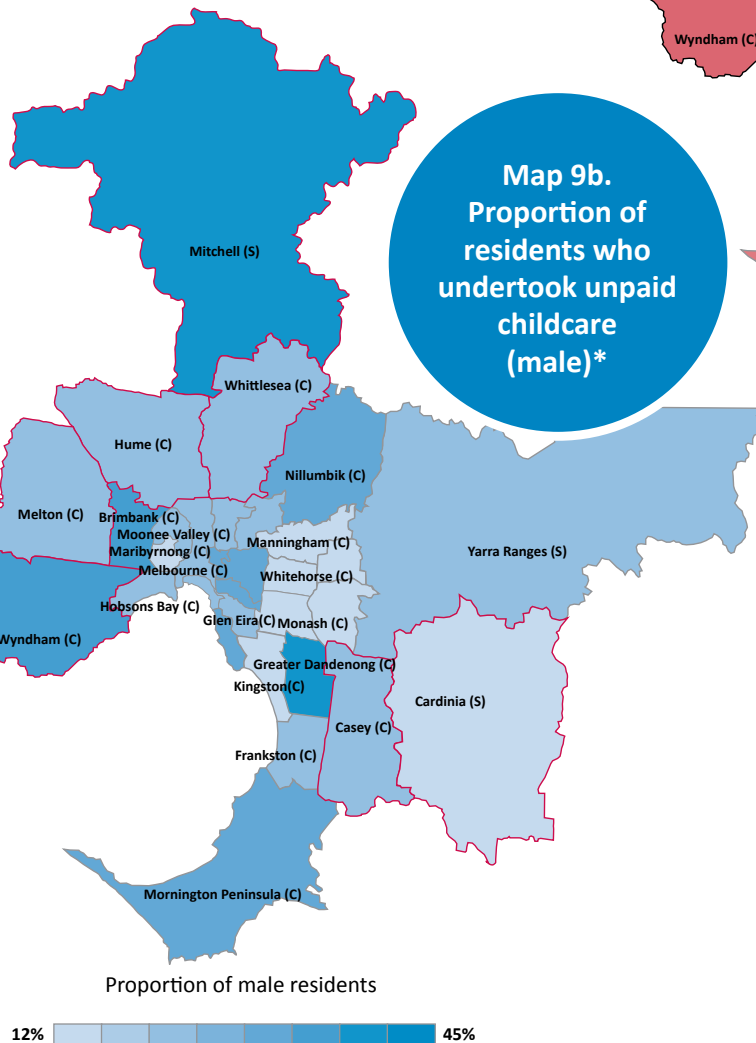


Unpaid childcare

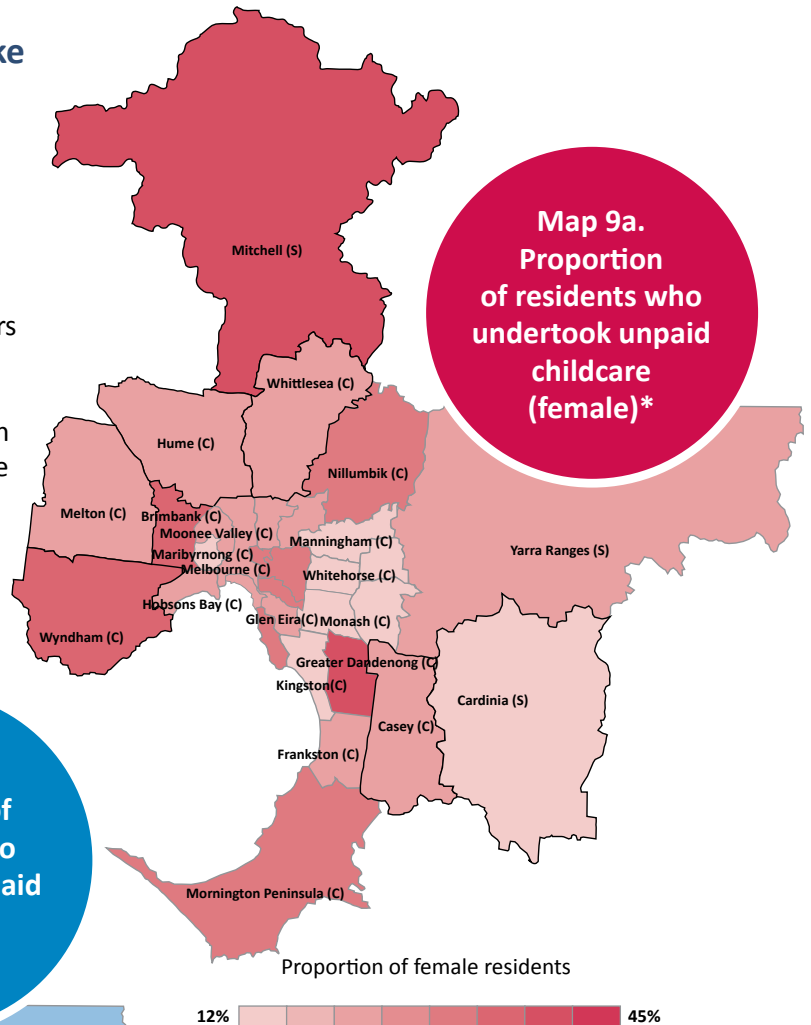
A greater proportion of women undertake unpaid childcare than men.

‘Unpaid childcare’ refers to any amount of unpaid time spent caring for one’s own or someone else’s children in the two weeks prior to the Census.⁴

Women in the City of Whittlesea undertake more hours of unpaid childcare than women and men across metropolitan Melbourne (38 per cent, compared to 33 per cent and 26 per cent respectively), but less than women in other growth LGAs (42 per cent). Men in the City of Whittlesea also undertake less hours of unpaid childcare than men in other growth LGAs (28 per cent compared to 31 per cent).



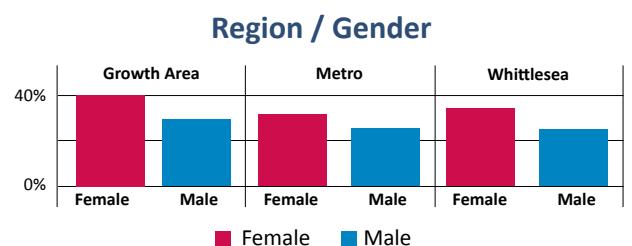
⁴ The Census does capture not data relating to the total amount of time spent an individual spends on unpaid childcare, or whether they are a primary carer. However, this is an important consideration.



*Proportion of residents who undertook unpaid childcare (Census 2016)

Table 9. Proportion of growth LGA residents who undertook unpaid childcare

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	42%	32%
Casey	39%	29%
Hume	36%	26%
Melton	42%	32%
Mitchell	43%	28%
Whittlesea	38%	28%
Wyndham	43%	33%



Distance to work

Men typically travel a greater distance to work than women.

Women in outer ring and growth LGAs travel the furthest to work compared with women living in inner and middle LGAs.

