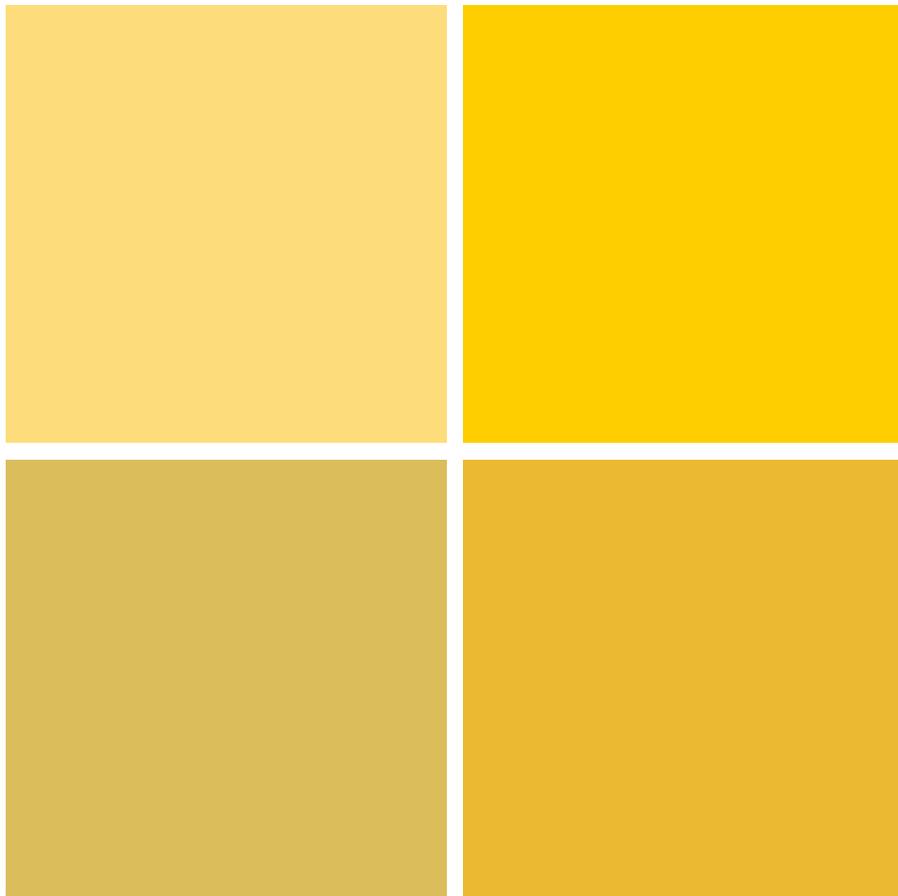


ANROWS

# ATTITUDES MATTER:



# NCAS

**THE 2021 NATIONAL COMMUNITY  
ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN SURVEY (NCAS)**

Findings for Australian states and territories

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## **Acknowledgement of Country**

ANROWS acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders past and present. We value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and knowledge. We are committed to standing and working with First Nations peoples, honouring the truths set out in the [Warawarni-gu Guma Statement](#).

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# Attitudes matter



The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards  
Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)  
Findings for Australian states and territories

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*to Reduce Violence against Women & their Children*



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ANROWS acknowledges the lives and experiences of the women and children affected by domestic, family and sexual violence who are represented in this report. We recognise the individual stories of courage, hope and resilience that form the basis of ANROWS research.

Caution: Some people may find parts of this content confronting or distressing. Recommended support services include 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732), Lifeline (13 11 14) and, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 13YARN (13 92 76).



This report addresses work covered in ANROWS's National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) Research Program. Please consult the [ANROWS website](#) for more information on this project.

ANROWS research contributes to the shared vision to end gender-based violence in one generation of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (the National Plan 2022–2032) and the six National Outcomes of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan 2010–2022). This research provides prevention and early intervention key indicators for the National Plan 2022–2032 and addresses National Outcome 1 – Communities are safe and free from violence, and National Outcome 2 – Relationships are respectful of the National Plan 2010–2022.

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# Shortened forms and data symbols

## Shortened forms

<b>ABS</b>	Australian Bureau of Statistics
<b>ACT</b>	Australian Capital Territory
<b>AGIS</b>	Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale
<b>AIHW</b>	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
<b>ANROWS</b>	Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
<b>AVAWS</b>	Attitudes towards Violence against Women Scale
<b>CDC</b>	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<b>Change the story</b>	<i>Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia</i> (2nd ed.; Our Watch, 2021)
<b>COAG</b>	Council of Australian Governments
<b>DVS</b>	Domestic Violence Scale
<b>GVIS</b>	Gendered Violence and Inequality Scale
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	An evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, asexual and other sexuality- or gender-diverse people
<b>Main report</b>	Coumarelos, C., Weeks, N., Bernstein, S., Roberts, N., Honey, N., Minter, K., & Carlisle, E. (2023). <i>Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for Australia</i> (Research report, 02/2023). ANROWS.
<b>National Plan 2010–2022</b>	<i>National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022</i>
<b>National Plan 2022–2032</b>	<i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032</i>

<b>NCAS</b>	National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey
<b>NSW</b>	New South Wales
<b>NT</b>	Northern Territory
<b>Recognise DV Subscale</b>	Recognise Domestic Violence Subscale
<b>Recognise VAW Subscale</b>	Recognise Violence Against Women Subscale
<b>SAS</b>	Sexual Assault Scale
<b>SHS</b>	Sexual Harassment Scale
<b>Summary report</b>	Coumarelos, C., Weeks, N., Bernstein, S., Roberts, N., Honey, N., Minter, K., & Carlisle, E. (2023). <i>Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Summary for Australia</i> (Research report, 03/2023). ANROWS.
<b>SVS</b>	Sexual Violence Scale
<b>Technical Report</b>	Coumarelos, C., Honey, N., Ward, A., Weeks, N., & Minter, K. (2023). <i>Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Technical report</i> (ANROWS Insights, 02/2023). ANROWS.
<b>TFAS</b>	Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale
<b>Understand Gendered DV Subscale</b>	Understand Gendered Domestic Violence Subscale
<b>UVAWS</b>	Understanding of Violence against Women Scale
<b>WA</b>	Western Australia
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

## Data symbols and table and figure notations

\* Indicates a statistically significant result, meaning we can be confident (with 95% certainty) that the difference observed in the survey sample is meaningful and likely to represent a true difference in the Australian population ( $p < 0.05$ ) that is not negligible in size (Cohen's  $d \geq 0.2$  or equivalent)

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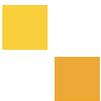
~ Indicates an item was asked of one quarter of the sample

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# About this report

This report outlines the results from the 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) for states and territories. It presents findings for each state and territory and considers them in the context of the overall Australian population. This report also includes information about the research design background for the NCAS. The 2021 NCAS states and territories report will interest stakeholders tasked with responding to, reducing and preventing violence against women, including policymakers, practitioners, practice designers, educators, researchers, community organisations and media.



This report is one among a suite of ANROWS resources produced for the 2021 NCAS. Other reports and documents on NCAS findings include:

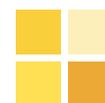
- Minter, K., Carlisle, E., & Coumarelos, C. (2021). *“Chuck her on a lie detector”: Investigating Australians’ mistrust in women’s reports of sexual assault* (Research report, 04/2021). ANROWS.
- Carlisle, E., Coumarelos, C., Minter, K., & Lohmeyer, B. (2022). *“It depends on what the definition of domestic violence is”: How young Australians conceptualise domestic violence and abuse* (Research report, 09/2022). ANROWS.
- Coumarelos, C., Weeks, N., Bernstein, S., Roberts, N., Honey, N., Minter, K., & Carlisle, E. (2023). *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for Australia* (Research report, 02/2023). ANROWS. (The “Main report”)
- Coumarelos, C., Weeks, N., Bernstein, S., Roberts, N., Honey, N., Minter, K., & Carlisle, E. (2023). *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Summary for Australia* (Research report, 03/2023). ANROWS. (The “Summary report”)
- Coumarelos, C., Honey, N., Ward, A., Weeks, N., & Minter, K. (2023). *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Technical report* (ANROWS Insights, 02/2023). ANROWS. (The “Technical report”)
- *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander respondents* (forthcoming).
- *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for people from non-English speaking backgrounds* (forthcoming).
- *Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for young Australians* (forthcoming).



# About the NCAS



The *National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey* (NCAS) is a periodic, representative survey of the Australian population that is conducted every four years. The NCAS measures the Australian community's understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women, their attitudes towards gender inequality and their intentions to intervene when witnessing violence or disrespect against women. It was established as a key means of monitoring progress against the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan 2010–2022) and will continue to evaluate progress against the current *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (the National Plan 2022–2032; Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2010, 2022). Community understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women are shaped by, and in part reflect, social norms embedded in organisational, community, institutional and societal practices, systems and structures. Thus, the NCAS functions as a gauge for how Australia is progressing in changing the broader climate that facilitates and maintains violence against women. By highlighting problematic areas in the community's understanding and attitudes towards violence against women, the NCAS provides valuable evidence to inform policy and practice in the prevention of this violence.



## 2021 NCAS

The 2021 NCAS sample consisted of 19,100 Australians aged 16 years or over, who were interviewed via mobile telephone. The sample included at least 1,000 respondents from each Australian state and territory to allow reporting at both the national and jurisdictional level.

The findings of the 2021 NCAS demonstrate gradual improvements in community understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women, suggesting encouraging progress towards the achievement of a community that offers equal opportunities to women and is safe and free from violence against women. However, further intervention is still necessary where harmful individual and social norms prevail. It is important to continue to challenge biases, myths and misconceptions regarding violence against women and gender inequality because these biases reflect the societal culture, including broad practices, processes, systems and structures, that maintains gender inequality and violence against women. These attitudes are also enacted in the responses to violence by police, the judiciary and community services in ways that may fail to deter perpetrators of violence against women and serve as systemic barriers to victims and survivors seeking justice and support.



# 1 Introduction: Violence against women and the need for action

## 1.1 Climate of violence against women

### Prevalence of violence against women and its impacts

Violence against women, including violence perpetrated within intimate, domestic and family relationships, is a fundamental violation of human rights and a global social, health and economic problem (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014; World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). In Australia, population-based prevalence data from the 2021–2022 *Personal Safety Survey* (PSS) indicates that, since the age of 15 years:

- 1 in 2 women have experienced sexual harassment (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2017)<sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 4 women have experienced violence by an intimate partner (ABS, 2023)
- 1 in 11 women have experienced violence by a boyfriend, girlfriend or date (ABS, 2023)
- 1 in 4 women have experienced cohabiting partner emotional abuse (ABS, 2023)
- 1 in 6 women have experienced cohabiting partner economic abuse (ABS, 2023)
- 1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence (ABS, 2023)
- 1 in 5 women have experienced stalking (ABS, 2023).

<sup>1</sup> We present 2021–2022 PSS data for all violence types other than sexual harassment. The ABS recommends using 2016 rather than 2021–2022 PSS data for sexual harassment due to its greater reliability.

The 2021–2022 PSS data indicates that prevalence of violence against women is concerning across all Australian states and territories, with 37 to 46 per cent of women having experienced sexual or physical violence since the age of 15 years (ABS, 2023). Specifically, since the age of 15 years, the percentage of women who had experienced physical violence and the percentage who had experienced sexual violence was, respectively:

- 31 and 25 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT)
- 29 and 21 per cent in New South Wales (NSW)
- 37 and 27 per cent in the Northern Territory (NT)
- 34 and 24 per cent in Queensland
- 31 and 21 per cent in South Australia
- 33 and 26 per cent in Tasmania
- 29 and 22 per cent in Victoria
- 34 and 23 per cent in Western Australia (WA; ABS, 2023).

Across the world, population-level data also confirms that domestic violence is predominantly gendered. Women are overwhelmingly the victims of violence in intimate relationships and sexual violence and men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of this violence (ABS, 2017, 2023; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014; WHO, 2021). Women are also much more likely than men to suffer serious harm because of this violence, with Australian women around six times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of domestic violence and around four times more likely to be murdered by an intimate partner (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2022a, 2022b; Serpell et al., 2022).

### Demographic factors correlated with risk of victimisation

The intersections of a range of structural and systemic forms of oppression and discrimination produce particular forms and patterns of violence against women, increase the prevalence or severity of this violence, and limit or undermine individual and systemic consequences for the use of this violence (see also Section 1.2). A wide range of demographic factors have been associated with increased risk of women experiencing violence, including cultural, ethnic, age, ability, gender and sexuality factors (Kulkarni, 2019; K. Morgan et al., 2016; Our Watch, 2021; Our Watch et al., 2015; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Thiara et al., 2011).

For example, all forms of violence against Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women occur at higher rates and are more likely to result in severe impacts than violence against non-Indigenous Australian women (ABS, 2017; AIHW, 2018; Bartels, 2010; Closing the Gap

Clearinghouse, 2013; Office of the eSafety Commissioner [eSafety], 2017; Our Watch, 2018b; Powell et al., 2022).

Women from some cultural or religious backgrounds are at heightened risk of specific forms of violence that, while illegal in Australia, are still carried out based on specific cultural or religious imperatives in some contexts, such as forced or child marriage, marital rape, dowry-related violence and female genital mutilation (Adinkrah, 2011; Gethin, 2019; Lyneham & Bricknell, 2018; Ogunsiji et al., 2018; WHO, 2022).

Younger women are at higher risk of many forms of violence, including stalking, sexual assault, sexual harassment and intimate partner violence, compared to both younger men and older women (ABS, 2017; AIHW, 2019b). Older women have higher risk than older men of specific forms of elder abuse, such as neglect, sexual abuse and psychological abuse (Qu et al., 2021).

Evidence over the past decade indicates that LGBTQ+ people are more likely to experience sexual violence and family violence (DeKeseredy et al., 2021; Edwards, Sylaska, & Neal, 2015; Edwards et al., 2015; Horsley, 2015; Messinger, 2017; Peitzmeier et al., 2020; Snyder et al., 2018). Lesbian, bisexual and trans women can experience additional, unique forms of violence as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity, including threats to publicly reveal a partner's sexual orientation or gender identity, and withholding of a partner's essential medication or hormones (Hill et al., 2020).

Evidence also indicates that women with disability have an increased prevalence of certain types of violence or abuse, such as emotional abuse from a current or previous partner since the age of 15 (AIHW, 2019b) and sexual violence over their lifetime (Townsend et al., 2022).

### Impacts of violence against women

Violence against women produces a profound and long-term toll on victims' and survivors' health and wellbeing, on families and communities, and on our broader society. These consequences include acute and chronic health impacts for victims and survivors, such as depressive, anxiety and alcohol use disorders; early pregnancy loss; physical injury and homicide; and suicide and self-inflicted injuries (ABS, 2017; AIHW, 2019a; Serpell et al., 2022). In addition, domestic and family violence engenders significant social and psychological costs for victims and survivors, their families, and the broader community, with increased risk of child abuse and neglect and of adverse impacts on emotional and psychological wellbeing, cognitive functioning, learning, and the ability to develop positive relationships

(Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety [ANROWS], 2018; AIHW, 2019a; Dembo et al., 2018; KPMG, 2016; Miller-Graff et al., 2016). The total economic cost of violence against women in Australia in 2015–16 was estimated to be \$22–26 billion (KPMG, 2016). The prevalence and adverse impacts of violence against women reveal that considerable progress is needed to meet the target of the National Plan 2022–2032 to “end violence against women and children in one generation” (Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2022, p. 55).

### Key events regarding violence against women since 2017

Key events in Australia and globally since the 2017 NCAS may have amplified the focus on violence against women. One noteworthy global event since the last NCAS is the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 lockdowns occurred in various parts of Australia during several periods between March 2020 and October 2021 (Knowlton, 2023). The evidence on the impact of the pandemic on violence against women in Australia has not been clear-cut. Some literature has indicated that the pandemic exacerbated violence against women (AIHW, 2021; Boxall & Morgan, 2021; Dalton, 2020; Gosangi et al., 2020; Kourti et al., 2023) or even described gender-based violence in the era of COVID-19 as a “twin” or “shadow” pandemic (Dlamini, 2021; Pfitzner et al., 2020; Sri et al., 2021). In addition, factors resulting from the COVID-19 lockdowns were argued by some authors to be conducive to increasing violence, including close and ongoing contact between victims and survivors and perpetrators; job losses leading to economic hardship; and reduced access to support services (particularly face-to-face services; Boserup et al., 2020; Nancarrow, 2020; Zhang, 2020). However, Australian victimisation data from the 2021–2022 PSS did not support an increase in violence during the pandemic. Between 2016 and 2021–2022 (which covered the tail end of lockdowns), the 12-month prevalence of physical violence and sexual violence remained stable and the 12-month prevalence rate of intimate partner violence decreased (ABS, 2023).<sup>2</sup>

Beyond the pandemic, a context of tolerance, wilful ignorance and endorsement of violence against women has persisted both internationally and within Australia between 2017 and 2022, exemplified by a series of high-profile legal cases and incidents of violence. However, the period since 2017 was also one of increased momentum and advocacy, with pivotal movements and legislative

reforms focused on rejecting violence against women. For example, the #MeToo movement brought violence against women, particularly sexual violence, to the forefront of public consciousness and this impetus for change spread swiftly from the internet to courtrooms and the broader international community (Chandra & Erlingsdóttir, 2021; Hillstrom, 2019).

In Australia, community pressure and advocacy resulted in steps towards changing the way sexual assault is recognised and legally defined, with “affirmative” sexual consent becoming the standard for assessing the occurrence of sexual assault in some jurisdictions, although this standard is yet to be adopted across Australia (ACT Government, 2022; NSW Government Communities and Justice, 2021; Rape and Sexual Assault Research and Advocacy, 2021; Teach Us Consent, 2021; The STOP Campaign, 2022). New South Wales was one of the earliest states to change its consent laws and now requires individuals to establish affirmative consent by taking active steps to confirm consent, recognising that silence or lack of resistance does not constitute consent and that consent may be withdrawn at any point during sexual activity (NSW Government Communities and Justice, 2022). However, this standard is yet to be adopted uniformly across Australia (ACT Government, 2022; Premier of Victoria, 2022).

Similarly, there have been significant shifts towards addressing and legislating against coercive control as a form of domestic and family violence. Coercive control is an abusive pattern of behaviour used to establish and maintain power over another person and may include limiting a partner’s access to money, controlling who they see, threats and intimidation, persistent texting and tracking their movements, and a range of other behaviours (COAG, 2022). The Australian Government’s consultation draft of the *National Principles to Address Coercive Control* was released in September 2022 and aims to facilitate a coordinated national approach to coercive control in terms of criminalisation as well as prevention, early intervention, response and recovery. It provides guidance to states and territories to consider their approach to coercive control in consultation with victims and survivors and with careful consideration of potential unintended consequences of criminalisation and impacts on the communities in their jurisdiction (ANROWS, 2021; Meeting of Attorneys-General, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> The 2021–2022 PSS findings were not available in time for inclusion in the NCAS Main and Summary reports.

## 1.2 Facilitators of a climate of violence

### Social ecology of violence against women

Violence against women is a complex phenomenon that is underpinned by multiple factors (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022; Heise, 1998; Our Watch, 2021). The socioecological model of violence against women considers the complex interplay between factors at all the different levels within society: the individual and relationship level, the organisational and community level, the system and institutional level, and the societal level (CDC, 2022; Heise, 1998). These interacting factors across the social ecology can place people at greater risk or buffer them from experiencing or perpetrating violence (CDC, 2022; Heise, 1998). Crucially, the socioecological model recognises both gender inequality and other inequalities underpinned by oppression and discrimination as *key underlying drivers* of violence against women and drivers of differential outcomes from the perpetration of this violence (Carman et al., 2020; Hulley et al., 2023; Our Watch, 2021; Weldon & Kerr, 2020). Gender, economic and social inequalities that maintain violence against women can be facilitated or disrupted at each level within the social ecology, including:

- *at the societal level* through social and cultural norms and broad health, economic, educational and social policies (CDC, 2022; Flood, 2020; Lowe et al., 2022; Rizzo et al., 2020; Sabol et al., 2020)
- *at the system and institutional level* through formal and informal structures, rules and legislation, such as those pertaining to patriarchal hierarchies (Hardesty & Ogolsky, 2020; Our Watch, 2021; Song et al., 2020)
- *at the organisational and community level* through norms, structures and practices, such as those in schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods (Banyard et al., 2019; Copp et al., 2019; Jackson & Sundaram, 2018; Kidman & Kohler, 2020; Yeo et al., 2021)
- *at the individual and relationship level* through people's experiences, attitudes, knowledge and skills, and their peer, intimate and familial relationships (K. M. Bell & Higgins, 2015; Corboz et al., 2016; DeKeseredy et al., 2018; Flood, 2008, 2019a; Ha et al., 2019; Hamai & Felitti, 2022; Kimber et al., 2015; Leen et al., 2013; Ogilvie et al., 2022).

### Gender inequality as a driver of violence against women

Many forms of violence against women are underpinned by gender inequality, which can be manifested in the gender norms, structures, systems and practices that privilege men and discriminate against women (Flood, 2019b; Our Watch, 2021; Webster et al., 2018; WHO, 2022). Gender inequality is a social problem in which women and men do not have equal social standing, value, power, resources or opportunities in society, providing a key context that facilitates and maintains violence against women (Our Watch, 2021). Australia lags behind many countries on various indicators of gender equality (Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC], 2018; Workplace Gender Equality Agency [WGEA], 2022). Attitudes supportive of gender inequality have been associated with the actual perpetration of violence against women (Ozaki & Otis, 2017; Pöllänen et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Verroya et al., 2022; Wahid et al., 2018). Gendered drivers of violence include attitudes which condone violence against women, support rigid gender roles, tolerate disrespect or aggression towards women, and endorse limits to women's decision-making and independence (Our Watch, 2021). These gendered drivers are informed by two key operating principles, namely sexist ideology and misogyny (Manne, 2017; Our Watch, 2021). Sexist ideology is defined by rigid gendered beliefs which justify existing systems and structures and maintain patriarchal social relations (Our Watch, 2021). Sexism can be overtly "hostile", or it can be more subtle and seemingly "benevolent" in that it is enacted under the guise of men's role to protect and provide for women (Glick & Fiske, 1997). Misogyny is a moral manifestation of sexist ideology involving "hostile" prejudice and contempt of women, and functions to enforce patriarchal social relations wherever they are challenged (Manne, 2017; Respect Victoria & Our Watch, 2022). The Change the story framework also identifies four reinforcing factors which do not drive violence on their own but can contribute to or exacerbate violence against women. These are condoning of violence in general, the experience of and exposure to violence, a range of factors that weaken prosocial behaviour, and resistance to or backlash against violence prevention and gender equality (Our Watch, 2021).

### Other inequalities as drivers of violence against women: An intersectional approach

However, gender inequality is not the sole driver of violence against women, nor necessarily the principal driver of violence and abuse in all contexts (Our Watch, 2021). Violence against women also occurs within a context of multiple, intersecting and mutually

compounding forms of oppression, discrimination, and unequal power and privilege, which operate within and across each level of the social ecology (Our Watch, 2021). These intersecting inequalities can increase the prevalence or severity of violence, produce different manifestations of violence and differential outcomes, and weaken individual and structural consequences for the use of violence against marginalised women (Annamma et al., 2018; Carman et al., 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Fiolet et al., 2019; Ghafournia & Easteal, 2018; Kulkarni, 2019; Lockhart & Danis, 2010; E. M. Morgan & Zurbriggen, 2016; Our Watch, 2018a, 2018b, 2021; Our Watch & Women with Disabilities Victoria, 2022; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Thiara et al., 2011). For example, intersecting inequalities have been argued to produce specific barriers to help-seeking or worse outcomes for particular groups of marginalised women, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women, migrant and refugee women, women with disability and LGBTQ+ women (Callander et al., 2019; Calton et al., 2015; Cripps, 2021; Edwards, Sylaska, & Neal, 2015; Femi-Ajao et al., 2020; Frawley & Wilson, 2016; Hulley et al., 2023; Koh et al., 2021; Langton et al., 2020; Messinger, 2017; Murray et al., 2019; Nancarrow et al., 2020; Serrato Calero et al., 2020; Stein et al., 2018; Streur et al., 2019; Ussher et al., 2020; Watego et al., 2021).

### Individual attitudes and violence against women

Individual attitudes are an important factor in the facilitation and perpetuation of violence against women, as identified in the sociological model. “Attitudes” are evaluations of a particular subject (e.g. a person, concept, behaviour or event) and usually exist along a continuum from less to more favourable (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). They comprise a cognitive component, reflecting thoughts and beliefs about the subject; an affective component, reflecting feelings associated with the subject; and a behavioural component, reflecting the attitude’s influence on actual behaviour (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Although attitudes are often enduring, they can potentially be altered via new experiences and education (Albarracin & Shavitt, 2018; Suedfeld, 2017).

The relationship between an individual’s attitudes and their behaviour is not straightforward. An individual may or may not be consciously aware of their attitude and how it impacts their behaviour. The motivational bases and characteristics of the attitude, such as its intensity and importance, can affect how much the attitude will impact behaviour (Kelman, 2017). Attitudes are only one of the factors that can influence behaviour. According to the socioecological model, people’s attitudes are an

individual-level factor that can interact with a broad range of other factors at different levels of society to facilitate violence against women (Callaghan et al., 2018; Debowska et al., 2015; Ozaki & Otis, 2017; Seff, 2021).

Given that attitudes are shaped by, and in part reflect, broader organisational, community, institutional and societal systems and structures, the NCAS functions as a gauge for how Australia and each state and territory is progressing in changing the broader climate that facilitates and maintains violence against women.

## 1.3 Deconstructing the climate of violence

Over the past several decades, governments at the Commonwealth, state and territory levels have taken steps to respond to violence against women through both legislative and non-legislative measures. Responsive legislative changes that keep pace with new and nuanced forms of violence can serve to discourage perpetrators by establishing appropriate penalties and protecting and assisting victims and survivors (such as via protection orders). Legislation is also a means of communicating the unacceptability of abusive behaviours in relationships, families, workplaces and in the broader community. Non-legislative changes, such as plans and policies and improved service responses, can also facilitate the establishment of social norms that actively reject violence against women and gender inequality across jurisdictions.

The federal government has provided guidance to states and territories about ending violence against women, such as via the National Plan 2022–2032; the *National Principles to Address Coercive Control*; amendments to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) requiring that employers take steps to address sexual harassment in workplaces; and funding Respectful Relationships education programs in Australian schools (Attorney-General’s Department, 2022; Clark, 2022; COAG, 2022; Meeting of Attorneys-General, 2022). However, states and territories also have an important role to play in ending violence against women not only through legislative and non-legislative measures in their jurisdiction, but also through the in-depth knowledge of their own population and the design of initiatives based on the particular barriers to and enablers of change within their population.

The impacts of violence against women can be reduced across states and territories by taking decisive action to prevent violence before it starts, intervening early, responding appropriately to violence when it occurs, and supporting recovery and healing (COAG, 2022). Ending violence against women requires addressing the range

of drivers and oppressions that enable and reinforce violence against women, including violence against the most marginalised groups of women who remain over-represented in victimisation data and who confront unique challenges in accessing support and assistance (Kulkarni, 2019; K. Morgan et al., 2016; Our Watch, 2021; Our Watch et al., 2015; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Thiara et al., 2011).

Initiatives for preventing violence against women can be divided into four types, which correspond to the four domains for action in the 2022–2032 National Plan (COAG, 2022; Our Watch, 2021; VicHealth, 2017):

1. **Prevention** (also described as primary prevention) – working to change the underlying social drivers of violence by addressing the attitudes and systems that drive violence against women and children to stop it before it starts.
2. **Early intervention** (also described as secondary prevention) – identifying and supporting individuals who are at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence and preventing violence from escalating or reoccurring.
3. **Response** (also described as tertiary prevention) – providing services and supports to address existing violence and support victims and survivors experiencing violence, including via crisis support and police intervention, and fostering a trauma-informed justice system that will hold people who use violence to account.
4. **Recovery and healing** (also described as tertiary prevention) – helping to reduce the risk of victim and survivor re-traumatisation, and supporting victims and survivors to be safe and healthy and to recover from trauma and the physical, mental, emotional and economic impacts of violence (COAG, 2022).

For clarity, throughout this report, “primary prevention” is used to refer specifically to actions consistent with Domain 1 (Prevention) from the National Plan 2022–2032. In addition, “prevention” is used as a more general term that can include actions consistent with any, some or all of the domains of the National Plan 2022–2032 (COAG, 2022).

The National Plan 2022–2032 also describes six guiding principles that inform action under the four domains to address violence against women (Our Watch, 2021; COAG, 2022). The six guiding principles are:

- **Advancing gender equality**, which recognises that achieving gender equality is fundamental to both advancing human rights for Australians and addressing a key driver of violence against women. The National Gender Equality Strategy is a federal

government initiative that seeks to address the structural, social and economic barriers to advancing gender equality in Australia (COAG, 2022).

- **Closing the Gap**, which is an agreement by all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks, a representative body of over 80 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled peak organisations and members. The objective of this agreement is to enable Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, including in relation to violence against women.
- **Centring victims and survivors**, to ensure that their lived experiences, perspectives and direct knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of current systems, structures and interventions is acknowledged, heard and respected as a key ingredient in policy development and reform.
- **Accountability**, which is an intention to focus attention and expectations on the actions of people who choose to use violence. This involves trust and support for victims and survivors and avoiding victim-blaming in any context. Similarly, perpetrators are to be held accountable and supported to take responsibility for their violence with appropriate legal and social sanctions and consequences.
- **Intersectionality**, which recognises that violence against women exists in relation to multiple and intersecting structural and systemic forms of discrimination, such as racism, colonialism, ableism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, and ageism. This recognises that gender and gender inequality may be constructed and experienced differently and may not be the most significant factor in violence against all women. Actions from prevention through to recovery and healing must therefore respond to the diversity of women and children.
- **Person-centred co-ordination and integration**, which strives for trauma-informed, person-focused and holistically integrated responses from the specialised services and systems that support victims and survivors through their recovery and healing.

Prevention of violence against women requires multiple types of actions and initiatives across the social ecology, including in key settings such as schools and universities, workplaces, clubs and sporting institutions, and the media, and in the justice and health service systems (COAG, 2022; Our Watch, 2021).

The NCAS instrument can be a useful tool at both the federal and jurisdictional level to assess progress towards creating “communities ... safe and free from violence” (COAG, 2010, p. 14). Specifically, the NCAS is

premised on the idea that achieving the objective of ending violence against women in one generation is facilitated by the population:

- having a strong understanding of the nature of violence against women, including its diverse and nuanced forms (see National Plan 2022–2032, “Early intervention key indicators”; COAG, 2022, p. 31)
- strongly rejecting attitudes that condone gender inequality and violence against women (see National Plan 2022–2032, “Prevention key indicators”; COAG, 2022, p. 31)
- being prepared to intervene when witnessing violence or abuse against women (see National Plan 2022–2032, “Early intervention key indicators”; COAG, 2022, p. 31).

## Differences in jurisdictional profiles

It is important to note that there are many differences between jurisdictions which could potentially contribute to differences in community understanding and attitudes towards violence against women. These include differences in state and territory government legislation, policies, plans, and the structure and accessibility of service systems that specifically relate to violence against women and gender inequality.

There are also fundamental differences in the population profiles of different jurisdictions, including in population density, geography and demographic characteristics. The 2021 NCAS demonstrated that demographic factors helped to explain some of the differences in respondents’ understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women and gender inequality. However, the predictive ability of demographic factors was relatively small, indicating that other factors are also important in shaping understanding and attitudes (see the Main report). For example, understanding and attitudes were significantly, albeit modestly, related to gender, age, sexuality, ethnicity, country of birth, English language proficiency, education, main labour activity and socioeconomic status of area. Thus, any differences between jurisdictions in understanding and attitudes may *in part* reflect a range of differences in population profiles. A few notable (but non-exhaustive) examples of

jurisdictional differences in population profiles include the following:

- **Population density:** NSW (31.4%), Victoria (25.5%) and Queensland (20.5%) are the most populous jurisdictions, comprising the largest proportions of the Australian population. The NT (1.0%), the ACT (1.8%) and Tasmania (2.0%) are the least populous jurisdictions (ABS, 2022b).
- **Geography and remoteness:** Jurisdictions vary dramatically in their geographic remoteness, as measured by their relative access to services based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA; ABS, 2021c). The NT consists entirely of outer regional, remote and very remote areas, while the ACT consists entirely of major city and inner regional areas.
- **Age:** The NT and the ACT have the youngest populations, while Tasmania and South Australia have the oldest (ABS, 2022b).
- **Ethnicity and country of birth:** WA (32.2%), Victoria (29.9%) and NSW (29.3%) have the highest proportion of people born overseas (ABS, 2021d).
- **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status:** Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 3.8 per cent of the Australian population. Compared to other jurisdictions, the NT’s population comprises a much higher proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (30.8%). Victoria has the lowest proportion (1.2%; ABS, 2021b).
- **Education and income:** The ACT has the highest average household income (ABS, 2022a), consistent with its larger proportion of people who have completed secondary education (ABS, 2021a; 2022a).
- **Socioeconomic status of area:** The ACT has the highest proportion of people living in the most advantaged areas in Australia (highest quintile), followed by NSW, while Tasmania has the highest proportion living in the most disadvantaged areas (lowest quintile) followed by South Australia, according to the SEIFA Index (ABS, 2018).<sup>3</sup> The 10 most disadvantaged local government areas are in Queensland and the NT (ABS, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> SEIFA was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as a measure of socioeconomic conditions in geographic areas in terms of people’s access to material and social resources, and their opportunity to participate in society. It ranks areas in Australia according to their relative socioeconomic “advantage” and “disadvantage” using quintiles from 5 (most advantaged areas) to 1 (most disadvantaged areas; ABS, 2022c). SEIFA summarises these socioeconomic conditions based on multiple demographic indicators including income, educational attainment, and employment status.

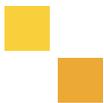


## ■ 2 Research design

### 2.1 Aims of the 2021 NCAS

The 2021 NCAS aimed to:

- benchmark the Australian population's understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women, attitudes towards gender equality and intention to intervene prosocially when witnessing abuse or disrespect of women
- determine if understanding and attitudes had improved since the 2017 NCAS
- identify any notable gaps in understanding or more problematic attitudes
- identify demographic, attitudinal and contextual factors that are associated with problematic understanding and attitudes.



## Aims of the analysis on states and territories

This report presents the analysis of the 2021 NCAS for each state and territory (i.e. each jurisdiction). The analysis aimed to:

- benchmark each jurisdiction's understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women, attitudes towards gender inequality and intention to intervene prosocially when witnessing abuse or disrespect of women in 2021 (Chapter 3)
- compare each jurisdiction's understanding and attitudes in 2021 to the rest of Australia (Chapter 3)
- determine if each jurisdiction's understanding and attitudes had improved since the 2017 NCAS (Chapter 3).

## 2.2 2021 NCAS instrument

The 2021 instrument included demographic items, items measuring understanding or attitudes regarding violence against women, attitudes towards gender inequality, and scenario-based items examining bystander responses when witnessing abuse or disrespect against women (Figure 2-1). Most items were retained from the 2017 NCAS to ensure reliable measurement of changes over time.

### Items and scales measuring understanding and attitudes

Understanding and attitude items were grouped into nine psychometric scales, validated via Rasch analysis. The strength of psychometrically validated scales is that they can measure a complex overall construct or concept (such as attitudes towards violence) that would be difficult to measure with a single item. The scales include the Gendered Violence and Inequality Scale (GVIS), which is an overarching "mega scale" that includes all understanding and attitude items that sit in one of the other eight scales. The other eight scales included three "main" scales, namely:

- the Understanding of Violence against Women Scale (UVAWS)
- the Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale (AGIS)
- the Attitudes towards Violence against Women Scale (AVAWS).

Each main scale also includes subscales (identified via factor analysis), which measure key themes within the broader construct measured by the scale.

The **UVAWS** has three subscales:

- The **Recognise VAW Subscale** (four items) asks whether problematic behaviours are a form of violence against women "yes, always", "yes, usually", "yes, sometimes" or "no".
- The **Recognise DV Subscale** (12 items) asks whether problematic behaviours are a form of domestic violence "yes, always", "yes, usually", "yes, sometimes" or "no".
- The **Understand Gendered DV Subscale** (three items) examines understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence by asking who is more likely to perpetrate and experience fear and harm from domestic violence: "men", "women", or "both equally".

The **AGIS** has five subscales examining whether respondents "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "neither agree or disagree", "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" with problematic attitudes towards gender inequality:

- The **Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale** (five items) examines attitudes that reinforce traditional, rigid gender roles and expectations.
- The **Undermine Leadership Subscale** (four items) examines attitudes that undermine women's leadership in work and public life.
- The **Limit Autonomy Subscale** (two items) examines attitudes that condone men being in charge in intimate relationships and limit women's personal autonomy.
- The **Normalise Sexism Subscale** (three items) examines attitudes that downplay or normalise sexism.
- The **Deny Inequality Subscale** (three items) examines attitudes that deny that gender inequality is experienced by women, suggesting "backlash" or resistance to gender equality.

