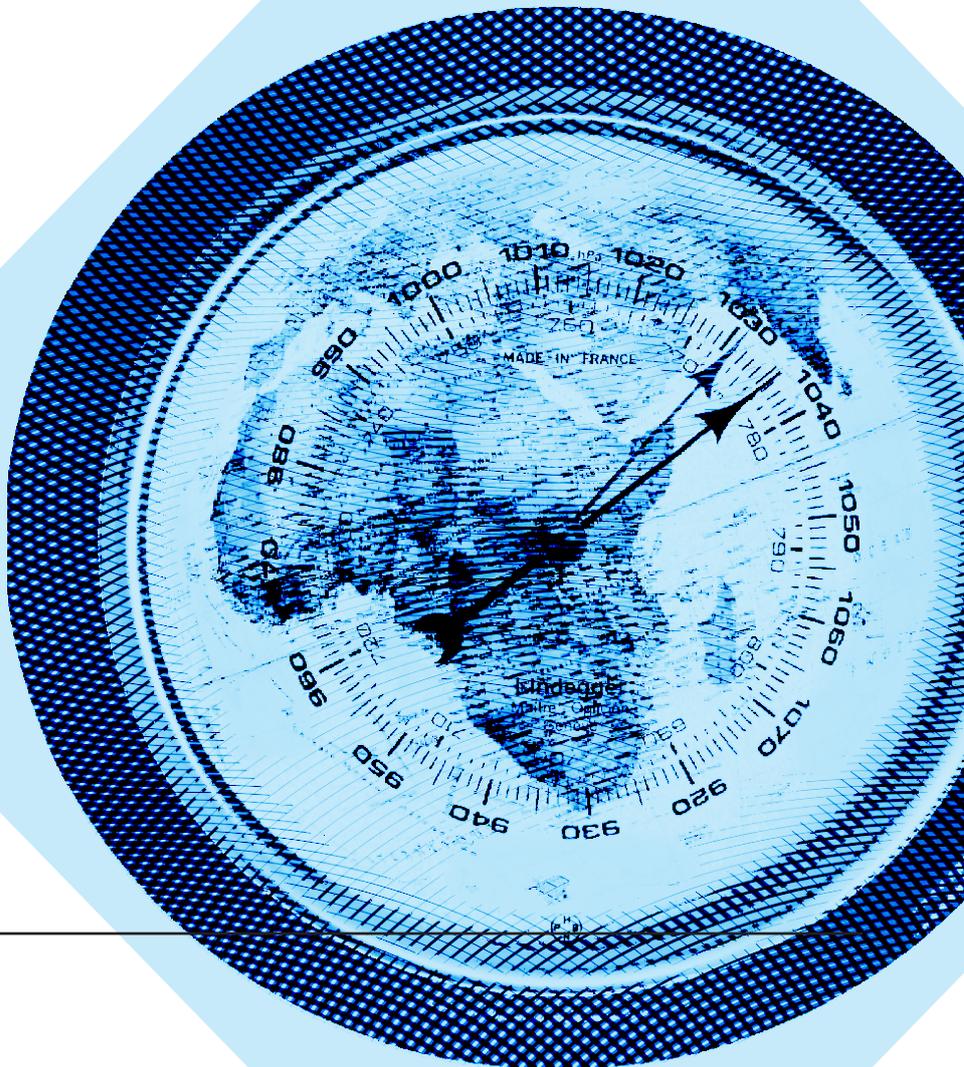


# INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BAROMETER N°7

**French views on gender equality in the  
run-up to the Generation Equality Forum**

Consolidating progress  
and achieving objectives

JULY 2020



# FOREWORD

---

The 'Generation Equality Forum' is the biggest international conference on gender equality in the last 25 years, co-organised by France and Mexico to be held in the summer of 2021 under the auspices of UN Women. In the run-up to the Forum, this seventh edition of Focus 2030's International Development Barometer aims to better understand and explain French opinions, attitudes, and behaviour on gender equality. As such, this study is made public as part of the "Generation Equality Voices" engagement festival, an initiative organized by the UN Women France Committee, a partner organization of Focus 2030

This edition of the International Development Barometer<sup>1</sup> follows the recent publication of the World Economic Forum Global Gender Report 2020 report, which estimates that on current trends, it will take on average another 99.5 years to close the global gender gap in politics, economics, health and education. Our survey examines French opinion on this issue in order to better understand the dynamics and difficulties on achieving gender equality, the fifth of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to which all UN member states have committed to achieving by 2030.

Do French people think that progress has been made in the last 25 years, since the last global conference on women's rights took place in Beijing? Do they think that gender stereotypes remain? Should France support feminist movements around the world? And would they be willing to stand up for the cause?

These are the questions which were answered by a representative sample of 2003 French adults in February 2020.

We hope that their answers, and our analysis, will help to create debate and build action from the many civil society organisations, institutions, development agencies and governments who will be working in the coming months to ensure that the Generation Equality Forum, to be held in the summer of 2021, is another historic milestone for women's empowerment and gender equality.

(1) [World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Report 2020](#)

# INTRODUCTION

---

In contrast to a number of societal issues which cause heated discussion, it seems that French people can agree on gender equality. In this edition of our Barometer, focusing on this issue, we do not therefore find a 'tribalisation of opinion'<sup>2</sup> which Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee identify as common to other issues which, it seems in today's world, cause increasing debate and division.

