

WHAT KIND OF MAN DO YOU WANT TO BE?



**RESPECT
VICTORIA**
V

VICTORIA
State
Government

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

‘What Kind of Man Do You Want to Be?’ invites Victorian men to **challenge harmful forms of masculinity and reflect on what kind of man they want to be**—for themselves, their partners, families, and communities.

Harmful gender stereotypes drive violence against women and other forms of gendered violence. This includes the pressure for men to be dominant, in control, and refrain from showing vulnerability. This campaign profiles the stories of real Victorians navigating those pressures, in everything from fatherhood to online gaming.

With a focus on listening rather than lecturing, ‘What Kind of Man Do You Want to Be?’ **prompts men to reflect and consider opportunities for change** in their own lives, to help build healthier relationships and communities.

This campaign is grounded in masculinities research and has been developed with experts from across family violence prevention and the fields of communications, social change campaigns and behaviour change, alongside extensive focus group testing with Victorians.



REFLECTING ON WHAT MASCULINITY MEANS TODAY

This is a patriarchal truism that most people in our society want to deny. Whenever women thinkers, especially advocates of feminism, speak about the widespread problem of male violence, folks are eager to stand up and make the point that most men are not violent. They refuse to acknowledge that masses of boys and men have been programmed from birth on to believe that at some point they must be violent, whether psychologically or physically, to prove that they are men.

bell hooks, *The Will To Change*

KIND MAN GOALS

PATHWAY 1: SELF REFLECTION

Using strengths-based approach to describe the pressures (of the Man Box) and start articulating what life looks like without these pressures could be like

PATHWAY 2: ACCOUNTABILITY

Building the connection of gender stereotypes and masculinities and the violence supportive traits identified in the Man Box and how it connects to men's violence against women.

PATHWAY 3: LONG TERM CHANGE & EDUCATION

Helping communities to challenge gender roles that are harmful and set new social norms that reject Man Box pressures

**WHAT KIND OF MAN
DO YOU WANT TO BE?**



KIND MAN PART 1

- 12 Victorian men speaking about social expectations of masculinity and how they navigate them
- 8 individual stories plus dual stories that explore masculinities in the context of:
 - The drive for success
 - Mateship and bonding
 - Online spaces and influences
 - Fatherhood
- Online – Instagram, TikTok, YouTube
- Cinema
- Regional press
- Street posters
- Radio



KIND MAN PART 2

- 14 Victorian men speaking in language about the social expectations of masculinity and how they navigate them
- Co-design with communities in Punjabi, Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese
- Meta, Weibo, REDnote, YouTube
- SBS online and radio
- Community events

