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Presentation to Global Sisters Forum

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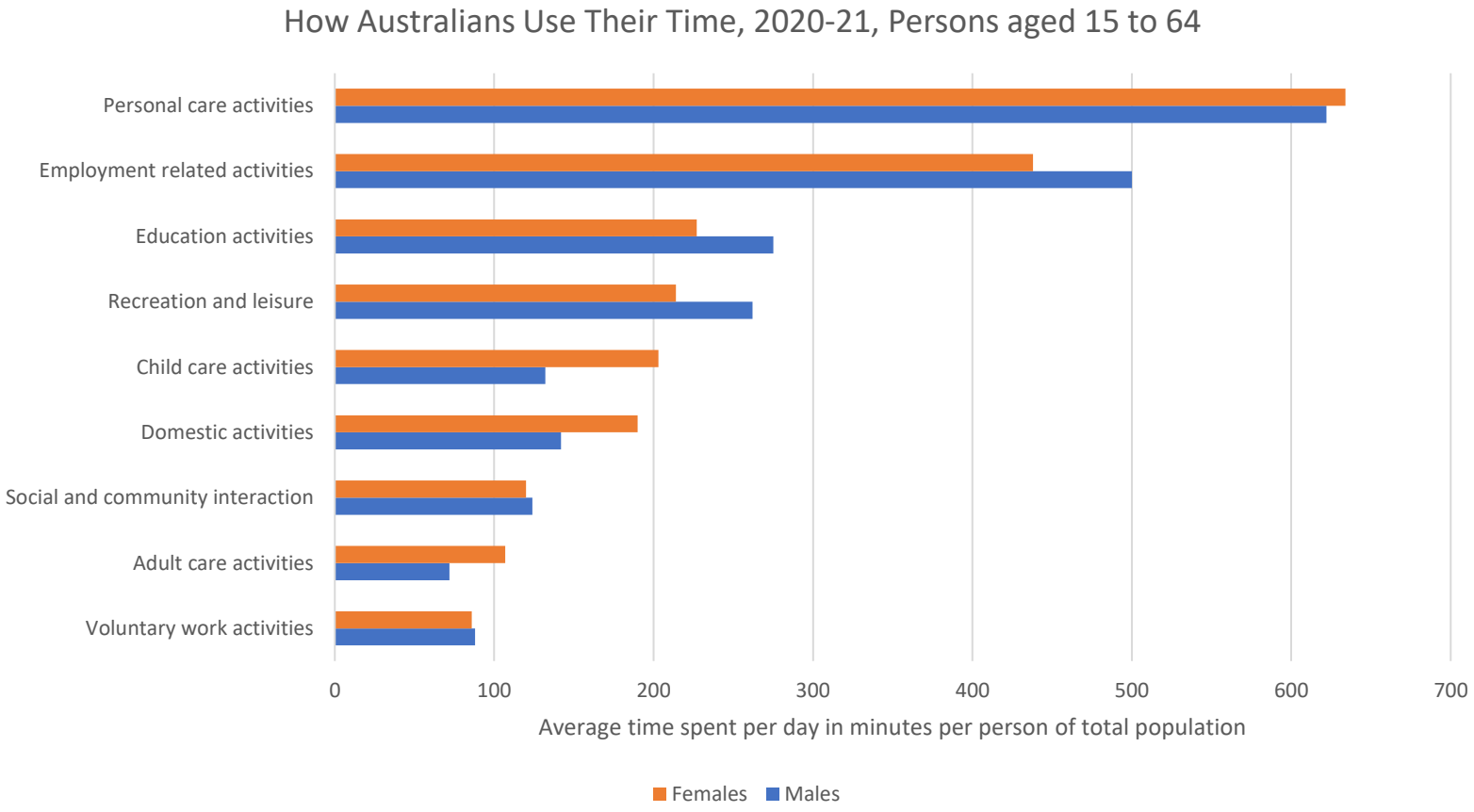
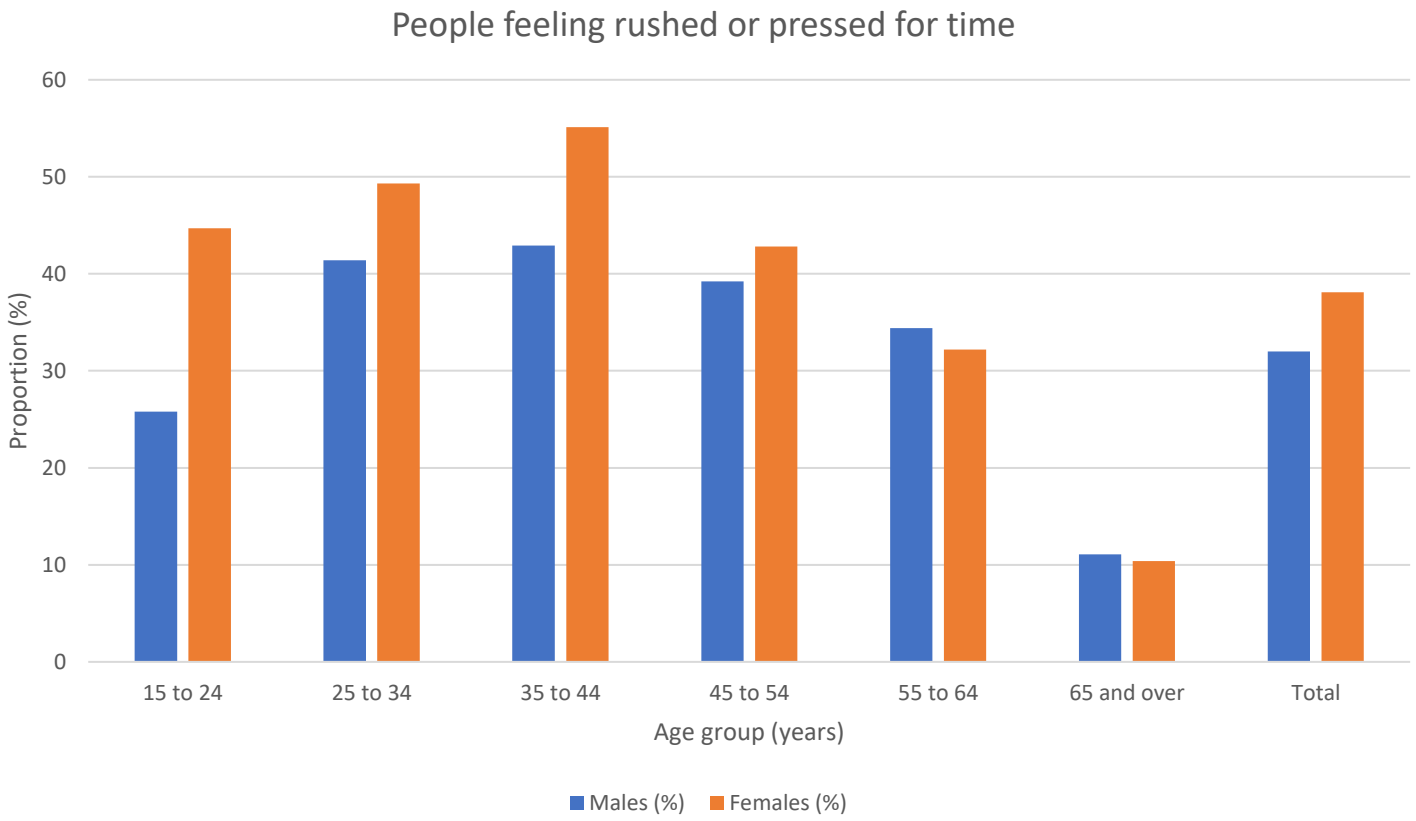
Women & men use their time differently



