



Tanya Plibersek MP



Minister for Housing
Minister for the Status of Women

WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA 2009 REPORT RELEASED

Minister for the Status of Women, Tanya Plibersek today released the *Women in Australia 2009* report.

Women in Australia 2009, the fifth in this biennial series, contains a range of statistics and commentary regarding the status of women in key areas, including women's economic independence, education and training, and health and wellbeing.

"This publication is an important tool for promoting gender equality," Ms Plibersek said.

"*Women in Australia 2009* again highlights that we need to do more to improve gender equality between women and men."

The report found that women spend less time in the paid workforce, are more likely to work part-time, work fewer hours, and are more likely to have interrupted career patterns due to caring responsibilities.

Women's employment is also concentrated in lower paying sectors and occupations.

"Gender pay equity is still an issue of great concern," Ms Plibersek said.

"All of these factors have implications for women's economic outcomes and financial independence – both now and into their retirement years.

"*Women in Australia 2009* is an important reference tool for people interested in gender equality, and can be used to underpin policy development, programs and projects to help achieve women's equal place in society."

Australia is pursuing three key priority areas for advancing gender equality:

- a. improving women's economic outcomes and financial independence;
- b. ensuring women's voices are heard at all levels of decision-making; and
- c. reducing violence against women.

Australia's accession to the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) came into effect two weeks ago.

Copies of *Women in Australia 2009* are available at
http://www.ofw.fahcsia.gov.au/publications/wia_2009/default.htm

**Media contact Darrin Barnett 0428 119 703
Thursday March 19, 2009**