

Gender equity snapshot: Towong Shire

A RESOURCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



Women's Health Goulburn North East
Challenging inequity. Embracing diversity.

We are intersectional in our approach and are proud to stand beside generations of great women whose work has brought us closer to equality for all.

We acknowledge the wisdom, living culture and connection of the Traditional Custodians of the unceded lands on which we work, and acknowledge the profound disruption of colonisation and the Stolen Generations on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We believe in shared and just cultural transformation that embraces diversity, and these acknowledgements are part of the ethical principles that guide our work and conduct.

We're listening to your feedback on our work – please let us know how we're doing.



Women's Health Goulburn North East
Last updated October 2020

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women's health
goulburn north east
challenging inequity, embracing diversity

About

Women's Health Goulburn North East

Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) is the government-funded specialist women's health service for the Goulburn Valley and North-East Victoria.

We are dedicated to promoting the health and wellbeing of all women and to improving the delivery of health and community services for women in their local communities.

We provide training, information, and assistance with service improvement for service providers and planners, as well as consultancy services on equity, gender and health, evaluation, planning and research.

This resource

Women's Health Goulburn North East has developed the Gender Equity Snapshot to be used alongside the Gendered Data and Planning Resource also developed by WHGNE.

Together, these tools will assist local government in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021 – 2025.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Towong Shire is a local government area in Victoria covering an area of 6,673 square kilometres.

There are 2,900 women in the area.¹

As of the 2016 census:

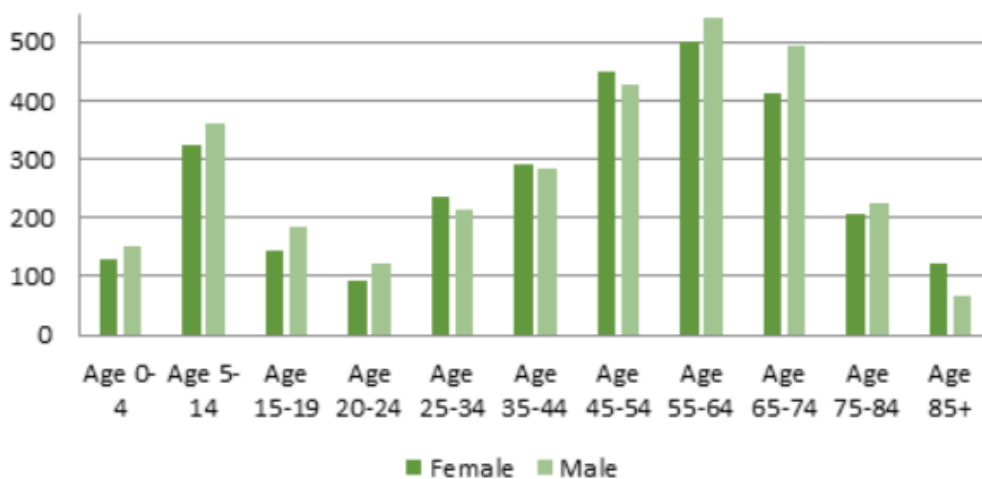
- 17.4 per cent of the female population was born outside Australia;² and
- 0.2 per cent of female residents reported having low English proficiency.³

Ageing is highly gendered. Young women experience higher rates of mental distress, intimate partner violence and body image issues.

Older women are the fastest growing group of homeless people due to lack of superannuation and higher life expectancy.⁴

See Figure 1 for a breakdown of population by age and sex in Towong Shire.

Figure 1. Total female population by age in Towong Shire



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Age by Sex (LGA). Available from: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_C16_T04_LGA#.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Towong (S)
 2. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Country of Birth by Person by Sex (LGA).
 3. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Proficiency in Spoken English/Language by Age by Sex (LGA).
 4. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality, Age distribution.