Source: ABS (2022) *How Australians Use Their Time, 2020-21,* accessed 12 April 2023.

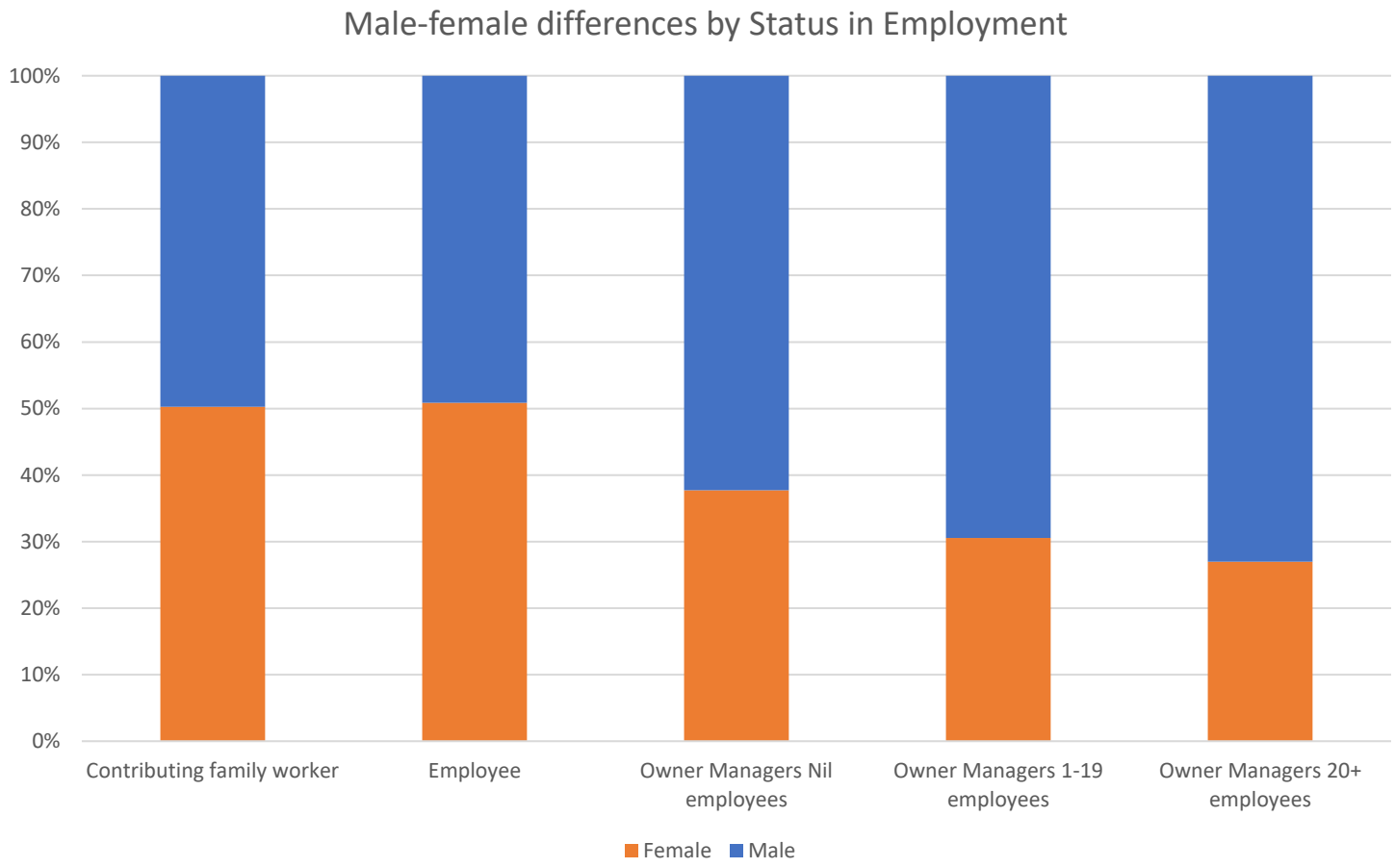
Time stress

Females under 54 are more likely