The **AVAWS** has three subscales examining whether respondents "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "neither agree or disagree", "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" with problematic attitudes towards violence against women:

- The **Minimise Violence Subscale** (15 items) examines attitudes that minimise the seriousness of violence against women and shift blame from perpetrators to victims and survivors.
- The **Mistrust Women Subscale** (13 items) examines attitudes that mistrust women's reports of violence.
- The **Objectify Women Subscale** (15 items) examines attitudes that objectify women or disregard the need to gain women's consent.

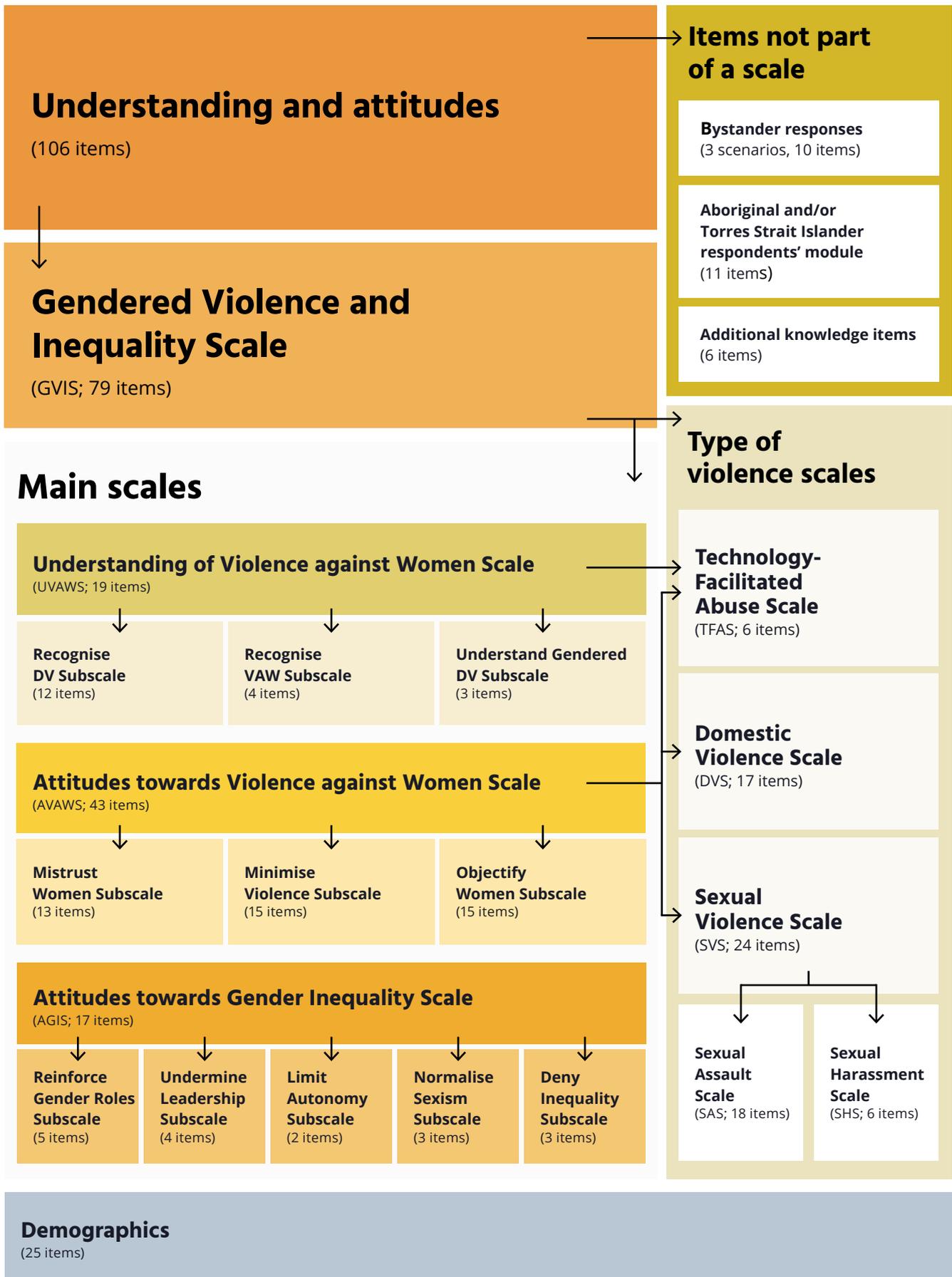
In addition, five “type of violence” scales were developed to measure attitudes towards specific types of violence, namely:

- the **Domestic Violence Scale** (DVS)
- the **Sexual Violence Scale** (SVS), which was divided into the **Sexual Assault Scale** (SAS) and the **Sexual Harassment Scale** (SHS)
- the **Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale** (TFAS).

All type of violence scales measure attitudes, apart from the TFAS which measures both understanding and attitudes regarding technology-facilitated abuse. Together, the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS) and Sexual Violence Scale (SVS) comprised all but two of the 43 items in the Attitudes towards Violence against Women Scale (AVAWS).

Figure 2-1

# Components of the NCAS instrument, 2021



Note: DV = domestic violence; VAW = violence against women.

## Changes to NCAS instrument

New or revised demographic items were included in 2021 on gender, sexuality and disability to provide additional and more inclusive demographic information, including capturing gender identity, diversity and experience more accurately and better capturing the range of physical, mental health and intellectual conditions and their impact on core activities. For the first time, the NCAS provides results for non-binary respondents and sexuality-diverse respondents.

New items were also added to better measure understanding and attitudes regarding forms of violence that have emerged more recently or have not been a major focus of the NCAS previously. Items were added on forms of violence against women that are related to intersectional forms of oppression, based on a partner's migrant status, disability, gender experience, sexuality or religion. Items were also added on technology-facilitated abuse, sexual harassment and stalking.

## 2.3 Sampling

The sample consisted of 19,100 Australians aged 16 years or over, who were interviewed via mobile telephone between 23 February and 18 July 2021. The sampling approach largely involved random digit dialling (RDD) of mobile telephones, which was supplemented or "topped up" with listed mobile telephones. Eighty-one per cent of the interviews were achieved via RDD mobiles. The response rate was 11 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

The Australian sample included a minimum of 1,000 respondents from each jurisdiction. This minimum

criterion ensured sufficient respondents from each jurisdiction to allow jurisdictional-level analysis (as well as national analysis). A full RDD sample would have resulted in too few respondents for reliable reporting on the smaller-population jurisdictions (i.e. the ACT, the NT and Tasmania). Thus, to meet the minimum criterion of 1,000 respondents, the smaller-population jurisdictions were deliberately "oversampled" compared to their share of the Australian population. Although sufficient interviews in Victoria would have been achieved via RDD mobiles, Victoria was also oversampled (by 1,600 interviews) due to additional funding for this purpose.<sup>5</sup>

As RDD sampling of mobile telephones cannot use location information, listed mobiles were used to efficiently achieve the additional interviews required in the smaller jurisdictions and Victoria.

## Weighting

To strengthen confidence that the survey results accurately represent the population, responses were weighted based on population benchmarks to align the sample and population demographic profiles within each jurisdiction.<sup>6</sup>

## Sample compared to population by jurisdiction

Table 2-1 shows the unweighted number of respondents from each jurisdiction. The unweighted number for a jurisdiction represents the actual number of respondents interviewed. The table also shows the percentage of the Australian population residing in each jurisdiction.

4 The cooperation rate was 80.1 per cent and the refusal rate was 15.0 per cent. See Technical report, Section T8.4 (Coumarelos, Honey, et al., 2023), for the calculation of the response, cooperation and refusal rates.

5 These additional interviews (or "booster" sample) for Victoria were funded by Respect Victoria. They were not required from the perspective of representativeness of the Victorian sample but were commissioned to facilitate more fine-grained analysis of Victoria's results (after the publication of the present report).

6 See Technical report, Section T11.

Table 2-1: Sample and population proportion of each jurisdiction, 2021

Jurisdiction	NCAS sample		Australian population <sup>a</sup>
	Unweighted	Unweighted	
	N	%	%
ACT	1,006	5	2
NSW	4,330	23	31
NT	1,000	5	1
Queensland	3,055	16	21
South Australia	1,110	6	7
Tasmania	1,000	5	2
Victoria	6,143	32	26
WA	1,456	8	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Note:** Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>a</sup>Australian population data is drawn from ABS (2022b).

## 2.4 Analysis and reporting

Data analysis was conducted on scale and subscale scores for each jurisdiction. In addition, results are presented for a few individual items that were not part of any scale.

All analyses were conducted on appropriately weighted data to strengthen confidence that the survey results accurately represent the population in each jurisdiction. The total number of respondents for each analysis (unweighted) is provided in the note to the table or figure presenting the findings of the analysis.

**Scale scores:** Each respondent received a (rescaled Rasch) score on each scale and subscale, based on their responses to the items in the scale or subscale. Scores on each scale or subscale could range from 0 to 100. As a society committed to reducing violence against women, we are aiming for higher scores on all NCAS scales and subscales. Higher scores indicate a higher understanding of violence against women (UVAWS, TFAS), higher attitudinal rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), and higher attitudinal rejection of violence against women in its various forms (AFAWS, DVS, SVS, SAS, SHS, TFAS).

**“Advanced” understanding and rejection of problematic attitudes:** For each scale, each respondent was placed into one of two categories: “advanced” or “developing”. For the UVAWS, these categories represented “advanced” or “developing” understanding. For the scales measuring attitudes (AGIS, AFAWS, DVS, SVS), these categories represented “advanced” or “developing” rejection of problematic attitudes. The advanced/developing classification was used to provide information on how Australia is tracking against the aspiration that everyone in the community has “advanced” understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women. As the classification was meant to provide information against an aspirational goal, a strict criterion was used for each scale. The criteria used to define “advanced” understanding and “advanced” attitudes were as follows:

- Respondents in the “advanced” understanding category answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75 per cent of the UVAWS items and “yes, usually” to the remaining UVAWS items (or the equivalent).
- Respondents in the “advanced” rejection category for each attitude scale “strongly disagreed” with

at least 75 per cent of the items in the scale, which described problematic attitudes, and “somewhat disagreed” with the remaining items in the scale (or the equivalent).<sup>7</sup>

Univariate and bivariate data analyses were conducted as summarised below.

**Univariate analysis** involves one variable only. Univariate analysis was used to report on each jurisdiction’s responses to a few items measuring understanding of violence against women, as well as on the percentage of the sample categorised as having “advanced” understanding or attitudes according to each scale.

**Bivariate analysis** examines the direct or straightforward relationship between two variables only, such as an outcome of interest (e.g. understanding of violence against women) and one other variable or factor (e.g. jurisdiction), without taking into account the effect of any other variables or factors. The bivariate analyses examined:

- comparisons over time between 2021 and previous years for each scale and subscale for each jurisdiction (mean scores)<sup>8</sup>
- comparisons between each jurisdiction and the rest of Australia on scale and subscale scores and in terms of “advanced” understanding or attitudes.

Throughout the report “significant” refers to **statistically significant** findings where we can be confident (with 95% certainty) that the difference observed in the survey sample is meaningful and likely to represent a true difference in the Australian population ( $p < 0.05$ ) that is not negligible in size (Cohen’s  $d \geq 0.2$ ).

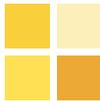
<sup>7</sup> The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75 per cent of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”.

<sup>8</sup> With the exception of the TFAS, there was sufficient overlap between each scale’s items in 2021 and the scale’s items in previous waves to allow reliable comparisons of scale scores over time.



# 3 Findings: Benchmarking understanding and attitudes across jurisdictions

Benchmarking the population’s understanding and attitudes regarding gender equality and violence against women over time allows us to track Australia’s progress towards key indicators for “ending gender-based violence in one generation” (COAG, 2022, p. 28). This section presents findings across jurisdictions. As discussed above, there are many variations in jurisdictional profiles which could potentially contribute to jurisdiction-level differences in understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women.



## BENCHMARKING RESULTS AUSTRALIAN SUMMARY

# Findings: Benchmarking understanding and attitudes across jurisdictions

Australians' understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women and gender inequality have improved slowly but significantly over time, with significant improvement on all NCAS scales between 2013 and 2021.

Between 2017 and 2021, there were significant improvements in Australians' understanding of violence against women and attitudinal rejection of gender inequality. While attitudinal rejection of sexual violence also improved significantly between 2017 and 2021, attitudinal rejection of domestic violence plateaued during this period. Nonetheless, Australians' understanding of violence and their attitudes to both gender inequality and violence against women were at a comparable level in 2021.

### 3.1 Awareness of violence against women as a problem in Australia and locally, by jurisdiction

In 2021, while respondents had high awareness that violence against women is a national problem, their awareness that violence against women transcends all communities, including their own local area, was much lower. Most respondents (88–94%) across jurisdictions agreed (strongly or somewhat) that “violence against women is a problem in Australia” (Item V1). Across all states and territories, fewer respondents (38–70%) felt that violence against women is a problem in the “suburb or town where they live” (Item V2). There was no significant difference between respondents in different states and territories when they were asked whether “violence against women is a problem in Australia”. However, respondents in the NT were significantly more likely to agree that violence against women is a problem in the suburb or town where they live (70%; see also Section 4.3) compared to respondents in the other jurisdictions (38–54%).

These findings suggest a misconception across jurisdictions that violence against women tends to generally occur outside of one’s own networks, rather than everywhere, which may impede recognition that violence is a community-wide social problem requiring action at all levels of society. There is room to increase understanding across all jurisdictions that violence occurs in all communities, including in one’s own community.

### 3.2 Change in understanding and attitudes over time by jurisdiction

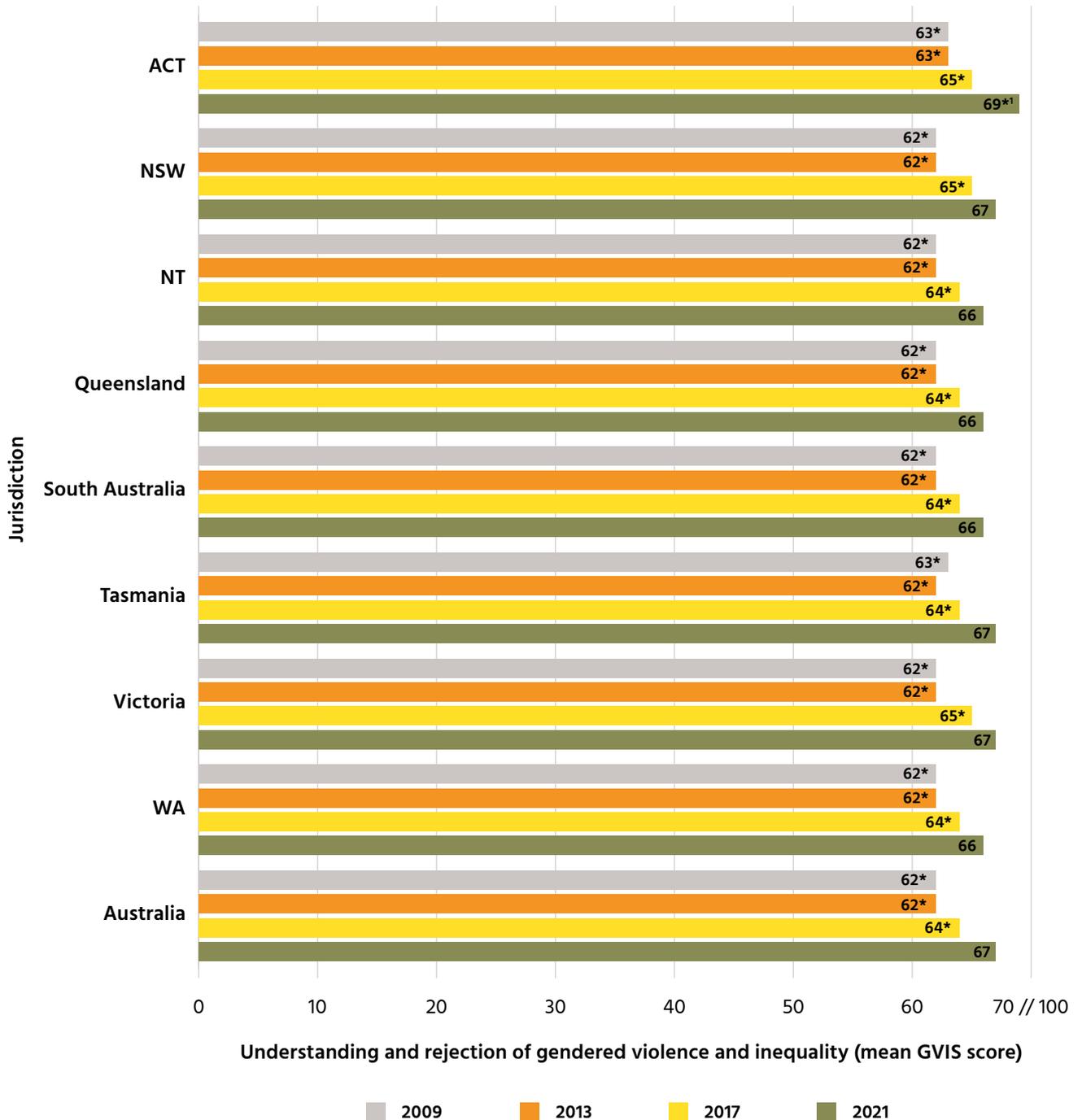
The GVIS is the mega scale which comprises the UVAWS, AGIS and AVAWS. The GVIS provides an overall indicator of the Australian community’s progress towards stronger understanding and attitudinal rejection of gendered violence and gender inequality. Higher scores on the GVIS indicate stronger understanding of violence against women and stronger rejection of gendered violence and inequality.

Figure 3-1 displays mean scores on the GVIS over time for each jurisdiction and for Australia. For each jurisdiction, mean GVIS scores were significantly higher in 2021 compared to each previous wave of the NCAS, indicating significant improvement in overall understanding and rejection of gendered violence and inequality.<sup>9</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences in mean scores on the GVIS between each jurisdiction and the rest of Australia, with one exception. Respondents from the ACT demonstrated significantly higher understanding and rejection of gendered violence and inequality (mean GVIS score) compared with respondents from the rest of Australia.

<sup>9</sup> See individual jurisdiction chapters for the results of the UVAWS, AGIS and AVAWS that contribute to this effect.

Figure 3-1: Understanding and rejection of gendered violence and inequality over time (mean GVIS scores), each jurisdiction and Australia, 2009 to 2021



Note: Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- ACT: 1,003; 1,184; 1,188; 1,006
- NSW: 1,715; 3,973; 4,018; 4,330
- NT: 1,008; 1,063; 1,006; 1,000
- Queensland: 1,450; 2,754; 2,950; 3,054
- South Australia: 1,180; 1,682; 1,729; 1,110
- Tasmania: 1,009; 1,139; 1,227; 1,000
- Victoria: 1,532; 3,787; 3,409; 6,143
- WA: 1,205; 1,926; 2,013; 1,456
- Australia: 10,102; 17,508; 17,540; 19,099.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

\*1 Statistically significant difference compared to the rest of Australia in 2021.

### 3.3 Bystander responses by jurisdiction

A bystander is somebody who observes, but is not directly involved in, a harmful or potentially harmful event and could assist or intervene (Webster et al., 2018). The bystander role is important in the prevention of violence against women. Prosocial bystanders can call out unacceptable behaviour, place social sanctions on perpetrators that discourage future perpetration, help victims and survivors to feel supported and heard, and in some situations, prevent violence from escalating or even occurring (K. Bell & Flood, 2020; Orchowski et al., 2018; Palmer et al., 2020). The way communities respond to everyday microaggressions are also important because while not all disrespect results in violence, all violence against women begins with disrespect (Australian Government, 2023).

#### 2021 NCAS bystander scenarios

Respondents were asked about three bystander scenarios:

- Friend sexist joke (B1): Imagine you are talking with some close friends at work, and a male work friend tells a sexist joke about women.
- Boss sexist joke (B2): Now, instead, imagine it was your male boss rather than a work friend who told the sexist joke.
- Friend verbal abuse (B3): Imagine you are out with some friends and a male friend is insulting or verbally abusing a woman he is in a relationship with.

Respondents were asked if they would be bothered by each scenario, how they would react, reasons for not speaking out and the responses they anticipated from their peers if the respondent did speak out.

#### Bystander response to each scenario

Most respondents said they would be bothered by each scenario and there were no significant differences between each jurisdiction and the rest of Australia. See Chapter 8 of the Main report for a detailed discussion of the findings on the bystander scenarios for Australia.

### 3.4 Knowledge of where to get help for domestic violence by jurisdiction

In 2021, considerable proportions (35–47%) of respondents from each jurisdiction indicated they wouldn't know or were unsure about how to access outside advice or support for someone experiencing domestic violence (Item D33). These findings were similar to the finding for Australia as a whole (43%) and there was no significant difference between any jurisdiction and the rest of Australia. Thus, initiatives to increase awareness of how to access assistance for domestic violence would be useful in all jurisdictions.



# 4 Findings for each jurisdiction

## 4.1 Findings for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

### ACT RESULTS SUMMARY

### Jurisdiction snapshot: Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

**For all time periods examined**, the ACT and Australia significantly improved in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

#### Between 2017 and 2021:

- rejection of violence against women significantly increased in the ACT, but plateaued in Australia despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of domestic violence plateaued in both the ACT and Australia, despite an improvement over the longer term.

#### In 2021, compared to the rest of Australia, the ACT had:

- significantly higher rejection of domestic violence and sexual violence, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, and significantly lower mistrust in women's reports of violence
- similar proportions of respondents with "advanced" understanding of violence against women and "advanced" understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse
- higher proportions of respondents with "advanced" rejection of gender inequality, violence against women, domestic violence and sexual violence. Nonetheless, approximately half or more respondents did not fall into these "advanced" categories.

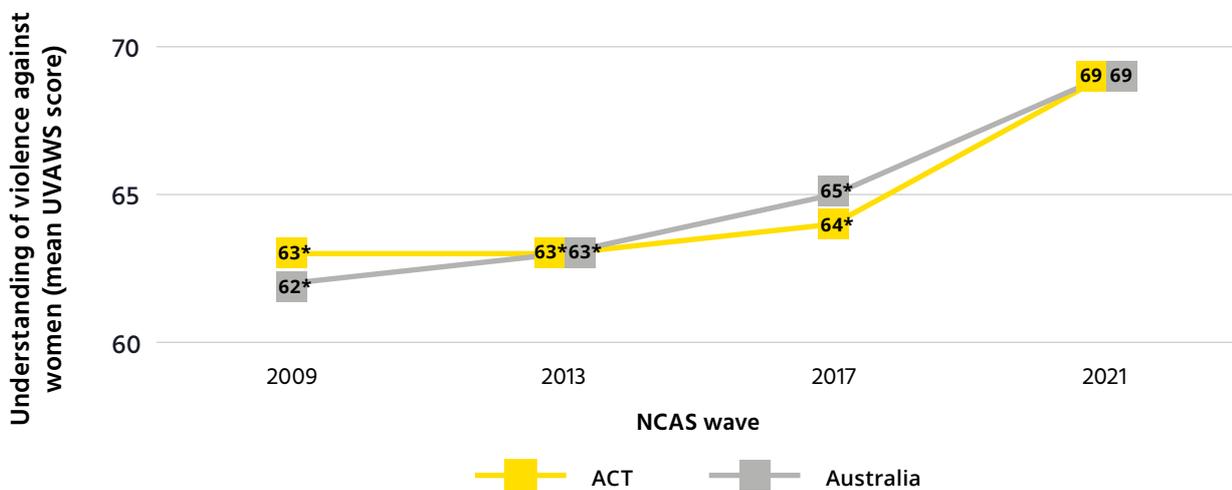
**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in the ACT and across Australia.



## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

The ACT, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-1). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the ACT population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-1: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

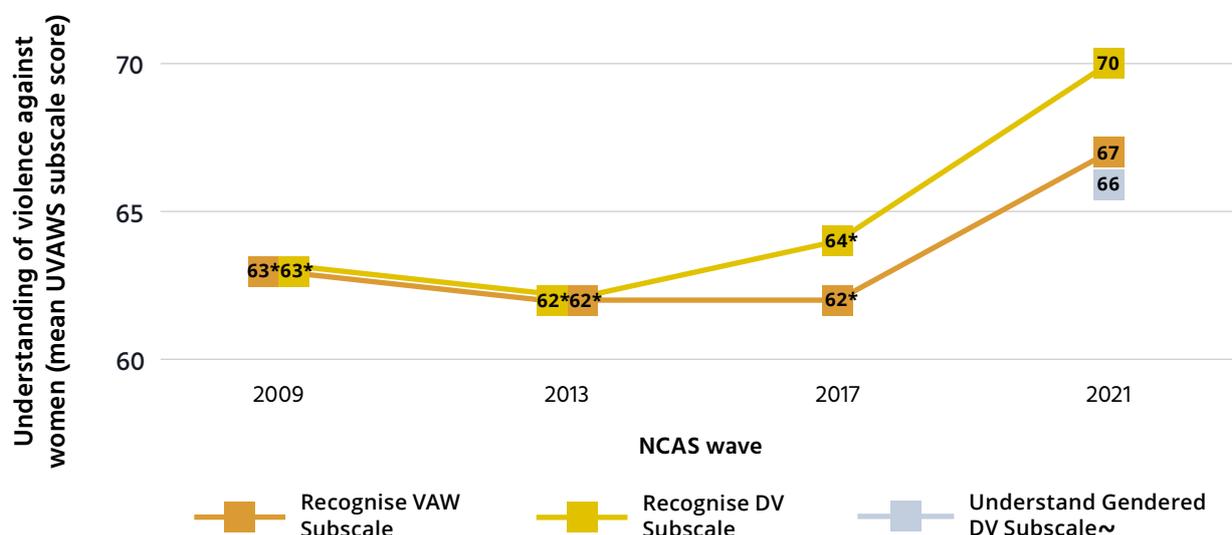
- ACT: 993; 1,177; 549; 1,006
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-2 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and the Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both the ACT and Australia. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly, both in the ACT and in Australia as a whole. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between the ACT and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of ACT (35%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-2: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Australian Capital Territory, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 968; 1,147; 546; 1,001
- Recognise DV Subscale: 996; 1,181; 1,159; 1,006
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 241.

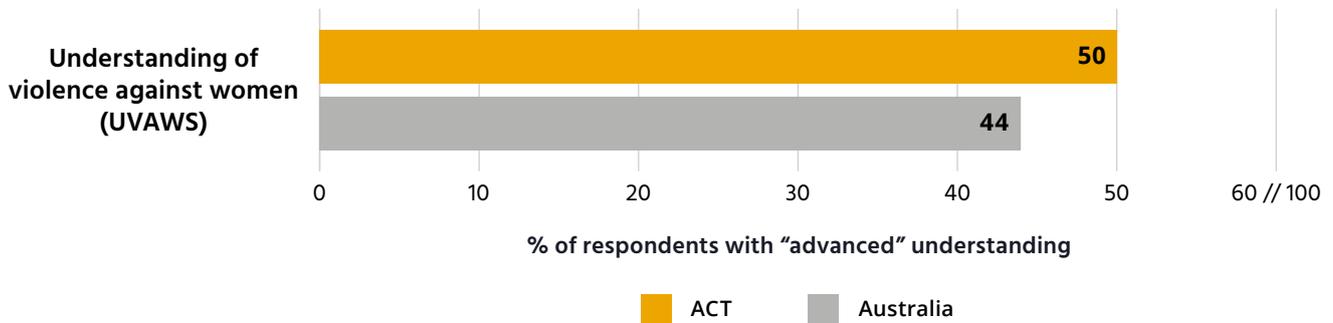
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-3 presents the percentages of ACT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS in 2021. Half (50%) of ACT respondents demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women, compared to 44 per cent of Australian respondents. However, there was no significant difference between the ACT and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” understanding category.<sup>10</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both the ACT and Australia.

<sup>10</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared the ACT with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-3: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

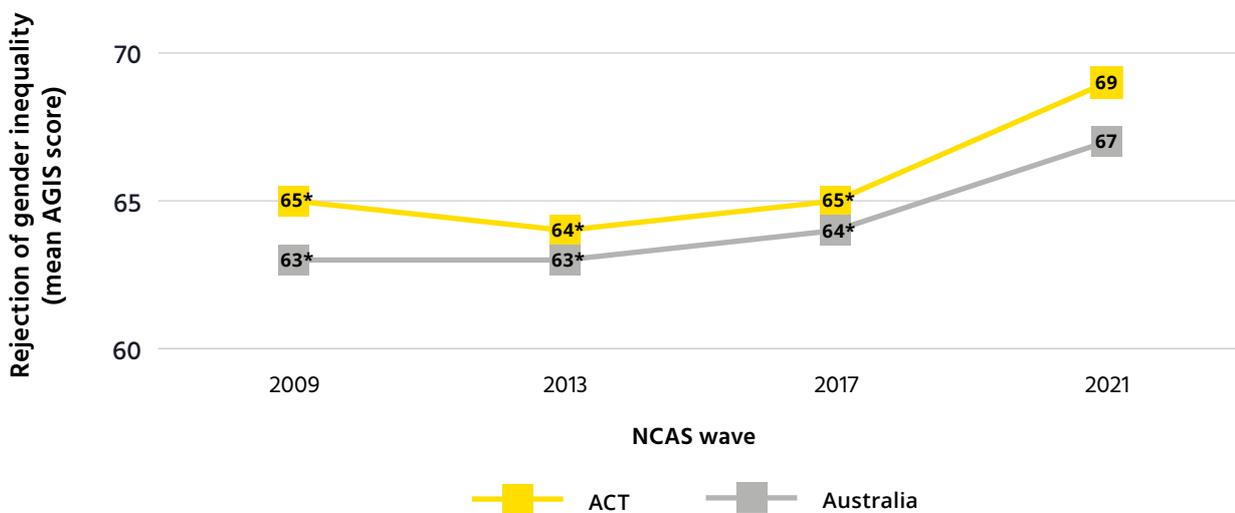
- ACT: 1,006
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between the ACT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

Similar to Australia, the ACT had a significantly higher mean AGIS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-4). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the ACT population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-4: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- ACT: 895; 1,032; 1,187; 1,002
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

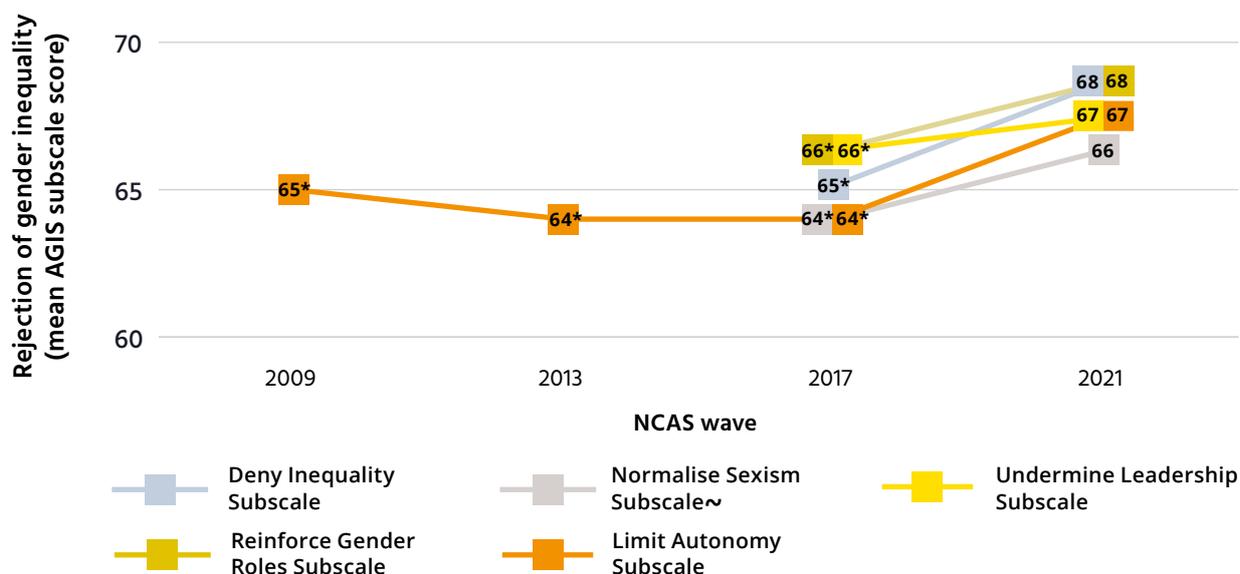
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-5 displays changes over time in mean scores on the five AGIS subscales between 2017 and 2021 for the ACT.<sup>11</sup> There were significant improvements over time on all five subscales for ACT respondents. The mean score on the Limit Autonomy Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all three previous waves of the NCAS, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that limit women's autonomy in intimate relationships in the ACT. The Reinforce Gender Roles, Undermine Leadership, Normalise Sexism and Deny Inequality Subscales also showed significant improvement in 2021 compared to 2017, indicating higher rejection of attitudes that reinforce traditional, rigid gender roles

and expectations; attitudes that undermine women's leadership in work and public life; attitudes that downplay sexism; and attitudes that deny the gender inequality experienced by women. Unlike for the ACT, there was no significant improvement over time for Australia as a whole on the Undermine Leadership Subscale. However, similar to the ACT, there was significant improvement over time for Australia on the other four AGIS subscales.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between the ACT and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-5: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Australian Capital Territory, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 1,068; 493
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 1,169; 291
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 1,184; 986
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 1,145; 503
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 945; 1,107; 1,130; 969.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

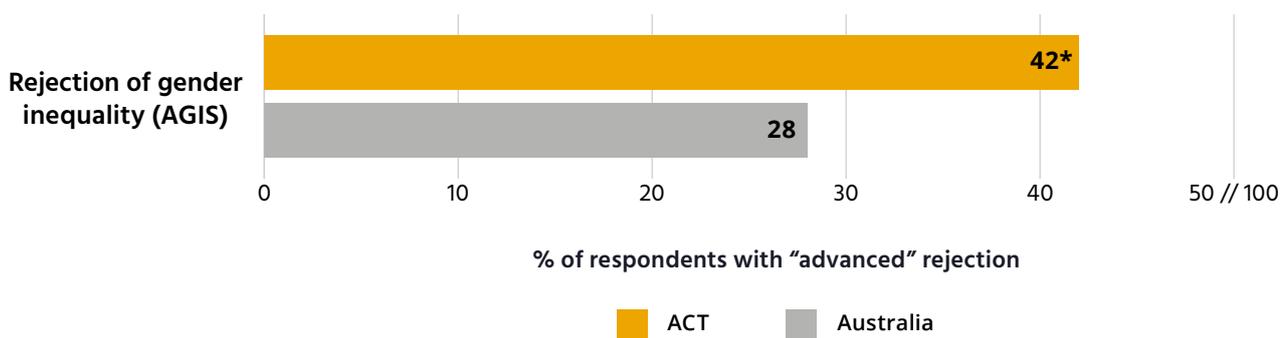
~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

11 Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other AGIS subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-6 presents the percentages of ACT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. Just over two fifths (42%) of ACT respondents demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, in comparison to 28 per cent of Australian respondents. The percentage of respondents with “advanced” attitudes towards gender inequality was significantly higher for the ACT compared to the rest of

Australia.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, less than half the respondents in both the ACT and Australia demonstrated “advanced” attitudes towards gender inequality. These findings indicate that there is still room to improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both the ACT and Australia.

Figure 4-6: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

- ACT: 1,002
- Australia: 19,091.

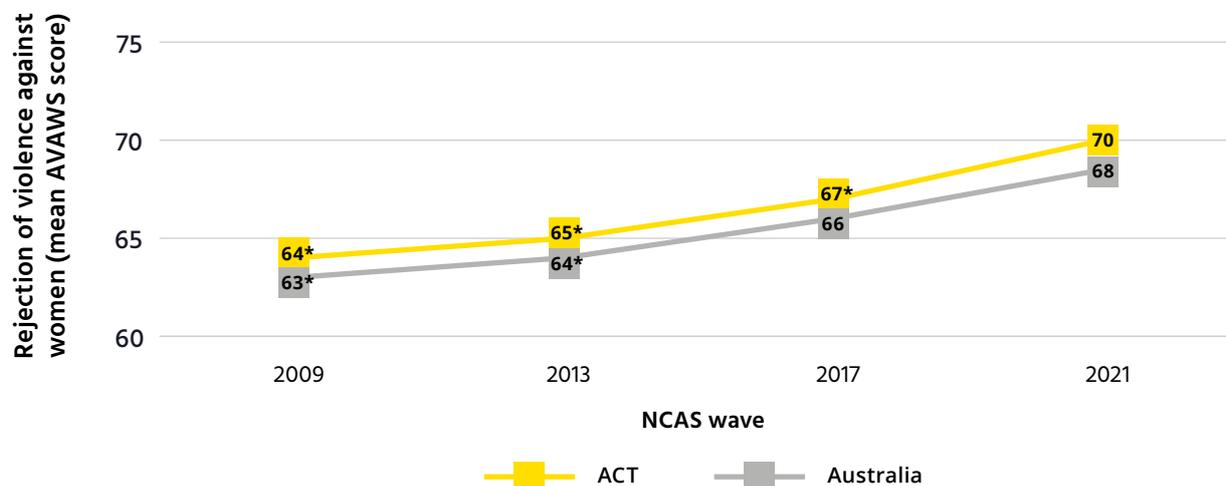
\* Statistically significant difference on “advanced” attitudes (AGIS) between the ACT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both ACT and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both the ACT population and the Australian population (Figure 4-7). The ACT also showed a significant increase in attitudinal rejection of violence against women between 2017 and 2021, whereas Australia showed no significant increase over this period.

