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Women's safety at work declines over the decade, while progress in other gender equality measures remains modest

Women's safety in the workplace remains a key concern for IEU members. However, between 2014 and 2024, conditions have worsened, making it the only area of gender equality to show a backward trend.

This decline undermines modest progress made in other areas. The [Centre for Gender Equality and Inclusion's 2025 Report](#) finds that governments and employers still have significant work to do, offering data-informed insights to support meaningful change.

With women making up nearly three-quarters of our union's membership, the IEU is deeply concerned by the national findings of the [Gender Equality @ Work Index](#). The data shows that women's safety at work actually declined to 75 points in 2024, a drop of three points since 2014.

Women are still experiencing significantly higher rates of sexual harassment and psychological injuries compared to men, who by contrast experience higher rates of physical injury.

Overall [gender equality has improved by a just three points](#) up from 80 to 83 (out of a possible score of 100) over the last decade.

The [Gender Equality Report](#) measures seven dimensions: workforce participation; pay rates; hours of paid work and unpaid domestic labour; job security; occupational segmentation; safety; and stratification. The dimension recording the most improvement was stratification which rose from 77 to 86. The stratification dimension measures women's representation in lower paid jobs and whether positions are meeting qualification and experience levels.

Addressing the unequal burden of domestic and care responsibilities, which continues to hold women back at work, will require men to access parental leave at much higher rates. The new data shows a slight decrease in the amount of unpaid domestic work performed by women.

The report's data-informed insights offer an additional resource alongside, for example, the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) data. Together, these sources support the IEU's efforts to build the case for change and guide government and employer action to deliver more swiftly on their stated commitments to gender equality.

Our union will continue to advocate and campaign for governments, employers, and the community to prioritise investment in higher wages and improved conditions in female-dominated professions; expand access to flexible work; incentivise men to share the domestic load and take up paid parental leave; and implement all necessary measures to ensure safe workplaces across the feminised education sector.