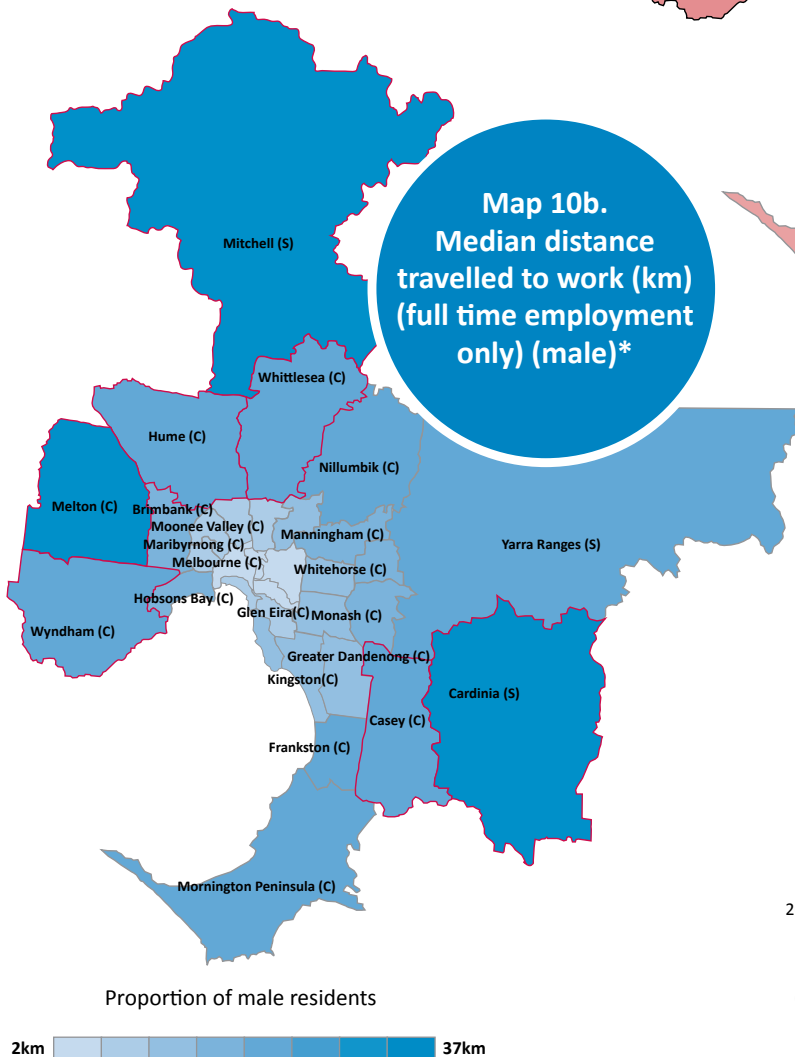
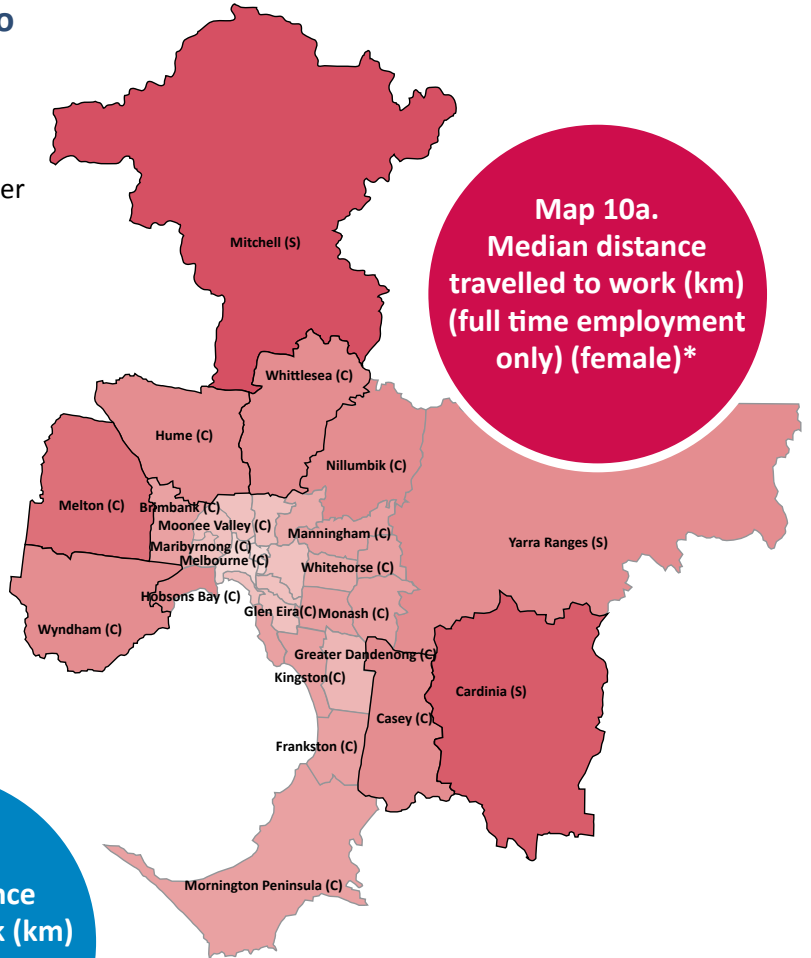
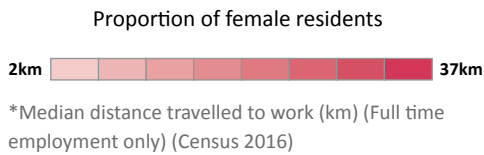
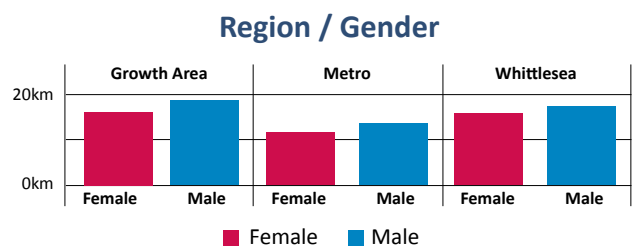


Table 10. Median distance travelled to work (km) by growth LGA residents

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	21.17km	26.65km
Casey	16.59km	19.57km
Hume	16.23km	18.06km
Melton	18.77km	22.93km
Mitchell	27km	35km
Whittlesea	16.24km	19.3km
Wyndham	16.26km	20.23km



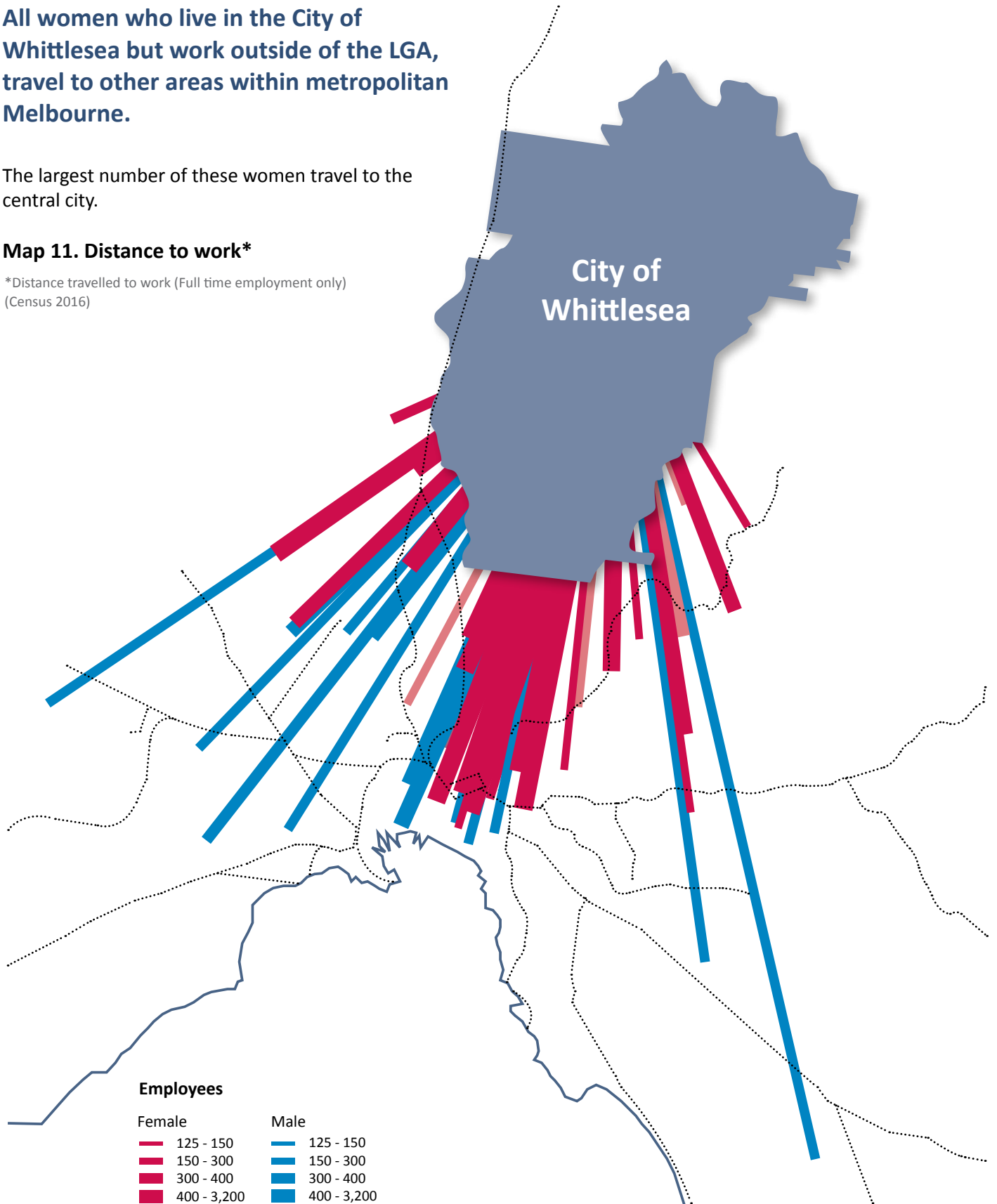
Destination of work: City of Whittlesea

All women who live in the City of Whittlesea but work outside of the LGA, travel to other areas within metropolitan Melbourne.

The largest number of these women travel to the central city.

Map 11. Distance to work*

*Distance travelled to work (Full time employment only)
(Census 2016)



SECTION 3

Mapping gendered employment patterns: Gap analysis

This section provides an analysis of the relationship between the key indicators explored in Section 2. Change in the results over time are also examined by comparing Census data from 2011 and 2016.

Spatial gaps in employment access were looked at by LGAs in metropolitan Melbourne. The relationship between two indicators were investigated and compared across 2011 and 2016.

The gaps investigated include:

- Education and Income
- Skills and Income
- Education and occupation gap analysis

Education and income gap analysis

A greater share of women than men with a tertiary education earn less than \$65k per year across metropolitan Melbourne.

The prevalence of a gap between educational attainment and earnings is greatest for women living in the western and northern growth LGAs.