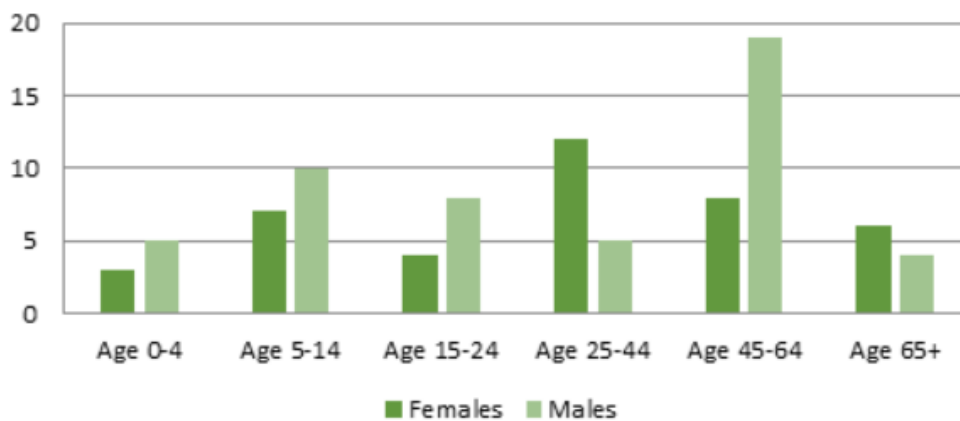
DEMOGRAPHICS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women face multiple layers of discrimination.

This may prevent them from accessing services. High incarceration, suicide and family violence rates in Aboriginal communities impact on health outcomes.⁵

See Figure 2 for a breakdown of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population by sex and age in Towong Shire.

Figure 2. Female Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population in Towong Shire



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Indigenous Status by Age by Sex (LGA). Available from: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_C16_T04_LGA#

5. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Indigenous Status

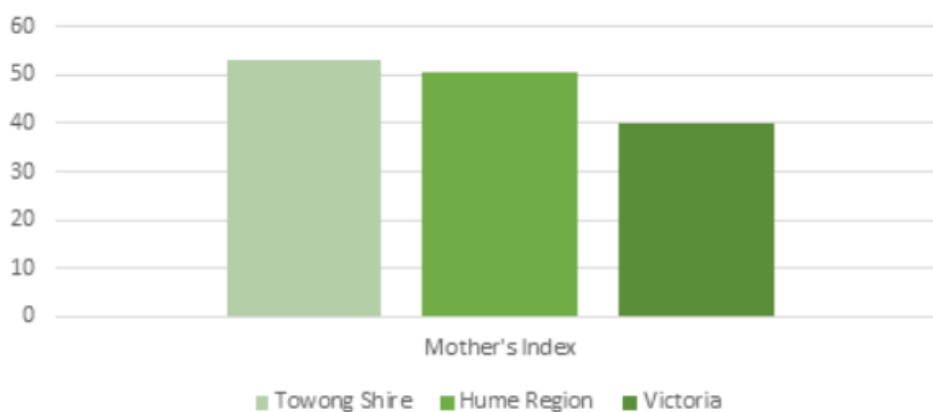
MOTHER'S INDEX

The mother's index measures scores from indicators that matter most to mothers.

This includes her health, the wellbeing of her children, her own educational attainment, the family's economic status and her relative socioeconomic status.

Mothers in rural and remote areas are further disadvantaged by reduced access to primary health care providers and health services. LGAs are rated from 1 to 79, with 1 being the best place for a mother to live.⁶ Figure 3 shows the mother's index rank for Towong Shire.

Figure 3. Mother's Index Rank, Towong Shire



Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Mothers Index: Rank: 2016. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au>



6. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Mothers Index: Rank: 2016.

EDUCATION

Educational attainment is associated with better lifelong health.

It equips people with the skills required to achieve a stable employment and income, live in adequate housing, provide for families and cope with ill health by assisting them to make informed healthcare choices.⁷

A mother's education level affects the health of her family, her children's educational attainment and their health and nutrition outcomes.⁷

Benefits associated with attaining high levels of education are consistently more accessible to men than women.

More women graduate from higher education institutions and receive the same education as men but continue to be undervalued in the majority of study fields and industries from the start of their career.⁸ Table 1 shows post-secondary education by sex and age for Towong Shire.