to feel rushed or pressured for time when compared to males



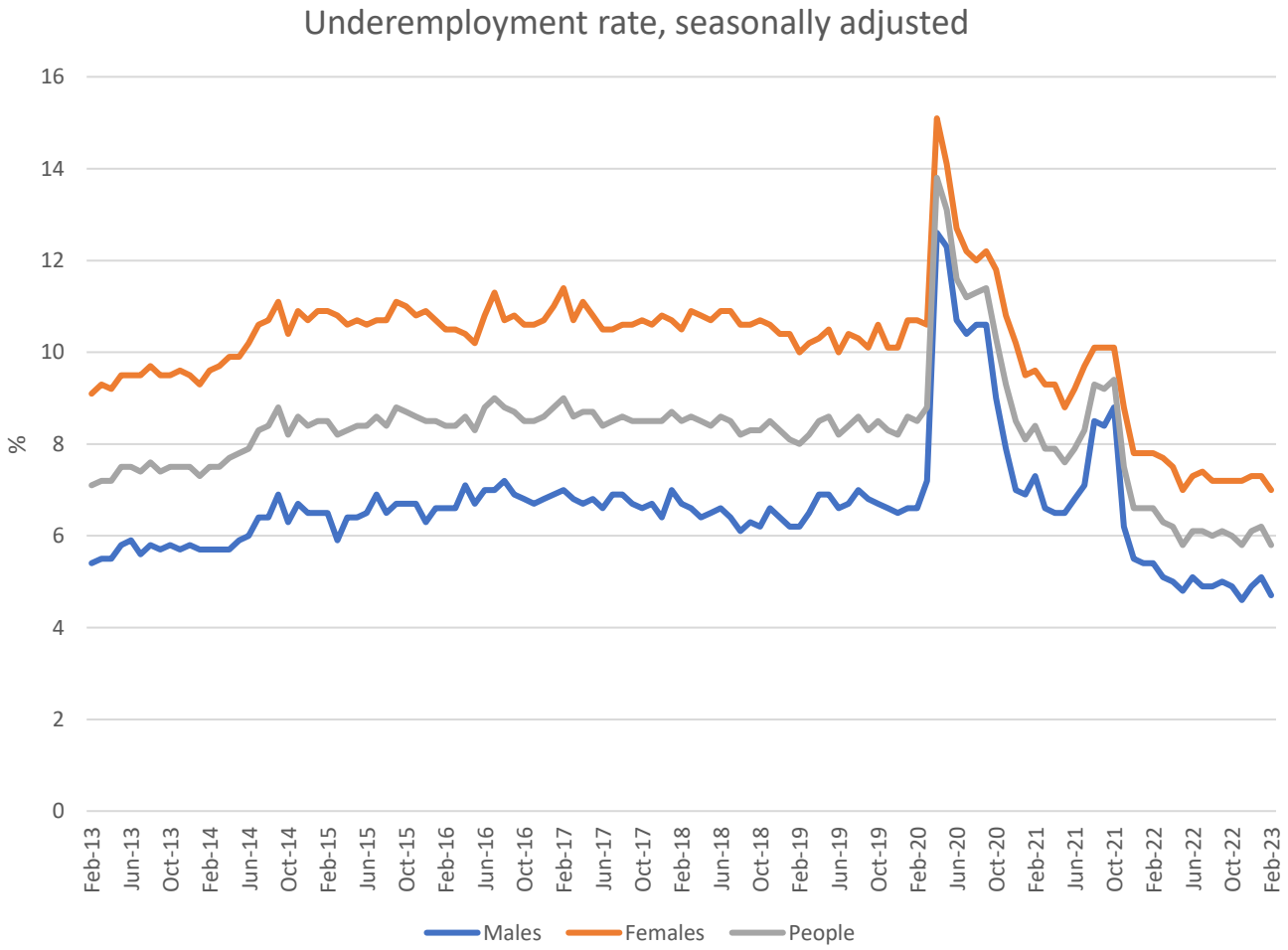
Source: ABS, *How Australians Use Their Time*, 2020-21 financial year