<sup>12</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared the ACT with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-7: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- ACT: 378; 376; 1,188; 1,006
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

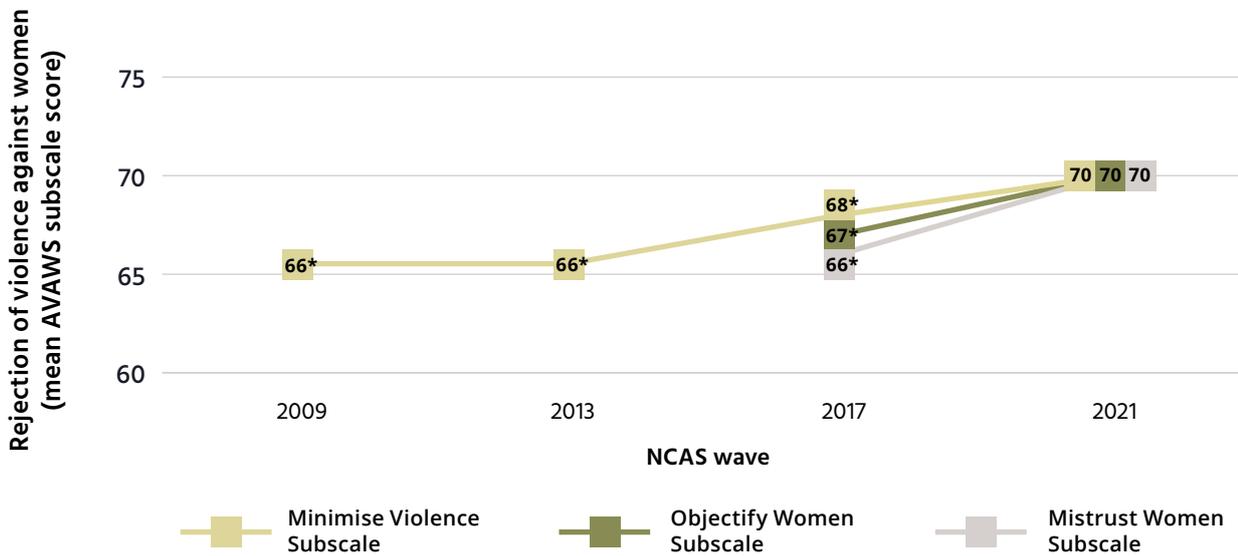
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-8 shows change over time in mean scores on the three AVAWS subscales for the ACT. There were significant improvements over time on all three AVAWS subscales for ACT respondents: the Minimise Violence Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017); the Mistrust Women Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017); and the Objectify Women Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). These findings indicate increased rejection in the ACT of attitudes that minimise violence and shift blame, attitudes that mistrust women's reports of violence, and attitudes that objectify women or disregard the need for consent. Australia similarly showed significant improvement over time on all three

AVAWS subscales. However, on the Minimise Violence Subscale, while the ACT showed significantly higher rejection in 2021 compared to all three previous years, Australia showed significantly higher rejection in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013 but not compared to 2017.

In 2021, the mean score on the Mistrust Women Subscale was significantly higher in the ACT than the rest of Australia, indicating that women's reports of violence are more likely to be trusted in the ACT than the rest of Australia. There were no significant differences in 2021 between the ACT and the rest of Australia on the other two AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-8: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Australian Capital Territory, 2009 to 2021



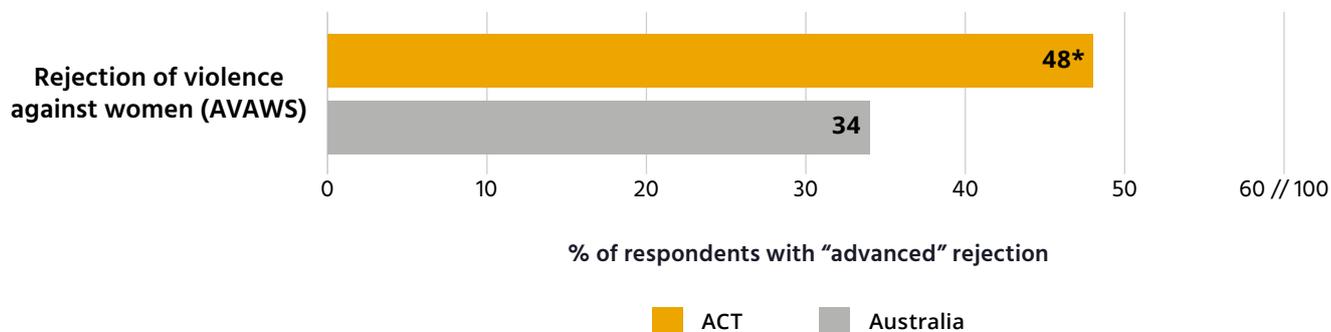
**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Minimise Violence Subscale: 519; 1,145; 1,188; 1,005
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 1,185; 989
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 1,159; 1,001.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-9 presents the percentages of ACT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. More than two fifths (48%) of ACT respondents demonstrated “advanced” rejection of violence against women, compared to 34 per cent of Australian respondents. The percentage of respondents with “advanced” attitudes towards violence against women was significantly higher for the ACT compared to the rest of Australia. As the majority of respondents were not categorised as “advanced”, there is still substantial room to improve attitudes towards violence against women in both the ACT and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-9: “Advanced” rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

- ACT: 1,006
- Australia: 19,099.

\* Statistically significant difference on “advanced” attitudes (AVAWS) for the ACT compared to the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

### Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both ACT and Australian respondents showed a significant increase in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-10). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment between 2017 and 2021 in the ACT and Australia (Figure 4-11).<sup>13</sup> However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017

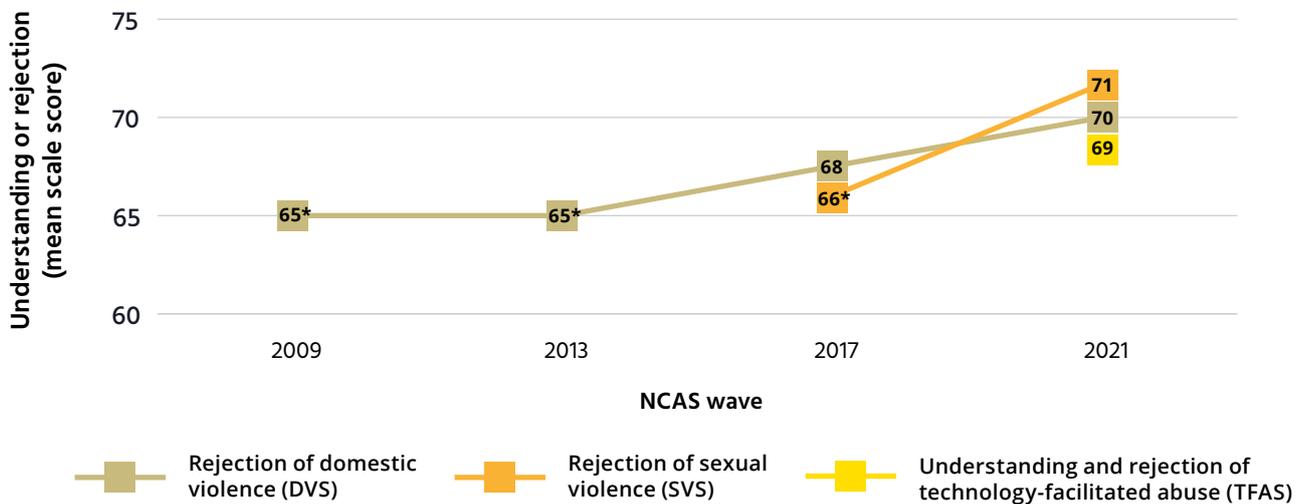
and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either the ACT or Australia. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in the ACT nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>14</sup>

In 2021, compared to the rest of Australia, the ACT had a significantly higher rejection of sexual violence, including both sexual assault and sexual harassment, as well as significantly higher rejection of domestic violence, according to mean scores on the SVS, SAS, SHS and DVS. However, in 2021, there was no significant difference between the ACT and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the TFAS.

<sup>13</sup> The change over time results for the SHS in the ACT should be treated as indicative only because they are based on relatively small numbers for 2017.

<sup>14</sup> There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-10: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Australian Capital Territory, 2009 to 2021

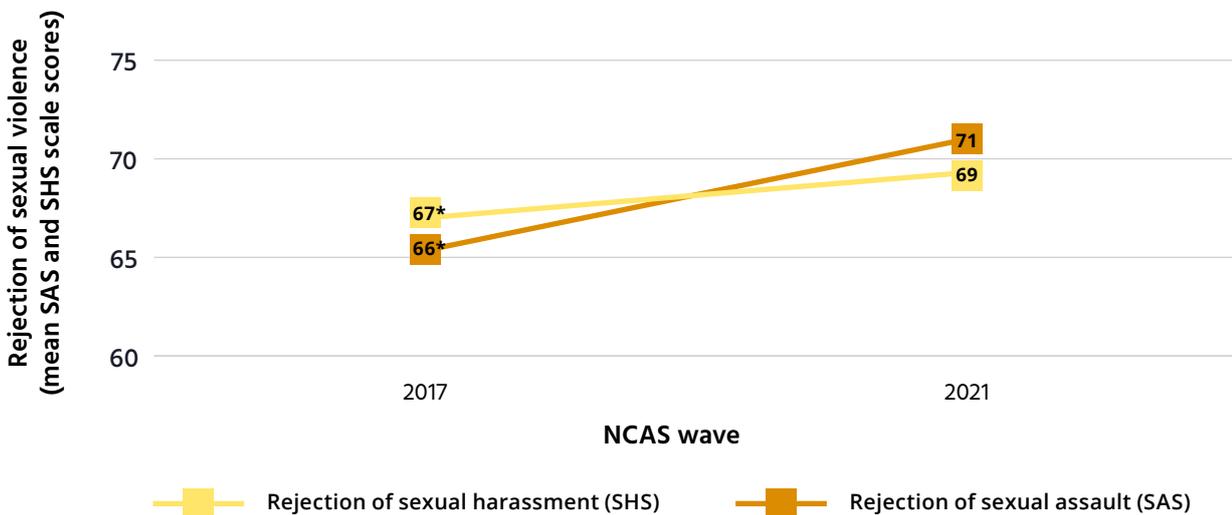


**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* for ACT in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 511; 449; 1,188; 1,005
- SVS: na; na; 1,181; 1,004
- TFAS: na; na; na; 1,002.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-11: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Australian Capital Territory, 2017 to 2021



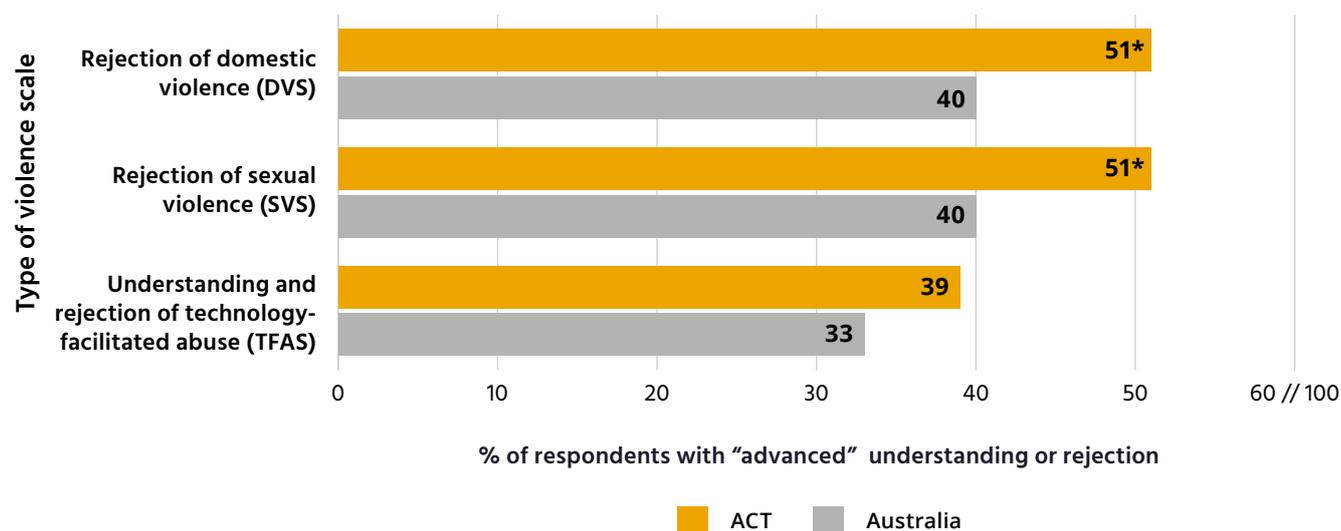
**Note:** *Ns* for ACT in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 325; 983
- SAS: 1,181; 993.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-12 presents the percentages of ACT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. Compared to the rest of Australia, a significantly higher proportion of ACT respondents demonstrated “advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic and sexual violence, but a similar proportion demonstrated “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both the ACT and Australia given that only about half the respondents or fewer fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-12: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- ACT: 1,005; 1,004; 1,002
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

\* Statistically significant difference between the ACT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.2 Findings for New South Wales (NSW)

### NSW RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: New South Wales (NSW)

**For all time periods examined**, NSW and Australia showed significant improvement in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**Between 2017 and 2021**, rejection of violence against women and domestic violence plateaued in both NSW and Australia despite an improvement over the longer term.

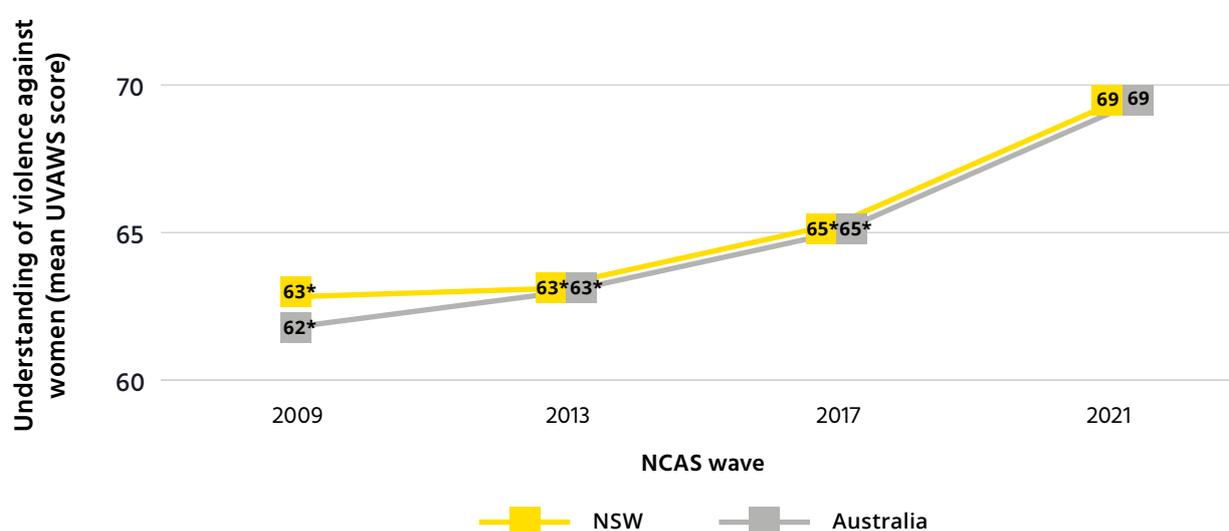
**In 2021**, NSW and the rest of Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in NSW and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in NSW and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

NSW, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-13). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the NSW population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-13: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), New South Wales and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

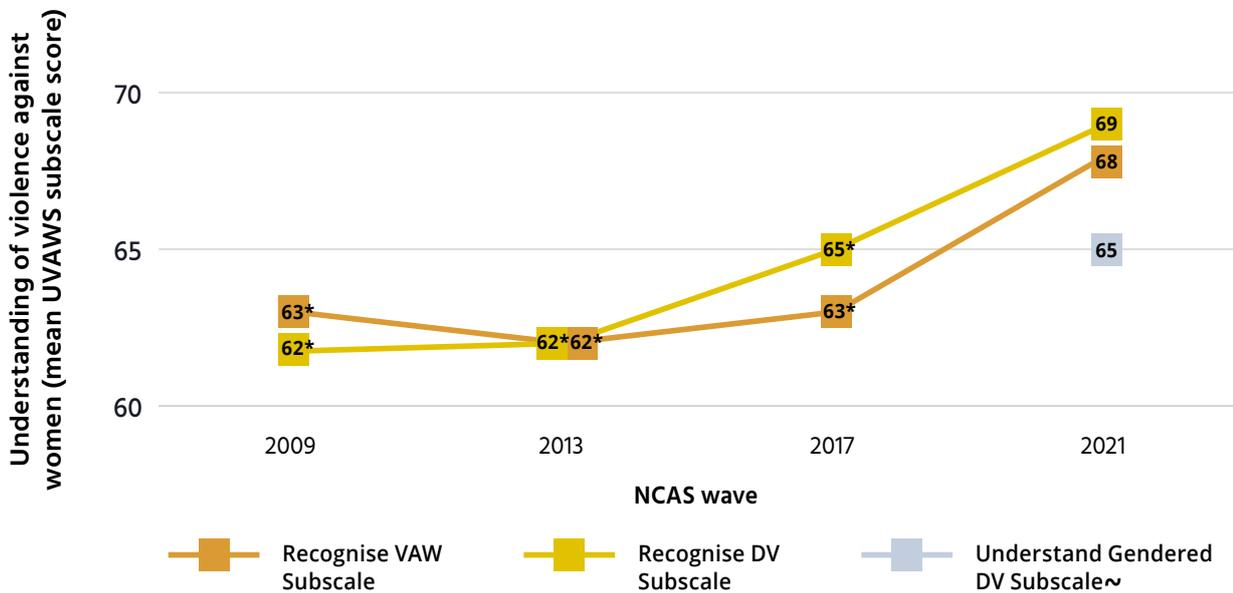
- NSW: 1,704; 3,943; 1984; 4,330
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-14 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both NSW respondents and Australian respondents. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures the understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between NSW and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of both NSW (41%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-14: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), New South Wales, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 1,651; 3,830; 1,957; 4,320
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,711; 3,962; 3,929; 4,330
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 1,070.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

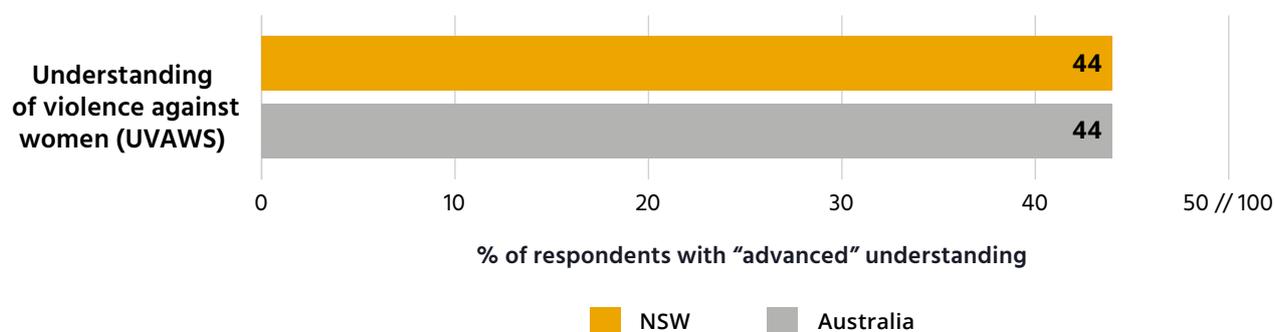
<sup>~</sup> Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-15 presents the percentages of NSW and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS

in 2021. More than two in five (44%) of both NSW and Australian respondents demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women. These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both NSW and Australia.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared NSW with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-15: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), New South Wales and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

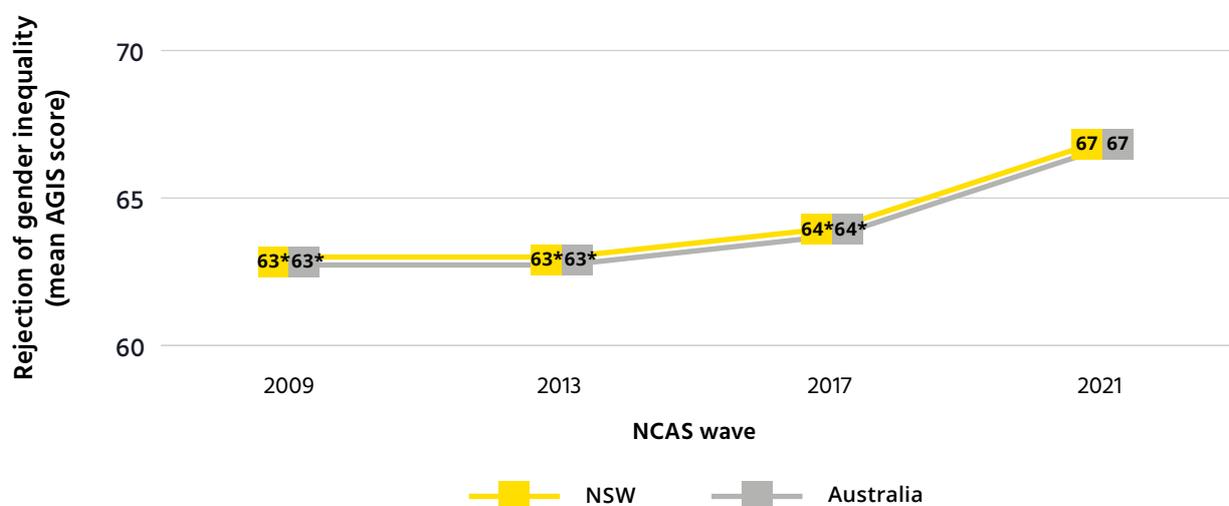
- NSW: 4,330
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between NSW and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

For both NSW and Australia, the mean AGIS score was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-16). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the NSW population and the Australian population.

Figure 4-16: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), New South Wales and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- NSW: 1,530; 3,480; 4,017; 4,316
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

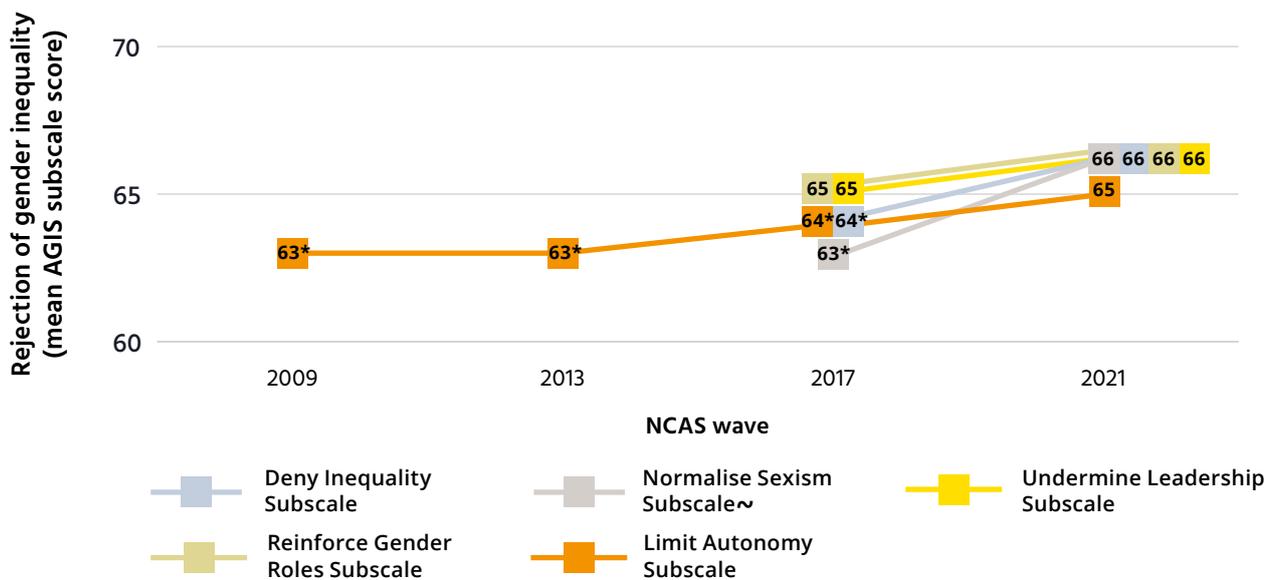
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-17 displays changes over time in mean scores for the five AGIS subscales for NSW.<sup>16</sup> There were significant improvements over time on three of the AGIS subscales for NSW: the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Deny Inequality Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). Australia similarly showed significant improvement on these three subscales. These findings indicate increased rejection in both NSW and Australia of attitudes that limit women’s autonomy in intimate relationships, attitudes that downplay sexism and attitudes that deny

the gender inequality experienced by women. There was no significant improvement in NSW on the other two AGIS subscales between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that reinforce rigid gender roles and attitudes that undermine women’s leadership in work and public life. However, unlike NSW, Australia showed a significant improvement over time on one of these two subscales, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that reinforce rigid gender roles.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between NSW and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-17: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), New South Wales, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 3,684; 2,109
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 3,955; 1,544
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 3,998; 4,267
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 3,898; 2,157
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 1,626; 3,741; 3,814; 4,168.

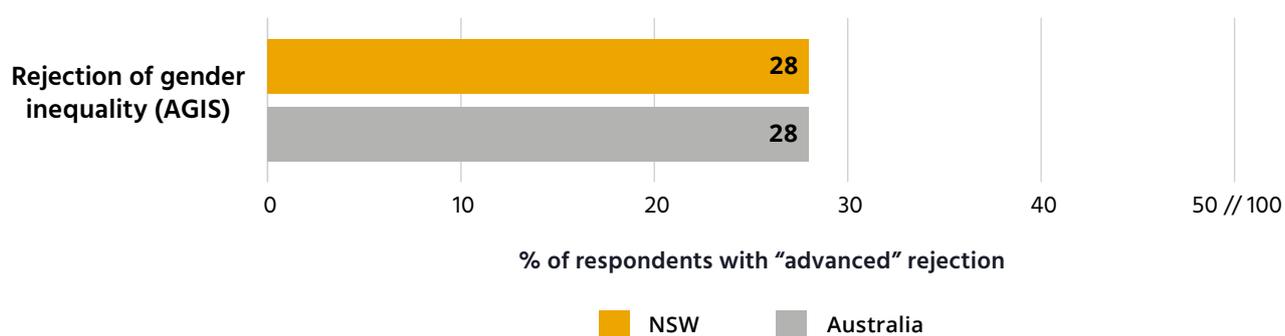
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-18 presents the percentages of NSW and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. More than a quarter (28%) of both NSW and Australian respondents demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both NSW and Australia.

Figure 4-18: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), New South Wales and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

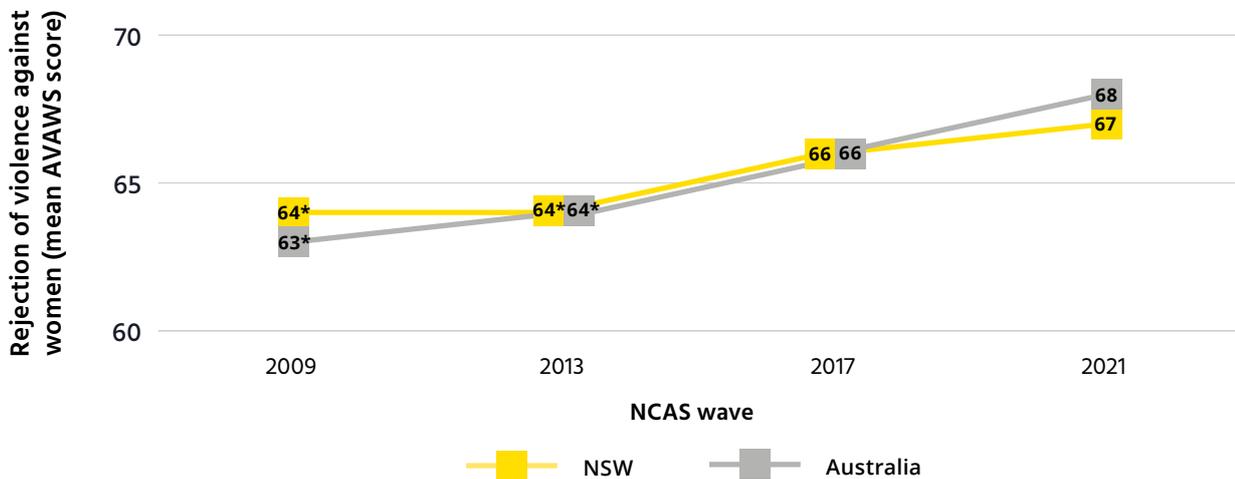
- NSW: 4,316
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between NSW and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both NSW and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both NSW and Australia (Figure 4-19). However, like the rest of Australia, no significant increase in AVAWS scores was observed in NSW between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-19: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), New South Wales and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- NSW: 641; 1,247; 4,018; 4,329
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

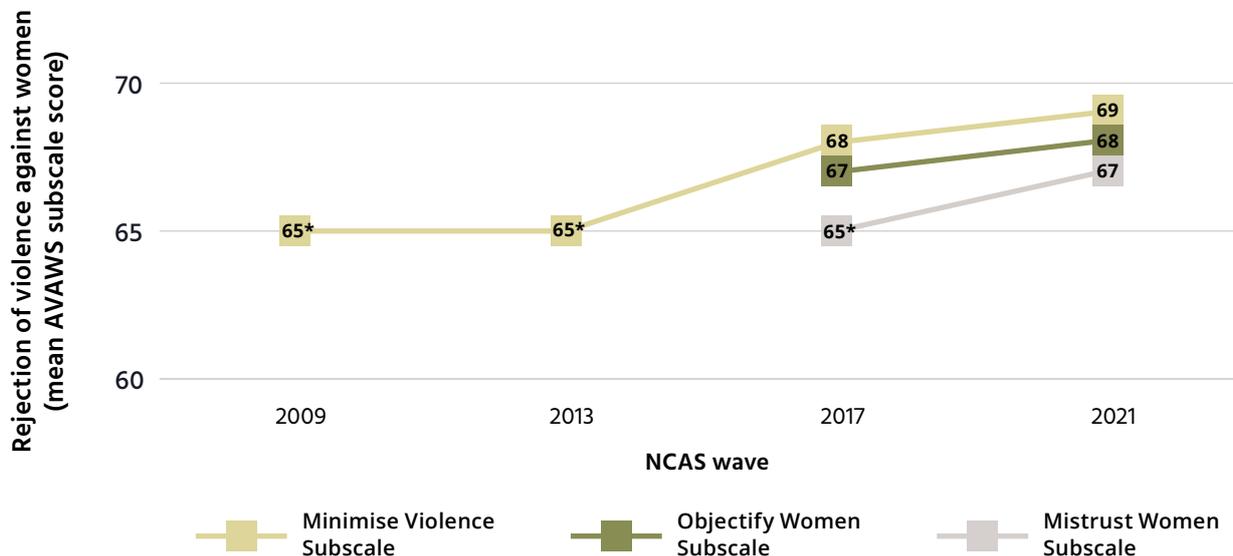
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-20 shows change over time on the three AVAWS subscales for NSW. There were significant improvements over time on two of the AVAWS subscales for NSW. The Mistrust Women Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that mistrust women's reports of violence (in 2021 compared to 2017). Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the Mistrust

and Minimise subscales in NSW were identical to those for Australia. There was no significant improvement in NSW on the Objectify Women Subscale between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. However, unlike NSW, Australia showed a significant improvement on this subscale between 2017 and 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between NSW and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-20: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), New South Wales, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

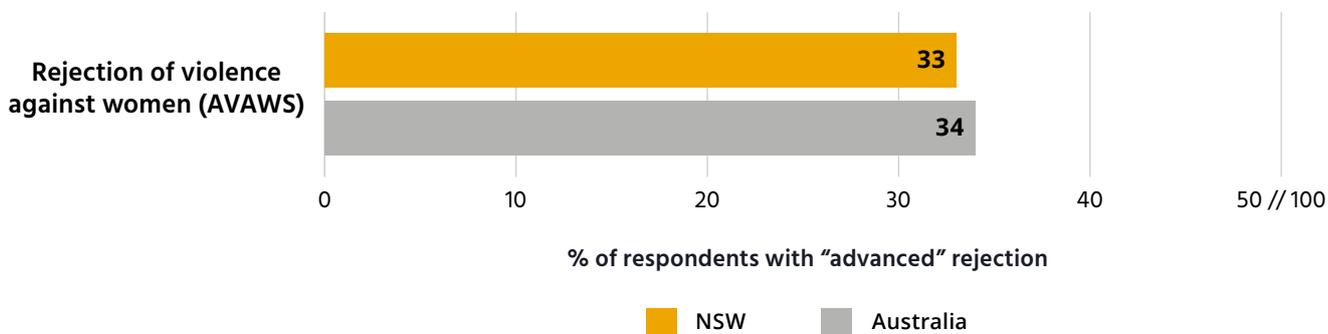
- Minimise Violence Subscale: 838; 3,797; 4,018; 4,327
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 4,004; 4,259
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 3,971; 4,297.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-21 presents the percentages of NSW and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. A similar proportion of respondents in NSW (33%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between

NSW and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in this "advanced" attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is still substantial room for improvement in community attitudes towards violence against women in both NSW and Australia.