Lower salaries mean that women receive lower rewards from investing in their tertiary education compared to men.

Table 1. Education – Post-secondary, Towong Shire

	Age 15 - 34		Age 35 - 64		Age 65+	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Post-graduate degree	0	3	22	28	9	11
Graduate diploma or certificate	3	4	18	39	12	6
Bachelor's degree	25	50	89	159	30	55

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Non-school qualification: Level of Education by age by sex (LGA). Available from: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_C16_T04_LGA#

7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2016. Australia's Health 2016: Chapter 4: Determinants of Health.

8. Workplace Gender Equality Agency. 2019. Higher Education Enrolments and Graduate Labour Market Statistics.

EDUCATION

More women have post-secondary qualifications than men; however they remain underrepresented in leadership positions.⁹

lack of flexible work practices, affordability and accessibility of childcare, sexism, lack of female mentors and societal expectations regarding gender roles (e.g. household work and childcare).¹⁰

This trend is seen at the national level, and within Towong Shire. This is due to a range of complex and interrelated factors, including workplace culture, gender stereotypes,

Table 2 depicts the numbers of local men and women in community and industry across Towong Shire with post-secondary qualifications.

Table 2. Education – Leadership opportunities, Towong Shire

	Managers		Professionals		Community & personal service workers		Clerical & administration workers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Doctorate	3	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
Master's degree	5	7	7	10	0	0	4	0
Bachelor's degree	19	46	64	111	7	14	3	15

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, G50 Non-school Qualification: Level of Education by occupation by sex (LGA). Available from: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_C16_G48_SA

9. Workplace Gender Equality Agency. 2019. Higher Education Enrolments and Graduate Labour Market Statistics.

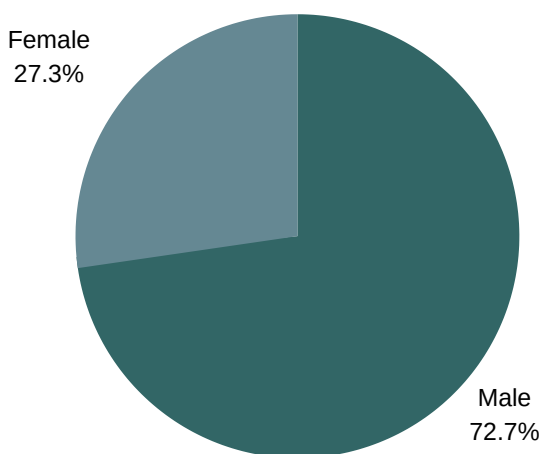
10. Committee for Economic Development of Australia. 2013. Barriers to Equality of Opportunity.



LEADERSHIP



Figure 4. Proportion of male and female managers in Towong Shire



Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators: % Proportion that are Male or Female: 2016. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au>

Chief executive, general manager and legislator positions in Towong Shire

Figure 4 shows the proportion of women occupying chief executive, general manager and legislator positions in Towong Shire. This proportion is similar to the state average of 26.2 per cent for women and 73.8 per cent for men.¹¹

The disparity between men and women in leadership roles perpetuates existing stereotypes about the role of women both at work and in wider society and exacerbates gender pay inequity.¹¹

11. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators: % Proportion that are Male or Female: 2016.

WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION - THE GENDER PAY GAP

The gender pay gap (GPG) is the difference between women and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.¹²

Contributing factors to the GPG include:

- Hiring and pay discrimination
- Female-dominated sectors attracting lower wages
- Women's disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work
- Limited workplace flexibility to accommodate women's non-work responsibilities; and
- Women's greater time out of the workforce impacting career progression.¹²

Tables 3 and 4 indicate the biggest industry employer of females in Towong Shire and the national gender pay gap in favour of males for these industries, respectively.