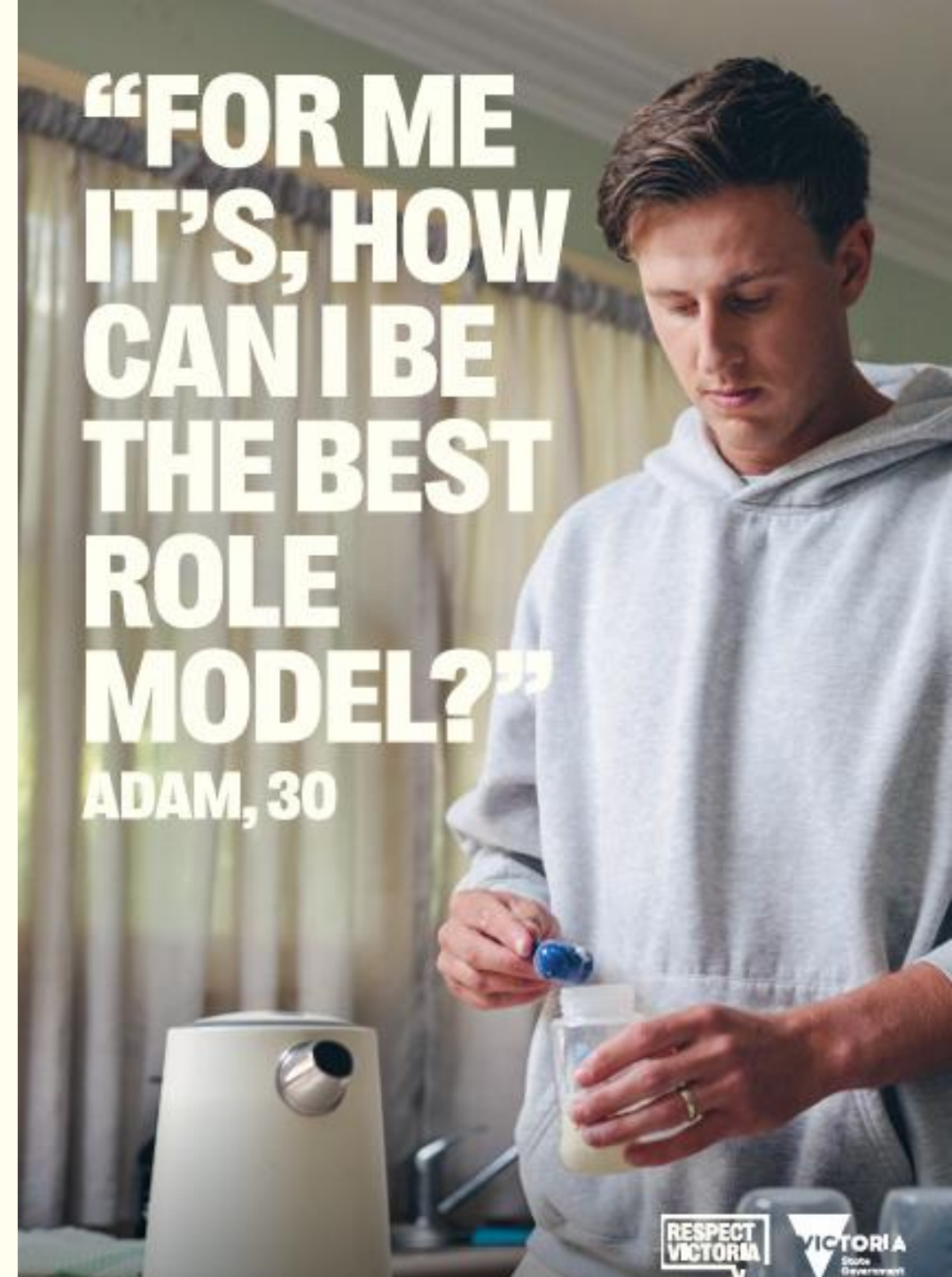


A genuine campaign, but ads alone aren't enough – schools and families need to step in too. More concrete action, fewer slogans.

- Survey respondent

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- An online survey of $n = 3,227$ Victorians aged 18 to 44, fielded in May and June 2026
- Boosted samples of men ($n = 1,989$) and regional Victorians ($n = 1,103$)
- Weighted on gender, age and location to the ABS 2021 Census (for Victorians 18 to 44)



BASELINE ATTITUDES

Most Victorians recognize violence against women as a national problem, but far fewer believe it is happening where they live.

NATIONAL VS. LOCAL

86%

Agreed violence against women is a problem in Australia

49%

Believe it is a problem in their own suburb or town

DISTANCING

87%

Accepted that violence against women could be happening in their community **without them knowing**

*Men were twice as likely as women to believe **they would know***

GENDER EQUALITY PERCEPTIONS

63%

Believed Australia is close to achieving, or has already achieved, gender equality

Among men this rose to 75%, compared to 51% of women

RECALL WAS HIGHEST AMONG

- Young men under 30 (**36%**)
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander men (**66%** n=154)
- Victorians speaking a language other than English at home (**33%**)
- Little difference between regional/ metro (**25%** v. **27%**)
- Recall higher among metro men (**34%**) than regional (**28%**)