Figure 4-21: "Advanced" rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), New South Wales and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

- NSW: 4,329
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on "advanced" rejection between NSW and the rest of Australia. "Advanced" attitudes refer to answering "strongly disagree" to at least 75% of the items in the scale and "somewhat disagree" to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

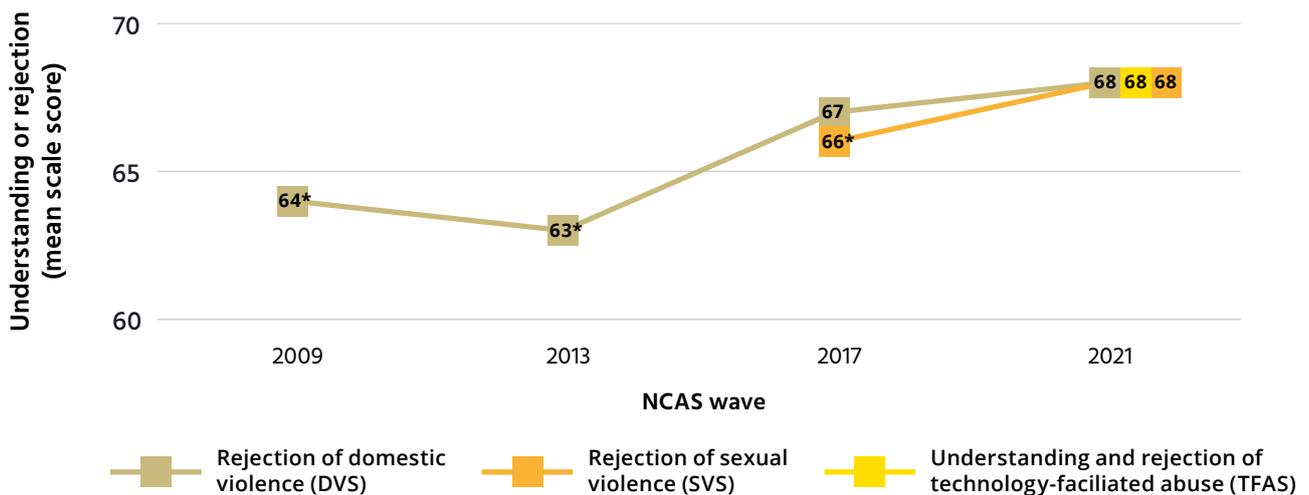
## Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both NSW and Australian respondents showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-22). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment

between 2017 and 2021 in NSW and Australia (Figure 4-23). However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either NSW or Australian respondents. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in NSW nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>17</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between NSW and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

Figure 4-22: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, New South Wales, 2009 to 2021



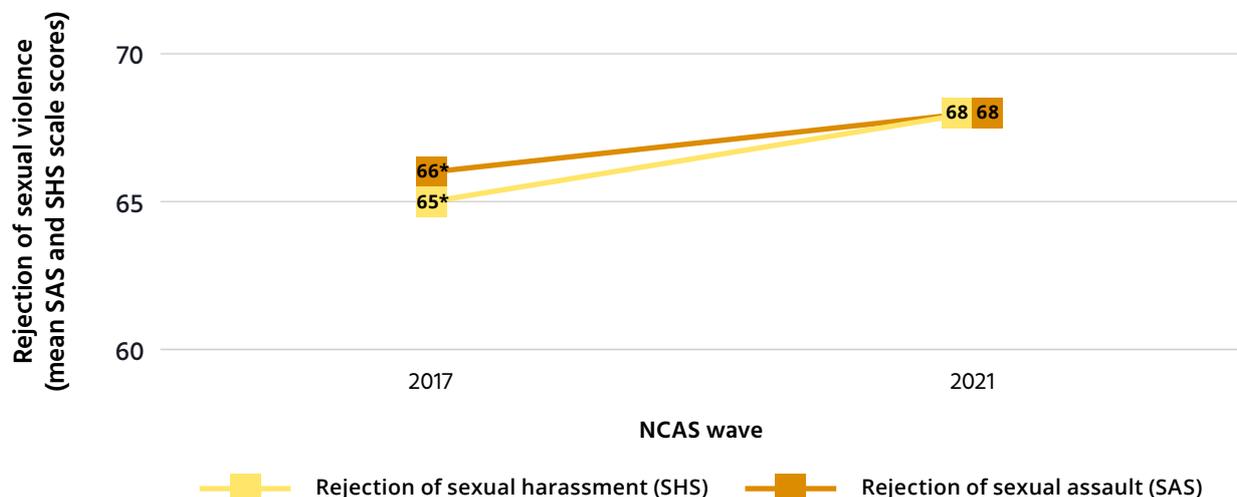
**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 823; 1,575; 4,018; 4,327
- SVS: na; na; 3,991; 4,310
- TFAS: na; na; na; 4,323.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

<sup>17</sup> There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-23: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, New South Wales, 2017 to 2021



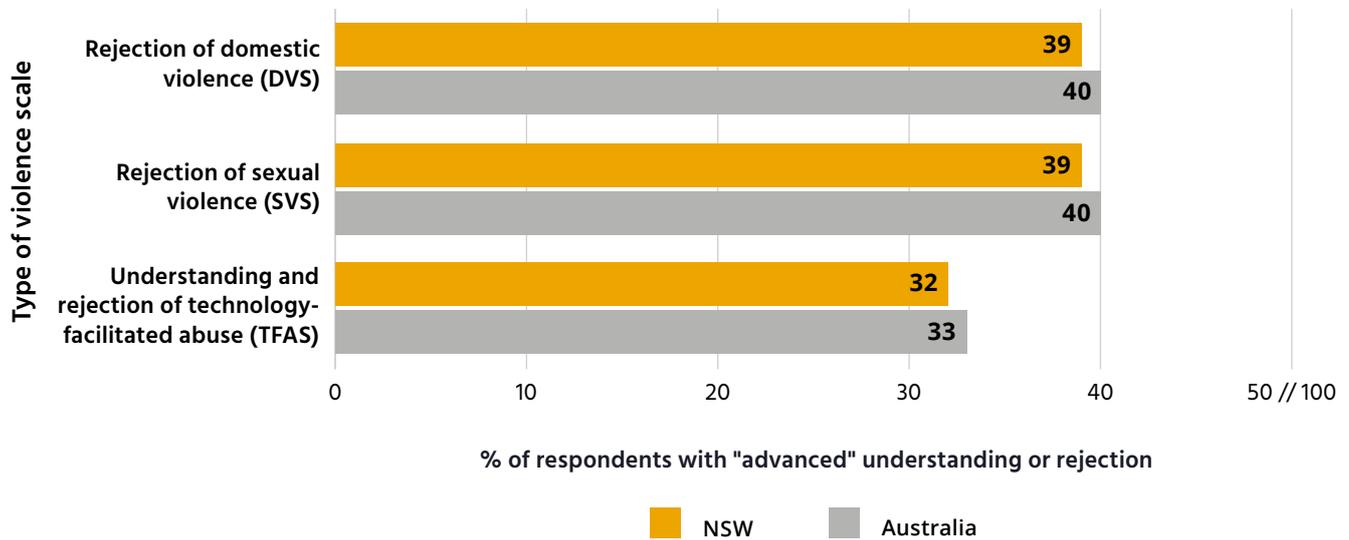
**Note:** Ns in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 949; 4,261
- SAS: 3,990; 4,265.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-24 presents the percentages of NSW and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. NSW was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both NSW and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-24: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), New South Wales and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- NSW: 4,327; 4,310; 4,323
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between NSW and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.3 Findings for the Northern Territory (NT)

### NORTHERN TERRITORY RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: Northern Territory (NT)

**For all time periods examined**, the NT and Australia showed significant improvement in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

### Between 2017 and 2021:

- rejection of gender inequality significantly increased in Australia, but plateaued in the NT despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of violence against women significantly increased in the NT, but plateaued in Australia despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of domestic violence plateaued in both NT and Australia despite an improvement over the longer term.

**In 2021**, compared to the rest of Australia, the NT had:

- significantly lower understanding of the gendered nature of violence against women
- similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in the NT and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

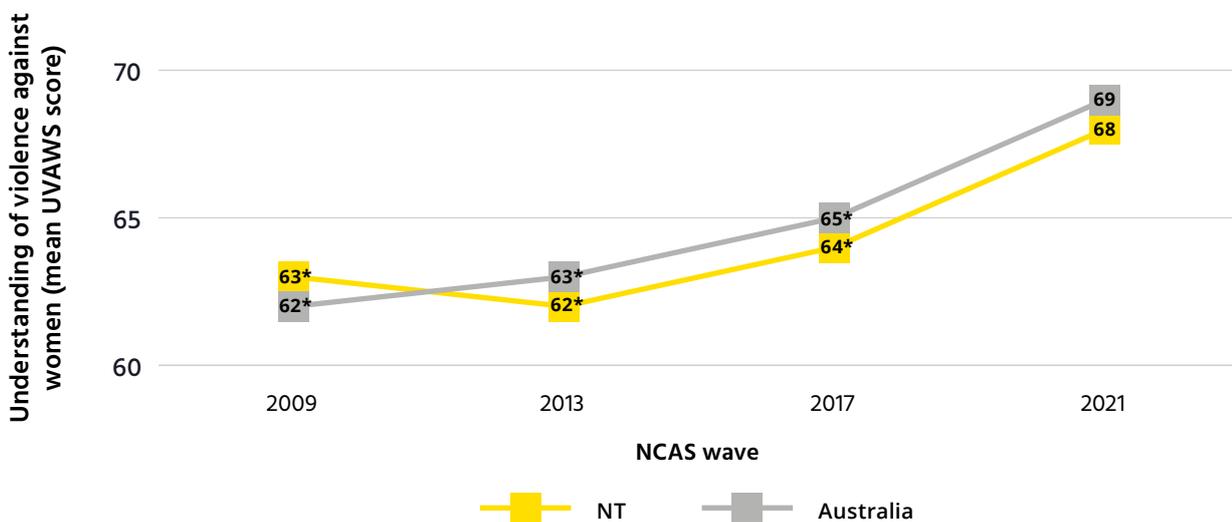
**In 2021**, the large majority of respondents in the NT and Australia agreed that violence against women is a problem in Australia, but significantly more NT than Australian respondents agreed that violence against women is a problem in the suburb or town where they live.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in the NT and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

The NT, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-25). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the NT population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-25: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

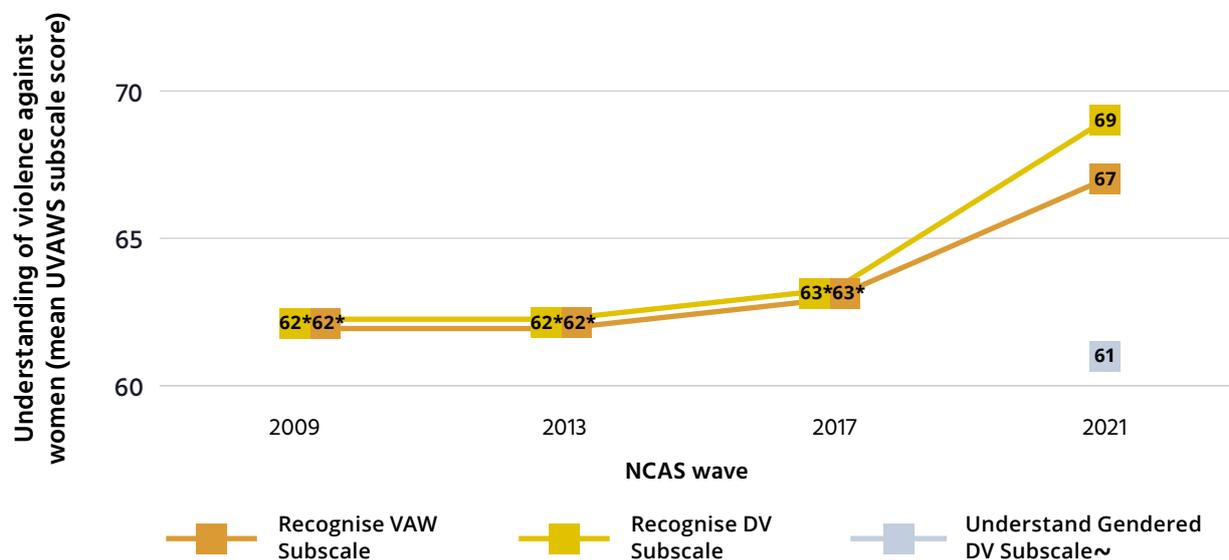
- NT: 1,002; 1,054; 506; 1,000
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-26 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both the NT and Australia. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there was a significant difference between the NT and the rest of Australia in mean scores on only one of the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, substantial proportions of both NT and Australian respondents did not understand the gendered nature of violence against women, contrary to the empirical evidence from PSS, court and police data (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019). However, this understanding was even lower in the NT, with 57 per cent of NT respondents compared to 41 per cent of Australian respondents believing that domestic violence is committed by both men and women equally.

Figure 4-26: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Northern Territory, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 975; 1,016; 500; 999
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,007; 1,061; 967; 1,000
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 262.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

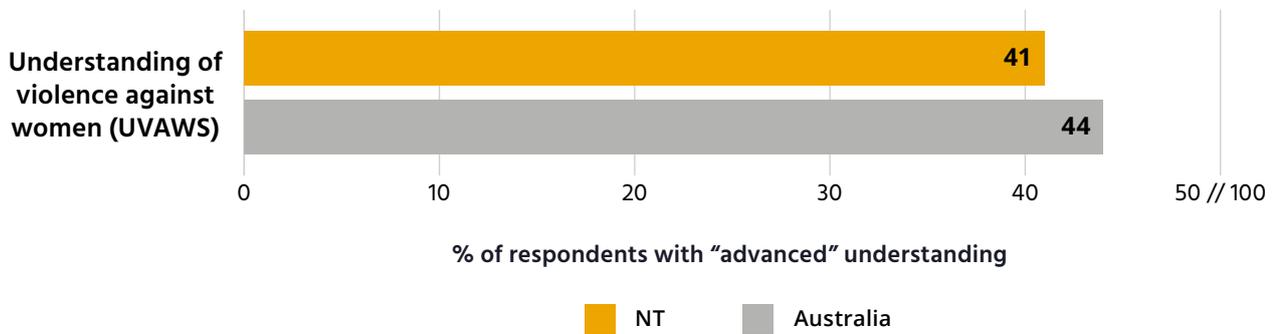
<sup>~</sup> Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-27 presents the percentages of NT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from the

NT (41%) and Australia (44%) demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women. There was no significant difference between the NT and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” understanding category.<sup>18</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both the NT and Australia.

<sup>18</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared the NT with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-27: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

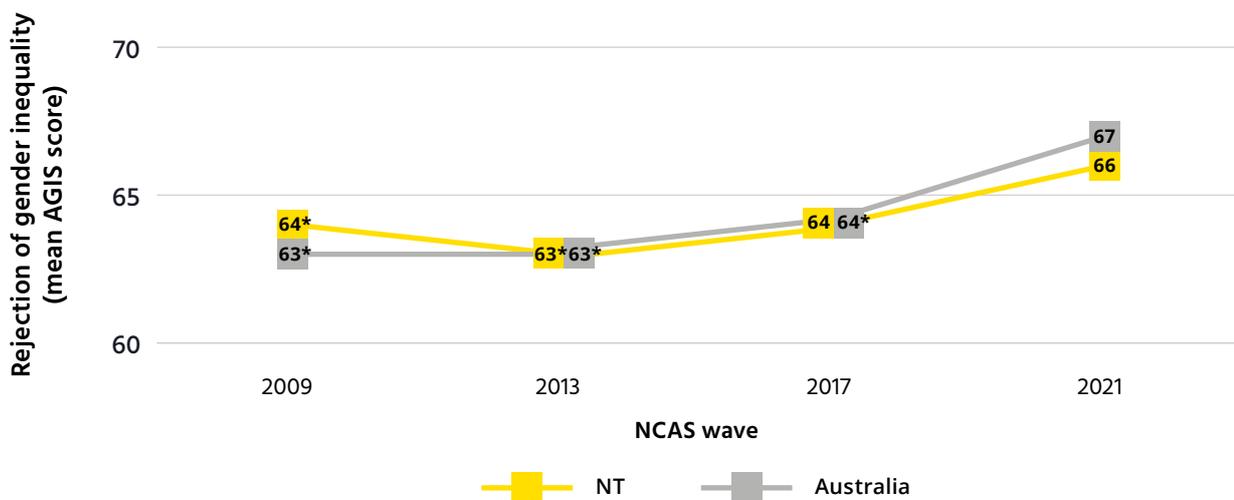
- NT: 1,000
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between the NT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

Similar to Australia, the NT had a significantly higher mean AGIS score in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013 (Figure 4-28). However, in contrast to Australia as a whole, NT respondents did not score significantly higher on the AGIS in 2021 compared to 2017.

Figure 4-28: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- NT: 904; 903; 1,004; 996
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

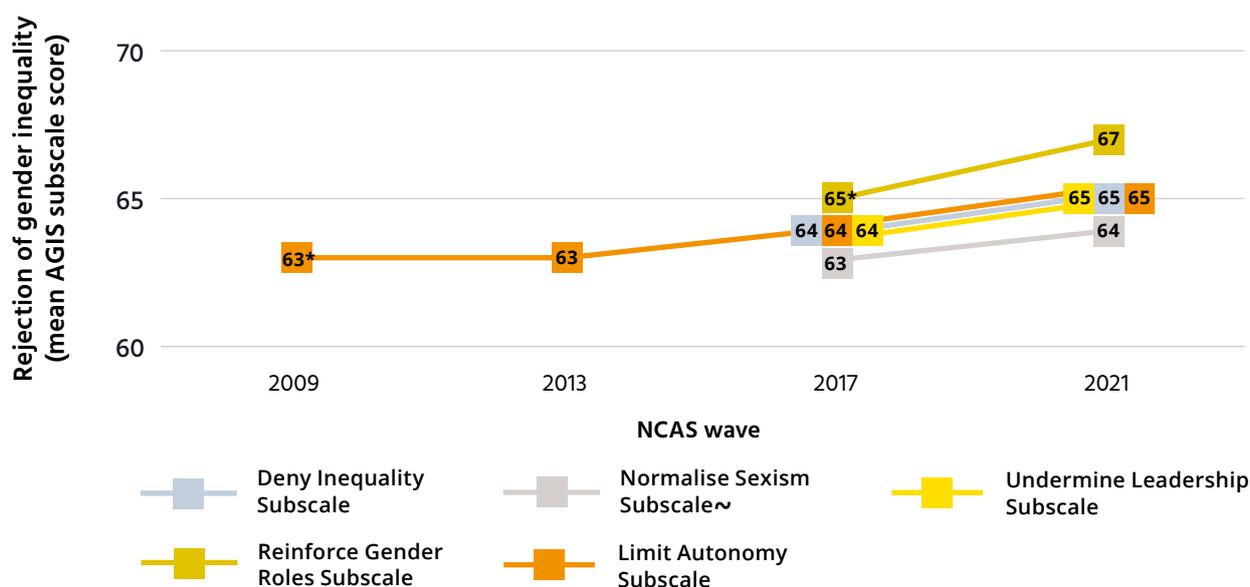
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-29 displays changes over time for the five AGIS subscales for the NT.<sup>19</sup> There were significant improvements over time on two of the five AGIS subscales for NT respondents: the Limit Autonomy Subscale and the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale. Although the Limit Autonomy Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that limit women's autonomy in intimate relationships over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009), this rejection plateaued between 2013 and 2021. Unlike the NT, Australia showed significant improvement on the Limit Autonomy Subscale between 2021 and all three previous survey waves. Both the NT and Australia

had increased rejection of attitudes that reinforce rigid gender roles, but plateaued on rejection of attitudes that undermine leadership, between 2017 and 2021. Unlike the NT, Australia showed a significant improvement between 2017 and 2021 on two of the other AGIS subscales, indicating increased rejection in Australia of attitudes that normalise sexism and attitudes that deny gender inequality experiences.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between the NT and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-29: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Northern Territory, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 896; 472
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 982; 272
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 995; 982
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 955; 483
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 956; 981; 942; 962.

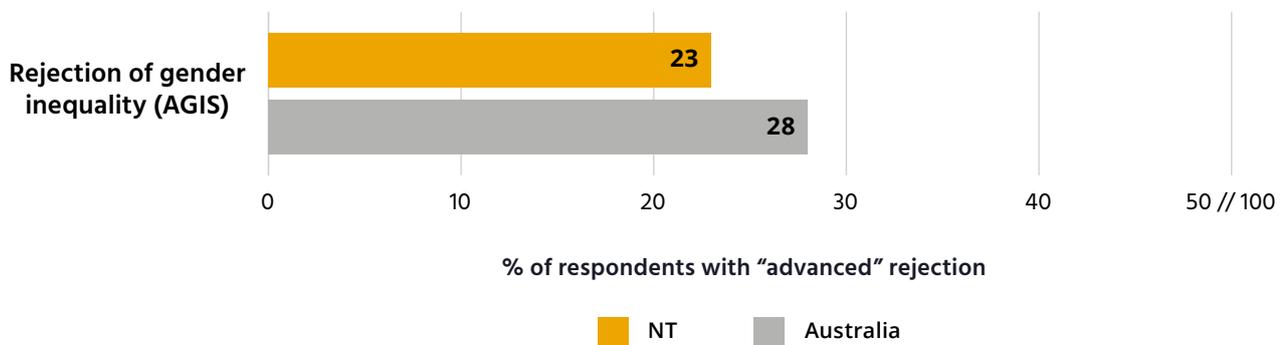
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

<sup>~</sup> Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

19 Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-30 presents the percentages of NT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from the NT (23%) and Australia (28%) demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. There was no significant difference between the NT and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both the NT and Australia.

Figure 4-30: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *N*s in 2021 were:

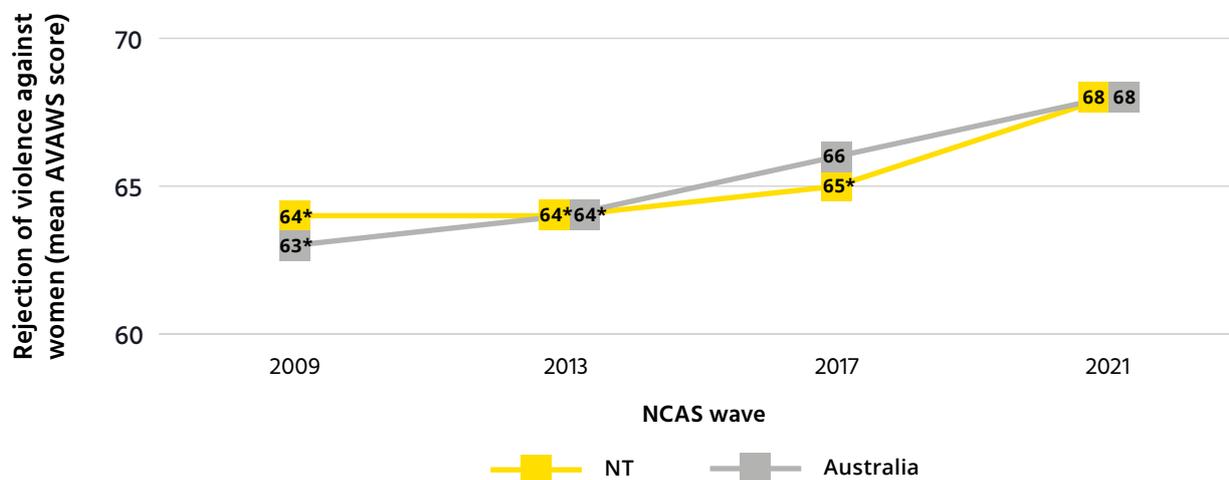
- NT: 996
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between NT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both NT and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both the NT and the Australian population overall (Figure 4-31). The NT also showed a significant increase in attitudinal rejection of violence against women between 2017 and 2021, whereas Australia showed no significant increase over this period.

Figure 4-31: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- NT: 377; 317; 1,006; 1,000
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

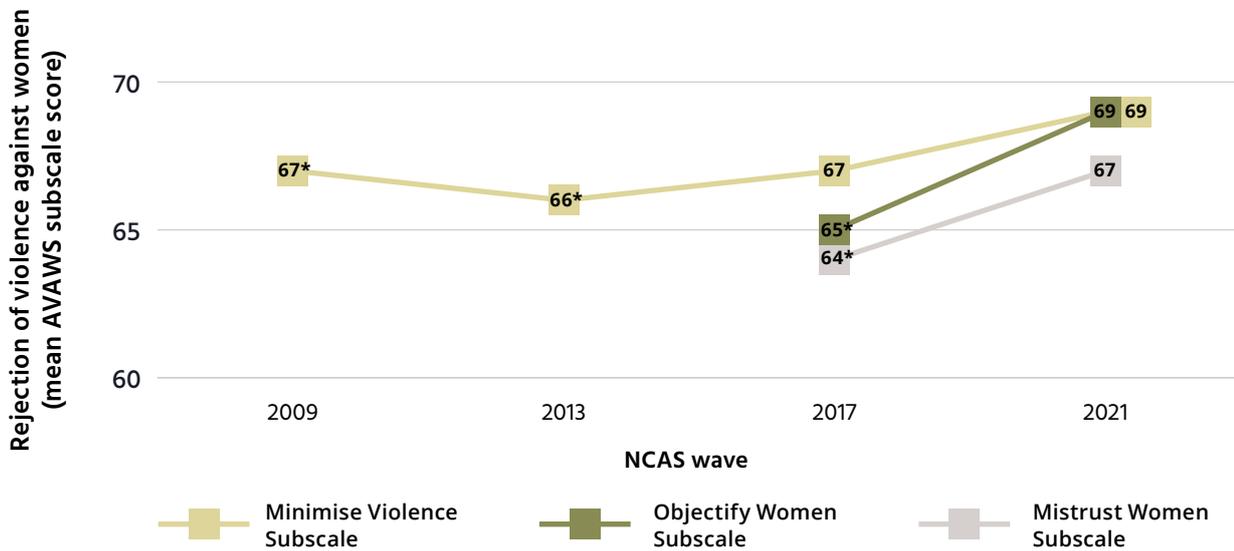
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-32 shows change over time on the three AVAWS subscales for the NT. There were significant improvements over time on all three of the AVAWS subscales for the NT. The Mistrust Women and Objectify Women subscales showed improvement in 2021 compared to 2017, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage and attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that

downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the three AVAWS subscales in the NT were identical to those for Australia.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between the NT and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-32: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Northern Territory, 2009 to 2021



Note: "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

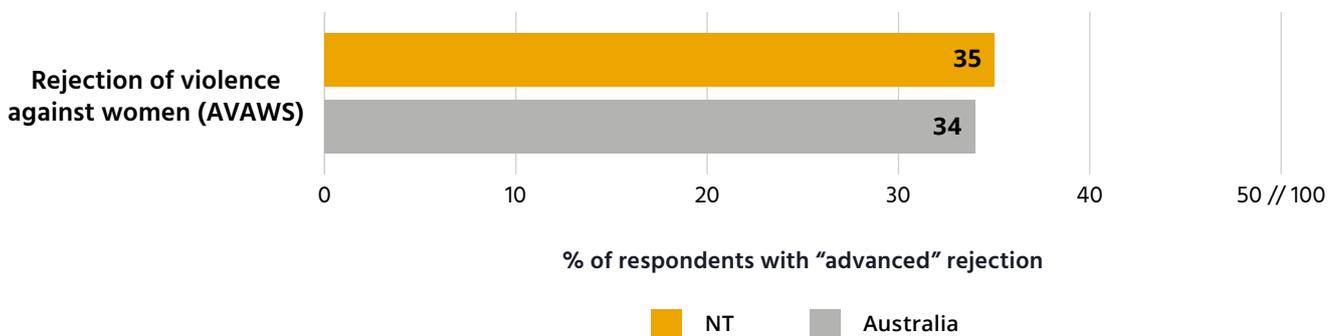
- Minimise Violence Subscale: 493; 1,028; 1,006; 1,000
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 1,001; 984
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 986; 988.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-33 presents the percentages of NT and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents in the NT (35%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between

the NT and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in this "advanced" attitudes category. As the majority of respondents were not categorised as "advanced", there is still substantial room to improve community attitudes towards violence against women in both the NT and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-33: "Advanced" rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2021



Note: Ns in 2021 were:

- NT: 1,000
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on "advanced" rejection between NT and the rest of Australia. "Advanced" attitudes refer to answering "strongly disagree" to at least 75% of the items in the scale and "somewhat disagree" to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

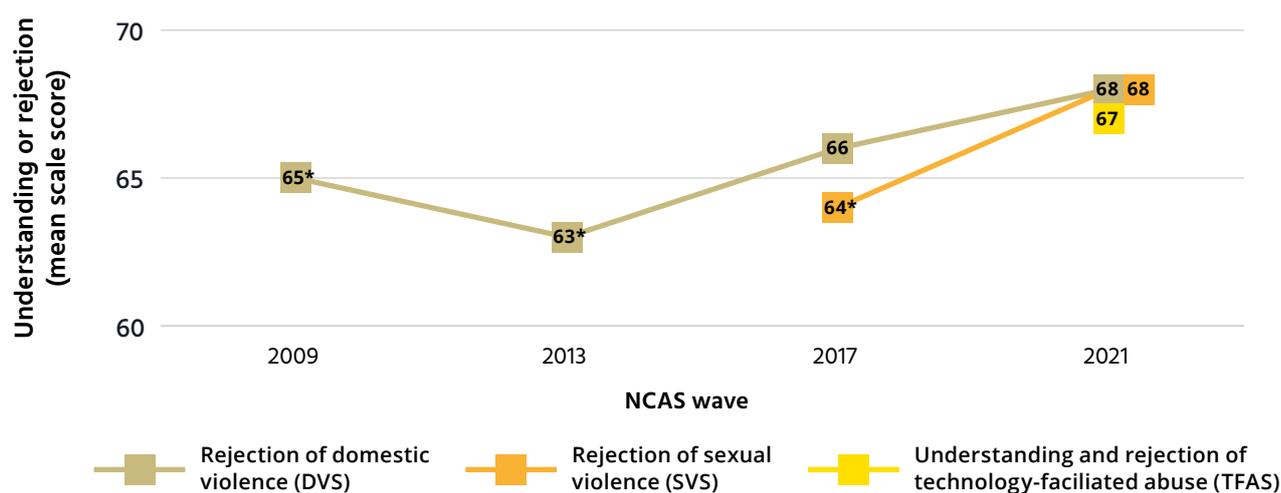
## Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both NT and Australian respondents showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-34). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault

and sexual harassment between 2017 and 2021 in the NT and Australia (Figure 4-35).<sup>20</sup> However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either the NT or Australia. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in the NT nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>21</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between the NT and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

Figure 4-34: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Northern Territory, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

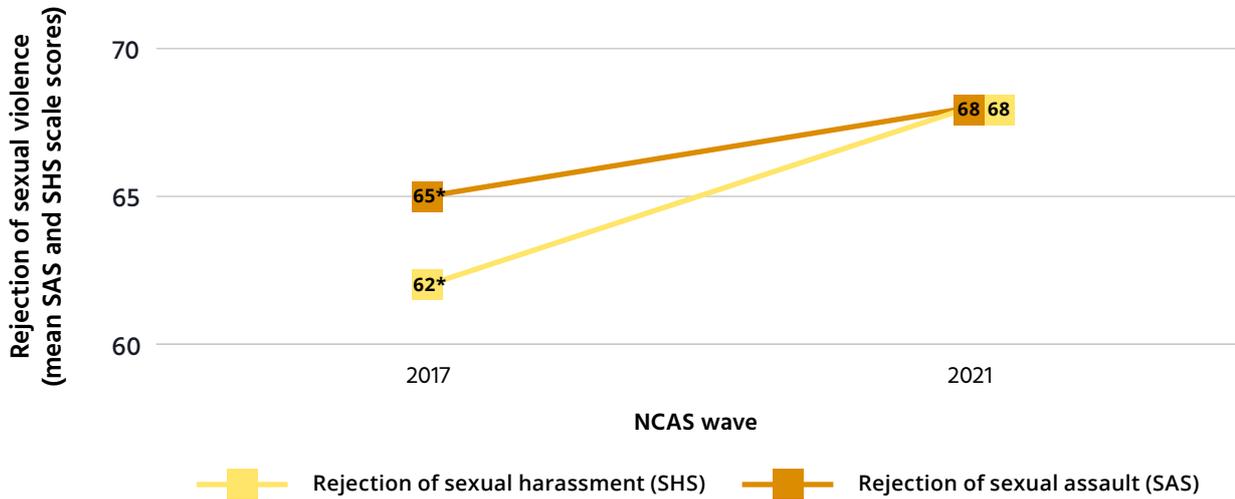
- DVS: 491; 413; 1,006; 1,000
- SVS: na; na; 991; 992
- TFAS: na; na; na; 999.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

<sup>20</sup> The change over time results for the SHS in the NT should be treated as indicative only because they are based on relatively small numbers for 2017.

<sup>21</sup> There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-35: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Northern Territory, 2017 to 2021



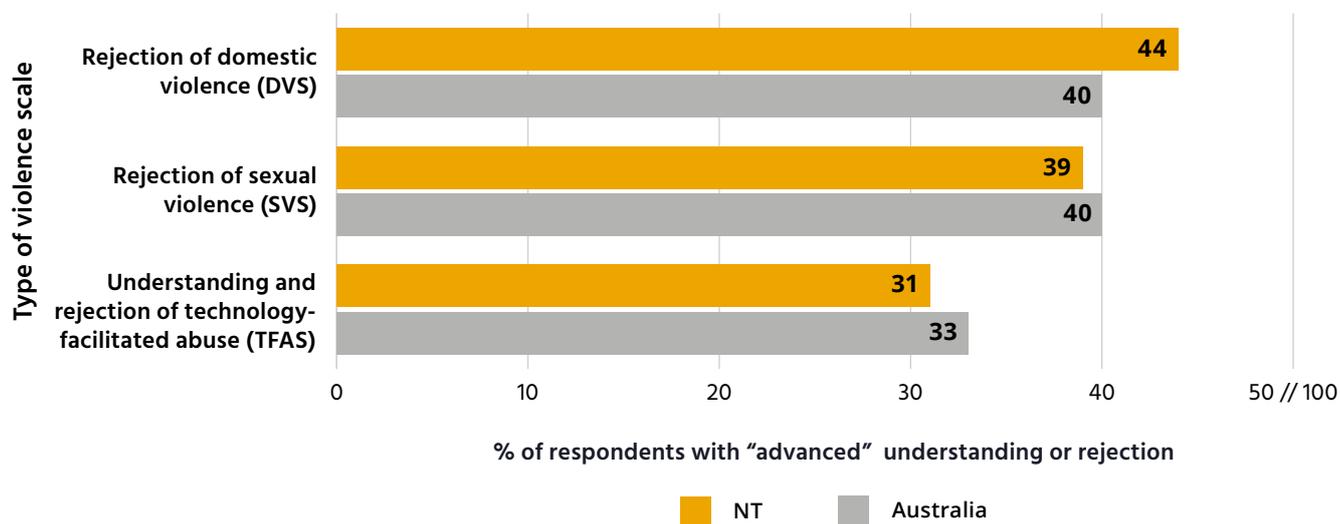
**Note:** Ns in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 243; 971
- SAS: 990; 982.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-36 presents the percentages of NT and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. The NT was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both the NT and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-36: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Northern Territory and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- NT: 1,000; 992; 999
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between NT and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## Awareness of violence against women as a problem in Australia and locally

The large majority of NT respondents (92%), like those from other jurisdictions (88–94%), agreed strongly or somewhat that violence against women is a problem in Australia (Item V1). However, NT respondents were significantly more likely to agree that violence against women is a problem in the suburb or town where they live (70%) compared to respondents from other jurisdictions (38–54%; Item V2).

The reason why NT respondents were more likely to agree that violence is a problem in the suburb or town where they live is a question for further research.<sup>22</sup> Further research could consider whether this finding reflects the unique profile of the NT, such as its greater remoteness and its much higher proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, many of whom live in small communities in remote areas (ABS, 2021b, 2021c). For example, violence may be more “invisible”

in major cities where many people are strangers and more “visible” in smaller communities where most residents know one another. The higher recognition of violence against women as a problem may also reflect the higher prevalence of violence against women in the NT in general or against Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women, or both. According to the 2021–2022 PSS, more women in the NT (46%) reported experiencing violence since the age of 15 compared with other states and territories (37–43%; ABS, 2023). As noted in Section 1.1, there is also evidence that all forms of violence against Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women occur at higher rates and are more likely to result in severe impacts than violence against non-Indigenous Australian women (ABS, 2017; AIHW, 2018; Bartels, 2010; Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, 2013; eSafety Commissioner, 2017; Our Watch, 2018b; Powell et al., 2022). Regardless, there is room to increase understanding across all jurisdictions, including the NT, that violence occurs in all communities, including in one’s own community.

<sup>22</sup> Cross-sectional surveys such as the NCAS provide information about relationships but cannot provide conclusive information about what factors cause or underlie these relationships.

## 4.4 Findings for Queensland

### QUEENSLAND RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: Queensland

**For all time periods examined**, Queensland and Australia showed significant improvement in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**Between 2017 and 2021**, rejection of violence against women and domestic violence plateaued in both Queensland and Australia despite improvements over the longer term.

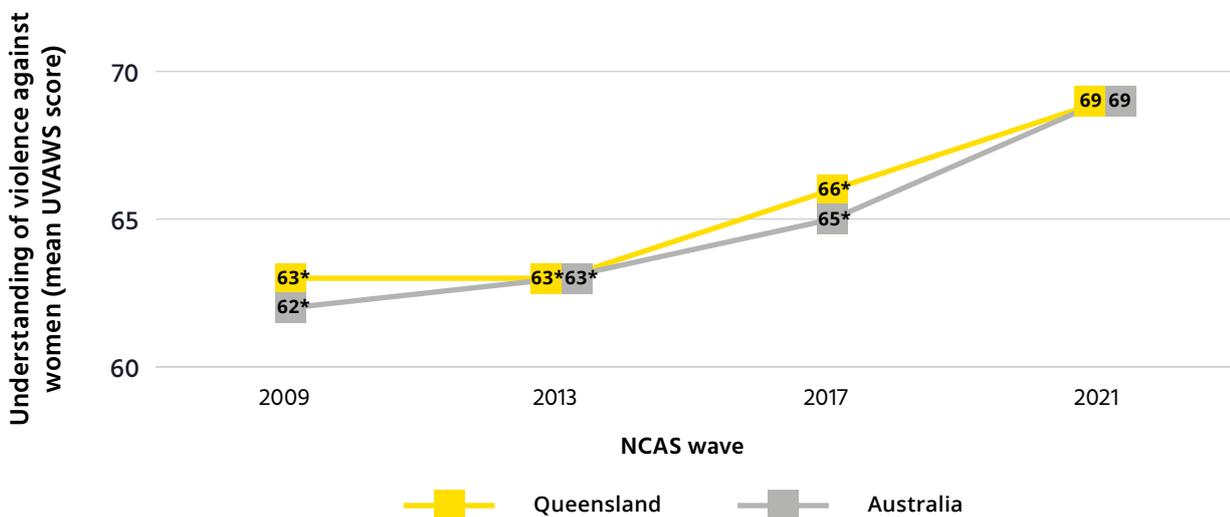
**In 2021**, Queensland and the rest of Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in Queensland and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in Queensland and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

Queensland, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-37). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the Queensland population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-37: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Queensland and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Queensland: 1,440; 2,736; 1,426; 3,054
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

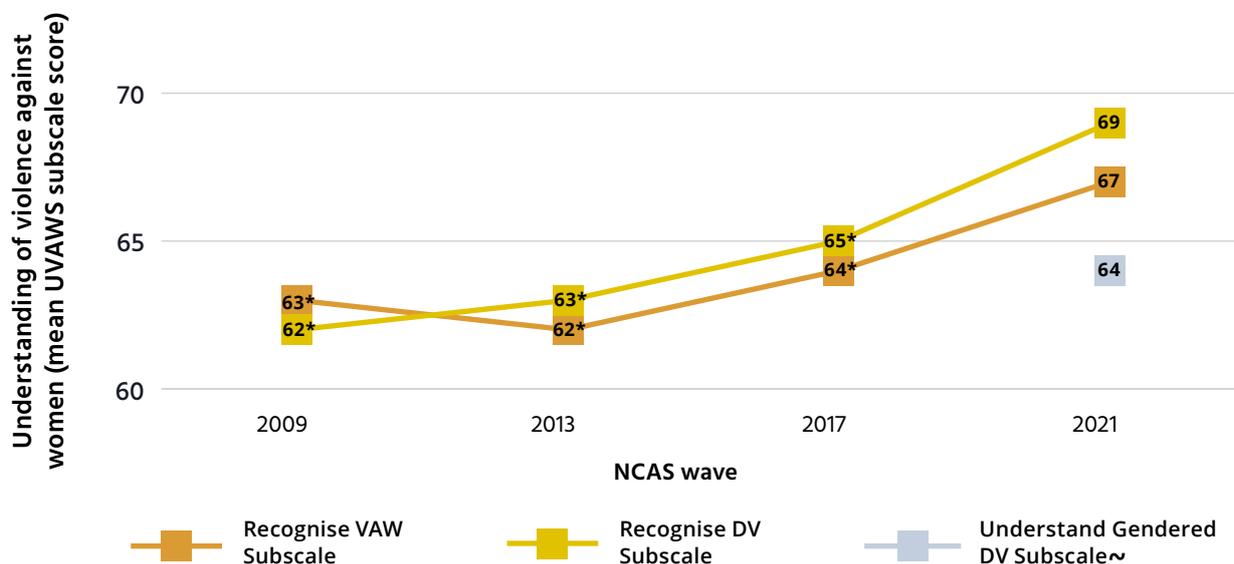
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-38 shows change over time in mean scores for two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both Queensland respondents and Australian respondents. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures the understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because

one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Queensland and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of Queensland (43%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-38: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Queensland, 2009 to 2021



Note: "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 1,398; 2,677; 1,415; 3,048
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,445; 2,743; 2,893; 3,054
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 774.

