

Gender Equality Universally Embraced, but Inequalities Acknowledged

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Fifteen years after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Platform for Action proclaimed that "shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities," people around the globe embrace the document's key principles.

Almost everywhere, solid majorities express support for gender equality and agree that women should be able to work outside the home. Most also find a marriage in which both spouses share financial and household responsibilities to be more satisfying than one in which the husband provides for the family and the wife takes care of the house and children. In addition, majorities in most countries reject the notion that higher education is more important for a boy than for a girl.

Yet, despite a general consensus that women should have the same rights as men, people in many countries around the world say gender inequalities persist in their countries. Many say that men get more opportunities than equally qualified women for jobs that pay well and that life is generally better for men than it is for women in their countries. This is especially so in some of the wealthier nations surveyed. And while majorities in nearly every country surveyed express support for gender equality, equal rights supporters in most countries say that more changes are needed to ensure that women have the same rights as men.

These are among the findings of a 22-nation survey by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, conducted April 7 to May 8. This special in-depth look at views on gender equality, done in association with the International Herald Tribune, also suggests that, while egalitarian sentiments are pervasive, they are less than robust; when economically challenging times arise, many feel men should be given preferential treatment over women in the search for employment.

This is especially true in the predominantly Muslim countries surveyed as well as in India, China, South Korea and Nigeria. In these countries, solid majorities agree that women should be able to work outside the home; yet, most also agree that men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce. For example, about six-in-ten in Egypt (61%) and Jordan (58%) say women should have the right to work outside the home, but even larger shares (75% and 68%, respectively) say the priority should be for men to have jobs.

In some countries, male respondents are considerably more likely than female respondents to agree that men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce. For example, about nine-in-ten Egyptian men (92%) share this view, compared with 58% of Egyptian women. Similarly, while about three-quarters of Jordanian men (77%) say their sex should be more entitled to a job in tough economic times, a much slimmer majority of Jordanian women (56%) say the same.

Men and women also frequently offer diverging views on other aspects of gender equality, including a woman's right to work outside the home and the importance of higher education for boys and girls; this gender gap is evident most consistently in the predominantly Muslim countries surveyed.

The survey also finds that women are far more likely than men to perceive gender inequalities. By double-digit margins, female respondents in 13 of 22 nations are more likely than male respondents to say men in their countries have the better life. And in most countries where majorities among both men and women agree that men get more opportunities than women for high-paying jobs, women are considerably more likely to say they completely agree that is the case.

Find the full report including methodology and topline questionnaire at pewglobal.org

Widespread Support for Gender Equality, but More Changes Needed

	Women should have equal rights %	Among supporters of equal rights	
		Most changes made %	More changes needed %
U.S.	97	33	64
Britain	97	29	69
France	99	18	82
Germany	97	37	63
Spain	99	18	80
Poland	95	42	56
Russia	85	43	51
Turkey	89	32	64
Egypt	60	36	59
Jordan	61	61	37
Lebanon	95	47	51
China	95	53	46
India	92	57	41
Indonesia	64	58	41
Japan	89	8	89
Pakistan	79	34	60
S. Korea	93	27	71
Argentina	97	23	73
Brazil	95	15	84
Mexico	96	26	73
Kenya	73	22	77
Nigeria	45	29	70

Samples in China, India and Pakistan are disproportionately urban. See the Methods section for more information.

"Do you think women should have equal rights with men, or shouldn't they?" If "yes": "Which of these two statements comes closer to your own views – even if neither is exactly right. (Survey country) has made most of the changes needed to give women equal rights with men, OR (Survey country) needs to continue making changes to give women equal rights with men." (Pew Research Center Q80 & Q81)

Support for Women Working Outside the Home, but Many Prioritize Giving Jobs to Men

	When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job	
	Women should be able to work outside home %	When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job %
U.S.	97	14
Britain	97	12
France	97	20
Germany	97	19
Spain	97	12
Poland	92	44
Russia	95	47
Turkey	95	67
Egypt	61	75
Jordan	58	68
Lebanon	96	51
China	97	73
India	95	84
Indonesia	88	74
Japan	94	41
Pakistan	69	82
S. Korea	96	60
Argentina	87	43
Brazil	96	37
Mexico	90	28
Kenya	87	46
Nigeria	84	77

Pew Research Center Q69b & Q69c.

Who Has the Better Life?

Where more say men do	(Vol)			
	Men? %	Women? %	Same %	DK %
France	75	14	9	2
Poland	55	15	25	6
Germany	49	15	27	9
Nigeria	46	25	26	3
Spain	45	16	33	5

Brazil	42	30	27	1
India	40	33	26	2
Britain	39	16	36	9
U. S.	39	23	24	15
Kenya	36	28	34	2
<i>Where more say both the same</i>				
Mexico	27	14	56	3
Indonesia	29	15	55	1
Russia	29	14	52	5
China	22	24	49	6
Jordan	28	23	47	2
Lebanon	18	34	47	1
Egypt	32	16	46	7
Argentina	27	21	46	6
Pakistan	37	16	42	6
Turkey	33	27	38	2
<i>Where more say women do</i>				
S. Korea	26	49	23	3
Japan	29	47	20	5
Pew Research Center Q6.				