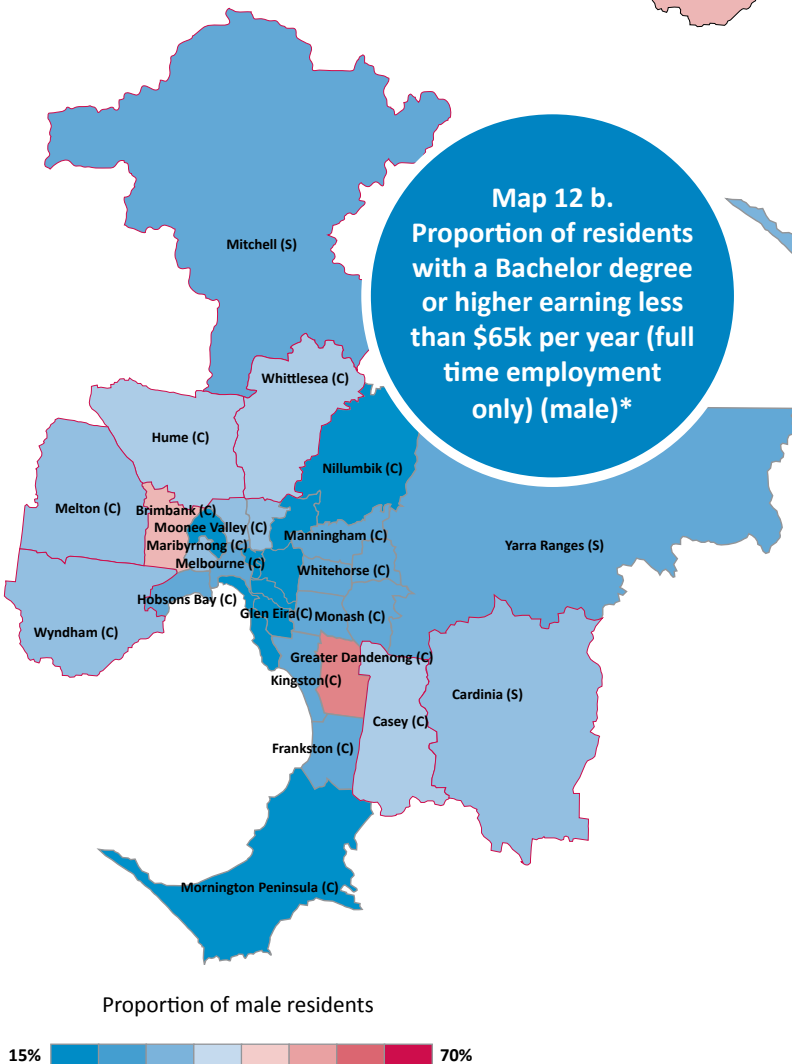
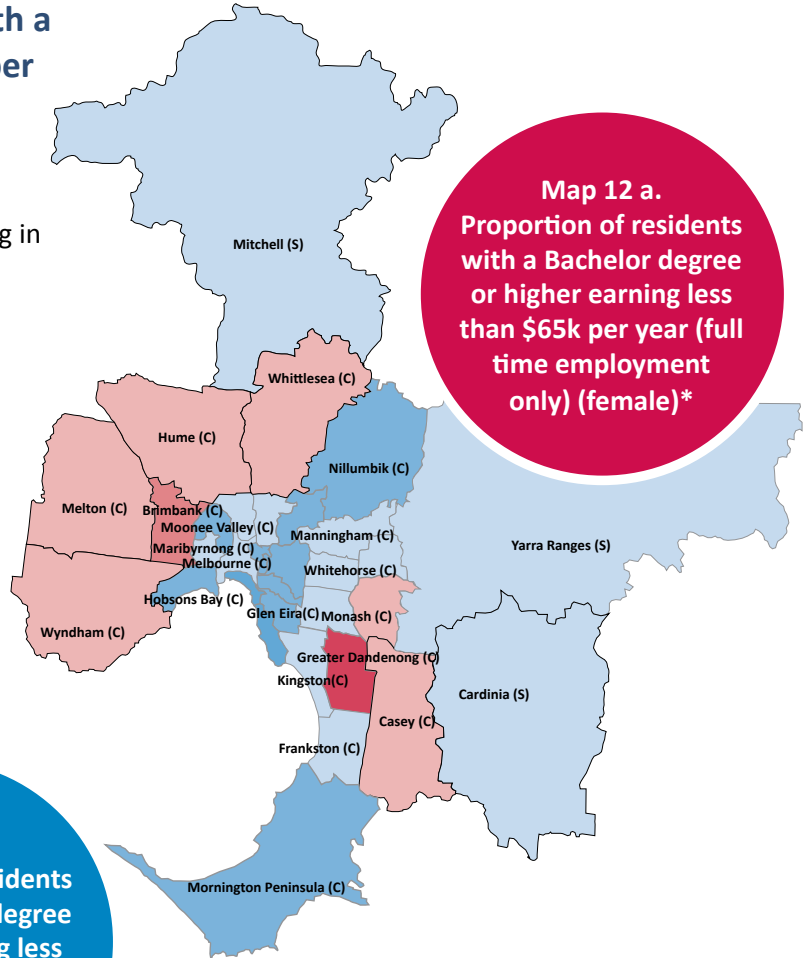
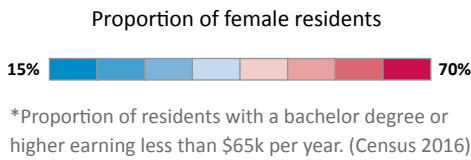
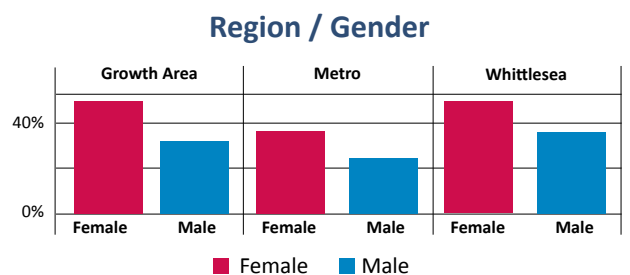


Table 12. Proportion of growth LGA residents with a bachelor degree or higher earning less than \$65K per year (full-time employment only)

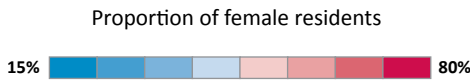
LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	42%	30%
Casey	49%	36%
Hume	49%	39%
Melton	44%	32%
Mitchell	38%	25%
Whittlesea	48%	38%
Wyndham	48%	34%



Skills and income gap analysis

A larger share of women working in higher-skill occupations earn less than \$65k per year compared to men.

The difference between skill level and earnings is more pronounced in growth LGAs for both women and men.



*Proportion of residents employed in Managerial/Professional/Technical and trade jobs earning less than 65k per year. (Census 2016)

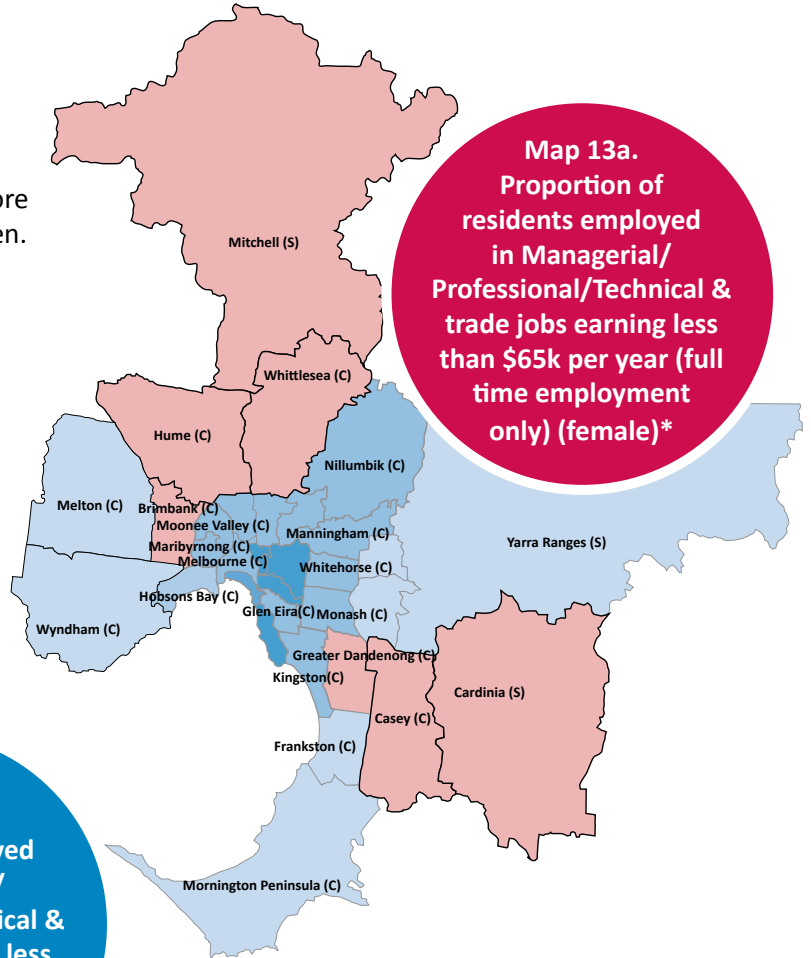
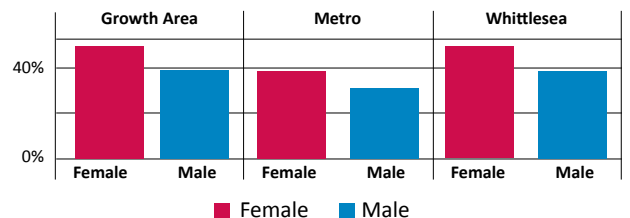