Women and men make different contributions within the working ecosystem



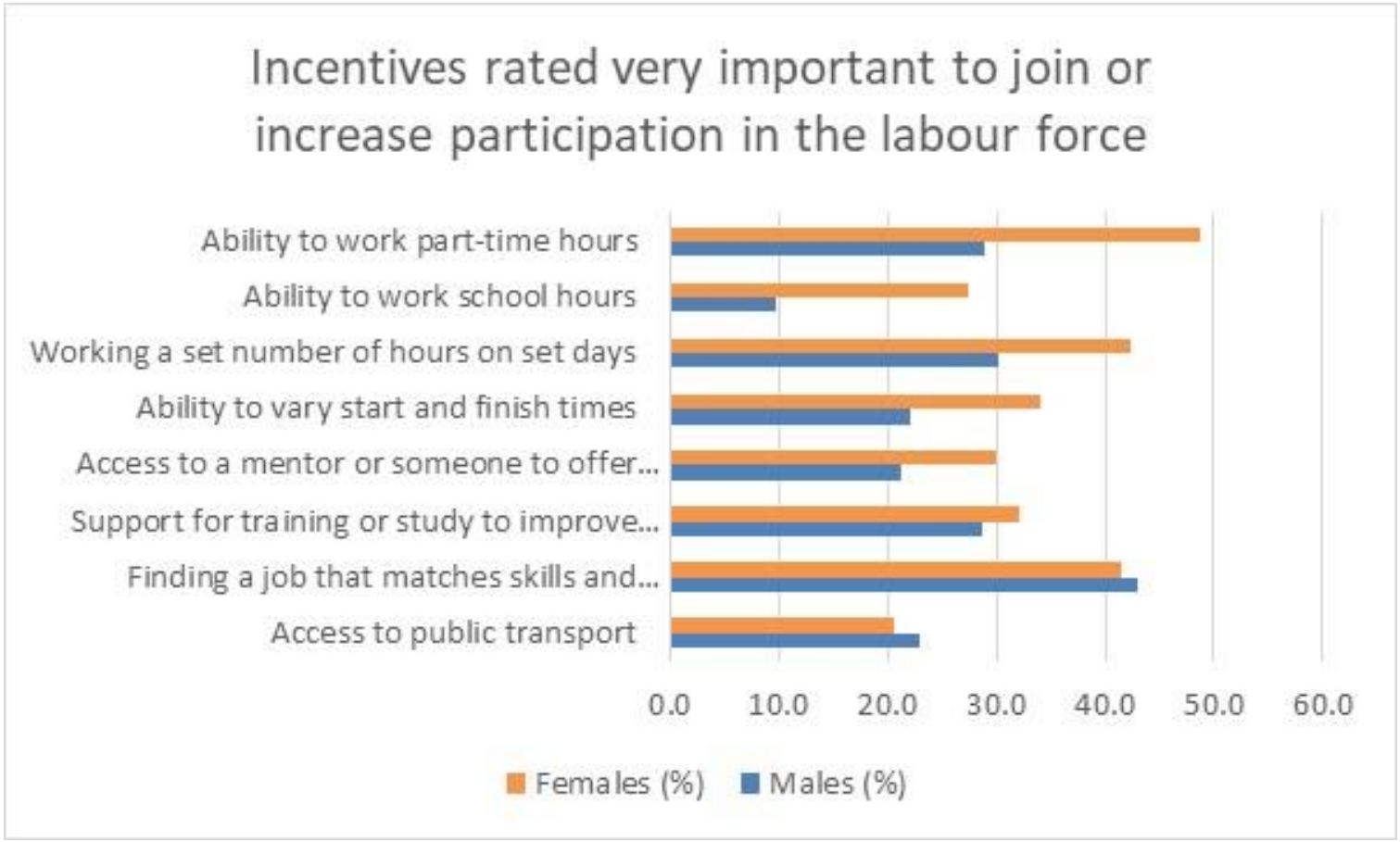
Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021*, TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