➤ **27%**

Total recall among Victorians aged 18-44

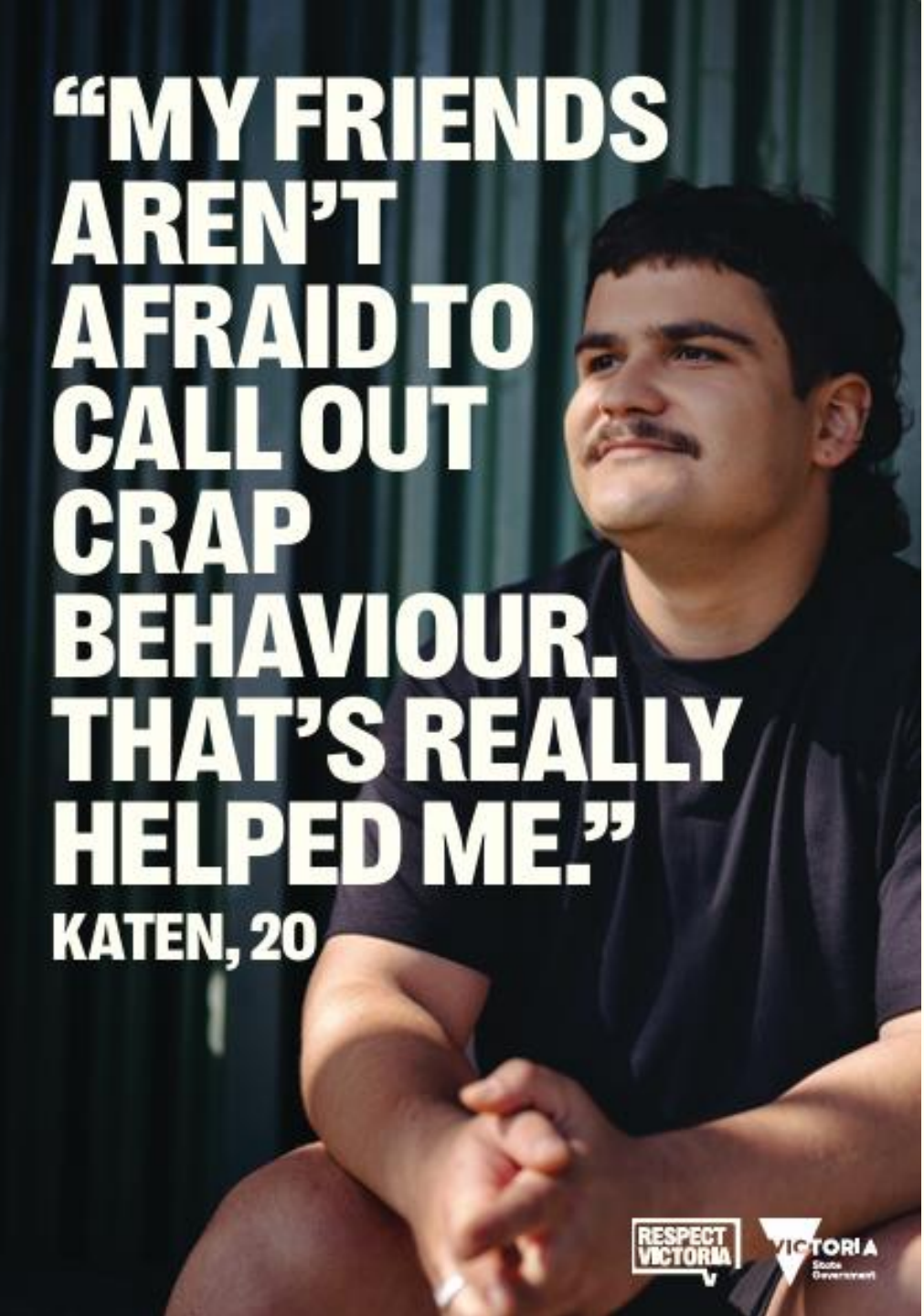
➤ **33%**

Recall among men

➤ **About 4 in 10**

Men in Ballarat

Recalled the campaign (n= 42)