Table 13. Proportion of growth LGA residents employed in Managerial/Professional/Technical & trade jobs earning less than \$65k per year (full-time employment only)

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	50%	38%
Casey	50%	39%
Hume	49%	40%
Melton	47%	36%
Mitchell	48%	40%
Whittlesea	50%	39%
Wyndham	44%	32%

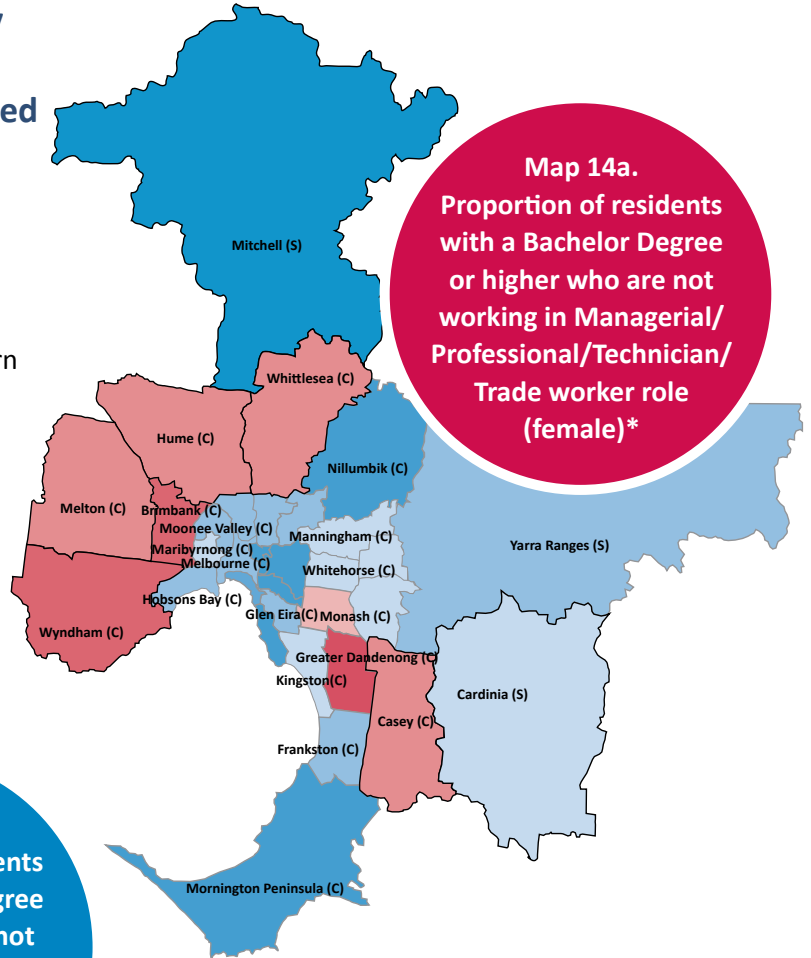
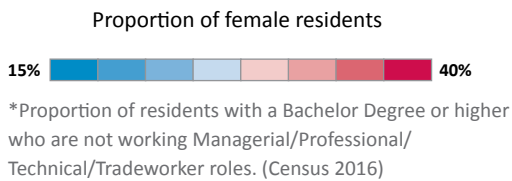
Region / Gender



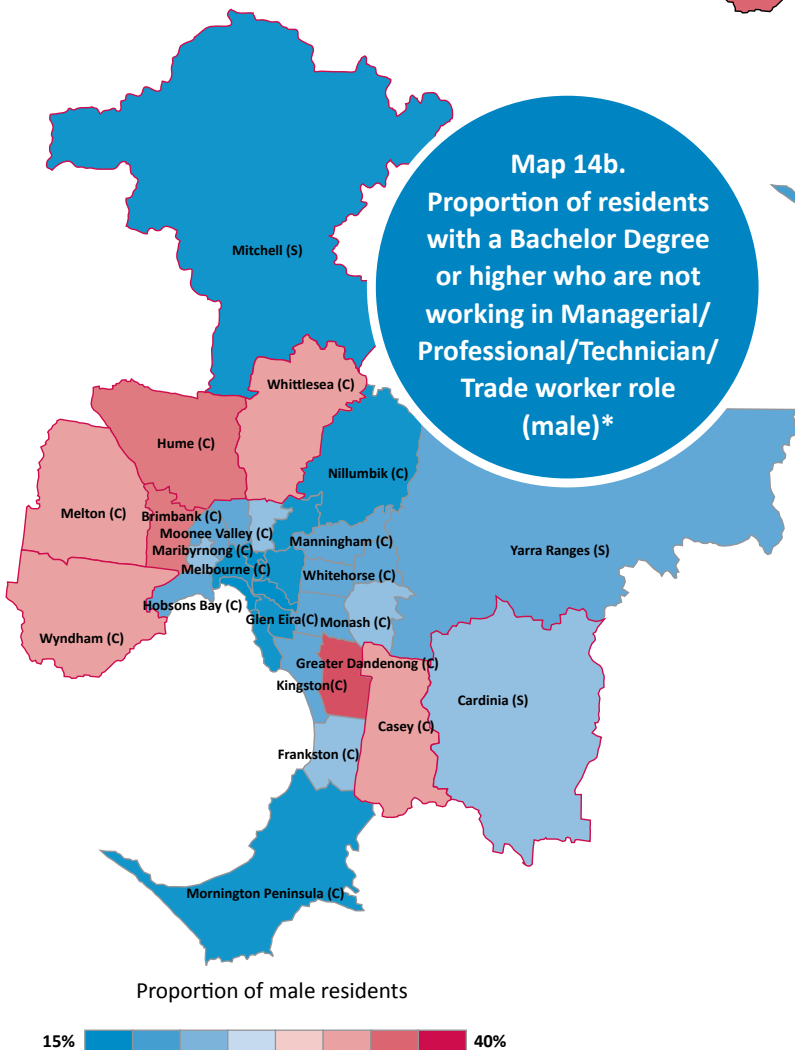
Education and occupation gap analysis

A greater share of women with a tertiary education are not employed in jobs that reflect this skill and qualification compared to men with a tertiary education across metropolitan Melbourne.

The prevalence of a gap between educational attainment and employment in skilled occupations is greatest for women living in the western and northern growth LGAs.



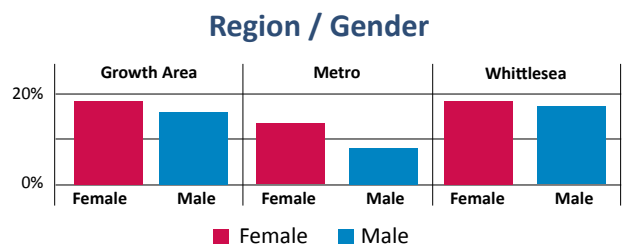
Map 14a.
Proportion of residents with a Bachelor Degree or higher who are not working in Managerial/Professional/Technical/Trade worker role (female)*



Map 14b.
Proportion of residents with a Bachelor Degree or higher who are not working in Managerial/Professional/Technical/Trade worker role (male)*

Table 14. Proportion of residents with a bachelor degree or higher who are not working in Managerial/Professional/Technical/Tradeworker roles

LGA	Female	Male
Cardinia	24%	24%
Casey	32%	28%
Hume	32%	30%
Melton	32%	27%
Mitchell	10%	9%
Whittlesea	31%	29%
Wyndham	35%	29%



Summary of gap analysis

The data analysis results were largely consistent across all the indicators, and showed that:

- Women and men in growth areas experience greater disadvantage in access to employment compared to women and men in metropolitan Melbourne.
- In growth areas, women are at more of a disadvantage in accessing employment compared with men.

Spatial Leash

Overall, men typically travel further distances to work than women, and further still from growth areas. Greater travel times for men means that they spend less time in caring roles and with their families which reinforces traditional gender stereotypes.

For women, the need to find jobs close to home often limits the opportunities that are available to them which exacerbates the observed income, education and skills gaps. This provides evidence of the concept of the spatial leash identified by Pocock and colleagues.

Unpaid childcare and employment choice

Across metropolitan Melbourne, women provide more unpaid childcare than men and this is particularly pronounced in growth LGAs. Women in growth LGAs are also more likely to be employed part time, or not participating in the workforce. In comparison, levels of part time employment and non-participation in the workforce are very low for men living in growth areas.

It is reasonable to assume that their high levels of unpaid childcare make participating in the paid workforce more challenging for women. This gendered inequity further reinforces traditional, more 'rigid' gender roles for work and care.

With lower levels of workforce participation during the early child rearing years, it could be assumed that when women return to work, they are willing to accept employment in roles that do not reflect their skills or education and/or lower levels of pay because these may be the only jobs available close to home.

SECTION 4

Community consultation findings

This section provides a brief outline of the findings from City of Whittlesea staff and community consultations. Beginning with an overview of the participants and their demographic details, going on to detail the themes and sub-themes identified in consultations, followed by a brief discussion of the key findings, supported by quotes.

