

<b>Key Policy in discussion</b>	<b>WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES</b>
<b>Portfolio and or agency</b>	<b>Multi Agency</b>
<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>20 May 2023</b>

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### **Key Portfolio Issues**

Women with disabilities are impacted by measures across all portfolios, and specific measures are discussed in more detail in the portfolio analysis of the Gender Lens. Additional brief comment is provided here, highlighting employment and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, noting that women with disability in Australia are significantly disadvantaged in employment in relation to access to jobs, in regard to remuneration for the work they perform, and in the types of jobs they gain.

#### **National Disability Insurance Scheme**

The Albanese Government has committed to increasing the workforce of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) by 722 people (14.5 per cent) ([Donnelly, 2023](#)). Given that 74 per cent of NDIA's permanent staff are female ([NDIA, 2023](#)), this percentage is likely to continue. The increased staffing levels will increase service provision to clients.

The National Quality and Safeguards Commission will have its workforce increased by 252 staff (58 per cent) ([Donnelly, 2023](#)). This will increase the Commission's capacity to follow up on reports of physical, psychological and financial abuse by NDIS providers of services. Women with disabilities have to take extreme care when accessing services ([Howe & Hargrave, 2016](#); [Martino, Yon, & Whitzman, 2020](#); [Woodlock & Harris, 2022](#)).

See **Social Security** section.

#### **Employment**

Employment and economic independence within the disability sector remains hidden. A huge number of people with disabilities remain reliant on the Disability Support Pension (DSP). This reliance, sadly, has meant people turning down casual employment in fear of losing the DSP. The NDIA itself has the highest percentage of people with disabilities in its workforce in the Australian Public Service ([website, 2023](#)).

The highlight of the latest Quarterly Report of the NDIS is the percentage growth of the parent or carer in paid employment. This figure has grown from 46 per cent to 51 per cent of parents or carers of children 0-15 years who have been in Scheme two years ([website, 2023](#)).