Female employees are more underemployed than males



Source: ABS, *Labour Force*, Australia February 2023, accessed 12 April 2023

The most important incentive for women to work more is flexibility in work hours



Source: ABS, *Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation*, 2020-21, accessed 18 April 2023

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Most likely an employee

Working less than her male counterparts

She's spending more time looking after her kids than her husband

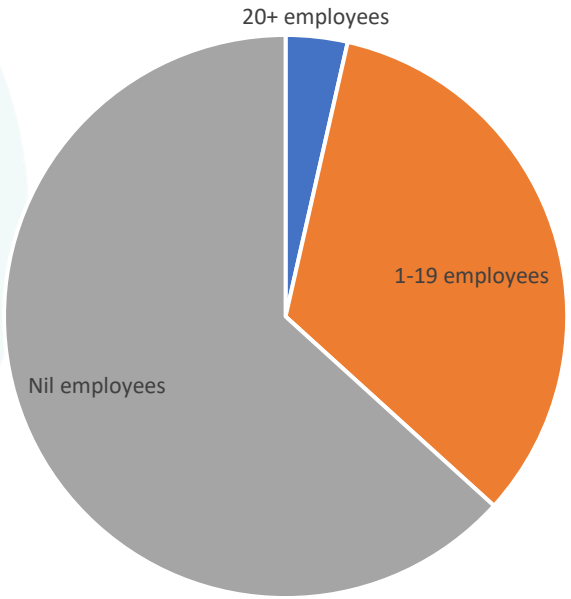
She's doing more domestic chores

She's more likely to be feeling under time pressure

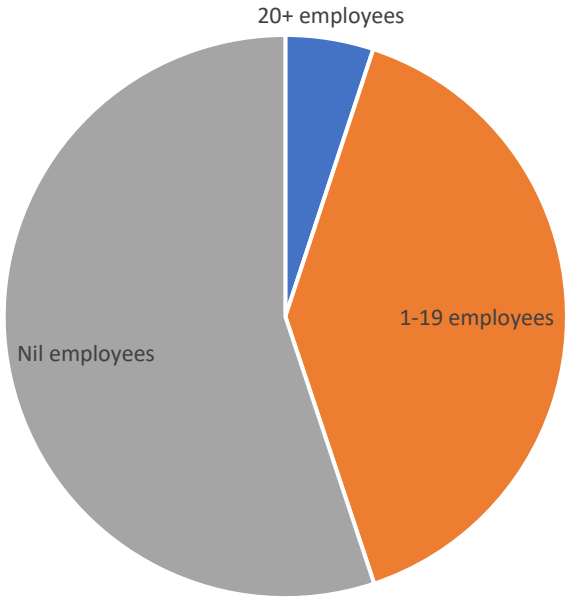
.. and she's ready and available to work more!

Let’s look at female business owner managers in greater detail

Female owner managers



Male owner managers



Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021*, TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

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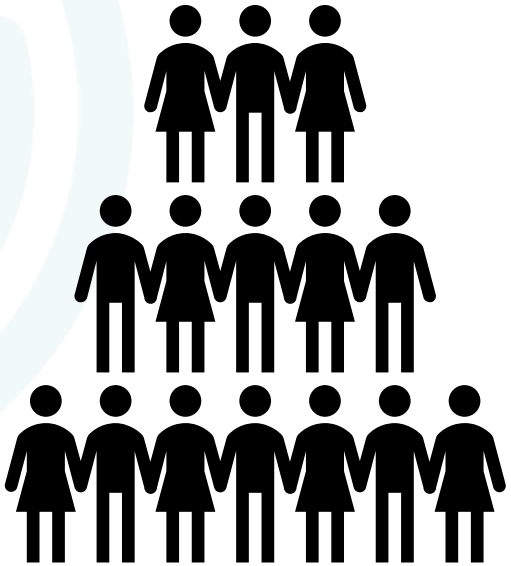
1,651,049 small business owner managers



549,951 are female

1,026,181 are male

Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021*, TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