	Staff	Community
Total participants	15	16
Focus group attendance	2 focus groups, 6 participants	2 focus groups, 14 participants
One-on-one interviews	8	2
Emailed responses	1	0

Cultural/ethnic backgrounds:

- Migrants (Iran, India, Sri Lanka, China, New Zealand)
- Australian-born (Caucasian/Anglo, Aboriginal and Asian or European heritage)

Educational background:

- Attained: Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor and Masters
- Currently studying: Masters
- Included women with overseas qualifications (some furthering their studies in Australia)

Employment status:

- Unemployed (but looking) and underemployed
- Casual, part-time and full-time
- Self-employed (home business)
- Mostly un-matched (working below qualifications) but some who were matched

Care responsibilities:

- Mostly children (primary-aged, secondary-aged and young adult), some caring for both their children and their parents
- Children with special needs and/or disability
- Elderly or sick parents
- Partner with a disability

Household composition:

- Couple families
- Single parents

Gender:

- 29 women
- 2 men

Themes and sub-themes

Family friendly career opportunities

- Prioritising work that accommodates care role:
 - Part-time, limited and/or flexible hours
 - Close to home
 - Children with special needs
 - Caring for sick, elderly or family members with disability
- Importance of flexibility
- Starting a business as a 'solution'
- Feeling supported at work
- Negative impacts of work-family conflict/interference

Gender roles, stereotypes and the unequal division of care

- Men as workers
- (lack of) Trust
 - Men are 'clueless'/not able to perform care and home duties adequately
- The 'second shift' - the unpaid work: Responsibility for planning, domestic work and emotional care
- Parental leave arrangements
- Inequity in the workplace
- Societal expectations and socialisation of gender roles

Networks of support

- Family or friends
 - Regular care support
 - Irregular
 - No care support

Barriers to meaningful employment

- Skilled employment concentrated in the inner city/
lack of opportunities in the outer north
- Nightmare commutes
 - 'Wasted time'
 - Road congestion
 - Public transport headaches
 - Exhaustion
 - Financial cost
- Inflexible and full-time roles
- Over-qualified for the jobs that are close to home
- Migrant with overseas qualifications
- The stress of paid childcare (fees, times, being late to pick up)

Importance of work

- Wellbeing
 - Positive identity
 - Sense of purpose
- Role model to children
- Financial contribution to the family
- Difficulty finding work exacts a mental toll

Proximity makes the difference

- Improved quality of life
- Improved management of work and family life
 - Being available for children
 - Better 'mothering'
 - Less work-family conflict
- Utilising local businesses and services

The trade-off - "something's gotta give"

- Less income
- Working below qualifications
- Non-permanent roles
- Frustration

⁵ "Un-matched" means that a woman is working in a role that is 'below' their skills or qualifications.

Analysis

Women are usually the primary carer of children, people with disability, elderly/sick parents and parents-in-law. Even when the childcare is relatively equal, women are responsible for the planning, domestic and emotional load that ensures the household runs smoothly, that children have what they need for school, their extracurricular activities and social engagements, as well as take them to activities and appointments.

"It is the mother role that is getting the swimming outfit ready, the babysitting requirements done, the notices to the school, the payments of whatever is needing, it's all the little ad hoc or even, day-to-day things...it almost feels like it's your responsibility but I question why we've made it our responsibility." (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed)

"I think in most cultures, looking after children is women's responsibility. My husband is very supportive as well, very kind, but it's not his priority to look after the child, cooking and the housekeeping and things like that, you know, it's [as] if he does that it's something sort of, help, helping... So, you have to organise everything, you have to manage everything." (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed).

Men often fulfilled the role as 'worker' or 'breadwinner', regularly commuting long distances and working long hours. This meant women had greater responsibility for care and domestic work. Some women noted that if they were to work full-time, they would earn more than their husband but due to perceived gender roles their husband remained the primary breadwinner.

"If I looked at it just from a financial perspective, if I asked him to do part-time and I worked full-time, financially we would have been better off but then again, him being the man I can't kind of say 'no you do part-time'." (Mother, bachelor degree, un-matched⁵, part-time contract worker)

“We can’t fix the time for him when he works, but it’s more than eight hours or 12 hours job, so that’s why I can’t give any responsibility to him for my child or domestic work or something.” (Mother, bachelor degree, studying masters, un-matched casual worker looking for part-time work)

The women who took part in consultations stressed the need for work that accommodated their care roles. This meant they prioritised roles that were part-time, limited, for example casual, had flexible hours or working arrangements, and were close to home. Workplaces that were supportive and understanding of their care roles were also important, such as when they had to leave work to pick up a sick child from school. However, finding roles that met these criteria proved difficult in the City of Whittlesea.

“The biggest challenge for me is finding something that fits between the hours that I have available to give work, and so yeah, it’s just very challenging because I can’t work early in the morning, I can’t work late in the afternoon because of the kids’ commitments. I suppose I could, but then that means the kids suffer from no activities. But no, I found it very hard to find something.” (Mother, bachelor degree, un-matched, casual)

“Moving to four days instead of two days is a huge difference, and it can be done with flexibility [from] your employer and working different days longer and different days shorter and you can manage that. So that’s been a huge positive change where I can manage my own time and my work based on how that needs to happen... So the flexibility of timing and being able to be close but also being able to work around what I needed for my children was paramount.” (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time)

“I’ve had job offers come to me and people asking me to come and work for them... but it’s again three hours’ drive daily... I’ve reluctantly said no to that because it gives me that flexibility here and I know that it’s local, so that’s one of the main reasons that they’ve kept me here even though I’ve had other job offers based on my qualifications or the work I’ve carried out.” (Mother, bachelor degree, un-matched, contract part-time)

There were multiple and intersecting barriers to accessing employment that reflected their skills and qualifications. When these accumulated, women experienced significant barriers to meaningful and relevant employment that accommodated their care role(s). Barriers included skilled employment being concentrated in the inner city or elsewhere in metropolitan Melbourne and conversely, the lack of skilled employment in the outer north or in the Whittlesea municipality. Further, skilled roles were often full-time and inflexible, which were untenable when commuting time was also considered.

“I get many chances to get a job, but the thing is it is a bit far from my home, so distance is the main issue for me to do the work.” (Mother and carer for father-in-law, unemployed and looking for work)

“I think there’s also certain skills or certain degrees and there are not those sort of jobs here. Like with [my qualification], there’s just not jobs, there’s not a pool of different opportunities that you can apply for.” (Mother, masters degree, unemployed and looking for work)

“Just about everything I look at and think ‘oh that would be a great job!’ it’s full time. And not only that, it’s far away... I kind of need at least one day a fortnight or a week that, yeah, I’m available... [to] put my parent hat back on or if I just need to take them to specialists...”

If I had to add onto that getting into the city, you know, commuting as well, that's like, wow... I would feel like there's so many people who would want the job and it's so professional and paid more that I feel like you'd have to go 'I am dedicated to doing five days a week, full time, I'll be there in the morning, leave in the afternoon and then something's gotta give'. (Single mother, bachelor degree and graduate diploma, unmatched, part-time)

Paid childcare and the stress this caused due to the cost and tight timeframes including by-the-minute additional costs if you are late to pick up your child was an additional barrier to women's employment, particularly work located in the city or requiring a long commute. This was an issue for most women as they did not have support networks they could rely on for unpaid childcare.

"When you take into account the commute into the city to earn the money that you need to earn to pay for childcare and then you pay the childcare and then you are away from your kids, you know, and you can't give everything to the role that you're doing in the city, you have to weigh it up, like is it even worth it? Is that struggle worth it? For us it was 400 bucks a week for day care and you, you know, I mean you get to the point where you've used up your subsidy or whatever it is and then you're paying like, ughh, and it's just constant, every week, you know?" (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed)

"It's also childcare fees, if you come late after 6.30pm they will charge extra, it happens every time. And also I'm using public transport, I can't you know, fix the time because it can be one hour or it can be one and [a] half hour[s] travel time so I can't predict the time of arrival to pick up the child, so yeah, so that's the main thing, the childcare fees." (Mother, bachelor degree and completing masters degree, un-matched, casual and looking for part-time work)

For roles that were local to the City of Whittlesea, women found they were overqualified. Women also noted that roles close to home often required they be available seven days week, such as in retail, supermarkets or personal/home care.

For many of the migrant women living in the municipality, they found having overseas qualifications were an additional barrier to skilled work.

"I face the problem, like I did Certificate III in individual support... I was good in my placement and they say alright you can apply here, and then I apply here and put the note that I can't start in the morning, I can only the afternoon or the night shift, they said 'alright you are not available 24/7 so that's why I can't give you [the job]'. This is the main problem... they prefer the people who are available any time." (Mother and carer for father-in-law, masters degree and Certificate III and IV, volunteer and looking for part-time work)

"I don't want to have very good job, you know, like anything, but I've tried everywhere, Coles, Safeway, Aldi and everywhere, but no one. The same thing, 24/7 they have, they always say you have to available any time, it's pretty hard for us." (Mother, advanced diploma, casual employment and looking for part-time work)

"When you migrate from your country to this country, you can't find [a] job matching to your education... so because I did [an] MBA when I came here, I didn't find any job, seriously, I work hard all the time. I was thinking when I arrived, I could find [work] because I have experience, I had a good job, but here the situation was totally different." (Mother and carer for father-in-law, masters degree and Certificate III and IV, volunteer and looking for part-time work)

Women cited multiple reasons why working was important to them, with varying emphasis. They felt that paid employment was important for their wellbeing in the sense that it fostered a positive sense of identity and enabled them to pursue and enjoy a sense of purpose outside the family.