**“MY FRIENDS
AREN’T
AFRAID TO
CALL OUT
CRAP
BEHAVIOUR.
THAT’S REALLY
HELPED ME.”**

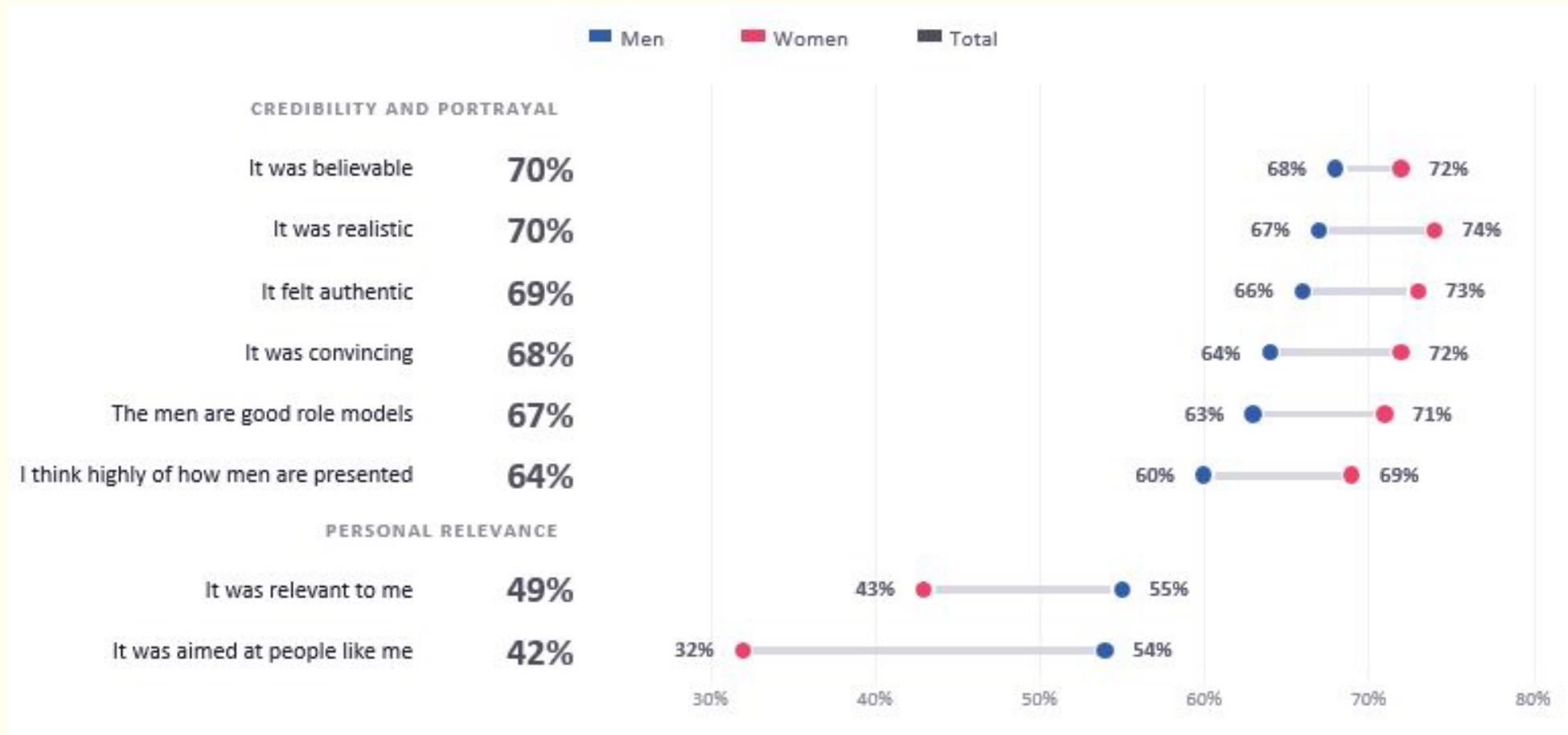
KATEN, 20



WHAT VICTORIANS THINK

- Unprompted feedback revealed 70% overwhelmingly positive
- 30% want more actions that men can take
- 7% want broader focus including teenage boys and older men
- Women more likely to want the campaign to go further

PERCEPTIONS



ACTION

89% took or were open to taking at least one action including private reflection, speaking with others and seeking further information about healthy masculinities.

- Victorians were most open to the Pathway 1 private, reflective actions that part of the campaigns first pathway (self reflection) at **85%**
- Pathway 3 carries public asks but saw higher openness (longer term) at **80%**
- Pathway 2 actions were slightly lower (accountability) at **78%**

Most common actions were thinking about the men in their lives and pressures and what boys learn with the least common being starting conversations or seeking information on healthier masculinities. Men are open to reflection and are willing to challenge harmful roles including reflection on whether their actions cause harm to women.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was highest among men with the strongest Man Box endorsement, and the gaps sits entirely in online actions



- Campaign recallers engaged more than those that did not recall (73% to 65%)
- Among recallers men were more likely to engage than women (77% to 67%)
- Men with the highest Man Box endorsement were the most engaged of all (81% to 64%)
- Engagement fell with age – 18-29 most engaged

MAN BOX

HOW DID KIND MAN SHIFT VICTORIAN MEN?