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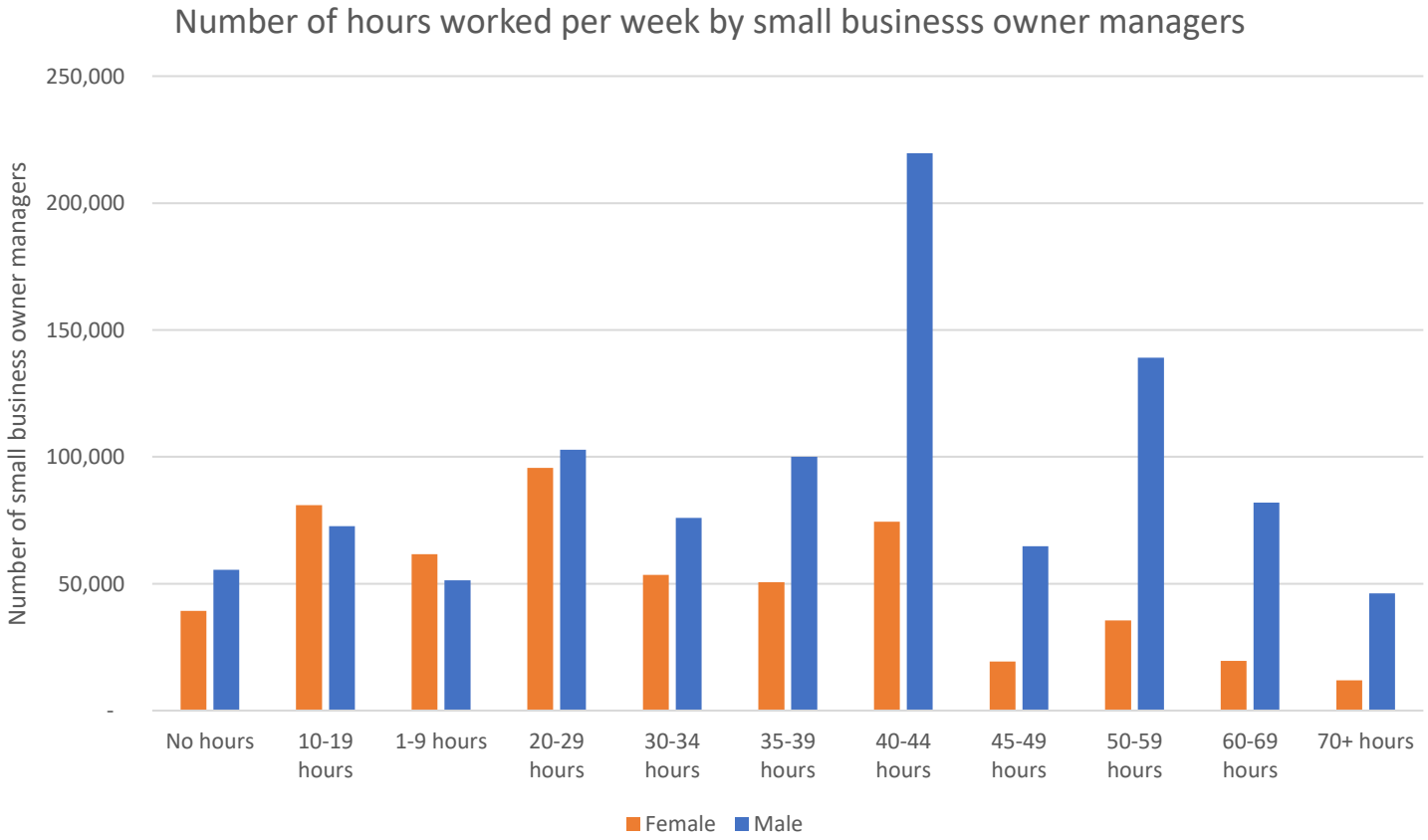
How many hours are female small business owner managers working?

In 2021, male small business owner managers were more likely to work full time hours



Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021*, TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

