

AUSTRALIA

Region: Oceania (Global North)

Population (2022): 26.98 million (56th)

Life Expectancy at Birth (Women): 84.84 (9th)

Governance System: Constitutional monarchy with representative democracy

Capital: Canberra

Land Area (km²): 7,692,020 (6th)

Major Language: English

Select Global Rankings

GDP (2022): 12th (1,675,419 US\$ Millions)

Human Development Index: 5th (Very High)

Fragile States Index - Inverted: 12th (Cat. 2)

Good Country Index: 18th

Human Freedom Index: 8th

World Happiness Ranking: 12th

Select Global Rankings (Gender-Focus)

Gross National Income Per Capita (Women): 20th

Gender Social Norms Index: 5th

Women's Power Index: 18th

Social Institutions and Gender Index (World Cup rank): 16th

Gender Inequality Index: 19th

Global Gender Gap Index: 26th

Women Peace & Security Index: 24th

Elite Sport System Rankings

2020 Summer Olympic Women's Medals (% of Total): 23 (50%)

2022 Winter Olympic Women's Medals (% of Total): 3 (75%)

Global Cup Ranking (Women): 4th

Football/World Cup Profile

FIFA Region: AFC

FIFA Ranking: 56

World Cup Appearance: 8th

Best World Cup Performance(s): Quarter-finals (2007, 2011, 2015)

Qualification: Co-host (automatic bid)

World Cup Group: B

Last World Cup Appearance: 2019

AUSTRALIA in International (Gender) Affairs (by Tasha Cory)

The Australian Women's National Soccer team, the Matildas, represents Australia in international association football. It is fielded by Football Australia (FA), the governing body of football in Australia competing as a member of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF), having previously been organized through the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) up until [2006](#).

The team has won three OFC titles, one AFC title and one AFF title, making them the first national team to be champions in two different confederations (before their male counterparts achieved the same feat in 2015 AFC Asian Cup). The team has also participated in seven FIFA Women's World Cups and four Olympic Games, but has not won either tournament. As of [April 2023](#), they are ranked eleventh in the world by FIFA. The Matildas will co-host the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup with New Zealand, which means they automatically qualify for the event as co-hosts.

To achieve gender equality in Australian football, the Football Federation of Australia (now Football Australia) had to go through a governance [reform process](#). When gender equality policies were implemented, the worldwide body for football, FIFA, threatened to revoke the recognition of member federation, Football Australia. The Congress Review Working Group was founded as a result of the threat posed by the governance crisis. Significant structural change, including required gender equality measures, resulted from the Working Group's recommendations. It remains to be seen whether constitutional reforms, such as the 40:40:20 plan (40 percent women, 40 percent males, and 20 percent of any gender), would result in significant and long-lasting change. In an effort to make sports more gender-equal in the future.

The host nations of large sports events are often called out by the international public for their track record on human rights. The shift to focus on Australia's treatment of women in preparation for co-[hosting](#) (with New Zealand) the 2023 FIFA women's World Cup. Australia is currently ranked 43rd in the world by the World Economic Forum for gender equality, noting that one woman a week dies in Australia as a consequence of intimate partner violence. First Nations women and gender-diverse people can participate in football through Australia's Legacy '23 plan to increase diversity in professional sport, but some argue that this is not enough to address the deeply entrenched inequities and disadvantage that women face in Australia.

Gender equality in Australia has been a long and hard-fought struggle that is still ongoing. Here are some of the [historical milestones](#) that have shaped the progress of women's rights and opportunities in the country. In 1894, South Australia became the first Australian state to grant women the right to vote and stand for elections. South Australia was also the only place in the world at the time where women could run for office. In 1962, Indigenous women gained the right to enrol and vote in federal elections, along with Indigenous men, after decades of activism and campaigning by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and organisations. The Conciliation and Arbitration Commission granted equal pay for men and women doing the same work, affecting about a million female workers in 1972. This was a landmark decision that recognised the economic value and contribution of women in the workforce. The Sex Discrimination Act was passed in 1984, making it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy in various areas of public life, such as employment, education, accommodation and provision of goods and services. However, currently Australia's [gender pay gap](#) is **22.8%**. Women, on average earn, **\$26,596 less** than men each year. Men are twice as likely to be in the top earning bracket and women are 1.5 times more likely to be in the lowest. Every single industry in Australia has a gender pay gap that favours men. And the gender pay gap has increased in eight industries this year.

These are some of the key events that have advanced gender equality in Australia, but there are many more achievements and challenges that have shaped the history and future of women's rights in the country.