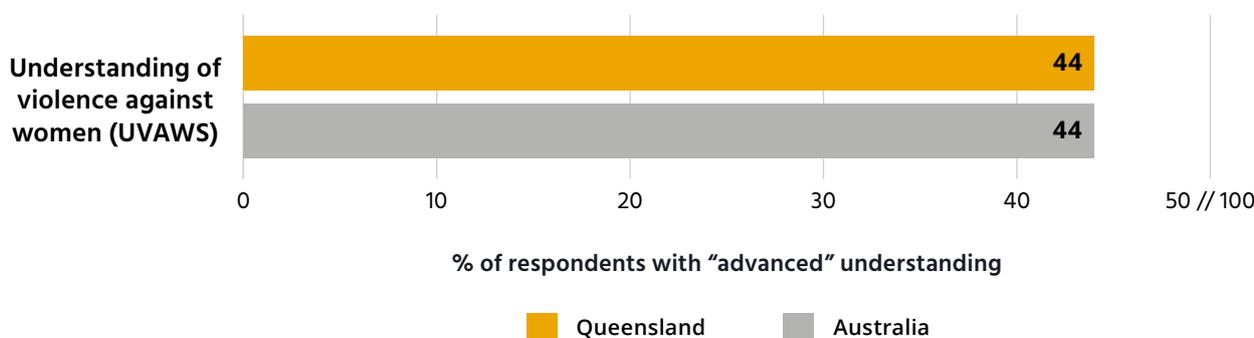
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what "advanced" understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-39 presents the percentages of Queensland and Australian respondents in the "advanced" category for the UVAWS

in 2021. More than two fifths (44%) of both Queensland and Australian respondents demonstrated "advanced" understanding of violence against women. These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both Queensland and Australia.

Figure 4-39: "Advanced" understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Queensland and Australia, 2021



Note: Ns in 2021 were:

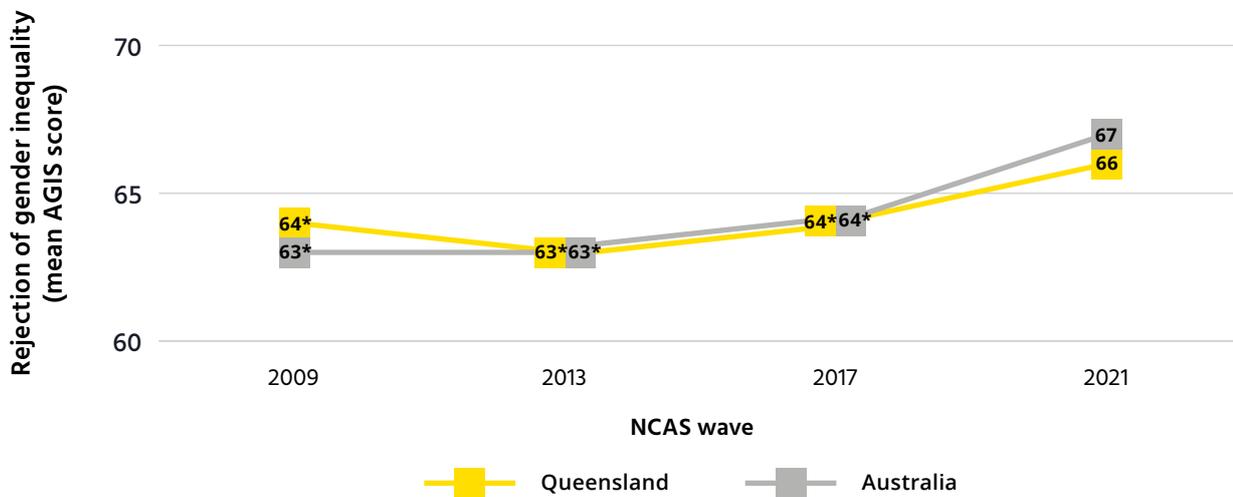
- Queensland: 3,054
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on "advanced" understanding between Queensland and the rest of Australia. "Advanced" understanding refers to answering "yes, always" the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and "yes, usually" to the remaining items (UVAWS).

## Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

For both Queensland and Australia, the mean AGIS score was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-40). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the Queensland population and the Australian population.

Figure 4-40: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Queensland and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Queensland: 1,266; 2,344; 2,948; 3,047
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

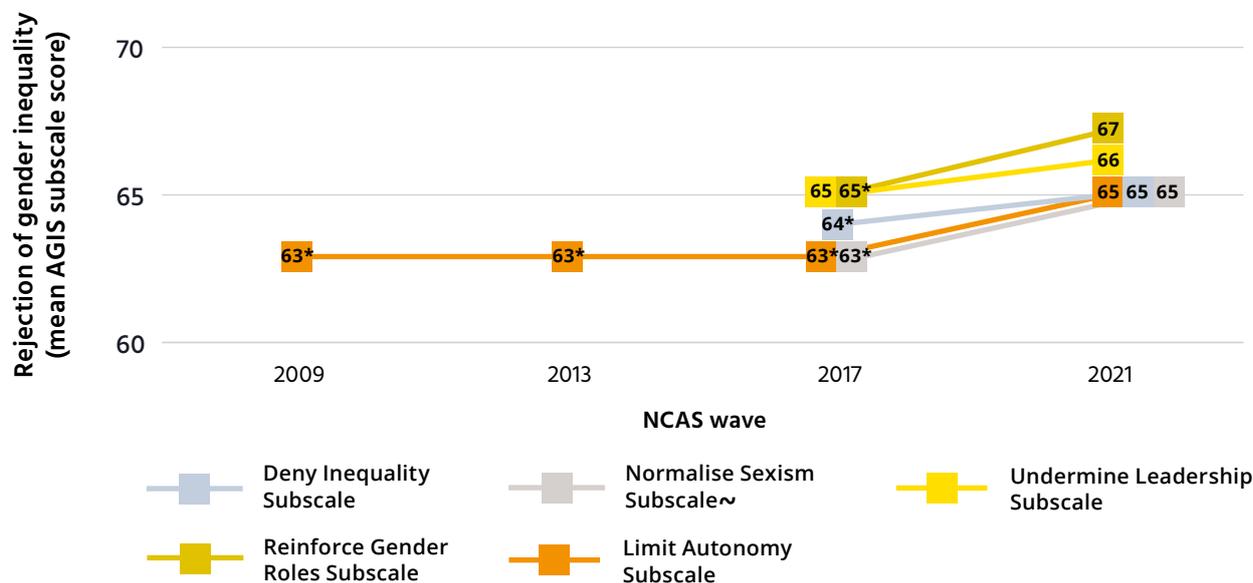
Figure 4-41 displays changes over time in mean scores on the five AGIS subscales for Queensland.<sup>23</sup> There were significant improvements over time on four of the AGIS subscales for Queensland: the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Deny Inequality Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). Australia as a whole similarly showed significant improvement on these four subscales. These findings indicate increased rejection in both Queensland and Australia of attitudes that limit

women's personal autonomy in intimate relationships, attitudes that downplay sexism and attitudes that deny the gender inequality experienced by women. There was no significant improvement in either Queensland or Australia on the Undermine Leadership Subscale between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that undermine women's leadership in work and public life.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Queensland and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

<sup>23</sup> Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-41: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Queensland, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 2,750; 1,481
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 2,906; 1,088
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 2,920; 2,997
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 2,881; 1,512
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 1,371; 2,566; 2,805; 2,921.

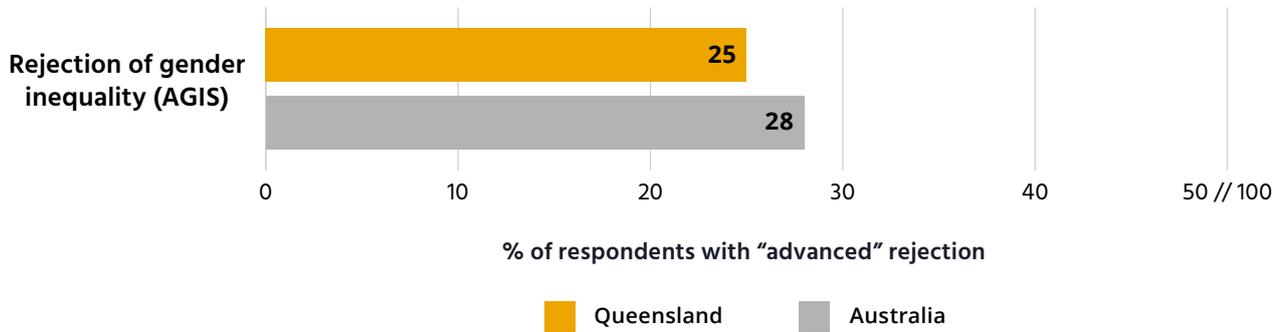
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

<sup>~</sup> Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

Figure 4-42 presents the percentages of Queensland and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from Queensland (25%) and Australia (28%) demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. There was no significant difference between Queensland and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in this “advanced” attitudes category.<sup>24</sup> These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both Queensland and Australia.

<sup>24</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared Queensland with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-42: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Queensland and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

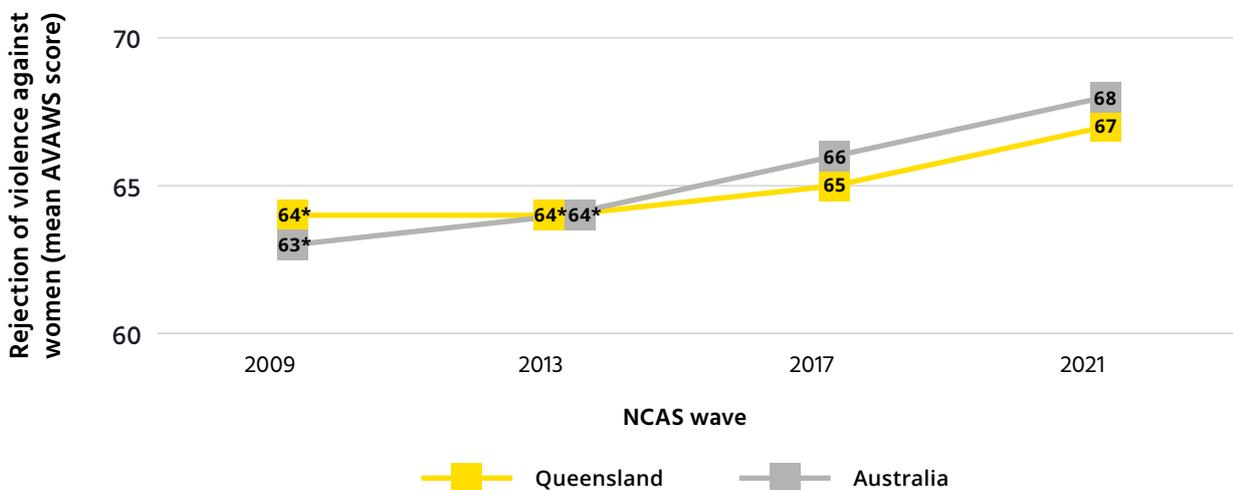
- Queensland: 3,047
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Queensland and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both Queensland and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both Queensland and Australia (Figure 4-43). However, like the rest of Australia, no significant increase in AVAWS scores was observed in Queensland between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-43: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Queensland and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Queensland: 541; 903; 2,950; 3,054
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

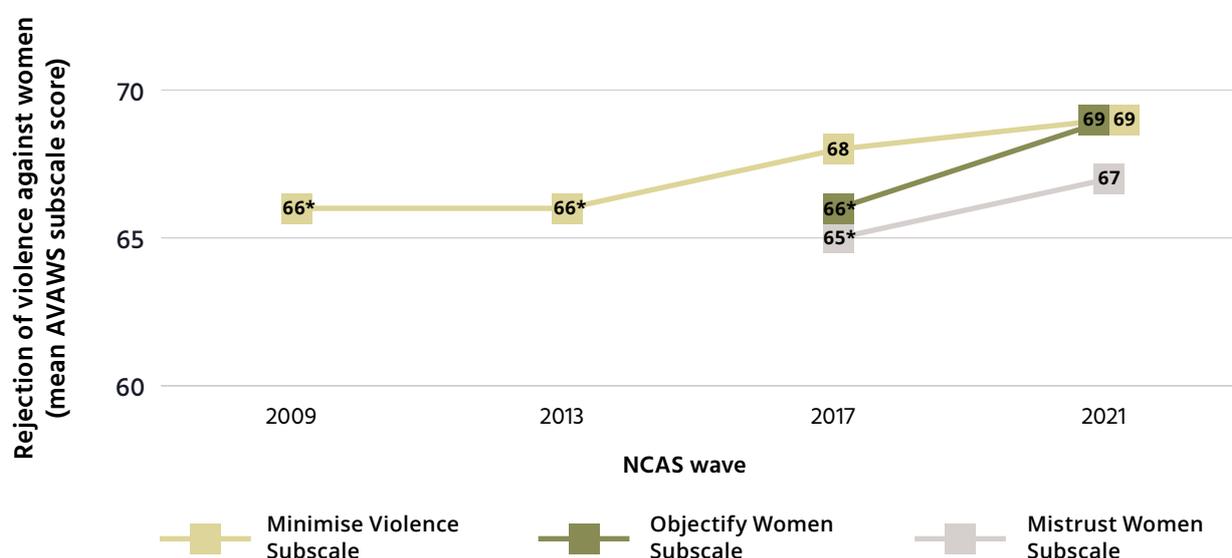
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-44 shows change over time on the three AVAWS subscales for Queensland. There were significant improvements over time on all three of the AVAWS subscales for Queensland. The Mistrust Women and Objectify Women subscales showed improvement in 2021 compared to 2017, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage and attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that

downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the three AVAWS subscales in Queensland were identical to those for Australia.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Queensland and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-44: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Queensland, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

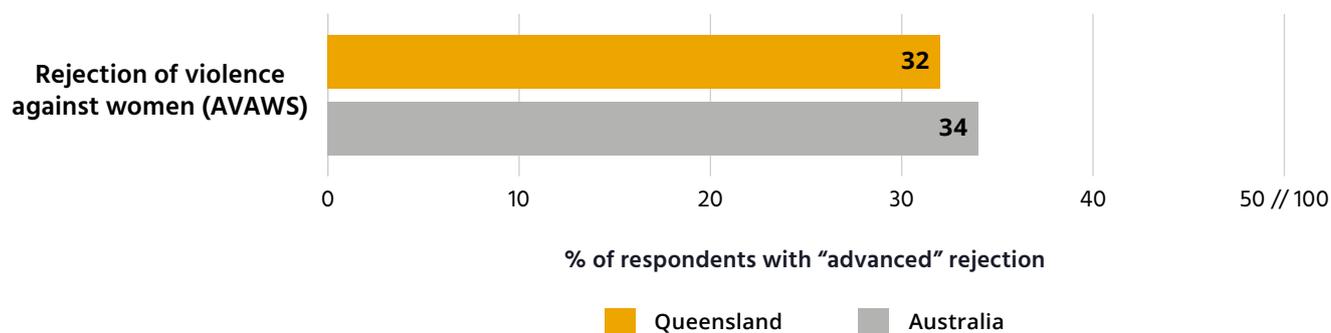
- Minimise Violence Subscale: 716; 2,665; 2,950; 3,053
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 2,947; 3,006
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 2,910; 3,031.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-45 presents the percentages of Queensland and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. A similar proportion of respondents in Queensland (32%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between

Queensland and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is still substantial room for improvement in community attitudes towards violence against women in both Queensland and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-45: “Advanced” rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Queensland and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

- Queensland: 3,054
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Queensland and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

### Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

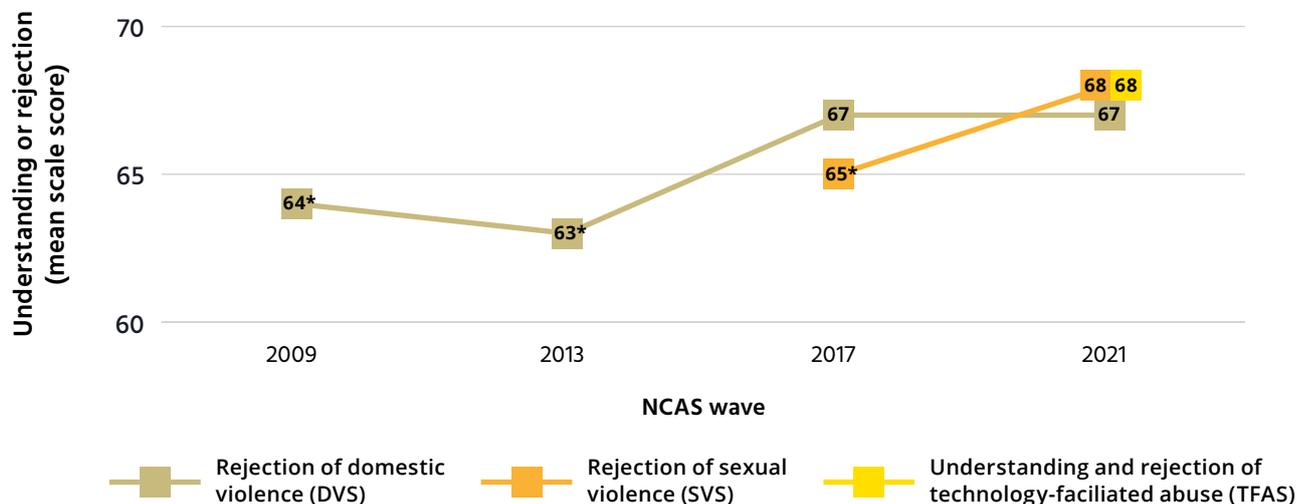
The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both Queensland and Australian respondents showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-46). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment

between 2017 and 2021 in Queensland and Australia (Figure 4-47). However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either Queensland or Australian respondents. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in Queensland nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>25</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Queensland and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

25 There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-46: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Queensland, 2009 to 2021

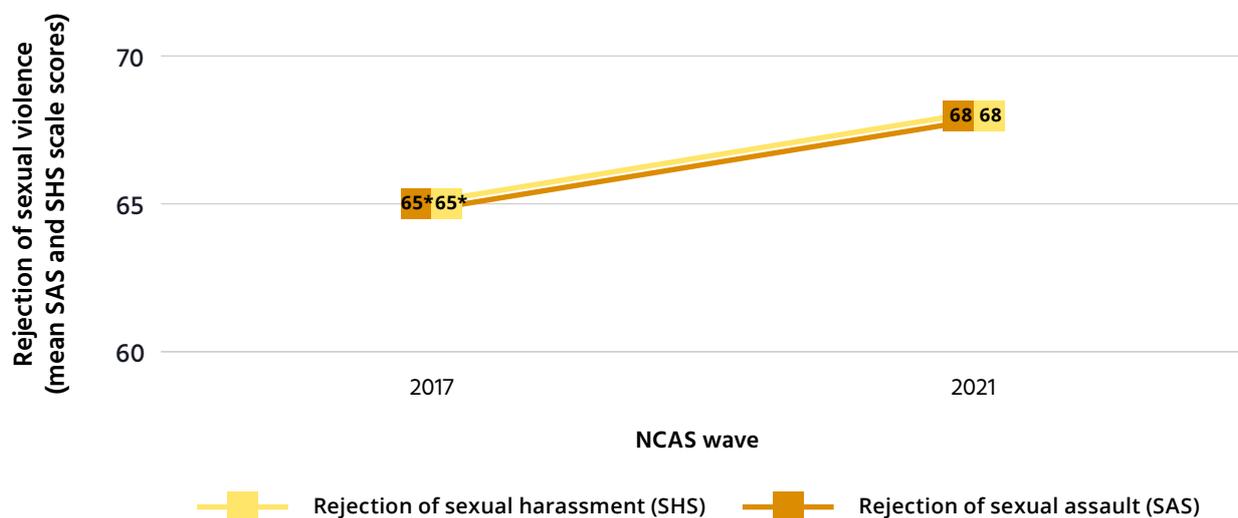


**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 709; 1,120; 2,949; 3,051
- SVS: na; na; 2,937; 3,042
- TFAS: na; na; na; 3,050.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-47: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Queensland, 2017 to 2021



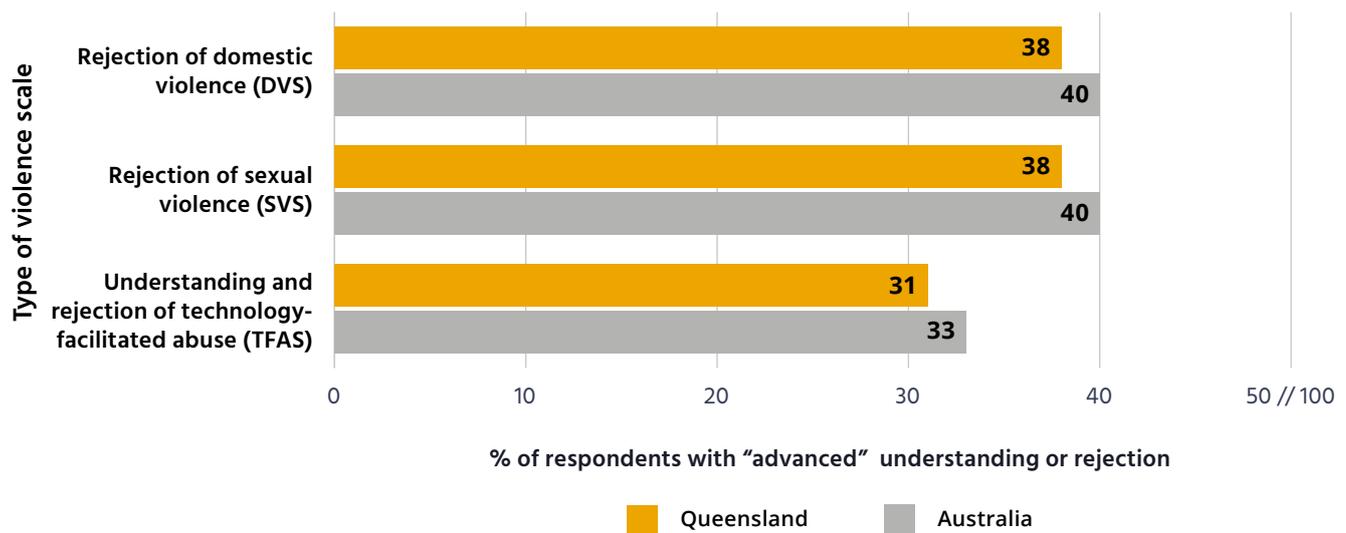
**Note:** *Ns* in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 741; 2,997
- SAS: 2,939; 3,012.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-48 presents the percentages of Queensland and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the SVS, DVS and TFAS in 2021. Queensland was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both Queensland and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-48: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Queensland and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *N*s for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- Queensland: 3,051; 3,042; 3,050
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between Queensland and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.5 Findings for South Australia

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: South Australia

**For all time periods examined**, South Australia and Australia showed significant improvement in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

### Between 2017 and 2021:

- rejection of violence against women significantly increased in South Australia, but plateaued in Australia despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of domestic violence plateaued in both South Australia and Australia despite an improvement over the longer term.

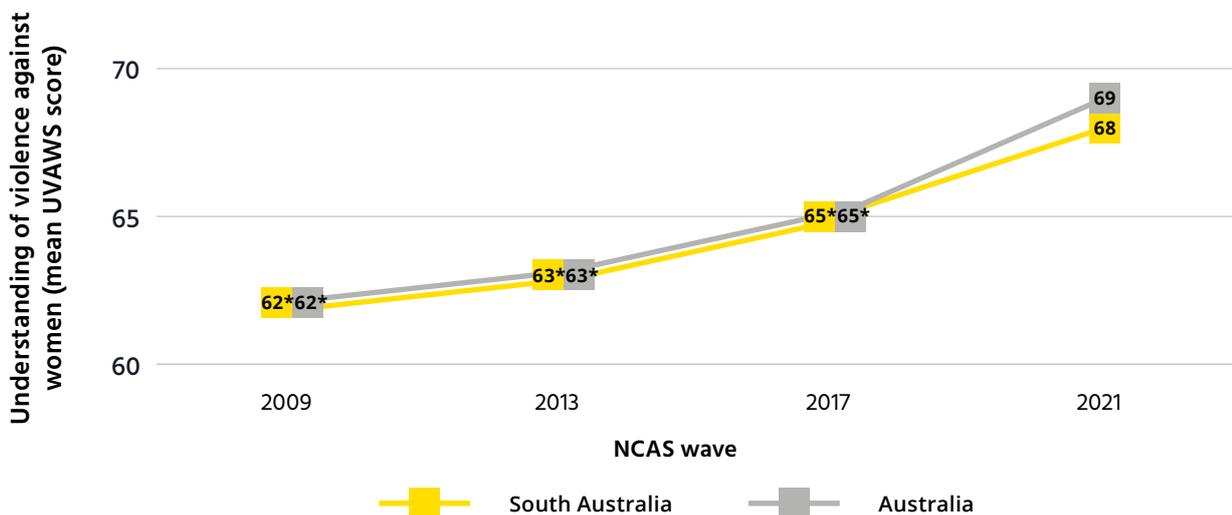
**In 2021**, South Australia and the rest of Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in both South Australia and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Conclusion:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in South Australia and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

South Australia, similar to Australia as a whole, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-49). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the South Australian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-49: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), South Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- South Australia: 1,176; 1,674; 867; 1,109
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

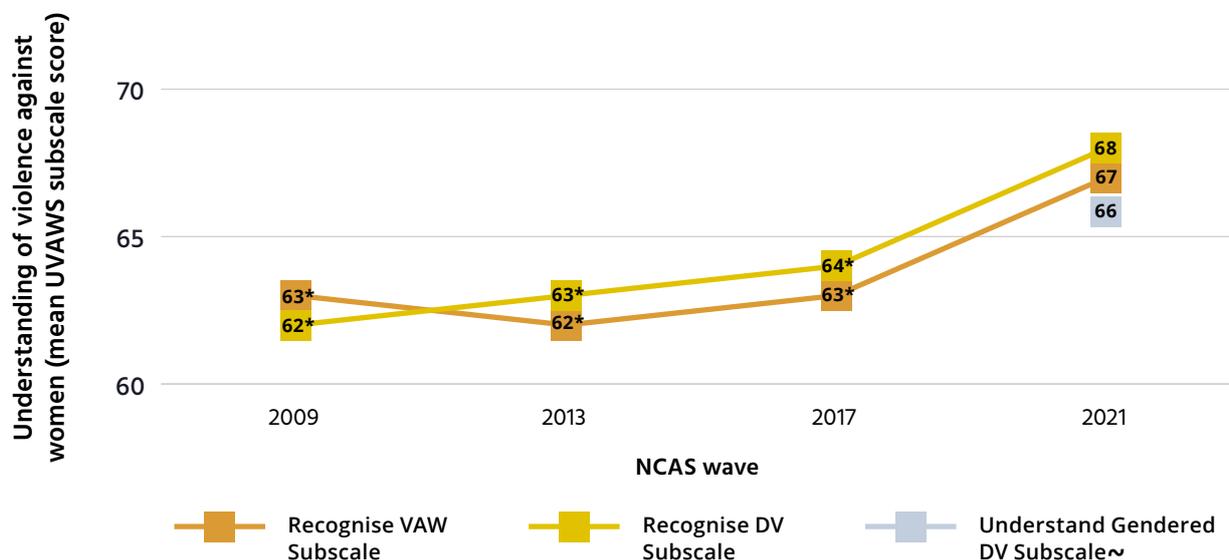
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-50 shows change over time for two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both South Australian respondents and Australian respondents. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures the understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because

one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between South Australia and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of South Australian (38%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-50: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), South Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 1,139; 1,615; 857; 1,107
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,179; 1,678; 1,687; 1,109
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 293.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

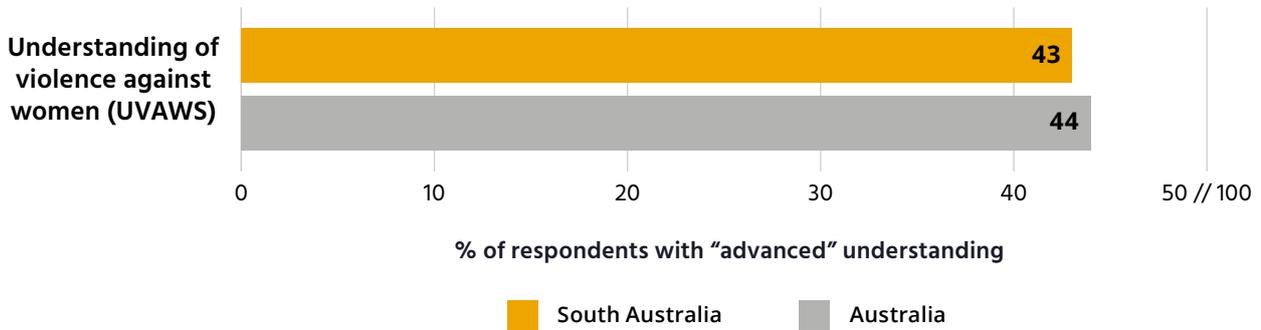
<sup>~</sup> Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-51 presents the percentages of South Australian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from South Australia (43%) and Australia (44%)

demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women. There was no significant difference between South Australia and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” understanding category.<sup>26</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both South Australia and Australia.

<sup>26</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared South Australia with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-51: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), South Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

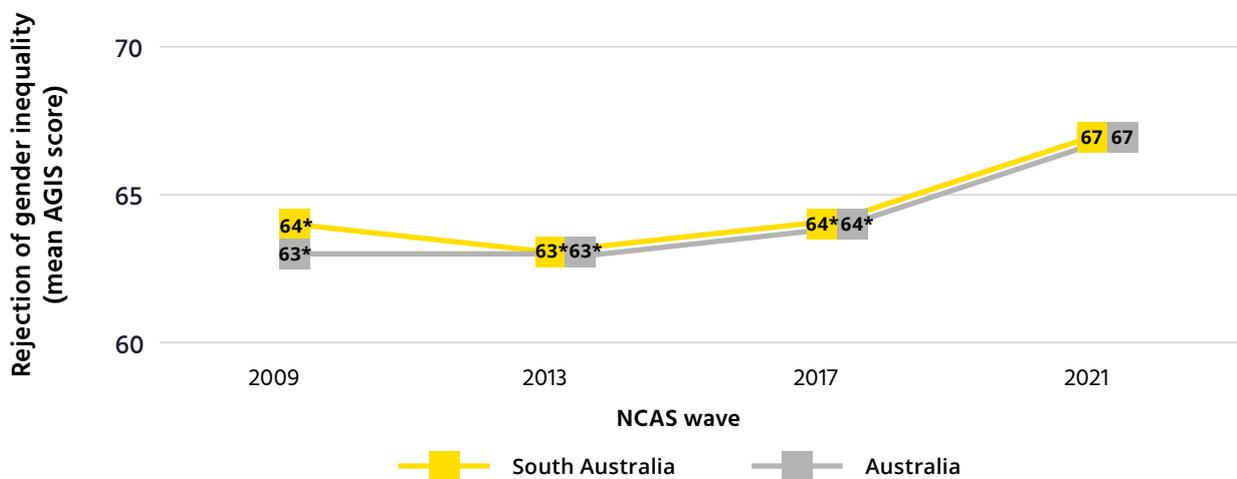
- South Australia: 1,109
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between South Australia and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

Similar to Australia, South Australia had a significantly higher mean AGIS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-52). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the South Australian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-52: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), South Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- South Australia: 1,029; 1,456; 1,728; 1,006
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

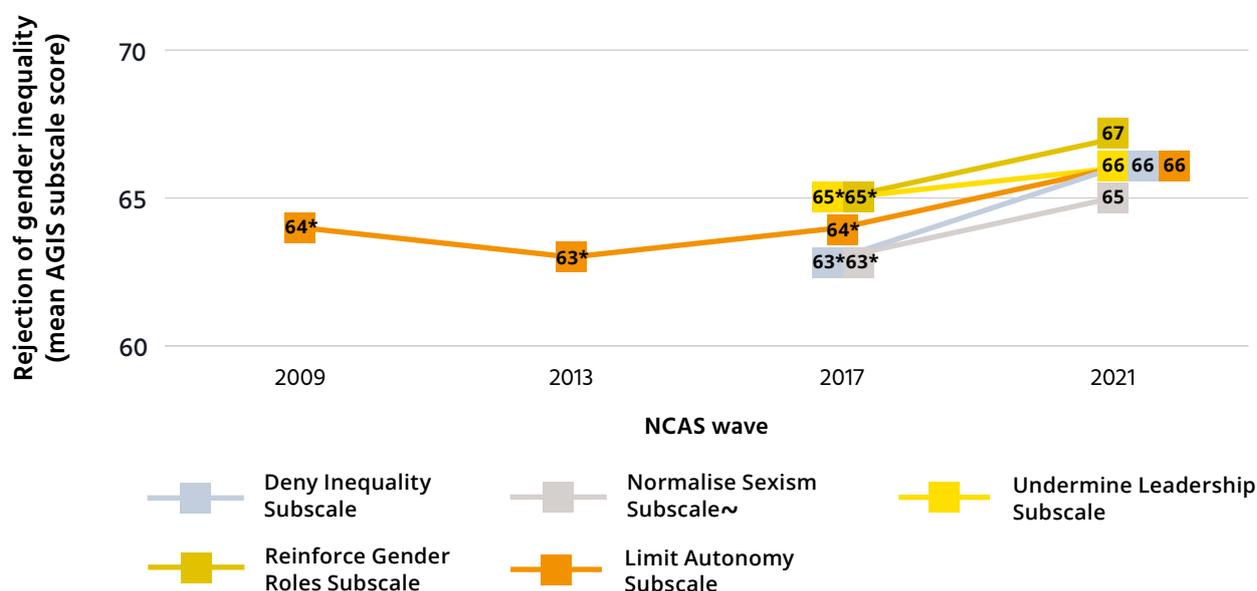
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-53 displays changes over time in mean scores on the five AGIS subscales for South Australia.<sup>27</sup> There were significant improvements over time on all five AGIS subscales for South Australia: the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Deny Inequality Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Undermine Leadership Subscale (in

2021 compared to 2017). Unlike South Australia, there was no significant improvement over time for Australia as a whole on the Undermine Leadership Subscale, indicating no change in attitudes that undermine women's leadership in work and public life.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between South Australia and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-53: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), South Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 1,572; 567
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 1,700; 433
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 1,716; 1,093
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 1,671; 581
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 1,104; 1,587; 1,650; 1,049.