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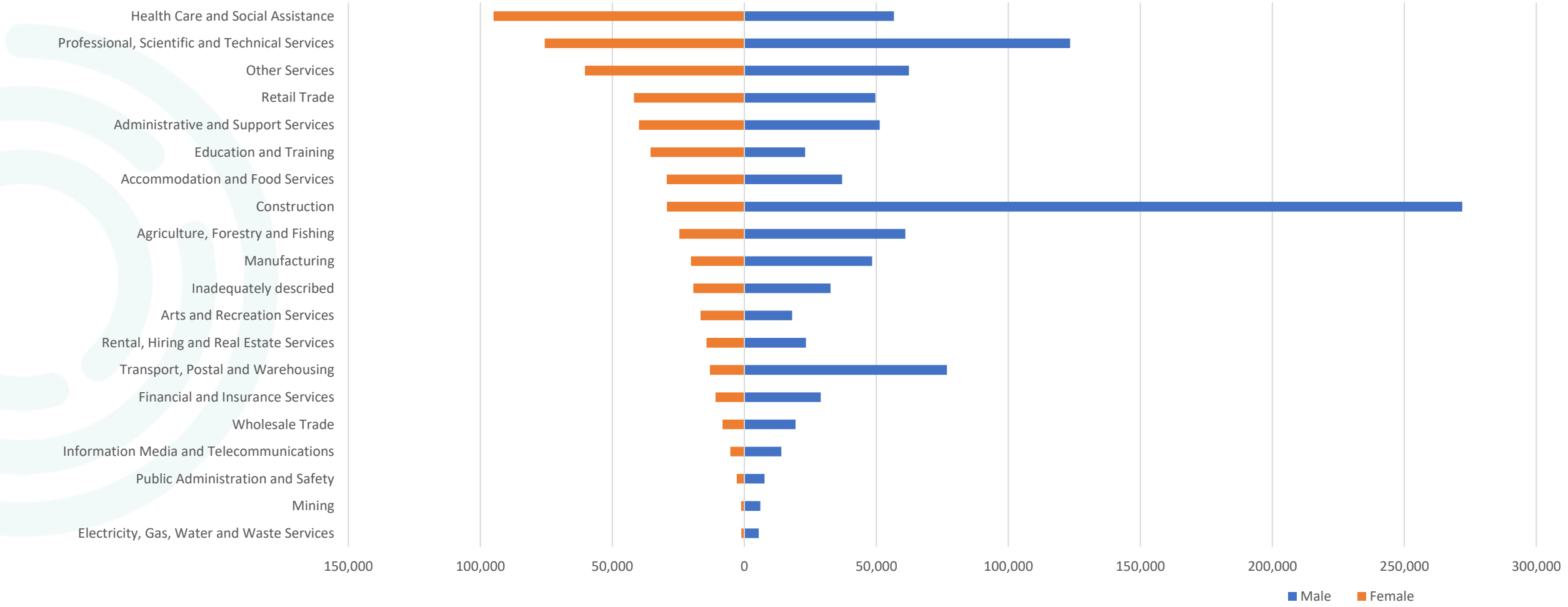
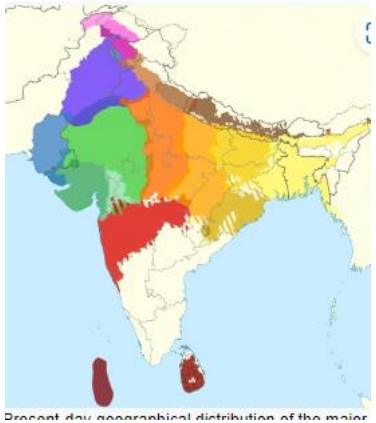
Industry Profile – comparison between male and female small business owner managers

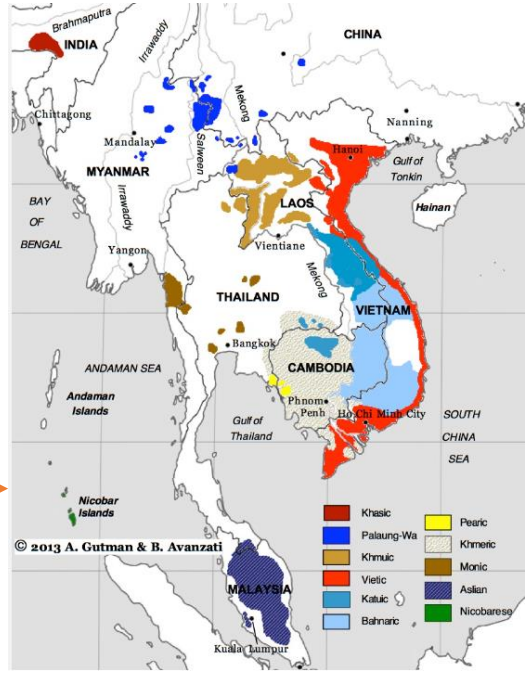


Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021,* TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

One third of female small business owner managers were born overseas

- Of those born overseas, the top three countries were China, India and Vietnam.
- The most common language for female small business owner managers to speak at home other than English in 2021 was Chinese, Indo-Aryan and Mon-Khmer.





Source: ASBFEO calculations from ABS, *Census 2021,* TableBuilder, accessed 12 April 2023