"...your sense of value and self and that self-worth that then impacts every other aspect of your life. I know a lot of my colleagues – and we talk about this a lot – it's that pressure you put on yourself to prove that you can do it... I know I can operate at this level and I know that I can operate higher... I wanna have my own environment that allows me to succeed in what I know I can do well." (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time)

"You get to actually use your brain. I have this brain, it's highly trained and I - through this field of work - get to use that, that has its own reward. Yeah and then when you add onto that... you can bring more perspectives and ideas to the table, that's validating as well. Yeah, all those things probably keep you, well not ego but self-esteem at that, 'I'm doing this, I'm out there doing it and living it', the good bits and the bad bits, the challenges." (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time worker)

"I think identity is really important and that sense of contribution... I think taking that six years out of the workforce and being on the receiving end of bureaucracy, made me want me want to do my job better... I almost felt like I had a responsibility to get back to work to fix what I knew was broken, and I felt that, you know, as a female from a diverse background, caring responsibilities, you know, we've got all sorts of things happening in our family, and there was all this information that I had that I knew makes a difference... it's important for your whole sense of purpose. What can I do to make things better?" (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time)

"You know, being in corporate for 18 years of my life and you know, running companies, you know, big companies, it was one of those things that I didn't want to lose with a child... I just love what I do and I don't want to lose that, you know what I mean? It's ingrained in me and it's not fair that I have to even compromise that. And this is no disrespect to my child because I love him with every part of my being, I just worked so hard for what I've done so it's important for me to have that." (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed)

Women also talked about wanting to be a good role model to their children by demonstrating that women can have a meaningful career and that they have skills and interests outside the domestic sphere. Women also wanted to financially contribute to their family and for some, alleviate the strain of having one income.

"I think it's really important for our children to see that we work, you know for both boys and girls, it's really important." (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed)

"In Australia it's really hard if only one ... [is] working, with children, and paying mortgage, it's really hard." (Mother, bachelor degree and completing masters degree, un-matched casual and looking for part-time work)

Not surprisingly, difficulty finding work that reflected their qualifications had a negative influence on women's mental health, with women expressing a sense of frustration, internalised pressure, self-doubt and deteriorating self-confidence. After the focus groups, some women said they felt relieved to know that they were not the only one struggling, as they had assumed their difficulties were due to their own personal failures.

“Feels like, sort of, that’s all you’re kind of destined for is just to work in the more, lower paid, helping kind of positions... I found even just returning to the workforce, doing anything, suddenly people are talking to you as a person and you know, as somebody who has some skills to offer and yeah, rather than just ‘Mum! Mum!’ All the time. It was actually quite nice. And I think imagine working somewhere that yeah, actually recognises my skills. Sounds like it would be idyllic.” (Mother, bachelor degree and graduate diploma, un-matched part-time)

“I feel like there’s an identity piece there, so for me I’ve always been very into what I achieve and generally that’s through work, so when you suddenly stop working and you’re just constantly doing things like wiping noses and like, feeding and nappies, you’re like, ‘who am I? What is my value-add to society?’ That’s something I had to grapple with...you’ve attached your sense of value to your job and you suddenly have to work at a different level, that’s terrible for your self-confidence, and your mental health and all sorts of things.” (Mother, bachelor degree, matched, part-time worker)

“When I think about it, it really makes me really pressure[d], like why am I doing [it] like this? It’s better, you know, leave the degree, just like it’s a waste of time finishing my degree and doing this masters now... it really makes pressure or feel like, down, like demotivated, even if you apply for the job and you don’t get a response or phone calls, you feel ‘oh my god, what happened? We are not talented, or we don’t have the skill.’” (Mother, bachelor degree and completing masters degree, un-matched casual and looking for part-time work)

“It’s sort of nice to know, oh this isn’t just me, there’s a whole lot of women that are dealing with this.” (Mother, bachelor degree and graduate diploma, un-matched part-time)

There was a clear juxtaposition between the experiences of long commutes to work (one hour or more) and working close to home. Commuting was associated with a sense of ‘wasted time’ that reduced their time with family and made them less available should anything happen to their children, as well as less time for themselves where they could relax, exercise or do activities they enjoyed. Commuting also caused stress, anxiety and a greater sense of exhaustion as a result of long drives or navigating public transport (including finding car parks, driving to/from the train station). Long commutes were also associated with extra wear and tear on cars and petrol costs, although this was only mentioned by one (male) participant.

P2: So much of that commute time takes away from the time you spend with your family and I remember when I was commuting to the city and I wasn’t a carer, just the energy of the commute, so if you commute on public transport... it’s just a depressing environment that you spend two, three hours a day in that you could be spending doing other things with people you care about. So regardless of [being a] carer or not, I think being close was important to us anyway.

P1: The energy you expend in that commute is then lost to you; it’s expended...

P3: And it takes away from another area of your life, because you only have a certain amount of energy in the day and when you expend it in areas where there’s no outcome, you’re taking it away from the parts that need you, you know, your kids when you get home or things that are important, you’re exhausted and it just...

P1: Depletes you

P3: It does and it has a flow on effect to the next day and the next day... so by the end of the week you can’t put a sentence together and then you’re supposed to spend two quality days with your children because you missed out on all of that and you can’t, because I almost need to get that energy back up for the week ahead... it’s not mutually exclusive all of these things.

“The issues I came up with, with my son because I was working in the city and he was in childcare out here, for me it was being so far away from him. There were days where I’d be like, if there is a bushfire, what do I do? If he hits his head, what do I do? Like, how am I going to get from the city to him quick enough? For years I was like, ‘God I hope nothing happens’ and we were really lucky nothing happened, you know. But that distance was huge for me, because you know, it was an hour and 15 minutes that it would take to get to him if something was wrong, you know? And you know, even if he was sick and needed to be picked up, how were we going to work that out? Because we don’t have family or a support network out here, so it was a huge commitment for me to continue working in the city and my bosses made it really easy and my hours were flexible, everybody was working for me, but it was just too far.” (Mother, bachelor degree, self-employed)

In contrast, working in proximity to home seemed to make a huge difference in relation to better management of work and family life. This is because proximity reduced work-family conflict, particularly the intrusion of work (and its associated requirements) into family life. Women preferred being available for their children for pick-up/drop-offs, after school activities, if they needed to be picked up from school due to injury or illness and could spend more time with them. They felt their “mothering” was improved because they were less pressed for time and less exhausted and, as a result, less irritable, more present and energetic with their families. Women also noted that they had time to utilise local businesses and services whereas previously they had accessed those closer to their work because local ones would be closed by the time they returned to the municipality.

“It made such a difference to the quality of mothering and just having a bit more ‘me time’. And, actually, starting to access things that were local, because that was the other thing, I left before light and came home after dark, was fairly new to the area so I was accessing all my services around Hawthorn because there was no daylight hours out here. So, it wasn’t until I moved my employment closer that I started to access things in my local area.” (Mother, bachelor degree, un-matched, part-time worker)

“For about one year, it was really challenging for me because it took me nearly three hours to commute... I was like a dead body when I reached home and let alone taking care of my kid and then, the home things, everything, everything... Now it’s about 15 minutes from my workplace, that’s much better... I can rest a bit (laughs). At least I’m not a dead body, I can do something, I can talk...” (Mother, bachelor degree, volunteer and un-matched casual worker)

“I took significant time off to care for my youngest who has autism so we had a lot of appointments and things and it was quite hard to manage having to be in the city and that was part-time work and I was always very keen to extend my hours but with almost a two hour commute each way balancing all that was almost impossible... So when the opportunity came up for a role close to home, you jump at it with everything you have and it’s luck, and it was pure luck that it was a role that was at my capabilities because I was so needing to move closer that I had actually applied for jobs below my capability... And that’s made a huge difference ...just to be able to manage both of those, yeah.” (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time worker)

“See I walk [to work]... and it’s a decent distance to walk but it’s still having that option is just awesome because I get prepped to walk into [that] place and that’s my process, I literally walk in and computer turns on and we go for the day and we go flat chat until we switch the computer off and I walk about the door and it’s like, that’s that done and I can release all that on the walk home and walk in the door at home as the person I want to walk in the door as... and I feel I don’t then have to go to the gym to get my exercise so it’s managed that aspect as well.” (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, full-time worker)

Of the women who had found work close to home, they noted they needed to make a trade-off, or that “something’s gotta give” in order to make that possible. Assessing whether to apply or accept a role close to home involved multidimensional decision-making whereby the costs and benefits were considered. For instance, women would accept a lower income or working below qualifications because they would save money and time wasted on commuting and as a result, have more time with family. Women also talked about accepting contract and casual roles because they would be closer to home, even if contracts added additional complexity and anxiety. Women also expressed a sense of frustration in their work life when these compromises meant they felt less challenged and had less opportunity for career progression.

