FOR REAL SECURITY

MOVE the MONEY

WILPF | AUSTRALIA
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM

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WILPF Australia works for permanent peace built on feminist foundations of freedom, justice, nonviolence, human rights, and equality for all.

Our **Move the Money** campaign calls on the government to redirect public money and productive capacity away from war and weapons, and towards human security.

Why Move the Money?

Australia's military spending is rising, while basic human needs go unmet.

Australia's 2026-27 Defence portfolio spending is projected to exceed $60 billion. AUKUS will cost the public more than $33 million *a day* over the next three decades.

Australians define security as the peaceful continuity of everyday life - and want the government to do more.[1]

Our Campaign Asks

- *Require real accountability for military spending.*
- *Commit to sustained investment in peacebuilding.*
- *Fund climate action at the level of climate risk.*
- *Invest in the everyday work that is the foundation of human security.*

[1] ANU Security College, No worries? Australian attitudes to national security, risk and resilience.

Real accountability for military spending.

Limit the Defence-GDP escalation and require Parliamentary scrutiny.

Setting military spending in terms of percentage of GDP is a poor way to make policy. There is no logical link between a nation's security and its spending on defence as a percentage of GDP.

In 2025, the US asked Australia to increase defence spending to 3.5% of GDP. The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates this will have a real cost to the budget of $76 billion by 2035-36.[2]

Any increase in the Defence-GDP ratio must be subject to parliamentary scrutiny, ensuring transparency and alignment with human security needs.

Model and publish opportunity costs of increased military spending in concrete social expenditure terms.

Rising military spending crowds out health, housing, education and climate investment and is one of the least effective[3] forms of government spending for economic growth.

[2] Parliamentary Budget Office, 2025-26 Medium-Term Budget Outlook
[3] Royal United Services Institute,The False Promise of Defence as Prosperity

Investment trade-offs should be made explicit through modelling, so that Australians can understand the real costs.

Independently audit jobs and economic multiplier claims.

Military spending is routinely justified to Parliament and the public with claims about domestic economic benefits. These claims must be subject to independent scrutiny so that the public can assess who really benefits from rising military spending.

Publish summaries of Gender Impact Assessments for all Defence New Policy Proposals and Cabinet Submissions above $250 million, or show why an exemption was applied.

Military spending is not gender neutral. There are direct and indirect impacts on women's share of income and workforce participation, and on gender equality.

Publishing Gender Impact Assessment summaries would make those impacts visible, improve transparency and accountability, and help ensure that gender equality is considered before public money is committed.

Invest in the everyday work that is the foundation of human security.

Australians say that everyday peace and security is their top priority. But the systems sustaining this everyday security - like aged and disability care, childcare, and First Nations-led services - are under-resourced



Comparison of Australians' top national priorities for the next 5 years. Source: ANU Security College.

When governments underinvest in these systems, the work does not disappear. It is transferred to families and communities through unpaid and underpaid labour, disproportionately undertaken by women and shaped by racial and economic inequalities.

The government should recognise care systems as core human security assets and resource them commensurate with need.

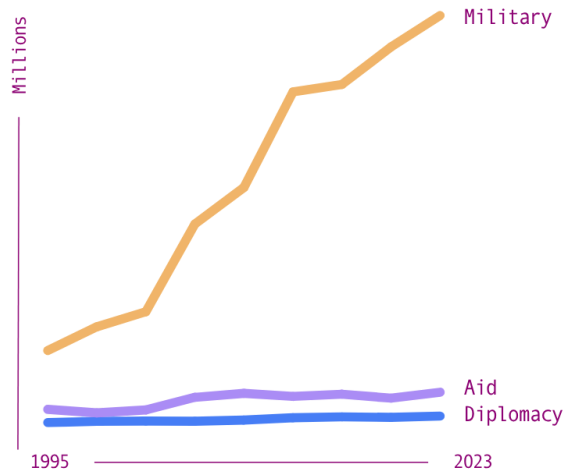
Commit to sustained investment in peacebuilding.

Lasting security depends on addressing the political, social and economic conditions that drive conflict and inequality. The Government should rebalance rising military spending with investments that strengthen Australia's capacity to prevent conflict and build sustainable peace.

Commit funding to establish a national program for peacebuilding research, training, and public education.

Australia invests heavily in military capability, but has no dedicated national funding stream for building knowledge and capacity in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. A national

peacebuilding program would support research, professional training and public education to build Australia's capacity to address the root causes of conflict, strengthen diplomacy and support more effective responses to emerging risks before they become crises.



Australian government spending 1995-2023. Source: Initiative for Peacebuilding, University of Melbourne.

Increase ambition in Official Development Assistance

Well-targeted Official Development Assistance (ODA) is one the most effective tools for building sustainable peace, yet Australia spends more than ten times on the military than on aid.

Australia should commit to investing its fair share in the global public good and set 1% of the federal budget as the floor for ODA, with sustained funding for poverty reduction, gender equality, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

Fund climate action at the level of climate risk.

A healthy and stable climate is essential to human security. But rising military spending exacerbates the climate crisis, while climate targets go unmet.

The government's Disaster Ready Fund provides just $200 million a year. But disaster costs in Australia are already running at $38 billion a year and are forecast to reach $73 billion by 2060 under a low-emissions scenario.[4]

The government should rapidly scale disaster response and mitigation, climate adaptation and resilience funding to match Australians' growing exposure to climate risk.

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Contact the Campaign
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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to those past, present and future.

[4] Actuaries Institute 2026-27 Pre-Budget Submission