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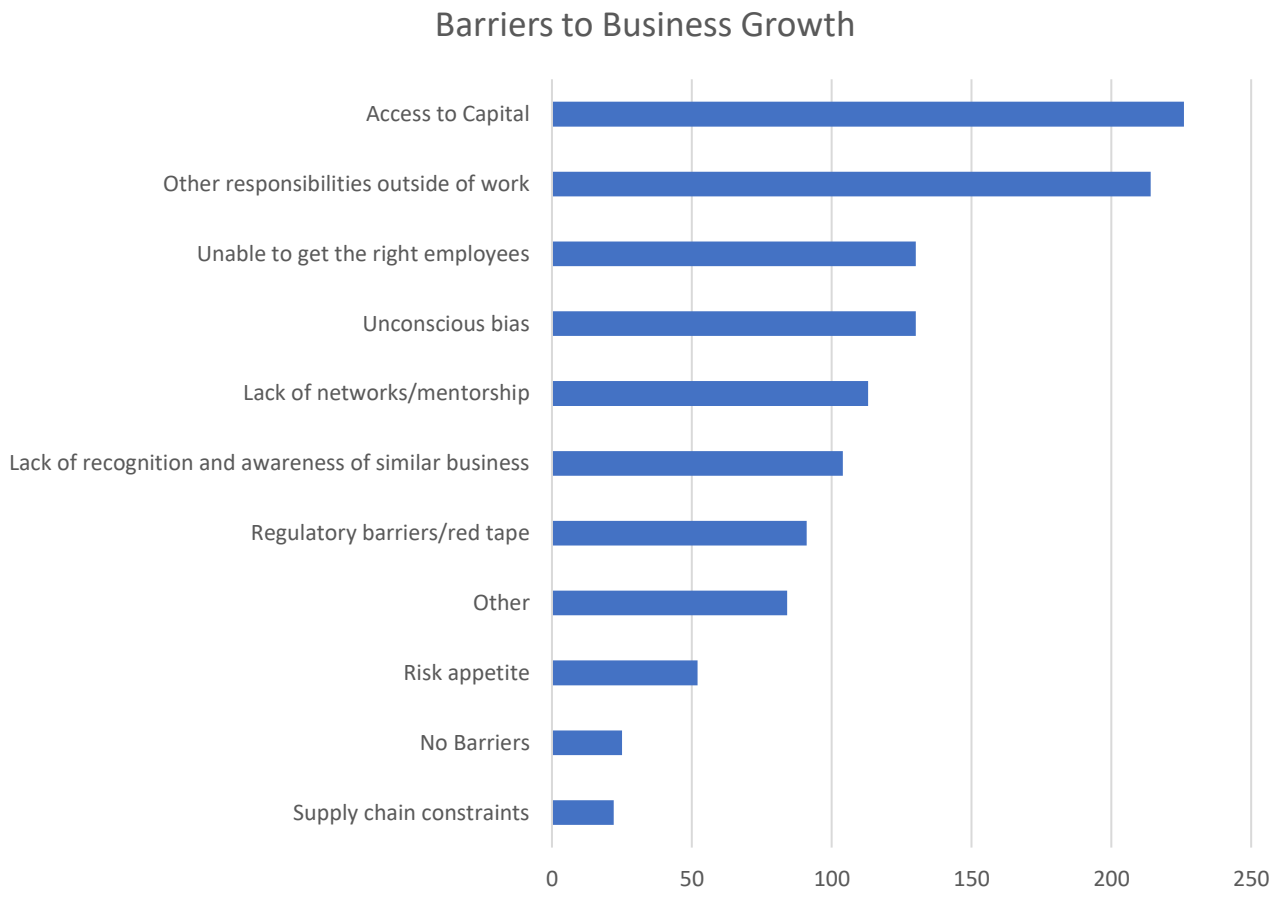
We surveyed women in business about barriers to business and support measures.

- Conducted in 2021
- 574 women owned businesses

Access to capital was the most commonly reported barrier to business growth

- 40% of women reported access to capital as a barrier to business growth
- 38% reported responsibilities outside of work as a barrier



In relation to access to capital, some respondents said:

"Access to investment opportunities for women led businesses, removing unconscious bias and the need to employ men to be the face of the business to get in the door."

"Reduced barriers to loans and capital, most banks won't provide a business loan before 2 years or to a women. Had [my bank] tell me that my father or a male must be on the application."

Assistance with caring responsibilities:

"Better access to support services for myself and family - my husband passed away last year and my father has recently come to live me as he has a serious illness. Accessing support to help me care for my children, father and as well as work has become difficult due to COVID and the nature of my work. I could take on employees but don't have the time to train them or supervise them while in this caring role. I am not sure there are specific support measures to help me other than lessening the time it takes to access myAged care to get dad assessed for respite in the home while I work and access to alternative transport options in a country town to pick up my kids when I am working and drop them home from school (we live out 4km of town.)"

And another comment:

“As a woman-owned business that works from home, and my husband working outside the house full-time, it means I have to do everything that is at home. If my husband was able to work part of the time at home this would help immensely.”

And another comment:

“I haven't had the headspace to consider expansion as I have my hands full running a family as well as the business”

In relation to business networks and mentorship:

“I needed reliable and affordable business coaching, not short term 3-4 sessions and that's all that's funded. I need someone to guide me from seed to expansion.”

“Education and understanding how to go from a sole trader to a company with employees. The responsibility of having employees but understanding workplace relations, law and IR is off-putting.

Some suggestions to empower more entrepreneurial women to try and succeed in business

- Streamlined access to support services, including childcare and aged care
- Workplace flexibility to share the responsibilities of family care
- Access to finance, removal of bias
- Government procurement as lever to energise female enterprise
- Access to mentorship, and professional tailored guidance
- Increased awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity

And what does success look like?

Again, from our survey:

"I think we need to move away from 'masculine' definitions of growth that focus on revenue or employee numbers and instead focus on impact measures that relate to women business owners personal objectives. We shouldn't assume that everyone has the same aims when they start their business."

"I don't want to grow. There is a certain size where a business loses its personal touch."

Thank you

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