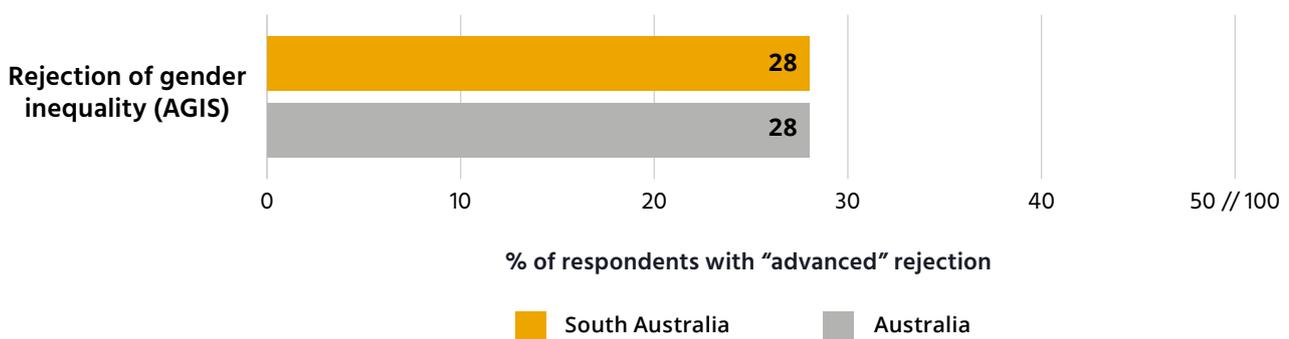
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

<sup>27</sup> Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-54 presents the percentages of South Australian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. More than a quarter (28%) of both South Australian and Australian respondents demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both South Australia and Australia.

Figure 4-54: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), South Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

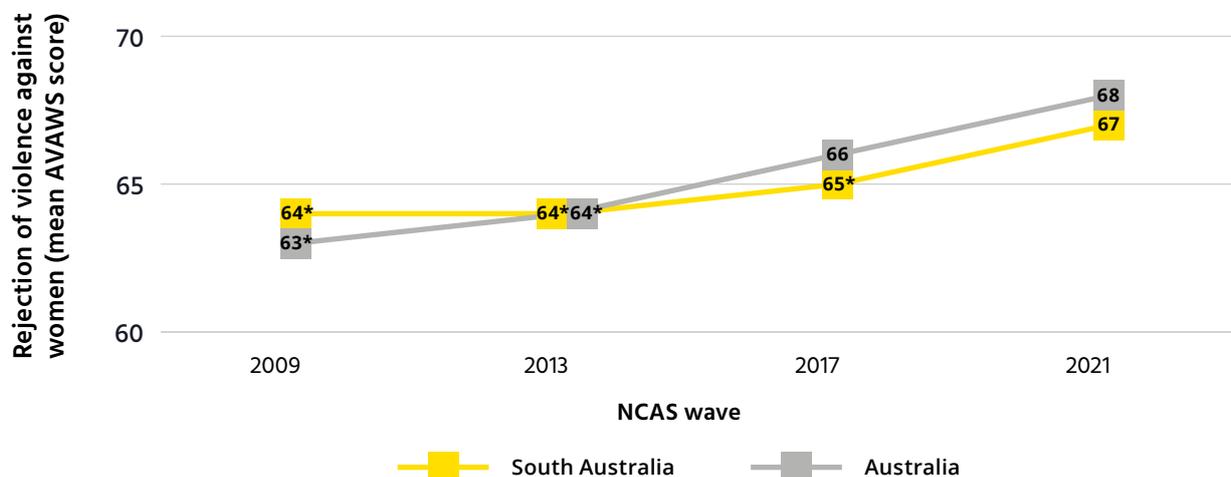
- South Australia: 1,106
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between South Australia and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both South Australian and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both the South Australian population and the Australian population overall (Figure 4-55). South Australia also showed a significant increase in attitudinal rejection of violence against women between 2017 and 2021, whereas Australia showed no significant increase over this period.

Figure 4-55: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), South Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- South Australia: 436; 496; 1,729; 1,109
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

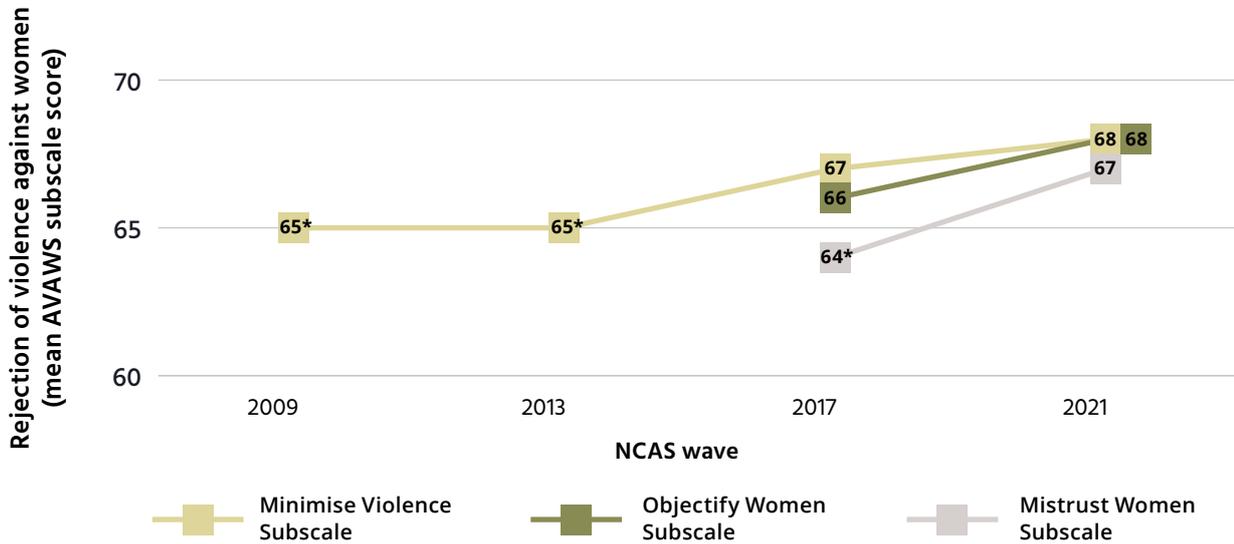
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-56 shows change over time in mean scores on the three AVAWS subscales for South Australia. There were significant improvements over time on two of the AVAWS subscales for South Australia. The Mistrust Women Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage (in 2021 compared to 2017). Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The

results for the Mistrust and Minimise subscales in South Australia were identical to those for Australia. There was no significant improvement in South Australia on the Objectify Women Subscale between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. However, unlike South Australia, Australia showed a significant improvement on this subscale over time.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between South Australia and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-56: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), South Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

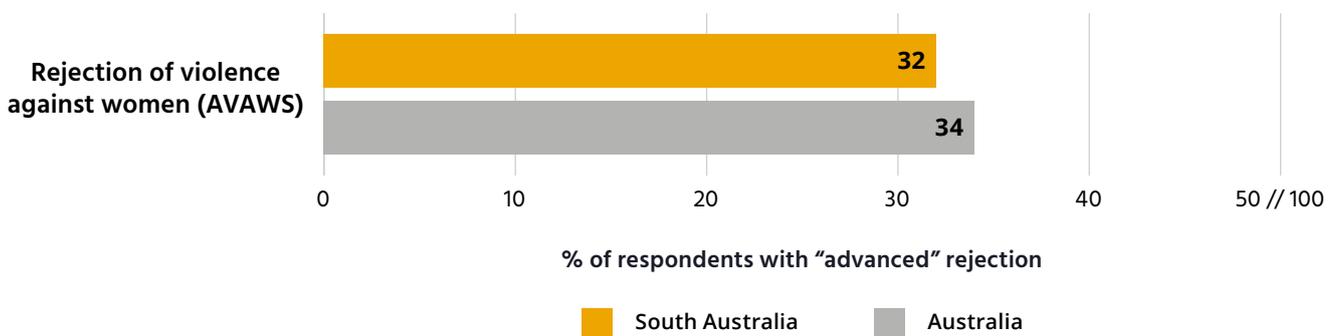
- Minimise Violence Subscale: 589; 1,607; 1,729; 1,110
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 1,724; 1,088
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 1,705; 1,104.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-57 presents the percentages of South Australian and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents in South Australia (32%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference

between South Australia and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category. As the majority of respondents were not categorised as "advanced", there is still substantial room to improve attitudes towards violence against women in both South Australia and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-57: "Advanced" rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), South Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

- South Australia: 1,109
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on "advanced" rejection between South Australia and the rest of Australia. "Advanced" attitudes refer to answering "strongly disagree" to at least 75% of the items in the scale and "somewhat disagree" to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

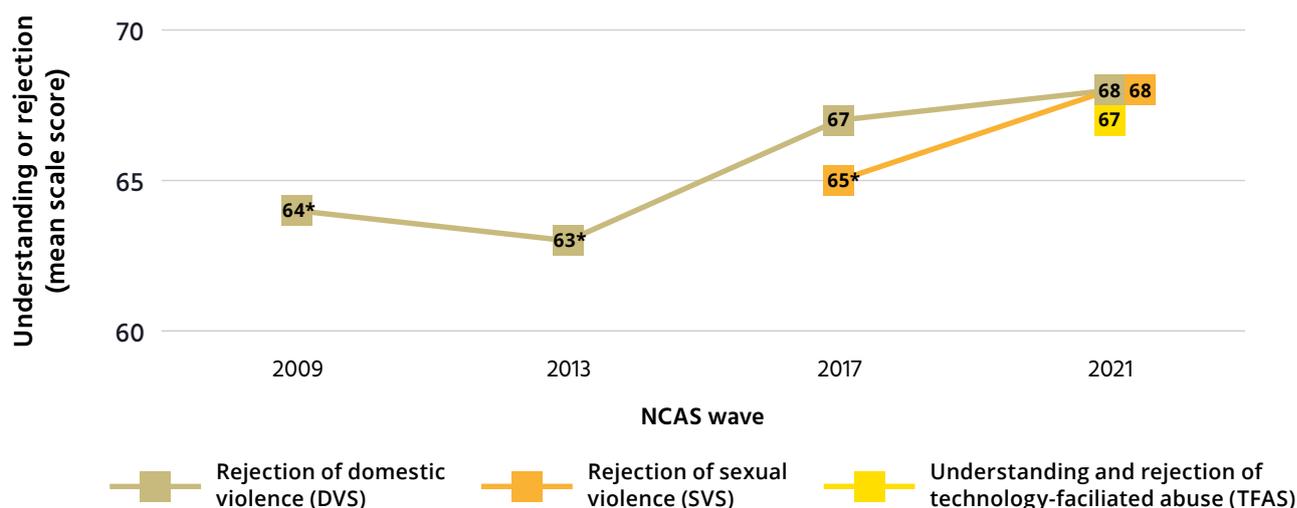
## Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both South Australian and Australian respondents showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-58). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment

between 2017 and 2021 in South Australia and Australia (Figure 4-59). However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either South Australia or Australia. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in South Australia nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>28</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between South Australia and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

Figure 4-58: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, South Australia, 2009 to 2021



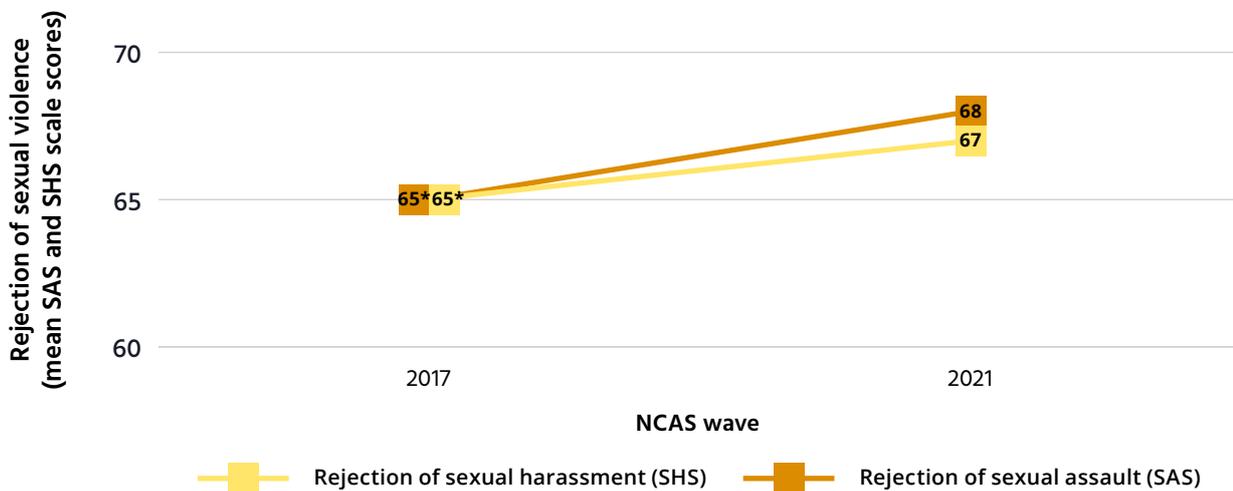
**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 579; 644; 1,729; 1,110
- SVS: na; na; 1,718; 1,106
- TFAS: na; na; na; 1,108.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

28 There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-59: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, South Australia, 2017 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2017 and 2021 were:

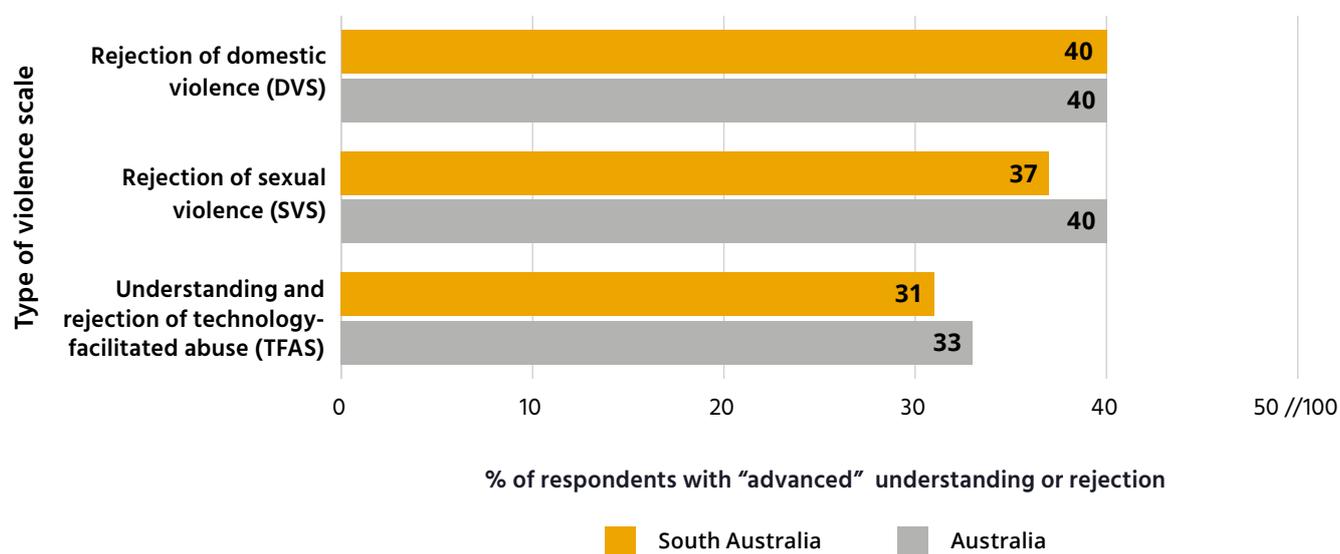
- SHS: 412; 1,092
- SAS: 1,719; 1,099.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-60 presents the percentages of South Australian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. South Australia was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced”

understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both South Australia and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-60: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), South Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- South Australia: 1,110; 1,106; 1,108
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between South Australia and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.6 Findings for Tasmania

### TASMANIA RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: Tasmania

**For all time periods examined**, Tasmania and Australia showed significant improvements in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

### Between 2017 and 2021:

- rejection of violence against women significantly increased in Tasmania, but plateaued in Australia despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of domestic violence plateaued in both Tasmania and Australia, despite an improvement over the longer term.

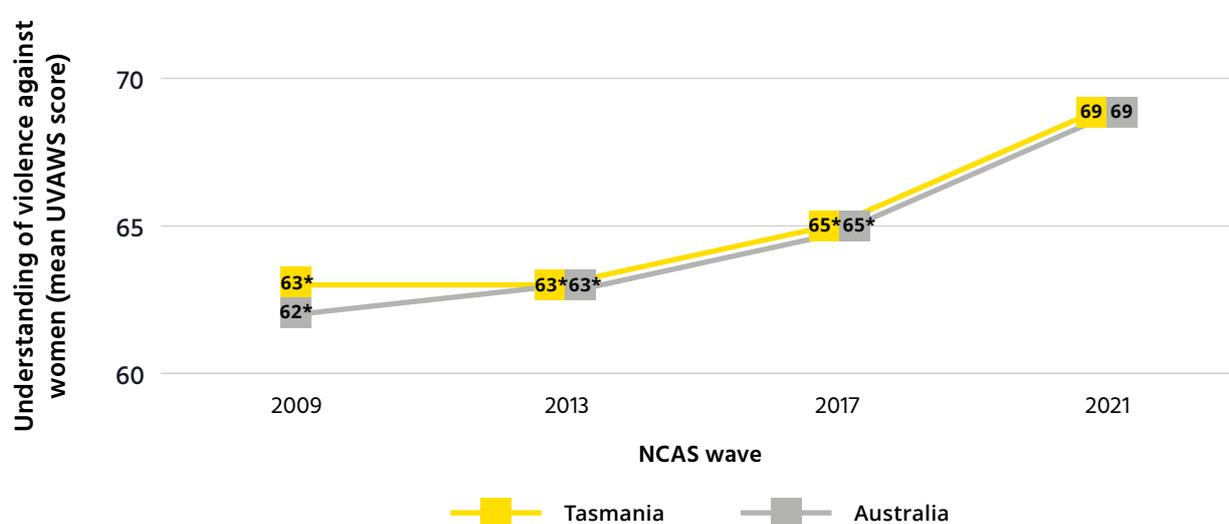
**In 2021**, Tasmania and Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in Tasmania and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in Tasmania and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

Tasmania, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-61). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the Tasmanian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-61: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Tasmania and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

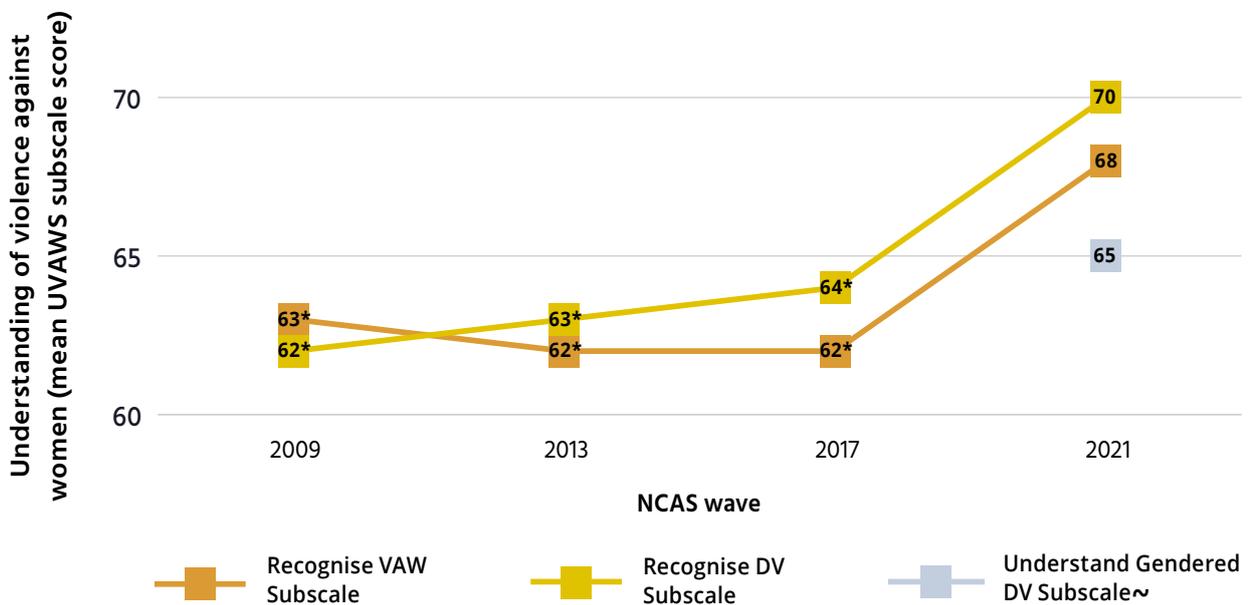
- Tasmania: 1,001; 1,134; 616; 1,000
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-62 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both Tasmania and Australia. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of Tasmanian (35%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-62: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Tasmania, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 975; 1,102; 613; 997
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,004; 1,138; 1,199; 1,000
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 244.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

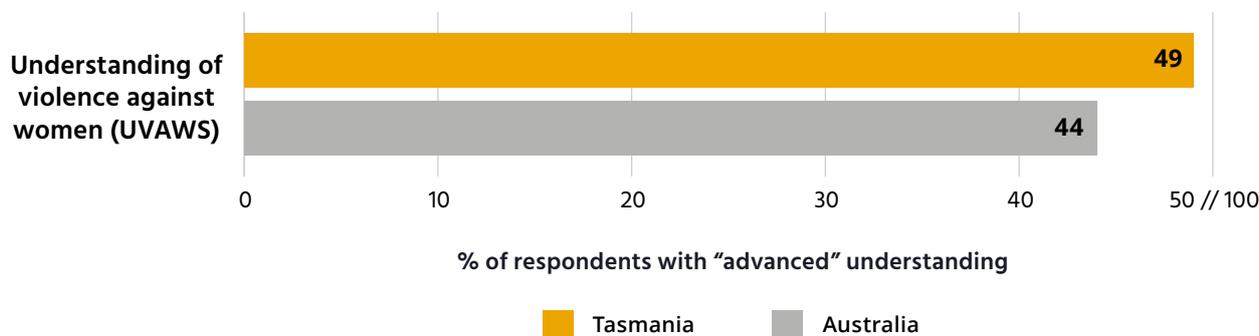
~ Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what "advanced" understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-63 presents the percentages of Tasmanian and Australian respondents in the "advanced" category for the UVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from Tasmania

(49%) and Australia (44%) demonstrated "advanced" understanding of violence against women. There was no significant difference between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the "advanced" understanding category.<sup>29</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both Tasmania and Australia.

<sup>29</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared Tasmania with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-63: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Tasmania and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

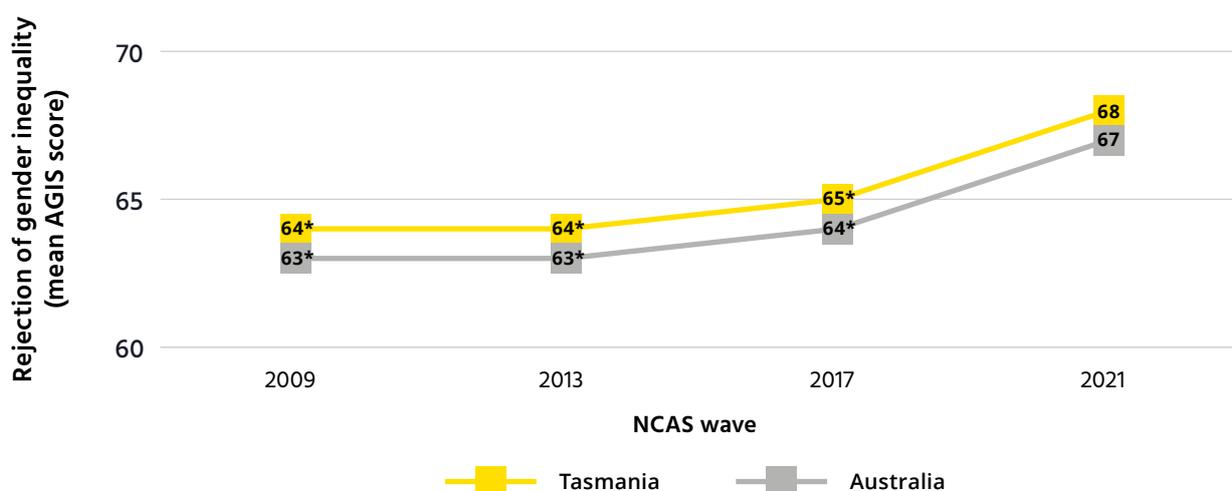
- Tasmania: 1,000
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between Tasmania and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

Similar to Australia, Tasmania had a significantly higher mean AGIS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-64). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the Tasmanian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-64: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Tasmania and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Tasmania: 891; 968; 1,225; 999
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

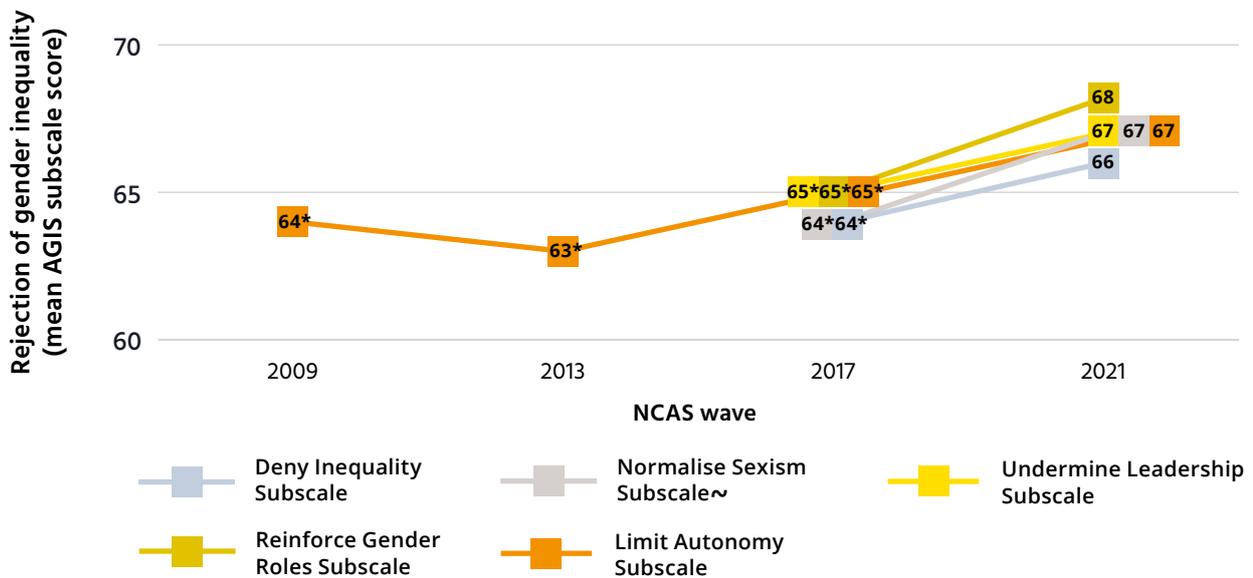
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-65 displays changes over time in mean scores on the five AGIS subscales for Tasmania.<sup>30</sup> There were significant improvements over time on all five AGIS subscales for Tasmania: the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Deny Inequality Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Undermine Leadership Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). These findings indicate higher rejection of attitudes that limit women’s personal autonomy in relationships; attitudes that

downplay sexism; attitudes that deny gender inequality experiences; attitudes that reinforce traditional, rigid gender roles and expectations; and attitudes that undermine women’s leadership in work and public life. Australia showed significant improvement over time on four of the five AGIS subscales, but unlike Tasmania, did not also show significant improvement over time on the Undermine Leadership Subscale.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-65: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Tasmania, 2009 to 2021



Note: “na” below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 1,110; 492
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 1,201; 290
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 1,216; 989
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 1,190; 499
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 958; 1,048; 1,153; 966.

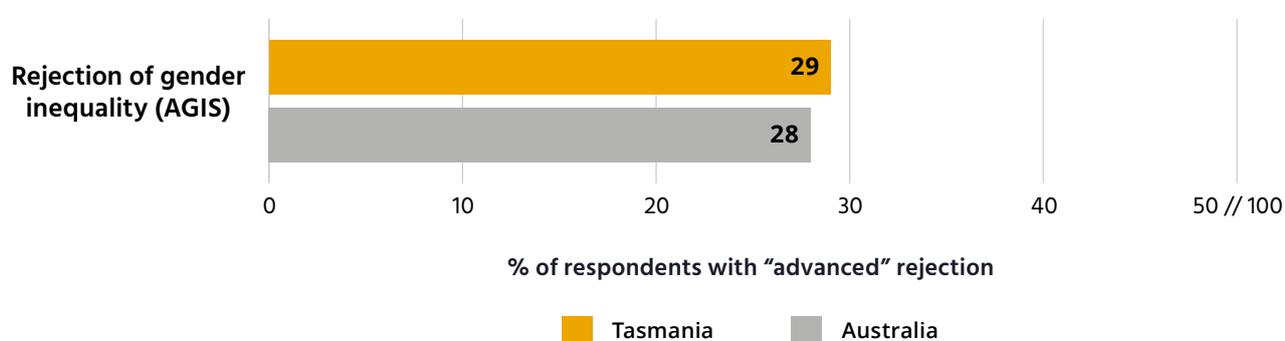
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

30 Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-66 presents the percentages of Tasmanian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from Tasmania (29%) and Australia (28%) demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. There was no significant difference between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both Tasmania and Australia.

Figure 4-66: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Tasmania and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

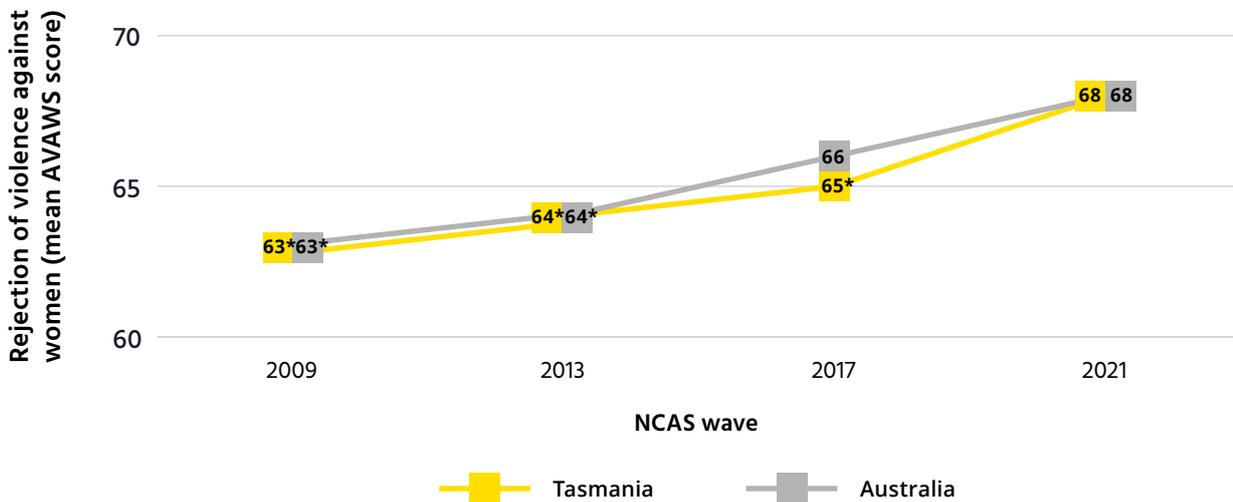
- Tasmania: 999
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Tasmania and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both Tasmanian and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both the Tasmanian population and the Australian population overall (Figure 4-67). Tasmania also showed a significant increase in attitudinal rejection of violence against women between 2017 and 2021, whereas Australia showed no significant increase over this period.

Figure 4-67: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Tasmania and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Tasmania: 374; 334; 1,226; 1,000
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

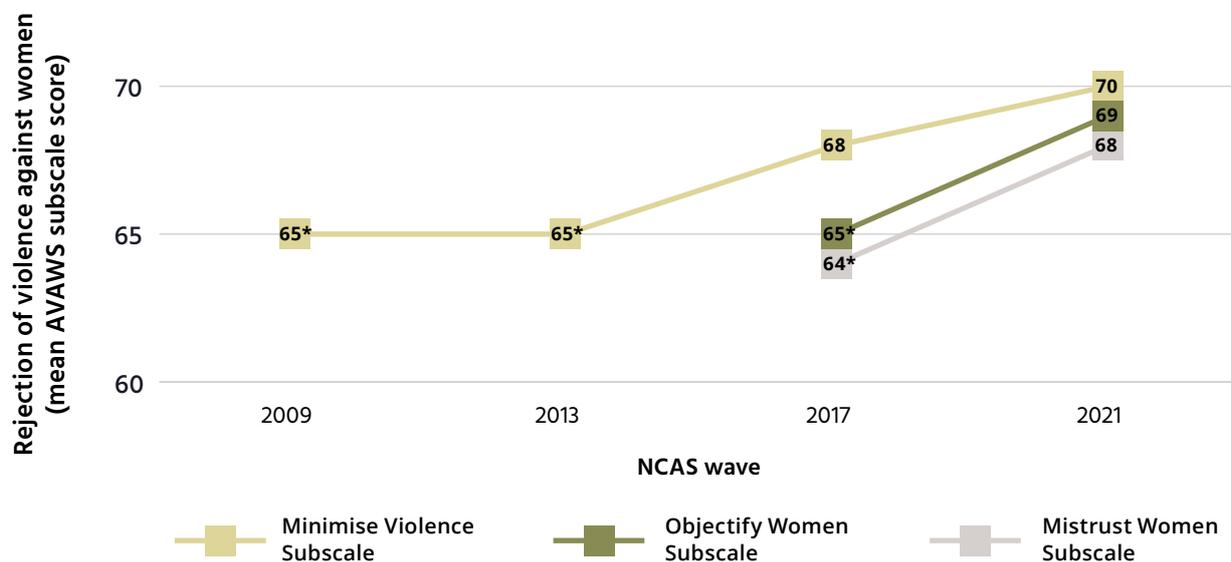
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-68 shows change over time in mean scores on the three AVAWS subscales for Tasmania. There were significant improvements over time on all three of the AVAWS subscales for Tasmania. The Mistrust Women and Objectify Women subscales showed improvement in 2021 compared to 2017, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage and attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that

downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the three AVAWS subscales in Tasmania were identical to those for Australia.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-68: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Tasmania, 2009 to 2021



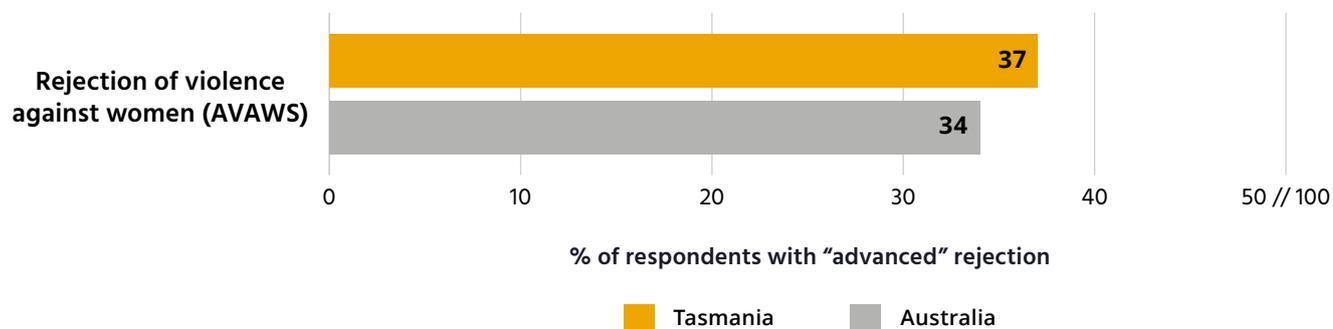
**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Minimise Violence Subscale: 509; 1,098; 1,226; 1,000
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 1,220; 984
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 1,196; 992.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-69 presents the percentages of Tasmanian and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from Tasmania (37%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between Tasmania and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category. As the majority of respondents were not categorised as "advanced", there is still substantial room to improve attitudes towards violence against women in both Tasmania and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-69: “Advanced” rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Tasmania and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

- Tasmania: 1,000
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Tasmania and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

### Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both Tasmanian and Australian respondents showed a significant increase in the rejection of sexual violence since 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-70). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and

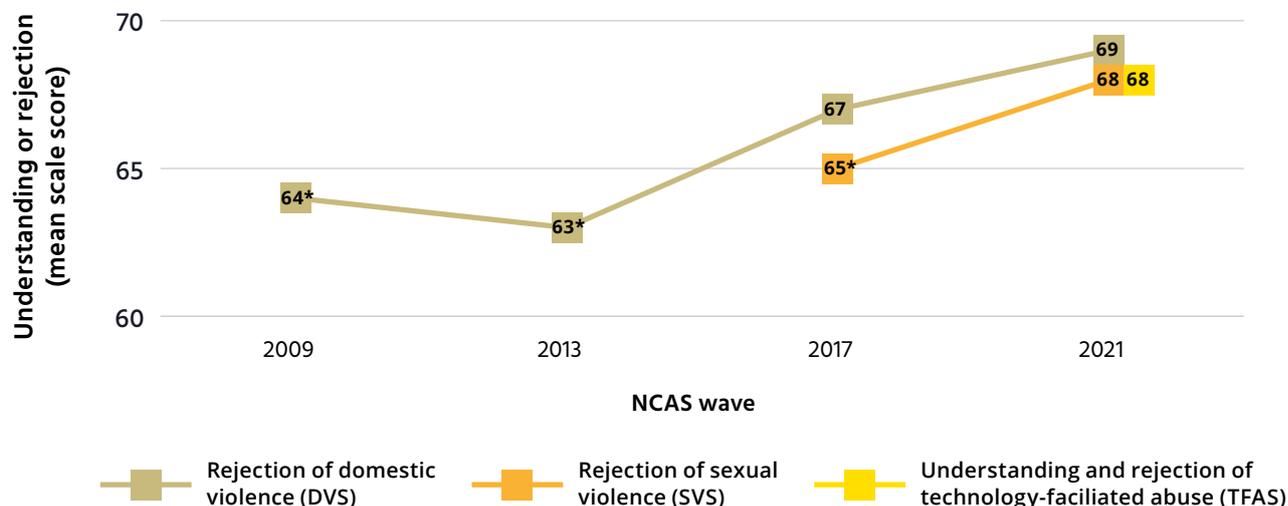
sexual harassment between 2017 and 2021 in Tasmania and Australia (Figure 4-71).<sup>31</sup> However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either Tasmania or Australia. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in Tasmania nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>32</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Tasmania and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

<sup>31</sup> The change over time results for the SHS in Tasmania should be treated as indicative only because they are based on relatively small numbers for 2017.