Table 3. Biggest industry employer of females in Towong Shire

Industry	Number of employees
Healthcare and social assistance	297
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	194
Education and training	147
Retail trade	122
Accommodation and food services	95
Public administration and safety	66
Inadequately described / not stated	40
Professional, scientific and technical services	35

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Industry of Employment by Age, by Sex (LGA). Available from: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_C16_G53_LGA

12. Workplace Gender Equality Agency. 2020. Australia's Gender Pay Gap Statistics.

WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION - THE GENDER PAY GAP

Table 4. National full-time pay gap for full-time employees in favour of males, including proportion of employees by sector and sex

Industry	Proportion of each sex working in industry		Pay gap for full time employees, % in favour of males
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Healthcare and social assistance	20.1	79.9	15.9
Retail trade	42.3	57.7	15.9
Education and training	36.6	63.4	8.8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	65.6	34.4	21.3

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency. 2020. WGEA Data Explorer: All Industries: Gender Pay Gaps. Available from: <https://data.wgea.gov.au/industries/1>

Men hold the majority of leadership roles and receive higher pay, even in female-dominated industries.

The proportion of women in traditionally female-dominated industries such as health care and social assistance and education and training has increased.¹³ The biggest employers for males in Towong Shire are agriculture, forestry and fishing and construction.¹⁴



13. Workplace Gender Equality Agency. 2019. Gender Segregation in Australia's Workforce.

14. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2016. Census 2016, Industry of Employment by Age, by Sex (LGA).

LABOUR FORCE STATUS AND INCOME

Unemployment, part-time and full-time work for women and men in Towong Shire ¹⁵

The percentage of women over 15 who are unemployed is 4.3 per cent, similar to the percentage of men unemployed at 5.1 per cent. Women make up the majority of the part-time workforce, with 48.4 per cent of women over 15 working part-time and 18.5 per cent of men.

Fewer women work full-time, with 39.5 per cent of women over 15 in full-time employment. Men make up the majority of the full-time work force in Towong Shire, with 68.9 per cent in full-time employment. These statistics reflect the state average (women = 40.8 per cent and men = 69 per cent). Full-time and part-time averages have not changed much since the 2011 census.

In 2016, below minimum wage was considered between \$0 and \$649. ¹⁶ 50.3 per cent of women aged 15 and older in Towong Shire earn below minimum wage. ¹⁶ 36.4 per cent of men aged 15 and older in Towong Shire earn below minimum wage. ¹⁶ As of ¹⁷ 2017, women in full-time work earn on average \$251.20 less per week than men.

Lone parent status in Towong Shire ¹⁷

Women head the majority of lone parent status families (69.3 per cent) while 30.7 per cent of lone parent status families are headed by men. This statistic is concerning when juxtaposed with data that demonstrates more women earn below minimum wage and make up considerably more of the part-time workforce. This figure has remained relatively consistent since the 2011 census.

15. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Labour Force Status: 2016.

16. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Individual Weekly Income: % Above Weekly Minimum Wage: 2016.

17. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Gender Equality: Lone Parent Status: % Proportion that are Male or Female: 2016.

SAFETY - PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

Feeling safe at night is influenced by the built environment, neighbourhood design & availability of transport options.¹⁸

Table 5 shows the proportion of people who feel safe at night in Towong Shire, by sex. The percentage of women who feel safe at night in Towong Shire is higher than the State and Hume Region average. The proportion has decreased between 2011 and 2015.¹⁸

Table 5. Proportion of people who feel safe walking at night, %

	Towong Shire		Hume region		Victoria	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
2015	91.8	69.4	83.6	51.4	78.8	44
2011	99.4	90.9	92.1	70.6	87.5	63.1

Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Perceptions Of Safety: % People who feel safe when walking alone at night: 2015. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au>

SAFETY - SEXUAL OFFENCES

Sexual offences are acts and intent of acts against another person of a sexual nature that are non-consensual or where the person is deemed incapable of giving consent because of youth or temporary/permanent incapacity. This includes rape, sexual offences against children, indecent assault and other sexual offences.¹⁹

18. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Perceptions Of Safety: % People who feel safe when walking alone at night: 2015.

19. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Sexual Offences Jan-June Reported Incidents: 2019.