EXPOSURE MOVED MEN TO LOWER ENDORSEMENT

53%

softened views

32%

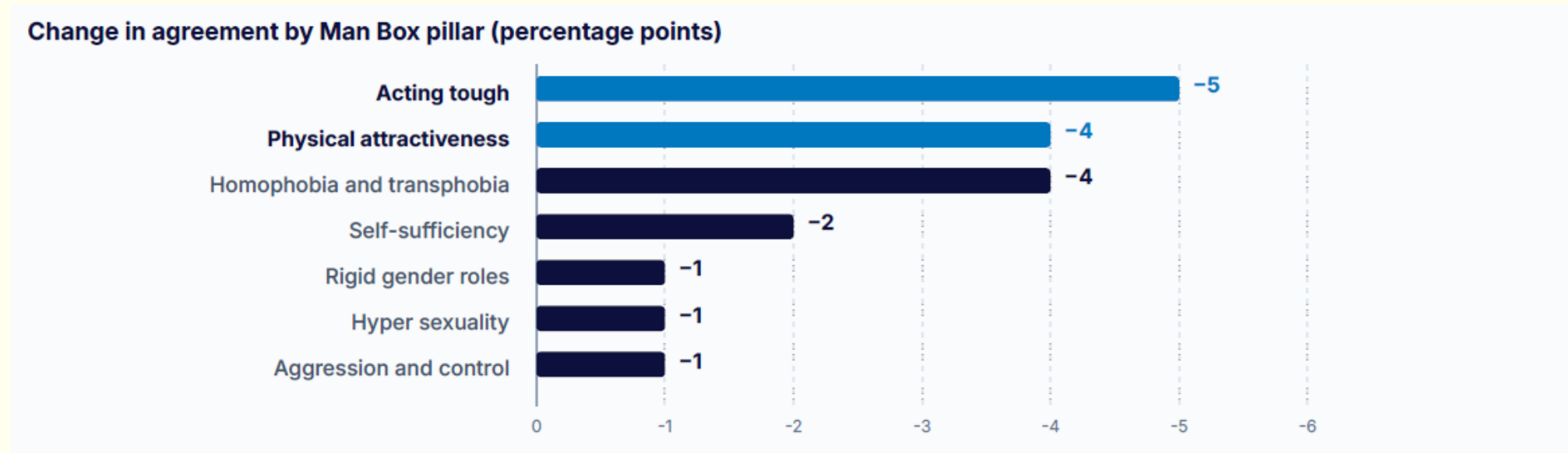
hardened views

+21

net movement lower

1.84 - 1.79

average Man Box score



GENDER COMPASS

AN IMPORTANT OVERLAY WITH GENDER EQUALITY

GENDER COMPASS SEGMENTS

- **Trailblazer** – strong advocates for GE, action to address bias and discrimination, long way to achieve GE (19%)
- **Hopeful** – positive about direction, GE necessary/achievable, along way but more work to do (24%)
- **Conflicted** – strong but contradictory views, observed gender dynamics growing up, worried about pressures on men and boys, traditional structures and roles (12%)
- **Moderate** – mild opinions, not fixed or impassioned, GE largely achieved, concern about men being blamed (23%)
- **Rejector** – resistance to GE, minimize and refuse recognition of discrimination, more rights for women = less for men (17%)
- **Indifferent** – not on radar, apathetic and tuned out (6%)



OVERARCHING FINDINGS FROM GENDER COMPASS

RESULTS CONSISTENT WITH EXPECTATIONS

Results are broadly consistent with what we know about each segment

CAMPAIGN REACHED ALL SEGMENTS

The campaign reached all audiences across the attitudinal spectrum not just supporters:

- Supporter segments most receptive with meaningful shifts
- Resistance segments showed greater shifts than expected

ENGAGEMENT DID NOT EQUAL SHIFT

Campaign engagement/ recall and attitude change do not always move in lockstep. For instance the conflicted segment were highly engaged but demonstrated limited attitude shift

CONFLICTED

Highest reach, highest engagement, least movement

40%

Recalled campaign

80%

Found believable

94%

Took action

65%

Felt aimed at them

+9

Net shift in Man Box

TRAILBLAZER AND HOPEFUL

The two most supportive segments, together making up more than half of Victorians aged 18 to 44

TRAILBLAZER

Saw the campaign as highly credible

Ready to take action – especially
conversations based

Less likely to see themselves as the target

Potential to amplify

HOPEFUL

Significant shifts in Man Box endorsement
scores

Highly supportive

More likely to opt for private reflection

MODERATE AND REJECTOR

The two segments least aligned to the campaign, but for different reasons

MODERATE

Least engaged and convinced by campaign

They do not see any urgency and believe campaign is unnecessary

REJECTOR

Resonated strongly with them

Pressure of masculinities provides a point of connection with them

Found the campaign credible

Significant shift in Man Box endorsement

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR OUR WORK



**“I JUST
WANT
MY KIDS
TO KNOW
THAT DAD’S
ALWAYS
THERE.”**
FUI, 43

WHAT THIS MEANS

- The campaign is opening doors for reflection and conversations
- It can work well with ‘on the ground’ complementary activities
- We can push further for actions – tools on healthy masculinities, programs that support prevention
- Men and boys are coming into the conversation when they are portrayed in credible ways
- There’s a risk of losing connection between harmful roles and violence – we need to innovate and test ways to make connections in credible ways