<sup>32</sup> There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-70: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Tasmania, 2009 to 2021

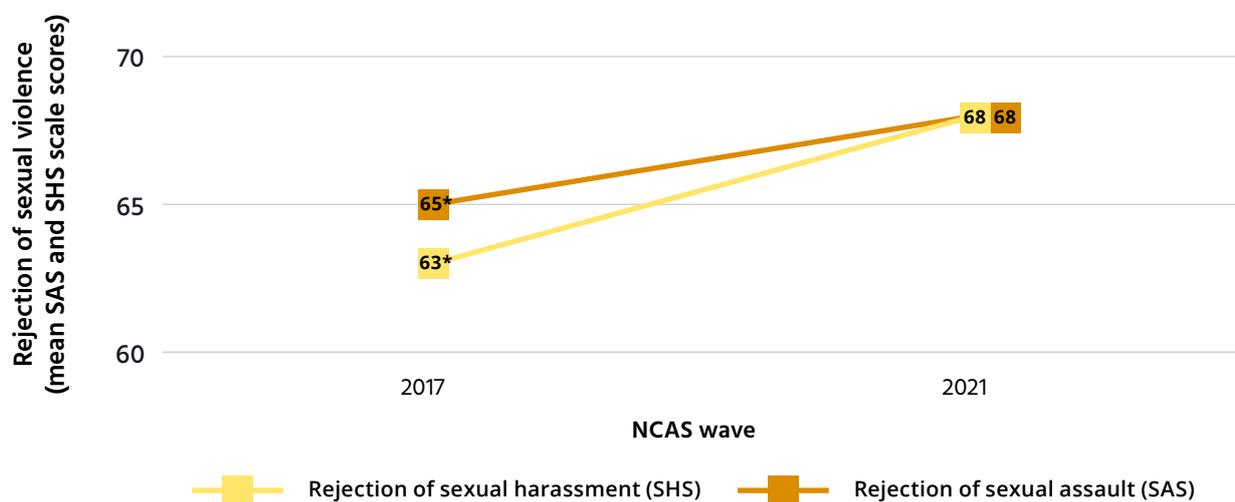


**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 500; 437; 1,226; 1,000
- SVS: na; na; 1,215; 997
- TFAS: na; na; na; 998.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-71: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Tasmania, 2017 to 2021



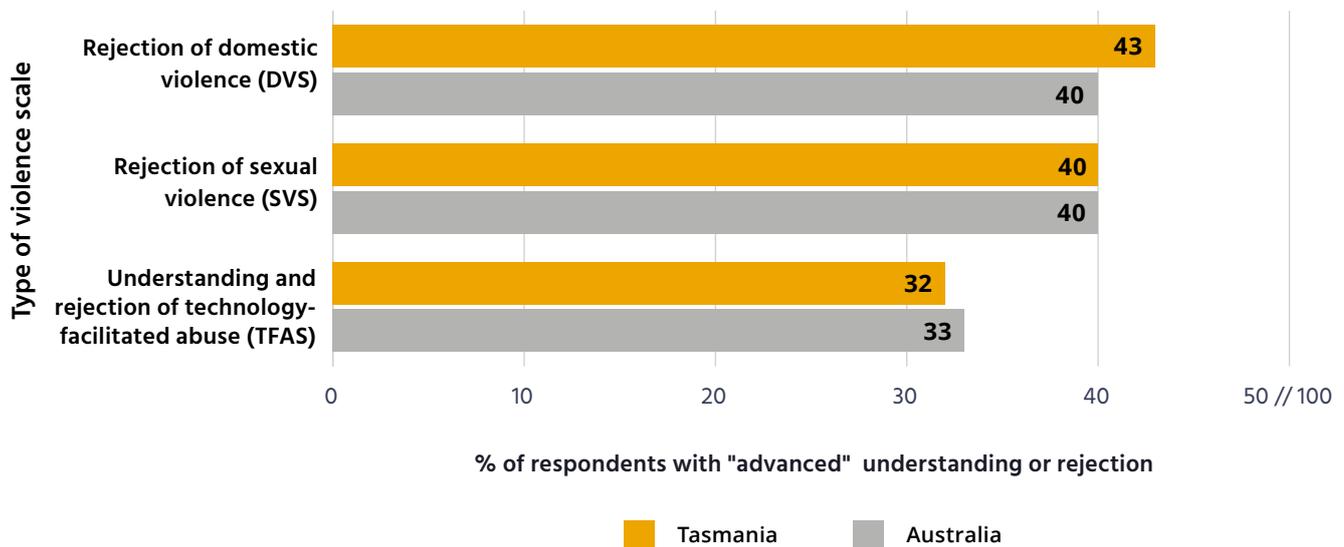
**Note:** *Ns* in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 295; 981
- SAS: 1,218; 987.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-72 presents the percentages of Tasmanian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. Tasmania was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both Tasmania and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-72: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Tasmania and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- Tasmania: 1,000; 997; 998
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between Tasmania and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.7 Findings for Victoria

### VICTORIA RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: Victoria

**For all time periods examined**, Victoria and Australia significantly improved in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**Between 2017 and 2021**, rejection of violence against women and domestic violence plateaued in both Victoria and Australia despite an improvement over the longer term.

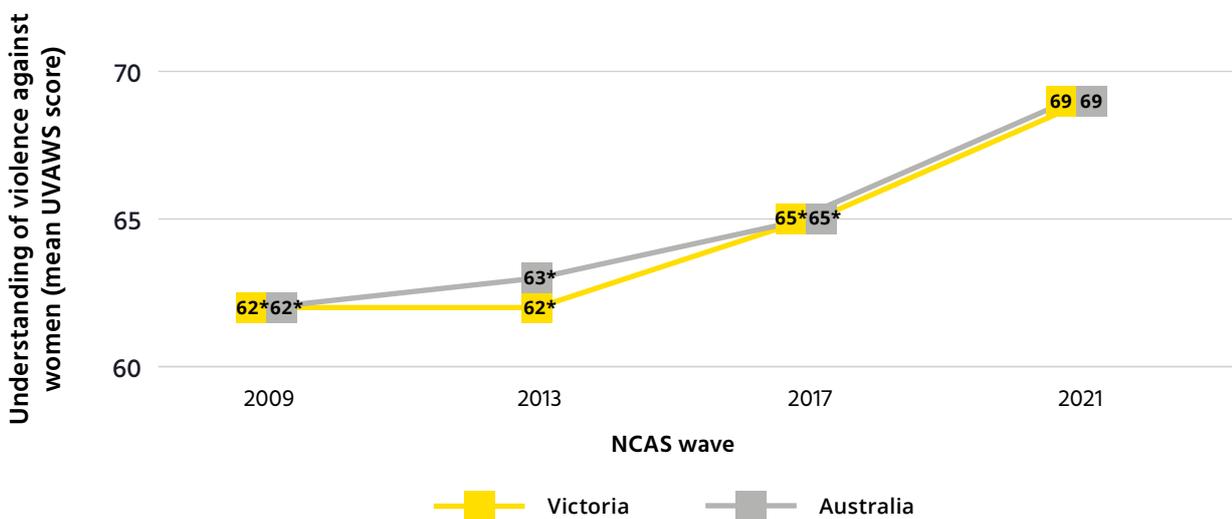
**In 2021**, Victoria and the rest of Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in Victoria and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in Victoria and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

Victoria, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-73). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the Victorian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-73: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Victoria and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

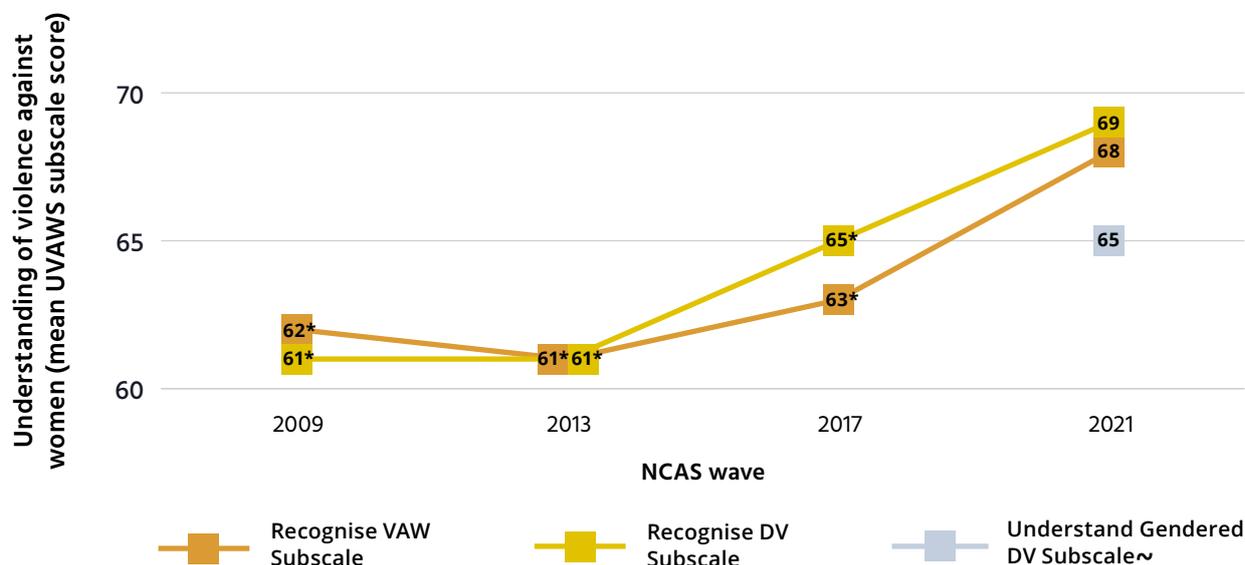
- Victoria: 1,523; 3,766; 1,673; 6,141
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-74 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean scores for both the Recognise VAW and Recognise DV subscales were significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for both Victorian respondents and Australian respondents. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures the understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Victoria and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of Victorian (39%) and Australian (41%) respondents thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-74: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Victoria, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 1,470; 3,662; 1,646; 6,130
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,527; 3,375; 3,347; 6,140
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 1,534.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

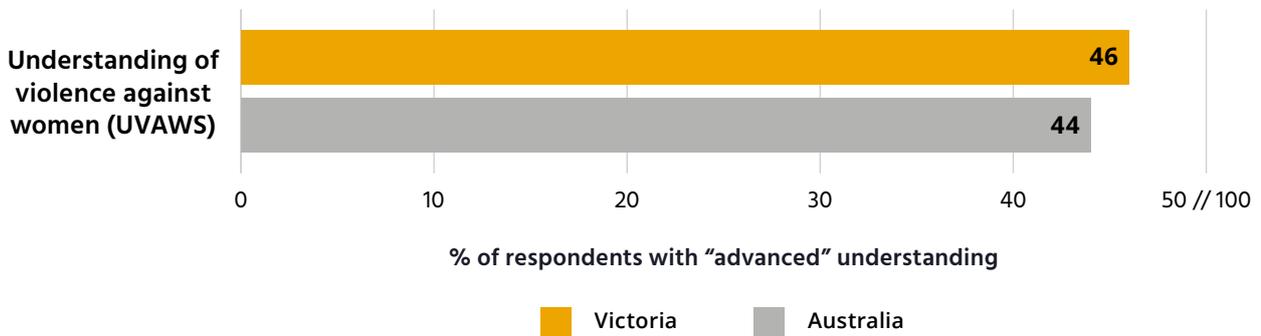
<sup>~</sup> Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-75 presents the percentages of Victorian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents

from Victoria (46%) and Australia (44%) demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women. There was no significant difference between Victoria and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” understanding category.<sup>33</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in both Victoria and Australia.

<sup>33</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared Victoria with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-75: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Victoria and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2021 were:

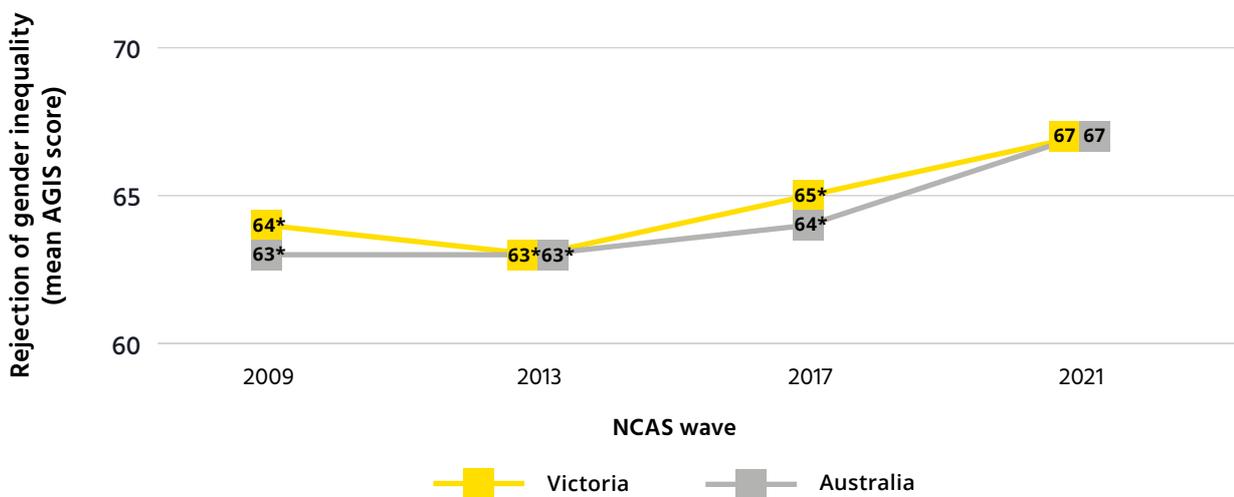
- Victoria: 6,141
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between Victoria and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

For both Victoria and Australia, the mean AGIS score was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-76). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the Victorian population and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-76: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Victoria and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Victoria: 1,348; 3,330; 3,408; 6,123
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

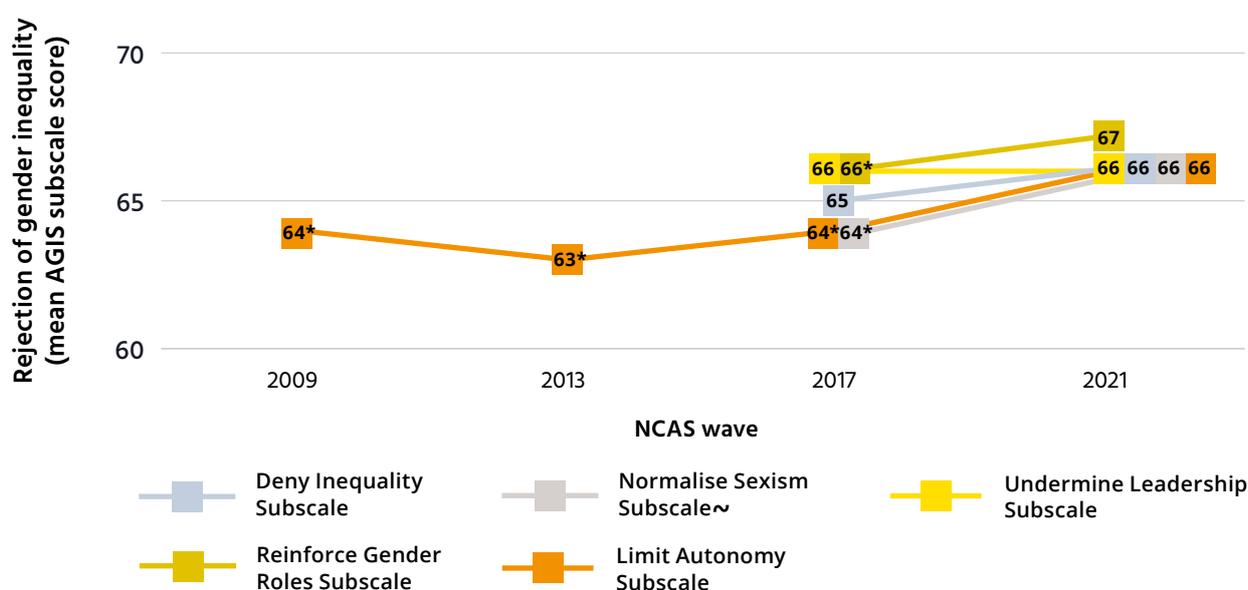
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-77 displays changes over time for the five AGIS subscales for Victoria.<sup>34</sup> There were significant improvements over time on three of the AGIS subscales for Victoria: the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). Australia as a whole similarly showed significant improvement over time on these three subscales. These findings indicate increased rejection in both Victoria and Australia of attitudes that limit women's autonomy in intimate relationships; attitudes that downplay sexism; and attitudes that reinforce traditional, rigid gender roles

and expectations. There was no significant improvement in Victoria on the other two AGIS subscales between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that undermine women's leadership in work and public life and attitudes that deny gender inequality experiences. However, unlike Victoria, Australia showed a significant improvement over time on one of these two subscales, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that deny gender inequality experiences.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Victoria and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-77: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Victoria, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 1,068; 493
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 1,169; 291
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 1,184; 986
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 1,145; 503
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 945; 1,107; 1,130; 969.

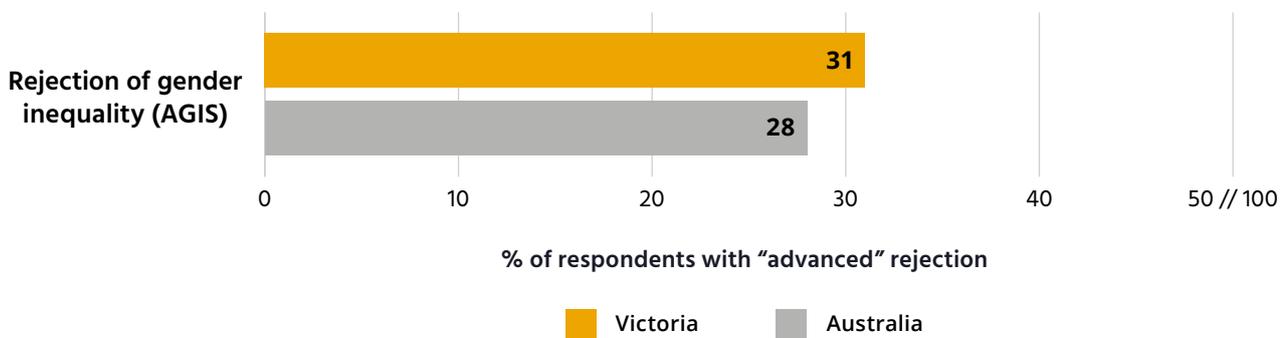
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-78 presents the percentages of Victorian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from Victoria (31%) and Australia (28%) demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. There was no significant difference between Victoria and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is considerable room to further improve community attitudes towards gender inequality in both Victoria and Australia.

Figure 4-78: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Victoria and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *N*s in 2021 were:

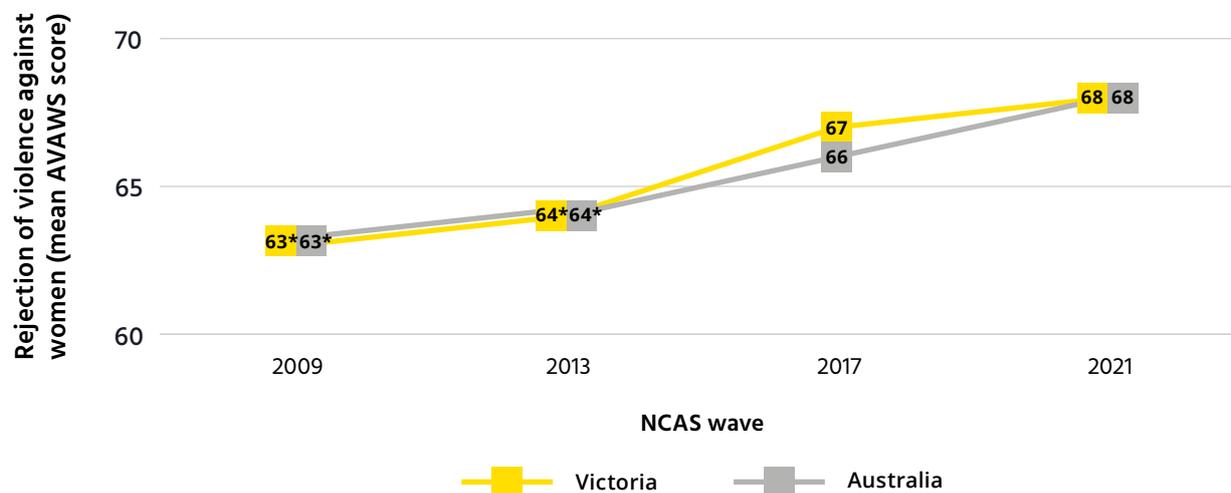
- Victoria: 6,123
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Victoria and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both Victorian and Australian respondents was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both Victoria and Australia (Figure 4-79). However, like the rest of Australia, no significant increase in AVAWS scores was observed in Victoria between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-79: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Victoria and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Victoria: 569; 1,183; 3,409; 6,143.
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

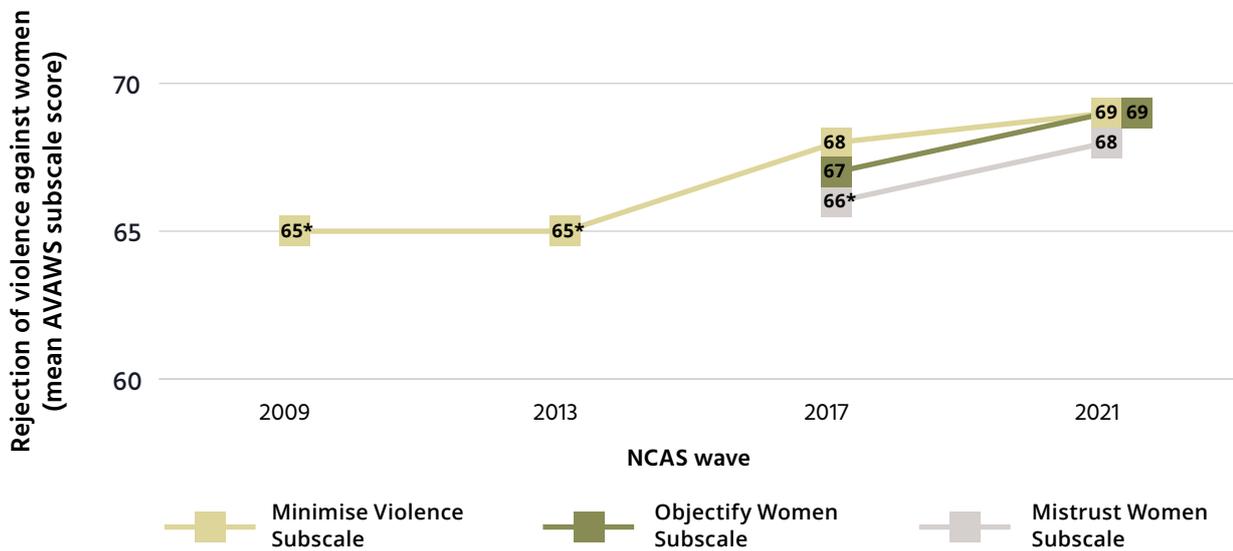
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-80 shows change over time on the three AVAWS subscales for Victoria. There were significant improvements over time on two of the AVAWS subscales for Victoria. The Mistrust Women Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage (in 2021 compared to 2017). Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that downplay the seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the Mistrust and

Minimise subscales in Victoria were identical to those for Australia. There was no significant improvement in Victoria on the Objectify Women Subscale between 2017 and 2021, indicating no change in attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. However, unlike Victoria, Australia showed a significant improvement on this subscale over time.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Victoria and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-80: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Victoria, 2009 to 2021



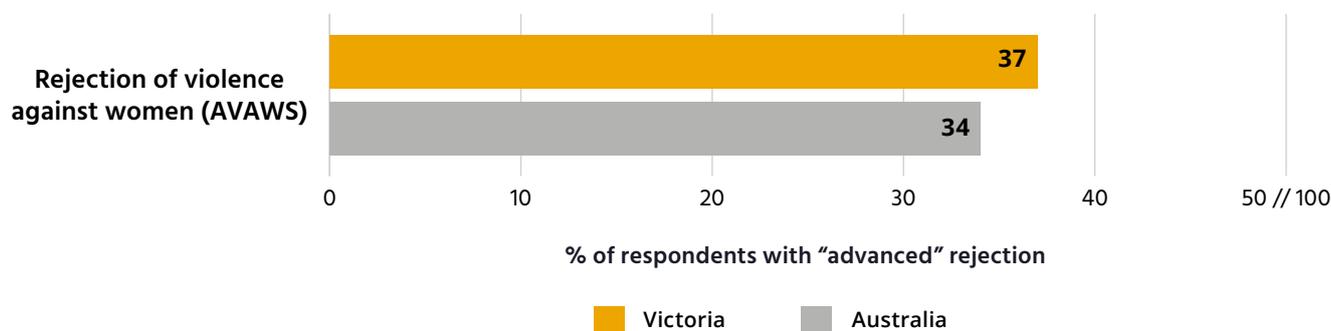
**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Minimise Violence Subscale: 784; 3,652; 3,409; 6,142
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 3,393; 6,033
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 3,365; 6,107.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-81 presents the percentages of Victorian and Australian respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. A similar proportion of respondents from Victoria (37%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between Victoria and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in this "advanced" attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is still substantial room for improvement in community attitudes towards violence against women in both Victoria and Australia.

Figure 4-81: “Advanced” rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Victoria and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

- Victoria: 6,143
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between Victoria and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

### Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

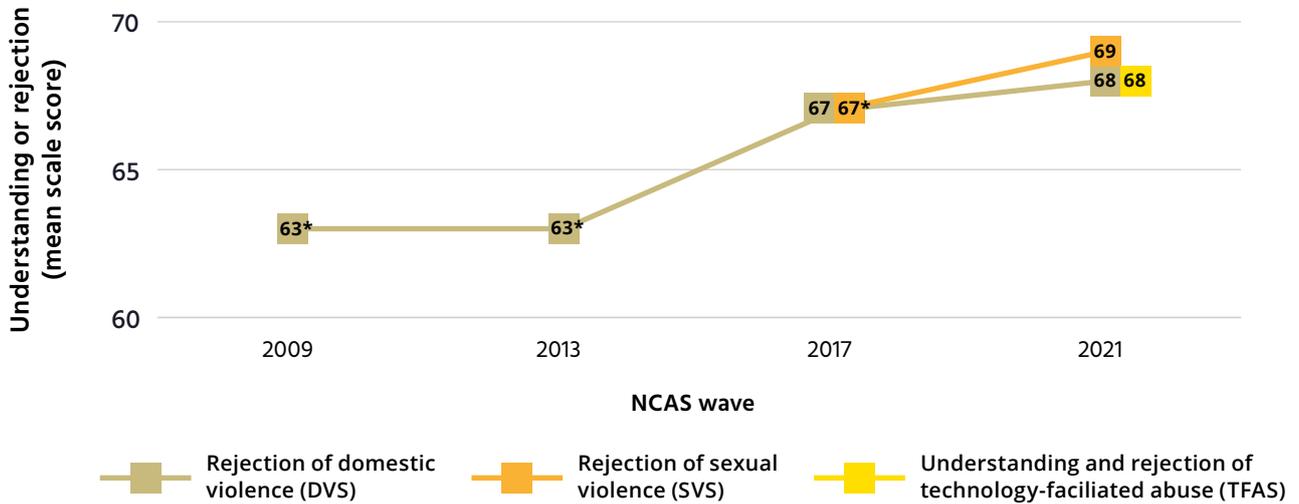
The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, both Victorian and Australian respondents showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-82). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection of sexual assault and sexual harassment

between 2017 and 2021 in Victoria and Australia (Figure 4-83). However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference in the rejection of domestic violence between 2017 and 2021 for either Victorian or Australian respondents. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in Victoria nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>35</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between Victoria and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

35 There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-82: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Victoria, 2009 to 2021

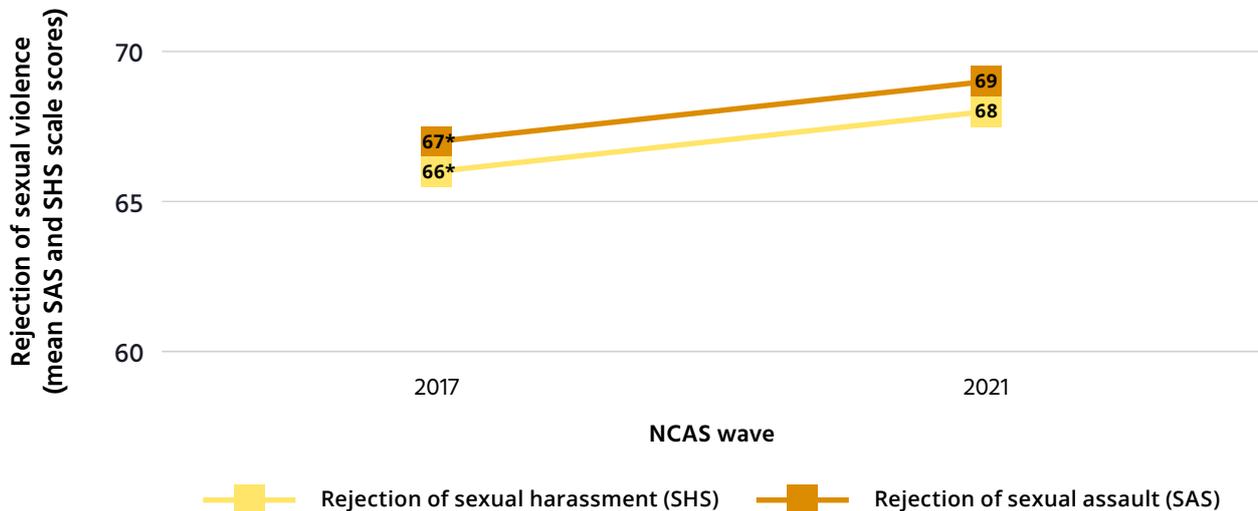


**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 767; 1,458; 3,409; 6,140
- SVS: na; na; 3,386; 6,126
- TFAS: na; na; na; 6,133.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-83: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Victoria, 2017 to 2021



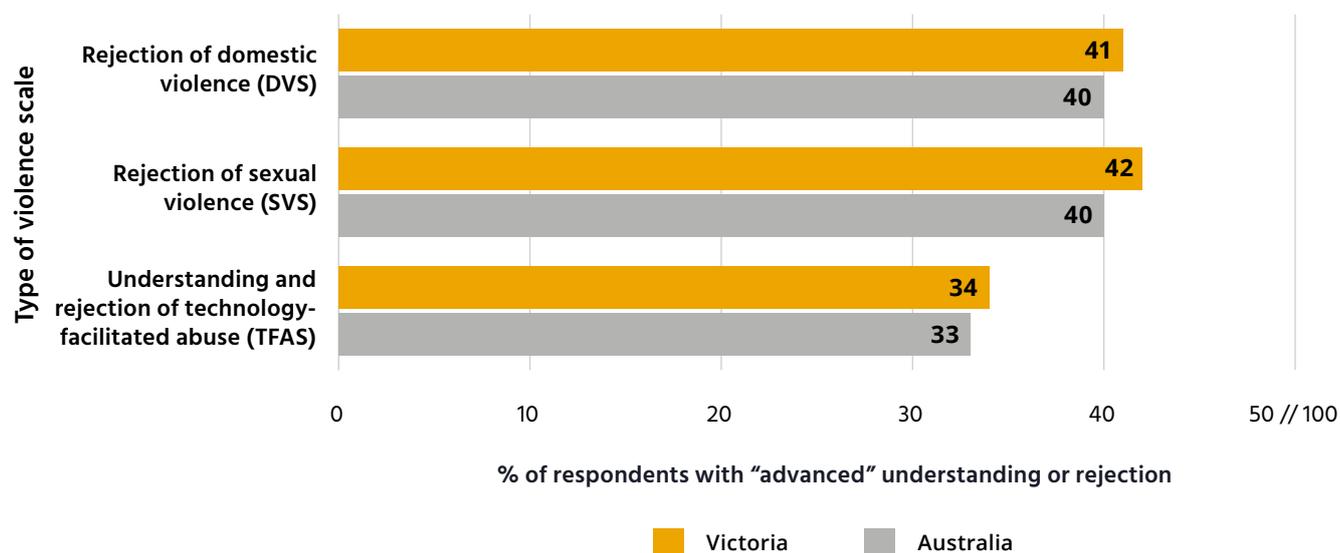
**Note:** *Ns* in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 901; 6,041
- SAS: 3,390; 6,064.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-84 presents the percentages of Victorian and Australian respondents in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. Victoria was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both Victoria and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-84: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Victoria and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- Victoria: 6,140; 6,126; 6,133
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between Victoria and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.

## 4.8 Findings for Western Australia (WA)

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA RESULTS SUMMARY

## Jurisdiction snapshot: Western Australia (WA)

**For all time periods examined**, WA and Australia significantly improved in their understanding of violence against women and in their rejection of gender inequality, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

### Between 2017 and 2021:

- rejection of violence against women significantly increased in WA, but plateaued in Australia despite an improvement over the longer term
- rejection of domestic violence plateaued in both WA and Australia, despite an improvement over the longer term.

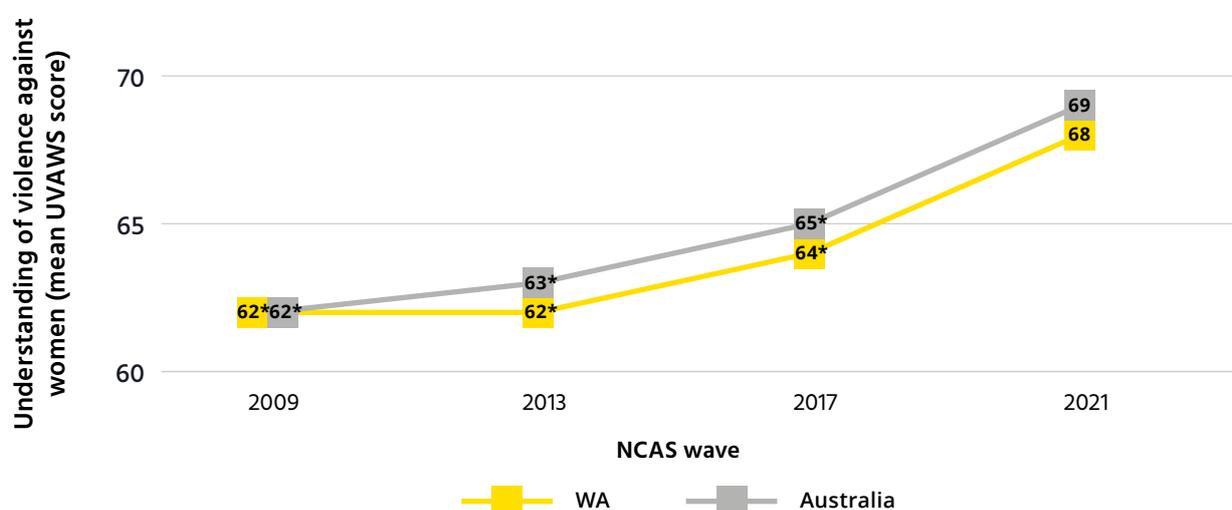
**In 2021**, WA and the rest of Australia had similar proportions of respondents with “advanced” understanding and rejection of violence against women and technology-facilitated abuse, and “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, domestic violence and sexual violence. However, most respondents in WA and Australia did not fall into these “advanced” categories.

**Key point:** There is room to further improve understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women in WA and across Australia.

## Understanding of violence against women: UVAWS and its subscales

WA, similar to Australia, had a significantly higher mean UVAWS score in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-85). These findings indicate a significant increase over time in the understanding of violence against women for both the population of WA and the Australian population overall.