SAFETY - SEXUAL OFFENCES

One in three women in Australia aged 18-64 have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime.²⁰

The majority of sexual harassment continues to be experienced in the workplace (65 per cent).²⁰ One in five Australian women have also been coerced into unwanted sex.²¹

In 2019, 7 females in Towong Shire reported a sexual offence.²² Figure 5 shows this as a rate of 11.7 women per 10,000, which is lower than the Hume region (16.1) and

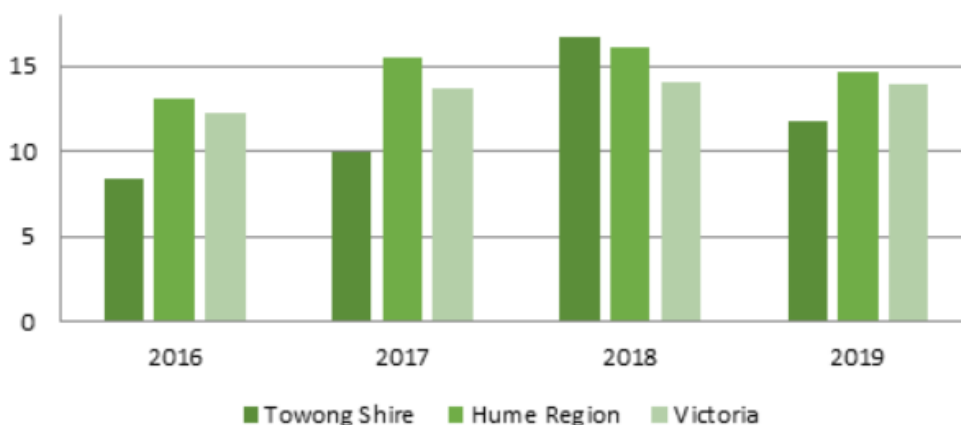
state (14.1) average rates.²²

Research has found most incidents of family and sexual violence go unreported. Therefore, this is likely an underestimate.²³

In Victoria, fewer than one third of recorded sexual offences progress to police prosecution. Of those that were progressed, only 69 per cent were heard in court.²⁴

Men overwhelmingly perpetrate sexual violence against women, and female victims of sexual offences outnumber male victims by five to one.²²

Figure 5. Number of women who reported a sexual offence in Towong Shire, rate per 10,000



Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Sexual Offences Jan-June Reported Incidents: 2019. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au>

20. Australian Human Rights Commission. 2008. Sexual Harassment: Serious Business.

21. Visser R, Badcock P, Rissel C, Richters J, Smith A, Grulich A & Simpson J. 2014. Experiences of Sexual Coercion in a Representative Sample of Adults: the Second Australian Study of Health and Relationships. *Sexual Health*. 11(5): 472-480.

22. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Sexual Offences Jan-June Reported Incidents: 2019.

23. Phillips J. 2014. Domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia: an overview of the issues.

24. Crime Statistics Agency. 2017. Attrition of sexual offence incidents across the Victorian criminal justice system.

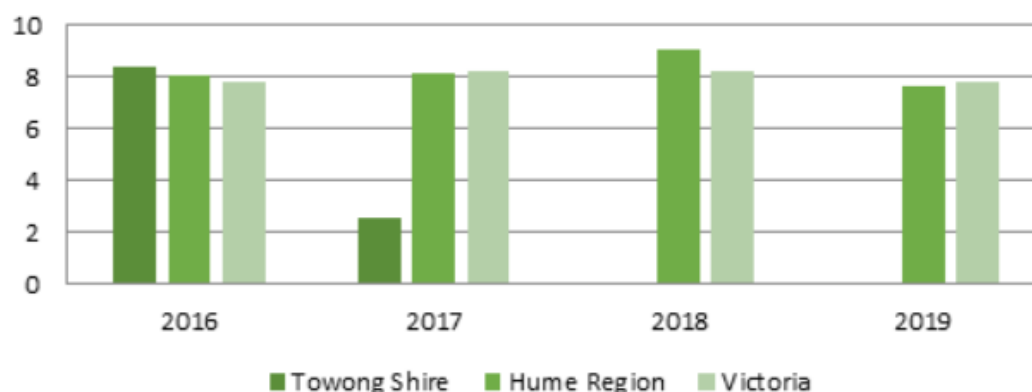
SAFETY - STALKING, HARASSMENT AND THREATENING BEHAVIOURS

Applying an intersectional lens to sexual harassment:

- Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are twice as likely as others to experience sexual harassment, as well as other forms of discrimination in the workplace.²⁵
- Nine out of ten (89 per cent) of women with a disability have been sexually harassed in their lifetime.²⁶
- Students who identify as LGBTQIA+ are almost twice as likely to experience sexual harassment at university than those who don't.²⁶
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to experience workplace sexual harassment than people who are non-Indigenous (53 per cent and 32 per cent respectively).²⁶

In Victoria, female victim reports of stalking, harassment and threatening behaviour outnumber male victim reports by a ratio of two to one.²⁷ Figure 6 shows that the rate of reported stalking, harassment and threatening behaviours in Towong Shire was much lower than the Hume Region and State average in 2017.²⁷

Figure 6. Number of women who reported stalking, harassment and threatening behaviours in Towong Shire, rate per 10,000



Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Stalking, Harassment And Threatening Behaviours: Rate (per 10,000): 2018. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au/>

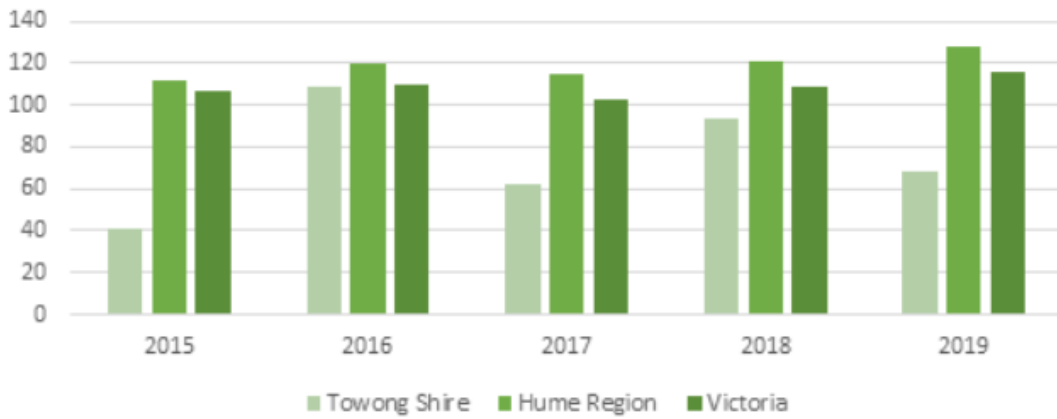
25. Baird M, Cooper R, Hill E, Probyn E, Vroman A. 2018. Women and the Future of Work.

26. Australian Human Rights Commission. 2018. Everyone's business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces.

27. Victorian Women's Health Atlas. 2020. Violence Against Women: Stalking, Harassment And Threatening Behaviours: Rate (per 10,000): 2018

SAFETY - FAMILY VIOLENCE

Figure 7. Family violence incidents, rate per 10,000, Towong Shire



Source: Victorian Women's Health Atlas 2020. Violence Against Women: Family Violence: Rate (per 10,000): 2018. Available from: <https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au/>

Family violence is the leading cause of death and disability in women aged 15-45 years and is the biggest contributor to women's ill health, including poor mental health.²⁸

Women and girls are generally less safe in their own homes than in public spaces. In Victoria, female victim reports of family violence outnumber male victim reports by a ratio of three to one.²⁸

As Figure 7 shows, the rate of family violence incidents in Towong Shire has been lower than the Hume Region State average for 5 years.²⁸



28. Victorian Women's Health Atlas 2020. Violence Against Women: Family Violence: Rate (per 10,000): 2018.

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