“I have moved now to a contract role, so I gave up an ongoing role for a contract role to be able to be close to home, to manage the schooling and the appointments and the requirements that go with that.” (Mother, bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time worker)

“I am quite overqualified for the job... but yeah it was because it’s close to home I took it. Yeah it does have something- it is related to my field but it’s not at the level that ideally, I’d like to work at, so yeah, but I still took it because it’s close to home.” (Mother, masters degree, un-matched, full-time)

“I made up my own... analysis in what was I willing to economically give up to get closer to home and so we sort of, my husband and I, put this spreadsheet together of how much basically I was earning while driving and what the loss would be because yeah, I took a pay cut to get closer to home and so did that weigh up in hours travelled? And for us, we worked out that it was better off being closer to home than the small benefits in the salary gain. So yeah you do sort of have to weigh up, [your] potential drop in salary by being closer to home but the benefits of quality of life or access to the family and that side.” (Mother, bachelor degree, un-matched, part-time)

“You still have to work at a level where financially you can, so I wouldn’t have been able to take a job at a much lower financial level than I was previously because that just creates more stress, so there is a balance where you can, there is a trade-off, so I always had a level where I thought I would take, begrudgingly, but I would take it to keep us floating. So, the fact that I didn’t have to make that financial sacrifice was a bonus.” (Mother, Bachelor degree with honours, matched, part-time)

“I went back to age 15 and worked at [a fast-food restaurant] as a manager because that’s what fitted in with my life, so I was working well underneath my qualification but that’s what worked for us, three shifts a week and I could walk to work.” (Mother, un-matched, casual worker)

Conclusion

The findings from these consultations suggest that creating more breadth and depth of employment in the City of Whittlesea is key to reducing the barriers women face to meaningful and relevant work. Diverse job opportunities are made available by a labour market with depth, meaning there is mix and volume of employment opportunities that accommodate young, middle-aged and older workers, as well as jobs suitable for low, middle and higher skilled workers (Williams, Pocock and Bridge, 2009).

Breadth in the labour market refers to jobs that allow for promotion over the lifecycle and the presence of larger labour markets that offer a range of jobs. This is referred to “lattices and ladders” of jobs that are related, meaning jobs and job clusters that facilitate and enable upward, sideways and downwards mobility as required (Williams, Pocock and Bridge, 2009). A greater diversity of employment opportunities in the City of Whittlesea would allow women and families to save time through better configurations of work and home lives. The consultations undertaken underscored the reciprocal relationship between these intersecting domains. Increased access to meaningful and relevant work close to home reduces women’s barriers to employment and reduces the need for trade-offs while also improving quality of life, health outcomes and creating a stronger local economy.

SECTION 5

Composite case studies reflecting themes from the community consultations

The following case studies were compiled from the consultations and focus groups with women living in the City of Whittlesea to bring the data and research to life.

Case study 1 – *Over skilled for local employment*

Amelia lives in Doreen with her husband and nine-year-old son. Before having her son, Amelia realised that although she loved her high-powered corporate career in the city, working full time and commuting at least two and a half hours each day would become difficult.

Amelia loves to work and didn't want to lose that part of her identity. She decided to start her own business because she could only find roles close to home that were lower-skilled, lower-paid or full-time. She is happy with her decision but running a home-business has brought new challenges. Because Amelia works from home, she feels pressure to be primarily responsible for the day-to-day running of the household, including housework, cooking, childcare, appointments, school pick-ups/drop-offs and the emotional wellbeing of the family. Amelia's husband was raised in a traditional household and when she asks him to help with care or domestic work, he questions her need to have a career. She feels like he doesn't take her business seriously.

Amelia hires co-working spaces in the inner city to meet with clients because they have a professional feel and facilities such as meeting rooms, wi-fi and data projectors. However, travelling to the inner city can be frustrating.

Congestion on Plenty Road and a lack of parking at her son's school means she is only available to meet clients between 10am and 2pm.

Case study 2 – *Gender roles that perpetuate gender stereotypes*

When Nicole was pregnant, she and her husband, Mark, decided that Mark would stay at home and care for the baby. However, Mark's workplace was not supportive of a father taking primary carer leave and so Nicole stayed at home when their son was born. Mark only had one week of 'Dad's Leave' plus another week of annual leave, which they both felt was inadequate. When Mark returned to work after this two weeks, his request for flexible work arrangements were denied.

Nicole's anxiety increased significantly when Mark returned to work and she felt overwhelmed and isolated. She felt that because she was home it made sense for her to do more of the household duties but could see how these arrangements reinforced gender stereotypes. Nicole missed being at work, interacting with different people and contributing her skills and talents to a workplace. She was exhausted and felt a loss of identity being at home with a dependent child. Mark wished he could have spent more time bonding with their son, supporting Nicole and learning how to care for their child.

Nicole has since returned to part-time work and remains the primary carer of their son. Working close to home was a priority but due to the lack of higher-skilled and part-time roles, she is working below her qualifications and earning potential. Nicole and Mark don't have family supports locally and so they rely on paid childcare while Nicole is at work. Nicole would love to increase from three to four days of work, but this would reduce her Child Care Benefits and her wage would be taken up by childcare costs. Nicole and Mark feel frustrated that there are so many barriers outside of their control to women and men having equal opportunity to work and raise their children.

Case study 3 – A 20-minute city?

Sophia lives in the Whittlesea Township and is a single mother of three sons. She was attracted to Whittlesea Township because she could afford to rent a family home on one income. However, she finds living on the urban fringe challenging due to its distance to employment, services, community facilities and the lack of public transport.

Although Sophia has a bachelor degree and a postgraduate diploma, she is working in a part-time administration role. She would love to work in a field relevant to her qualifications but is unable to commute into the inner city because it is too far from home and the roles tend to be full-time. She hopes that one day she will get a foot in the door with a job in communications and dreams of working in the not-for-profit sector.

Sophia needs part-time work that is close to home so she can take her sons to and from school because there is no public transport. They can sometimes catch a private school bus, but Sophia can't afford this every day. Sophia must also take her son, Sam, who has a disability, to doctors and specialists during the week and these are located in areas outside the municipality.

Sophia has observed that new housing developments in Mernda and Doreen have significantly increased road congestion and it now takes even longer to get anywhere. Sophia's work is on Plenty Road in Bundoora, which is significantly congested. She battles traffic get back to the Township and pick up her sons from school, take them to afterschool activities and then back home again. When Sophia gets home, she cooks dinner, helps with homework, completes some 'life admin' and the day-to-day household chores. She feels like she is always pressed for time and never has time for herself to go for a walk or see friends. She feels like her mental health and wellbeing is suffering.

Case study 4 – Traffic congestion and transport issues

Maryam moved to South Morang with her husband and two children one year ago. Maryam drove three hours each day to and from her full-time job in Richmond. Although she loved her work, once she finished work for the day she switched back into 'mum mode' and felt anxious to pick up her children and get home. As her children were in childcare, the by-the-minute charges if she arrived after 6.30pm caused additional emotional and financial stress.

Maryam felt chronically pressed for time and she was sometimes irritable with her children, which she felt guilty about. Feeling this anxiety every day was a major trigger for Maryam to look for more family friendly career opportunities closer to home. Maryam eventually found a job in Bundoora but soon realised that while close in distance, congestion on Plenty Road meant she was still driving 30 to 40 minutes each way. Maryam was disappointed that she sacrificed her career and good wage in order to work close to home and be more available to her children, but that congestion meant she was still travelling at least 90 minutes daily.

Although Maryam enjoyed having more time with her family, she felt frustrated in her job because it was below her skill level and experience and she wanted more of a challenge. Maryam hopes that one day there will be more diverse job opportunities close to home, faster and more regular trains and less congested roads.

Maryam drove three hours each day to and from her full-time job in Richmond.

Case study 5 – Workplace practices

Manjit migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka with her husband and daughter five years ago and they settled in Mernda. Manjit has a masters degree that is recognised in Australia, eight years' professional experience in Sri Lanka and speaks English fluently. Manjit has applied for many jobs but hasn't been invited for an interview and it has hurt her confidence.

Manjit's husband is a store manager in South Morang and is often required to work up to 12 hours a day. The unpredictable nature of his work hours means he cannot reliably look after their daughter or contribute to household duties. Manjit is looking for a job but is having difficulty finding one that suits her needs as she wants part-time work, to be close to home, and the flexibility to pick up and drop off her daughter from school.

One of Manjit's friends, Tracey, works in local government and has the working conditions Manjit is looking for.

Tracey explained that her job was advertised as full-time, but she applied anyway. At her interview, she told them she couldn't work full-time and was surprised to still be the successful candidate. The job advertisement did not mention the option of negotiable hours or flexibility.

Tracey sometimes feels frustrated because she is working at a lower level than her previous job, but the senior roles just don't have the flexibility she needs. Tracey is disappointed she won't be able to progress in her career until her children are older. Manjit understands this will probably be her situation too – provided she is given a chance.

Manjit has applied for many jobs but hasn't been invited for an interview and it has hurt her confidence.