Figure 4-85: Understanding of violence against women over time (UVAWS), Western Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

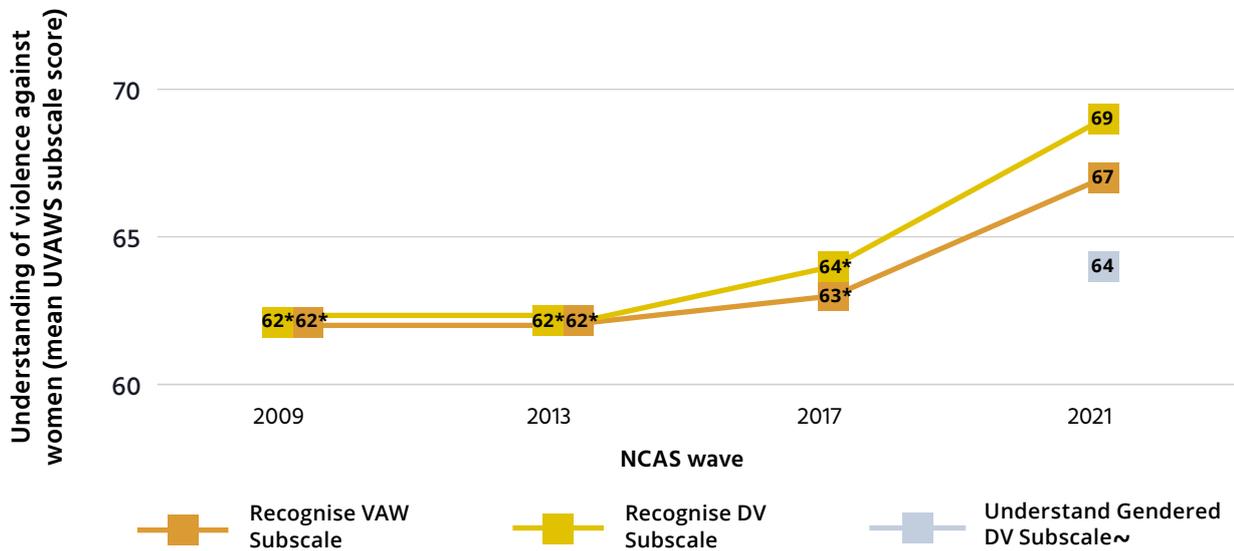
- WA: 1,194; 1,918; 985; 1,456
- Australia: 10,033; 17,402; 8,606; 19,096.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-86 shows change over time in mean scores on two of the three UVAWS subscales. The mean score for both the Recognise VAW Subscale and Recognise DV Subscale was significantly higher in 2021 compared to all previous waves of the survey for respondents from both WA and Australia. These results indicate an improvement over time, including an improvement since 2017, in people's understanding of the different behaviours that constitute domestic violence and violence against women more broadly. Change over time for the remaining UVAWS subscale, which measures the understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence, is not reported because one of the three items in this subscale was substantially revised in 2021.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between WA and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the UVAWS subscales. Concerningly, in 2021, according to the Understand Gendered DV Subscale, a substantial proportion of respondents from WA (44%) and Australia (41%) thought that domestic violence is perpetrated by men and women equally, contrary to PSS, police and court data that most perpetrators are men and most victims and survivors are women (ABS, 2023; Hulme et al., 2019).

Figure 4-86: Understanding of different aspects of violence against women over time (UVAWS subscales), Western Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Recognise VAW Subscale: 1,162; 1,878; 966; 1,453
- Recognise DV Subscale: 1,199; 1,923; 1,965; 1,454
- Understand Gendered DV Subscale: na; na; na; 340.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

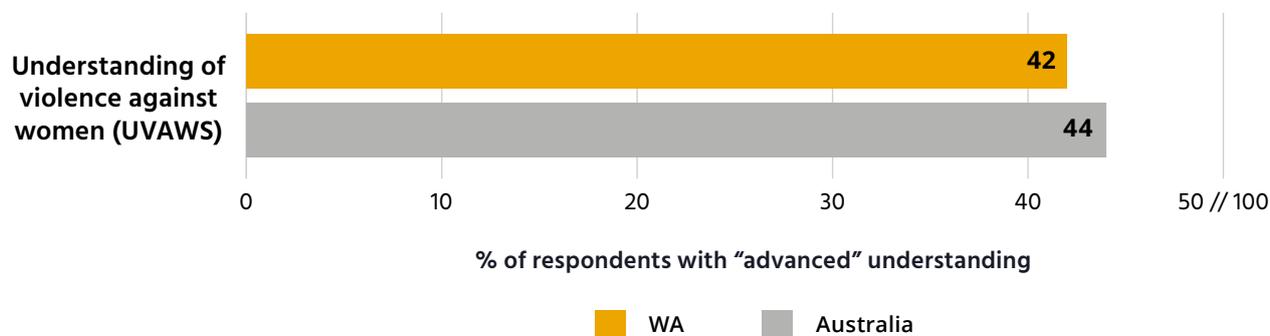
~ Items revised and asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

While mean scale scores provide a sensitive measure of even small changes over time, they are not easy to interpret in an absolute sense. Thus, we also defined what “advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS) would look like (Section 2.4). Figure 4-87 presents the percentages of respondents from WA and Australia in the “advanced” category for the UVAWS in 2021. Similar proportions of respondents from WA

(42%) and Australia (44%) demonstrated “advanced” understanding of violence against women. There was no significant difference between WA and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” understanding category.<sup>36</sup> These findings indicate that continued effort is warranted to further improve community understanding of violence against women in WA and Australia.

<sup>36</sup> For ease of understanding, percentages for Australia as a whole are presented in the text and figures, which correspond to the percentages in the Main report. The statistical analyses, however, compared WA with the other jurisdictions combined (i.e. with the rest of Australia).

Figure 4-87: “Advanced” understanding of violence against women (UVAWS), Western Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

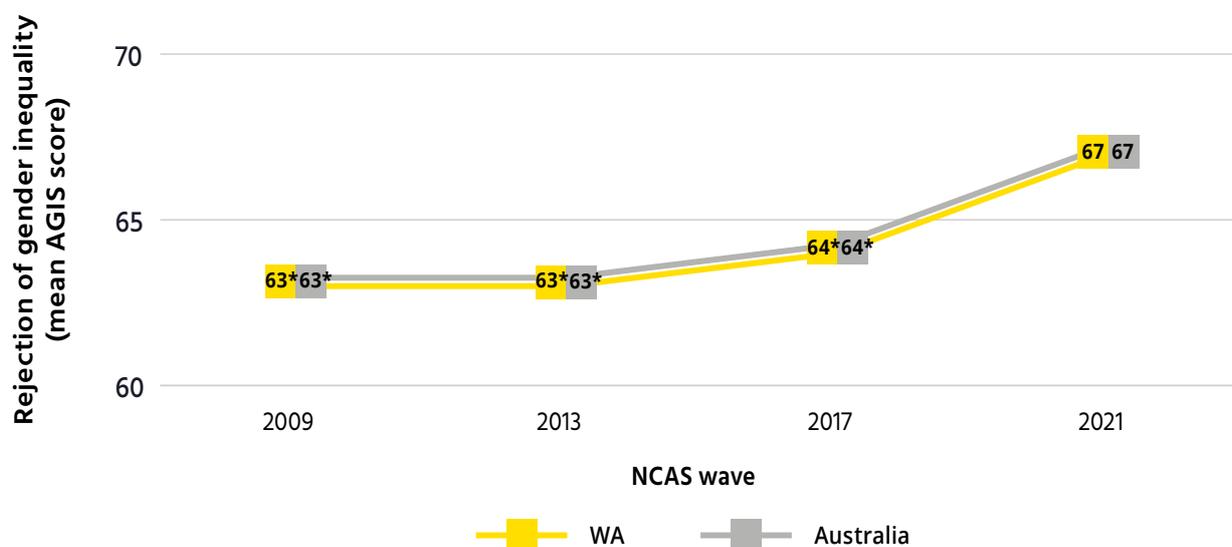
- WA: 1,456
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” understanding between WA and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” understanding refers to answering “yes, always” the behaviour is violence to at least 75% of items and “yes, usually” to the remaining items (UVAWS).

### Attitudes towards gender inequality: AGIS and its subscales

For both WA and Australia, the mean AGIS score was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009, 2013 and 2017 (Figure 4-88). These findings indicate a significant increase since all previous NCAS waves in the attitudinal rejection of gender inequality for both the population of WA and the Australian population.

Figure 4-88: Attitudinal rejection of gender inequality over time (AGIS), Western Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- WA: 1,046; 1,655; 2,011; 1,456
- Australia: 8,909; 15,178; 17,528; 19,040.

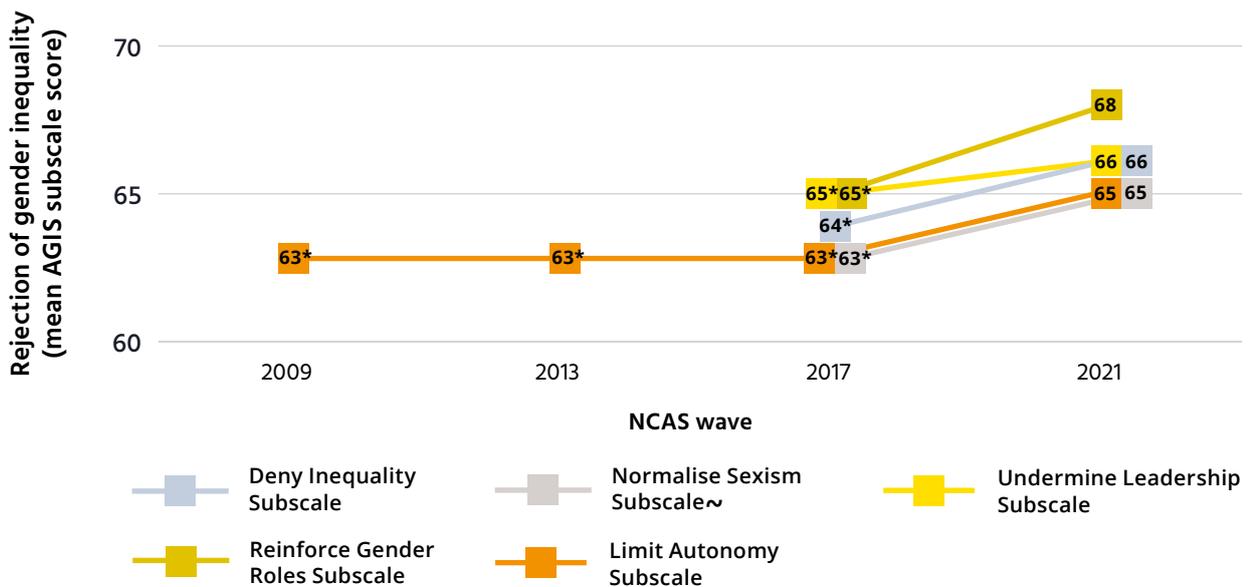
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-89 displays changes over time for the five AGIS subscales for WA.<sup>37</sup> There were significant improvements over time on all five subscales for WA: the Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Undermine Leadership Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017), the Limit Autonomy Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2009, 2013 and 2017), the Normalise Sexism Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017) and the Deny Inequality Subscale (in 2021 compared to 2017). These findings indicate increased rejection over time of attitudes that reinforce traditional, rigid gender roles and expectations; attitudes that undermine women’s leadership in work and public life; attitudes that limit

women’s personal autonomy in intimate relationships; attitudes that downplay sexism; and attitudes that deny the gender inequality experienced by women. Unlike for WA, there was no significant improvement over time for Australia as a whole on the Undermine Leadership Subscale. However, similar to WA, there was significant improvement over time for Australia on the other four AGIS subscales.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between WA and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AGIS subscales.

Figure 4-89: Rejection of different aspects of gender inequality over time (AGIS subscales), Western Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *N*s in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Deny Inequality Subscale: na; na; 1,849; 687
- Normalise Sexism Subscale: na; na; 1,979; 475
- Undermine Leadership Subscale: na; na; 1,990; 1,428
- Reinforce Gender Roles Subscale: na; na; 1,947; 698
- Limit Autonomy Subscale: 1,132; 1,796; 1,904; 1,396.

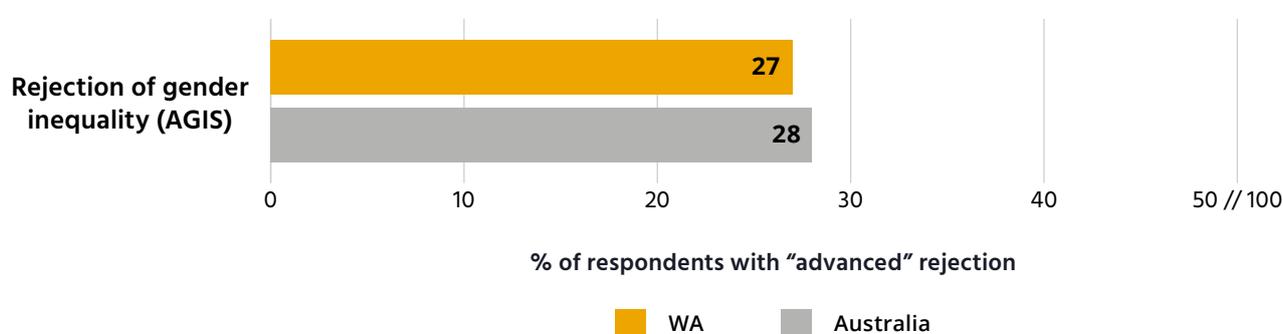
\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

~ Items asked of one quarter of the sample in 2021.

37 Reliable mean scores for 2009 and 2013 could only be calculated for the Limit Autonomy Subscale as the other subscales had insufficient data in previous years.

Figure 4-90 presents the percentages of respondents from WA and Australia in the “advanced” attitudes category for the AGIS in 2021. A similar proportion of respondents from WA (27%) and Australia (28%) demonstrated “advanced” rejection of gender inequality. There was no significant difference between WA and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the “advanced” attitudes category. These findings indicate that there is still substantial work to be done on improving community attitudes towards gender inequality in both WA and Australia.

Figure 4-90: “Advanced” rejection of gender inequality (AGIS), Western Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2021 were:

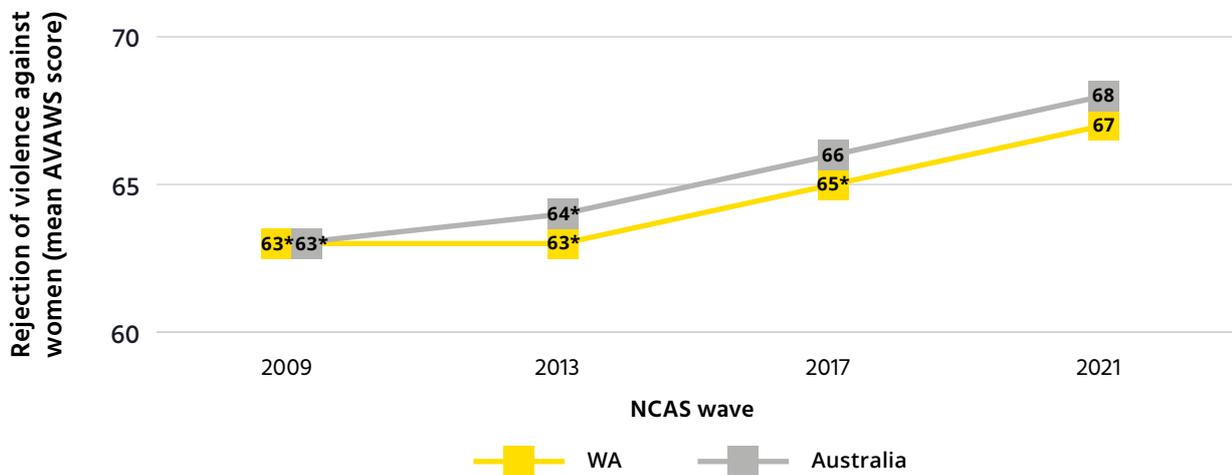
- WA: 1,451
- Australia: 19,091.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between WA and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned gender inequality (AGIS).

### Attitudes towards violence against women: AVAWS and its subscales

The mean AVAWS score for both WA and Australia was significantly higher in 2021 compared with 2009 and 2013, indicating a significant increase over this time period in the attitudinal rejection of violence against women in both the population of WA and the Australian population overall (Figure 4-91). WA also showed a significant increase in attitudinal rejection of violence against women between 2017 and 2021, whereas Australia showed no significant increase over this period.

Figure 4-91: Attitudinal rejection of violence against women over time (AVAWS), Western Australia and Australia, 2009 to 2021



**Note:** Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- WA: 427; 622; 2,012; 1,006
- Australia: 3,743; 5,478; 17,538; 19,097.

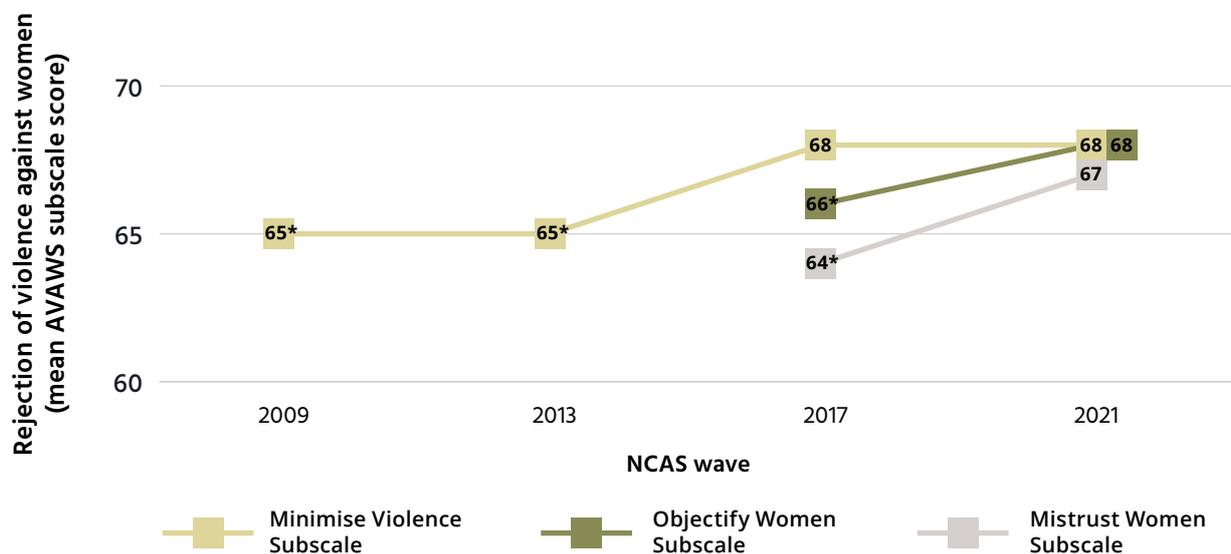
\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-92 shows change over time on the three AVAWS subscales for WA. There were significant improvements over time on all three of the AVAWS subscales for WA. The Mistrust Women and Objectify Women subscales showed improvement in 2021 compared to 2017, indicating increased rejection of attitudes that women lie about being victimised to gain some advantage and attitudes that objectify women and disregard consent. Although the Minimise Violence Subscale indicated increased rejection of attitudes that downplay the

seriousness of violence and shift blame to victims and survivors over the longer term (in 2021 compared to 2009 and 2013), this rejection plateaued between 2017 and 2021. The results for the three AVAWS subscales for WA were identical to those for Australia.

In 2021, there were no significant differences between WA and the rest of Australia in mean scores on the AVAWS subscales.

Figure 4-92: Rejection of different aspects of violence against women over time (AVAWS subscales), Western Australia, 2009 to 2021



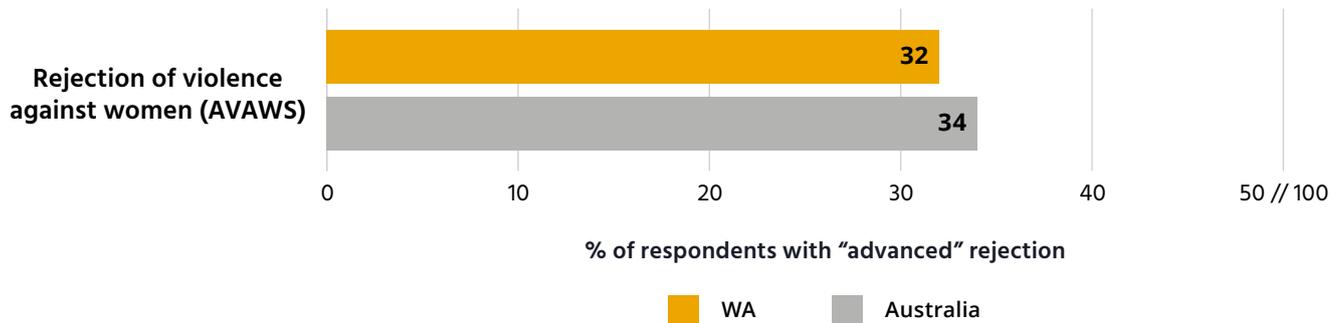
**Note:** "na" below means reliable data was not available. Ns in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- Minimise Violence Subscale: 597; 1,860; 2,012; 1,456
- Objectify Women Subscale: na; na; 2,006; 1,437
- Mistrust Women Subscale: na; na; 1,977; 1,448.

\* Statistically significant difference on this subscale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-93 presents the percentages of respondents from WA and Australia in the "advanced" attitudes category for the AVAWS in 2021. A similar proportion of respondents in WA (32%) and Australia (34%) demonstrated "advanced" rejection of violence against women. There was no significant difference between WA and the rest of Australia in the percentage of respondents in the "advanced" attitudes category. As the majority of respondents were not categorised as "advanced", there is still substantial room to improve attitudes towards violence against women in both WA and Australia as a whole.

Figure 4-93: “Advanced” rejection of violence against women (AVAWS), Western Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *N*s in 2021 were:

- WA: 1,456
- Australia: 19,099.

No significant difference on “advanced” rejection between WA and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” attitudes refer to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned violence against women (AVAWS).

### Attitudes towards specific types of violence against women

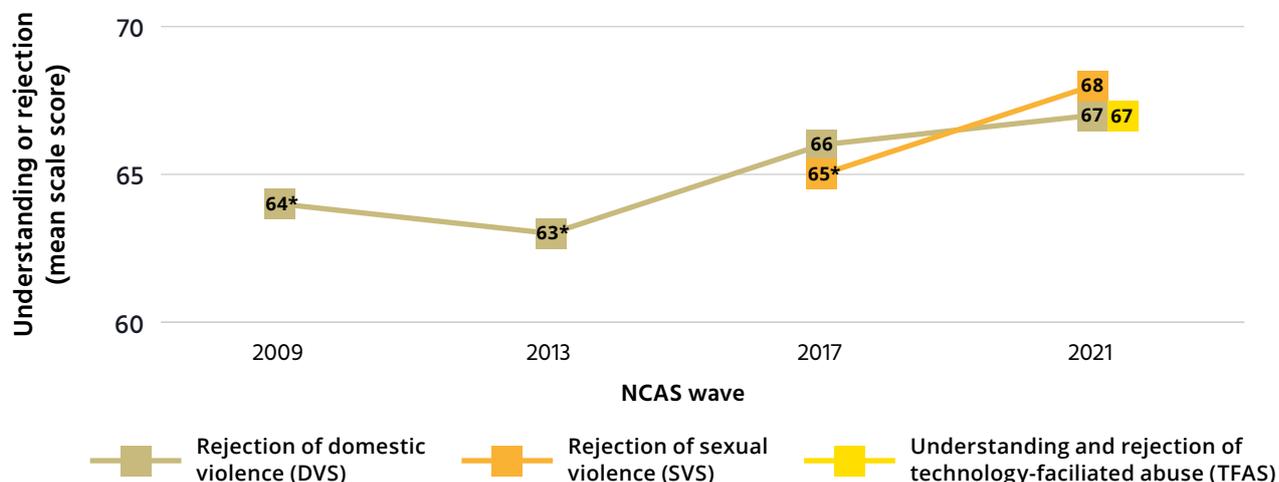
The 2021 NCAS also captured attitudes and understanding regarding types of violence via the Domestic Violence Scale (DVS), the Technology-Facilitated Abuse Scale (TFAS) and the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS), which splits into the Sexual Assault Scale (SAS) and the Sexual Harassment Scale (SHS). In 2021, respondents from both WA and Australia showed a significant improvement in the rejection of sexual violence compared to 2017, according to mean scores on the SVS (Figure 4-94). Mean scores on the SAS and SHS similarly showed significant improvement in the rejection

of sexual assault and sexual harassment between 2017 and 2021 in WA and Australia (Figure 4-95). However, mean scores on the DVS indicated no significant difference between 2017 and 2021 in the rejection of domestic violence for either WA or Australia. This finding indicates that despite efforts to educate the community and a series of high-profile domestic violence cases between 2017 and 2021, community attitudes towards domestic violence have not significantly improved in WA nor in Australia as a whole since 2017.<sup>38</sup>

In 2021, there were no significant differences between WA and the rest of Australia according to mean scores on the SAS, SHS, DVS and TFAS.

<sup>38</sup> There were insufficient items in earlier waves of the NCAS for reliable reporting of change over time for the TFAS.

Figure 4-94: Understanding (TFAS) and attitudes (DVS, SVS, TFAS) regarding types of violence over time, Western Australia, 2009 to 2021

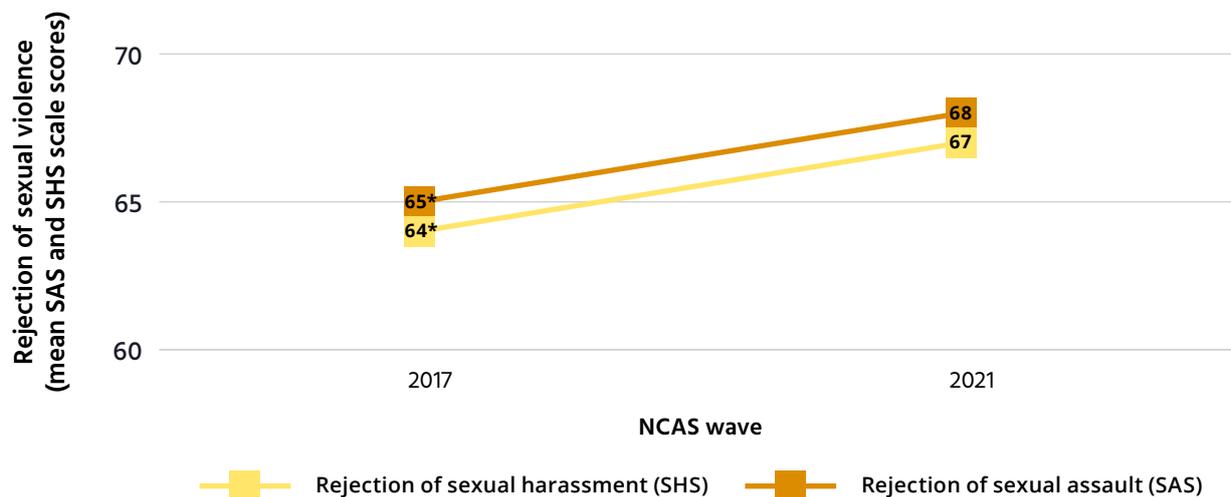


**Note:** “na” below means reliable data was not available. *Ns* in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021 were:

- DVS: 590; 754; 2,012; 1,455
- SVS: na; na; 2,000; 1,454
- TFAS: na; na; na; 1,454.

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between the year indicated and 2021.

Figure 4-95: Rejection of sexual harassment (SHS) and sexual assault (SAS) over time, Western Australia, 2017 to 2021



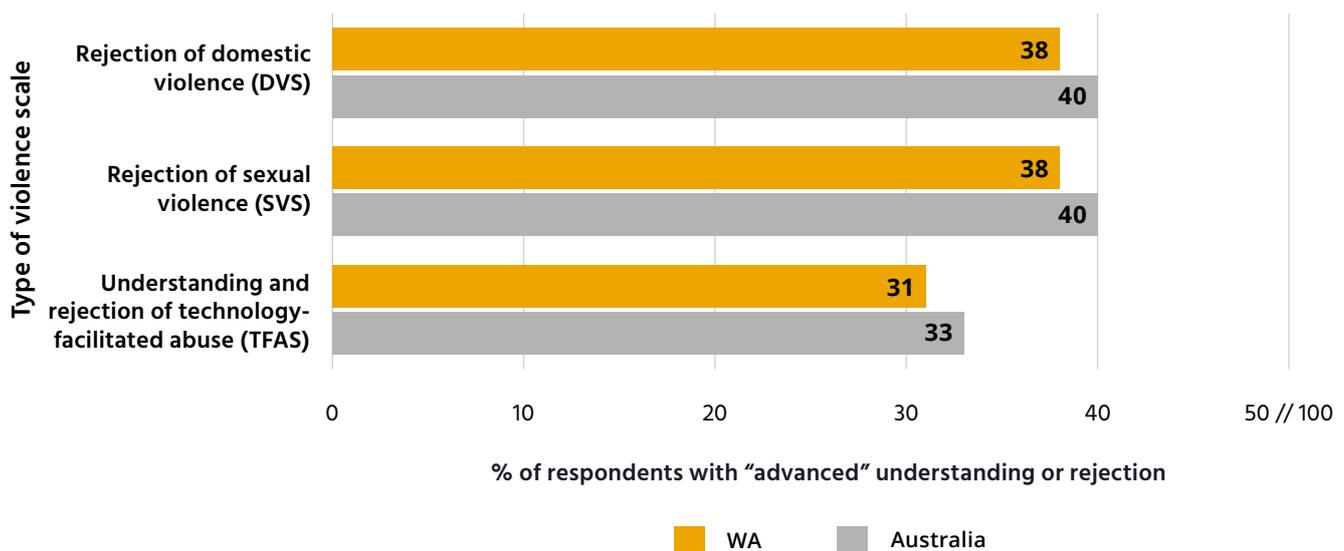
**Note:** *Ns* in 2017 and 2021 were:

- SHS: 486; 1,438
- SAS: 2,002; 1,437

\* Statistically significant difference on this scale between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 4-96 presents the percentages of respondents from WA and Australia in the “advanced” category for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021. WA was not significantly different to the rest of Australia in the proportion of respondents who demonstrated “advanced” rejection of domestic violence, “advanced” rejection of sexual violence, and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse. Further effort to improve attitudes towards all these types of violence is warranted in both WA and Australia given that fewer than half of all respondents fell into the “advanced” category on each type of violence scale.

Figure 4-96: “Advanced” attitudinal rejection of domestic violence (DVS) and sexual violence (SVS), and “advanced” understanding and rejection of technology-facilitated abuse (TFAS), Western Australia and Australia, 2021



**Note:** *Ns* for the DVS, SVS and TFAS in 2021 were:

- WA: 1,455; 1,454; 1,454
- Australia: 19,098; 19,097; 19,099.

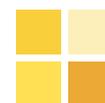
No significant difference on “advanced” understanding and/or rejection between WA and the rest of Australia. “Advanced” rejection of problematic attitudes towards domestic or sexual violence refers to answering “strongly disagree” to at least 75% of the items in the scale and “somewhat disagree” to the remaining items in the scale, which condoned this type of violence (SVS and DVS). The “advanced” TFAS category means that the respondent answered “yes, always” the behaviour is violence or “strongly disagreed” with problematic attitudes for at least 75% of items, and answered the remaining items “yes, usually” or “somewhat disagree”. See Section 2.4 for further details.



# 5 Implications of the NCAS jurisdictional-level findings for ending violence against women and further research

## 5.1 Key implications for all Australian jurisdictions

The findings of the 2021 NCAS demonstrate that positive changes to community understanding and attitudes regarding gender inequality and violence against women are slowly occurring in all Australian states and territories, suggesting movement towards achieving the aspiration of an Australian community that is safe and free from violence. However, across all Australian jurisdictions, more effort is still required to intervene where harmful individual and social norms prevail. Specifically, it is still necessary to continue to challenge biases, myths and misconceptions regarding violence against women and gender inequality held by individuals. In addition, broader practices, processes, systems and structures across society that maintain gender and other inequalities and inequities need to be addressed, and must also be supported by government, including via legal reform and response and recovery services for victims and survivors, such as health, legal and financial support services and safe housing. These efforts must occur across the federal and jurisdictional levels.



Most 2021 NCAS findings did not differ significantly by jurisdiction. Consequently, *all the implications for initiatives to end violence against women and for further research for Australia as a whole are equally relevant for each Australian state and territory*. Rather than repeating the implications here for each jurisdiction, we refer the reader to the detailed discussion in the Main report (Chapter 10) and the more succinct listing in the Summary report (Chapter 10). The 2021 NCAS implications for all Australian jurisdictions span the four domains for action recommended by the National Plan 2022–2032, namely, (primary) prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing (COAG, 2022).

Below we present the *additional implications* for ending violence against women and further research that are relevant to particular jurisdictions, based on the small number of significant differences between specific jurisdictions and the rest of Australia.

## 5.2 Additional implications for specific Australian jurisdictions

The significant differences in 2021 NCAS findings between specific jurisdictions and the rest of Australia are summarised below, together with their implications for ending violence or further research.

**Finding:** ACT respondents demonstrated significantly higher understanding and rejection of gendered violence and inequality (mean GVIS score) compared with respondents from the rest of Australia. Compared with other respondents, ACT respondents were also significantly more likely to have “advanced” rejection of gender inequality, violence against women overall, and domestic violence and sexual violence, as well as higher trust in women’s reports of violence.

- **Implication:** Further research could examine the factors underlying the more “advanced” rejection of violence and gender inequality in the ACT, such as the contribution of demographic factors (such as lower median age, higher education and higher proportion of people living in high socioeconomic status areas in the ACT) and the contribution of higher-level jurisdictional factors (such as differences in laws, policies and service systems). For further details on implications for addressing attitudes, see Sections 10.3 to 10.5 of the Summary report and Section 10.2 of the Main report. For further information on the impacts of demographics see Chapter 9 of the Summary and Main reports.

**Finding:** All jurisdictions showed a significant increase in their rejection of violence against women (mean AVAWS score) between 2013 and 2021, despite a plateau between 2017 and 2021 for some jurisdictions (NSW, Queensland and Victoria). Nonetheless, in 2021, the rejection of violence had reached a comparable level in all jurisdictions, with the exception that the ACT had a significantly higher level of rejection. In 2021, less than half the respondents in each jurisdiction (48% in the ACT and 32–37% in other jurisdictions) had “advanced” rejection of violence against women.

- **Implication:** These findings suggest that while attitudes are slowly improving, there is still room to further increase the rejection of problematic attitudes across all jurisdictions, even in the ACT, which had the highest level of rejection. Given that attitudes change slowly, continuous education and prevention efforts are needed to change problematic attitudes across jurisdictions. Further implications for addressing attitudes towards violence against women are provided in Section 10.4 of the Summary report and 10.2 of the Main report.

**Finding:** Respondents had high awareness that violence against women is a national problem, however, their awareness that violence against women exists in all communities, including their own local area, was much lower.

- **Implication:** These findings suggest a misconception across jurisdictions that violence against women tends to occur generally outside one’s own networks, rather than everywhere, which may impede recognition that violence is a community-wide social problem requiring action at all levels of society. See also Section 10.1 of the Summary report and 10.2 of the Main report.

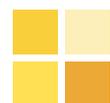
**Finding:** NT respondents were significantly more likely to recognise that violence is a problem in their suburb or town than respondents in other jurisdictions. Although a substantial proportion of respondents in all jurisdictions did not understand that domestic violence is predominantly perpetrated by men against women, respondents in the NT demonstrated an even lower understanding of the gendered nature of domestic violence than other jurisdictions.

- **Implication:** Further research is needed to
- understand why violence against women is better
- recognised as a local problem in the NT, but
- the gendered nature of this violence is less well
- recognised compared to other jurisdictions. It
- may be helpful to publish NT-specific facts about
- perpetrators of domestic violence and further
- explore and raise awareness of all the drivers
- of domestic violence (see Section 10.2 of the
- Summary and Main reports). It may also be helpful
- to raise recognition of coercive control in domestic
- violence situations, which is predominantly
- perpetrated by men, and distinguish coercive
- control from self-defence by victims and survivors
- and from mutual violence between partners
- (Nancarrow et al., 2020).



## 6 Conclusion

The NCAS findings provide evidence that understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women are generally moving towards positive change, although this change is occurring slowly. The NCAS results identify areas where it would be particularly beneficial to focus prevention efforts to address gaps in understanding of violence against women and to transform more entrenched problematic attitudes towards this violence and gender inequality. The findings point to many opportunities across the primary prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing continuum that can potentially contribute to realising the aspiration of ending violence against women and building a culture that supports safety, respect and equality for all Australians (COAG, 2022). It is clear that these initiatives must be undertaken across the population, in all Australian states and territories, and at all levels of society if this aspiration is to be reached. The NCAS is also a useful tool for highlighting areas where further research, evaluation and monitoring could be beneficial. For example, further investigation and analysis could provide deeper knowledge about the factors underlying problematic attitudes, as well as about the barriers and facilitators to improving these attitudes and to breaking down the culture that perpetuates violence against women.





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# ATTITUDES MATTER:

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