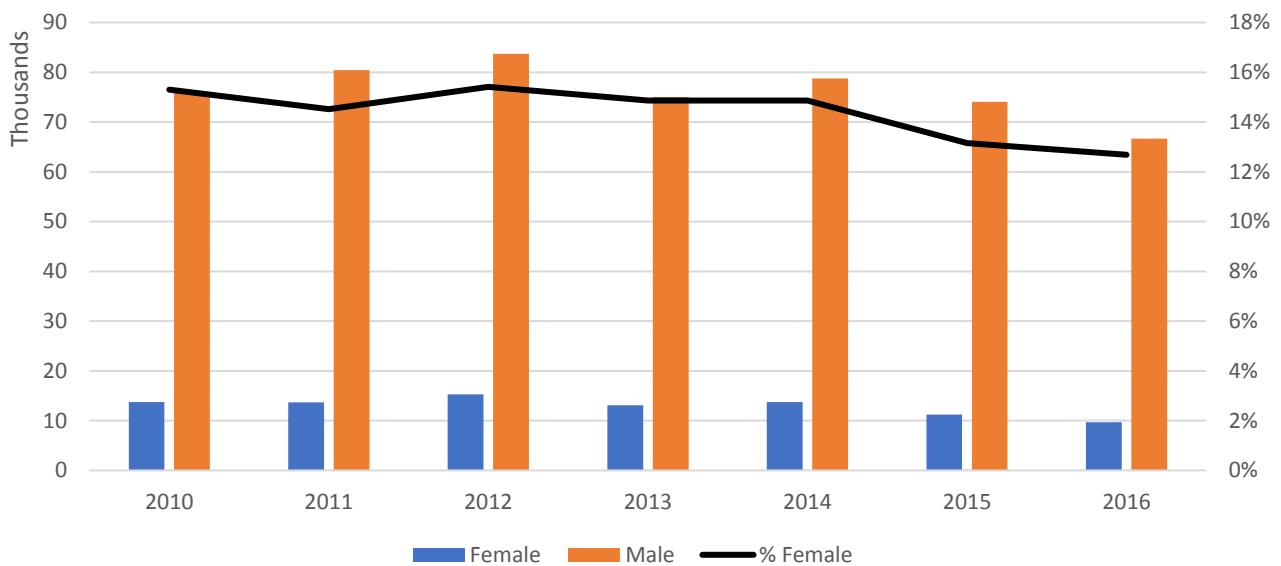


The other 2% - Female tradies in Australia

More tradespeople are needed in Australia, with most trades listed as skills shortage areas nationwide. Despite this need, women are much less likely to consider doing a trade than other types of work. In the year to June 2016 only 13% of trade apprentices were female, a decrease since 2010 as shown in the graph below.

Figure: Female and male commencements in trade apprenticeships, 2010-16 ('000 and %)



Source: NCVET 2016, Historical time series of apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia, from 1963, NCVET, Adelaide.

Note: Trade apprenticeship commencements in the year ending June 30 from 2010 to 2016

There are a number of benefits for becoming a tradesperson: getting paid to study as an apprentice, good job security, and the opportunities for self-employment and therefore working the way you want. For parents, particularly mothers who tend to undertake the majority of childcare duties, this flexibility can be extremely useful. Despite this, trades are often seen as ‘men’s work’ and girls and young women are not encouraged to pursue them.

Fantastic initiatives have been set up around Australia to support and encourage young women and girls to consider the trades as a career pathway. Supporting and Linking Tradeswomen (SALT) is one such initiative, who remind us that ‘jobs do not have a gender’ and who run workshops teaching women how to use tools, while The Lady Tradies Australia ‘promote, support, connect & encourage women & girls in non-traditional roles and trades’.

If you are interested in doing a trade apprenticeship and would like more information, have a look at the aapathways.com.au website for information on different apprenticeship and traineeship options, or call the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Information Service on 1800 338 022.