SECTION 6

Forum with stakeholders, academics and local government: *Work and Life: How do we build gender equity in the outer growth suburbs*

Summary

Overview

The Work and Life forum was held on 13 February 2020, 85 people registered their attendance from various sectors:

- Local government - Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), growth and interface councils [Whittlesea, Hume, Mitchell, Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik, Melton, Cardinia, Casey, Wyndham]
 - Roles included, directors/executive and general managers, health and social policy and planning, economic development, growth area investment planning, urban planning and strategic planning, preventing violence against women/ gender equity (PVAW/GE) and human resources
- Industry and community stakeholders including Northlink, Brotherhood of St Laurence, VCOSS, Whittlesea Community Connections, Northern Health, DPV Health, Epping Community Services Hub, SGS Economics and Planning and PRACE (Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education)
- State Government - Infrastructure Victoria
- National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA)
- Victorian Women's Trust, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Regional Women's Health Services CEOs and officers (Women's Health In the North, Women's Health West, Women's Health Goulburn North East, Women's Health In the South East and GenVic)
- Academics and researchers from University of Melbourne, Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University of Technology and RMIT
- Six community members (women)

A total of 60 people attended the event. The aim of this event was to bring together local government sector (specifically growth and interface councils), employment and community stakeholders to workshop ideas for opportunities, levers and advocacy centred around the topics of:

1. What could local government and partners do to help increase the number of women who can work locally?
2. How can urban planning make these localities more attractive investment propositions?
3. What could local government and local employers do to model gender equity in employment practice?
4. What can local governments do to better connect residents to each other and the supports they need to manage caring responsibilities?
5. How can local government address gender inequity in its own business, other than human resources?
6. What broader advocacy needs to be undertaken to address structural barriers to gender equity in employment?
7. What could local government and partners do to address geographic barriers (congestion, commutes)?

SGS Economics & Planning CEO Alison Holloway presented 'Mapping gendered employment patterns' (the mapping and data analysis that they undertook for the project refer Section 2 of this report), Barbara Pocock Emeritus Professor University of South Australia presented 'Social trends driving patterns of gender inequity in employment' and the workshops and table discussions were facilitated by Jeanette Pope, Freelance Strategy, Policy, Research.

Process

Tables were organised on the above topics and participants were allocated to tables according to their role and organisation. A briefing paper outlining the key findings from the mapping and research was distributed prior to the event and available on each table. Presentations were delivered first, then the film which presented local women's experiences of barriers/challenges to working locally (link available in Appendix) produced through the consultation phase. Participants were then asked to focus on table discussions and wrote their ideas on paper at the tables. A scribe on each table documented key points from the discussion to support evaluation and reporting and the development of recommendations and next steps.

From the table notes and the scribe notes key priorities and actions for local government and partners emerged, outlined later in this section of this report.

After the discussions, each table was asked to write one idea down and then place this on the “Ideas Wall”. After all tables had placed their idea, participants were provided three sticky dots and were asked to place these on “the ideas they have the most energy for”. What emerged from this was five priorities identified by the group for further action by local government.

Recordings of the guest presenters and films capturing key highlights were produced.

Work and Life Forum (highlights)

<https://youtube/7eZBU9uwl94?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDIJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

How do we build gender equity in outer growth suburbs (introduction)

<https://youtu.be/cDz9u5GoixU?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDIJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

Mapping gendered employment outcomes

<https://youtu.be/UICtjxJhOpg?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDIJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

Social trends driving gender inequality

<https://youtu.be/EaAEkDawo7A?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDIJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>



Evaluation

An evaluation survey was distributed, 40 responses were received (a 67 per cent response rate):

- 84.6 per cent female, 12.8 per cent male and 2.6 per cent non-binary
- Local Government Officer 48.7 per cent, Local Government CEO or Director 2.6 per cent;
- Not for Profit 25.6 per cent, Industry Stakeholder 5.1 per cent, Other 12.8 per cent which included State Government and community members.

The evaluation surveys showed that most respondents already had good to excellent knowledge of gender inequity as a driver of violence against women before the event (85 per cent or 34 respondents rated good to excellent). Most significantly is that those respondents who said they had poor to fair/satisfactory knowledge shifted when looking at the results for reported knowledge of gender inequity as a driver of violence against women after the event (25 per cent or 10 respondents shifted to 0 per cent after the event).



This increased the overall reported knowledge of gender inequity as a driver of violence against women after then event to 92.5 per cent or 37 respondents rating good to excellent.

The evaluation surveys showed most respondents “utilise sex-disaggregated data” (17 responses) and/or “analyse data and evidence with a gendered lens” (20 responses) (participants could select more than one answer).

There were three responses to “none of the above” and five responses of “I don’t know” which might indicate a lack of knowledge of tools or ways to apply a gendered analysis to research and data analysis, and four responses to “none of the above but plan to in the future” indicating a small number of respondents had identified a gap in their current practice. This provides an opportunity for the project in the future to include capacity building for gendered analysis for key council departments and industry and employment stakeholders.

Outcomes and recommendations

Analysis of the themes emerging from the table and scribe notes reveal nine recommendations for future action.

Recommendations:

1. Local government should increase/facilitate access to coworking spaces. Coworking spaces can support women-led startups and businesses to succeed.
2. Local government economic development programs must be driven by sex-disaggregated data, gendered analysis and evidence-based models. They need to be accessible, inclusive and relevant for women.
3. To help attract investment and higher skill employment, local government need to ensure good access to information technology, be flexible with zoning and provide safe, activated spaces with good amenity.
4. Local government should prioritise local people for employment, provide all roles flexible (including senior leadership) and have processes to ensure accountability to policy that supports this.
5. Good access to health, community and social services infrastructure can improve social connection for women – local government needs to advocate to improve timeliness of key services delivery.
6. Adopting gender responsive and equitable budgeting would be the best way to ensure equitable provision of the services, programs and facilities that local government must provide.
7. The local government sector could explore partnerships to advocate to the Federal Government to change the structural inequalities in the taxation system and childcare rebates which are disincentives for women to increase their working hours.
8. Local government could advocate to the State Government to require mandatory provision of 0 to 2-year-old places in childcare centers in growth area suburbs – a key barrier to women returning to work.
9. Geographic barriers such as long commutes and traffic congestion can be reduced through more gender-informed local planning and by securing key transport infrastructure projects (rail, bus and roads).

The top five ideas from the Ideas Wall as prioritised by participants:

Ideas we have the energy for pursuing:

1. Gender responsive budgeting would be a game changer (20 votes)
2. Coworking and satellite offices (18 votes)
 - Create planning environments that support and encourage coworking spaces and promote under-utilised council spaces such as (community centers and libraries) and employment hubs.
 - Ensure there is good WI-FI and coffee!
3. Involving community in the early planning and delivery of infrastructure (16 votes)
 - Build evaluation into the services/ infrastructure/ programs we deliver
 - Understand what our communities need and want, don't assume we have all the solutions
 - Bring our services up to date (culture change)
4. Coordinated/integrated view across Government (15 votes)
 - silos – no metropolitan wide view (15 votes)
 - Not failure to plan but failure to implement
 - Plan Melbourne – central city focus
 - Employment clusters separated from residential and delivering 'traditional' employment (i.e. male/ industrial focus)
 - Government intervention – de-centralised research
5. Organisational commitment to flexible roles (10 votes)
 - CEO commitment to "all roles will be considered flexible" or similar
 - Policy and process to "operationalize it"
 - Hiring Manager education – following through on commitment
 - Disciplinary process if not upheld.

SECTION 7

Stage two of the Gender Equity in Employment Project

The Free From Violence Local Government Preventing Violence Against Women Grants funding for the first stage of the Project has finished. City of Whittlesea has committed in-kind staffing and resources for 2020-2021 to further the Project and implement the Action Plan.

Action Plan 2020-2021

Priorities for Action	Activities	Activity Measures
1. Disseminate information and findings to relevant stakeholders (industry, employment, growth councils)	Develop communications resources (e.g. short films, internal lunch boxes, social media content, information resources, presentations) and deliver to key councils and stakeholders	Collateral developed highlights additional barriers for particular groups of women (e.g. sole parents) Proportion of growth councils and key stakeholders engaged in content
2. Project findings inform City of Whittlesea's Economic Development and Investment Attraction planning	Hold a workshop in partnership with Economic Development Team and relevant key staff/ stakeholders	Feasible actions for implementation based on Project findings and recommendations are developed and inform Economic Development planning
3. Project findings inform City of Whittlesea's and key local employer's employment and recruitment strategies	Document and share recommendations for improvements to internal culture and processes from staff focus groups Share recommendations with key large local employers	Recommendations presented to People and Culture and are used to inform Organisational Design process Number of local employers engaged Employment Feasibility Study scope includes a gendered analysis and reflects the recommendations from the GEE Project
4. Integrate Gender Equity and Employment objectives into Council Advocacy Priorities	Develop advocacy plan and collateral for integration into advocacy priorities	Number of meetings, submissions where the project findings and advocacy collateral used; Number of advocacy fact sheets/briefs that integrate GEE Project priorities

APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Research synthesis: Key documents

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Appendix 2. Films produced

Local research and consultation:

Gender Equity in Employment: Local women's experiences

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-Se1GJWtVI>

Gender Equity in Employment: Laura's story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gj8LBnnJCjY>

Work and Life forum

Work and Life Forum (highlights)

<https://youtu.be/7eZBU9uwl94?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDiJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

How do we build gender equity in outer growth suburbs (introduction)

<https://youtu.be/cDz9u5GoixU?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDiJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

Mapping gendered employment outcomes

<https://youtu.be/UICtjxJhOpg?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDiJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

Social trends driving gender inequality

<https://youtu.be/EaAEkDawo7A?list=PLocU5m8rvBM-C6eHDiJT-y8uKiYpyKatq>

Appendix 3. Mapping gendered employment data

Hyperlink to the Interactive data dashboard where you will find all the data and maps referenced in sections two and three.

<https://public.tableau.com/views/GenderEquityandEmployment/mapseries?:showVizHome=no&:embed=true>



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