In contrast also to the feminist debates over the February 2020 *Césars* awards in France (which awarded a controversial César to Director Roman Polanski) a majority of French people - regardless of age, political preference, post code or education - recognise gender equality when it takes the shape of something which ALL women face in their lifetimes. This was echoed by the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in a recent address: *'Centuries of discrimination, deep-rooted patriarchy and misogyny have created a yawning gender power gap in our economies, our political systems and our corporations.'*<sup>3</sup> This is indeed the essence of the findings in this Barometer.

It is as if, all of a sudden, French society has undergone an electroshock leading to a Copernican revolution in concern for, and reactions to, equality between women and men. And yet, we must caveat this optimism. Firstly, feminism as literally defined (and not as an activist movement) is a social philosophy advocating equal rights between women and men, and hardly a new phenomenon. Intellectual argument and long, hard-fought progress in France and across the world have corrected a state of inequality stretching back thousands of years. And secondly, because History teaches us that there is a difference between opinion and real life, a gap which creates the kind of systemic inertia which makes inequality and its consequences possible, despite a supposed social consensus around the principle of equality, and its supposed enforcement in law.

Indeed, even after the idealism of the 1968 student protests in France and the women's lib movements of the 1970s, women in 2020 continue to be victims of inequality, for example in terms of equal pay or as victims of gender-based violence.

Indeed, for the latter, a marked increase in domestic violence in France (and the world over) in lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic has been met with widespread consternation and anger. It has been 25 years since the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) and the next edition of the conference due to be held in Paris in the summer of 2021. And although some countries have made tangible progress on gender equality during that time, a quarter of a century later, we remain a long way from achieving agreed objectives on equality between women and men.

The Covid-19 pandemic has in itself shone a light on the basic building blocks of our societies, given the fact that so many human lives have been at risk. And it is women who have been at the heart of efforts to save and protect those lives, whether on the front line, or behind the scenes, as an indispensable and invisible army. In France for example, 88% of nurses are women. As are 90% of auxiliary nurses and care assistants,<sup>4</sup> 77% of healthcare professionals and

(2) Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee, *Économie utile pour des temps difficiles*, coll. Les livres du nouveau monde, published by Seuil, Paris, 2020.

(3) Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General's remarks to 64th Commission on the Status of Women, UN-New York, CSW 64, 9 March 2020.

(4) Dares, in INSEE (French National Office of Statistics) - 2011 data - © Observatoire des inégalités, France métropolitaine.

social workers, 90%<sup>5</sup> of retirement home staff, and 90% of supermarket cashiers.

A rather striking picture, liable to stir a cultural and political debate, even at a time when the country is 100% focused on the basics of health, social protection, and food supply.

Optimists among us must be allowed to be forgiven for hoping that the seriousness of the situation might at least lead to a drastic review of how women's contributions are valued in today's society.

(5) Population according to sex and socioprofessional category, in l'Enquête-emploi France hors Mayotte, population des ménages, personnes de 15 ans ou plus, INSEE ((French National Office of Statistics), 20 February 2020.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

This edition of Focus 2030's International Development Barometer studies the general topic of gender inequality based on a series of questions which examined respondents' opinions, feelings and behaviour, but also their personal experiences.

Focus 2030 would particularly like to thank the organisations whose expertise contributed to the design of the survey on which this report is based. In addition to the many organisations who are regularly involved in our work and with whom we co-construct our research, we are particularly grateful to UN Women France, ONE, Oxfam France, Equipop, CARE France, Terra Nova, the Jean Jaures Foundation, Action Santé mondiale and 50-50 magazine for their contributions.

Focus 2030 takes full responsibility for the results and analysis presented in this Barometer, which does not represent in any way the positions or views of our partner organisations.

Through measuring French people's views and attitudes - influenced by their own experiences - this survey provides us with an insight into the construction of gender relations and roles between women and men in France.

Even if socioeconomic or sociodemographic factors seem to have less influence than usual on views on gender equality, one of the most interesting findings from this survey is the comparison of answers between women and men by women; a comparison which demonstrates just how present gender stereotypes still are in France today.

## MAIN FINDINGS

1

Unsurprisingly - and systematically - women have a greater awareness of the importance of gender equality and its promotion. Even if both men and women agree on the essentials, there is a clear difference in emphasis, and in perception of severity or frequency of sexism.

2

A large majority of men appear to be aware of inequalities and the need for change. Men seem generally supportive of that change.

3

The consequences of gender inequality are spontaneously identified by women and men in terms of violence (physical and mental), economic inequality (the gender pay gap), or professional inequality (access to management positions). Enforcing parity appears as an immediate and obvious solution.

4

The usual sociodemographic factors seem less influential than for other development issues. However:

- Differences in opinion do emerge according to the stage in respondents' careers (entry-point professionals compared to those who are retired) or their generation (millennials vs. the generation of the 1968 student protests in France).
- Surprisingly, older respondents are sometimes more aware about gender equality than middle-aged respondents.
- Left-wing voters show a slightly greater awareness on gender equality (as for other social issues).

5

Regardless of cultural or ideological views, gender equality in France appears to be something which a majority of people understand, accept, expect, and want. Those who disagree are a minority, in every configuration, which suggests an increasingly clear mandate for major change.

6

For French people, it is acknowledged - or even assumed - that promoting gender equality should be a central rather than peripheral part of development policies in order to tackle poverty sustainably.

# CONTENTS

1

Gender equality in developing countries, and beyond

[page 7](#)

2

Gender equality in France: roots, issues, and implications

[page 21](#)

3

Gender equality as a personal experience: revelations and confessions

[page 33](#)

4

Introducing the International Development Barometer

[page 47](#)

1

# **GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BEYOND**

## 52% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK GENDER EQUALITY HAS IMPROVED IN THE LAST 25 YEARS

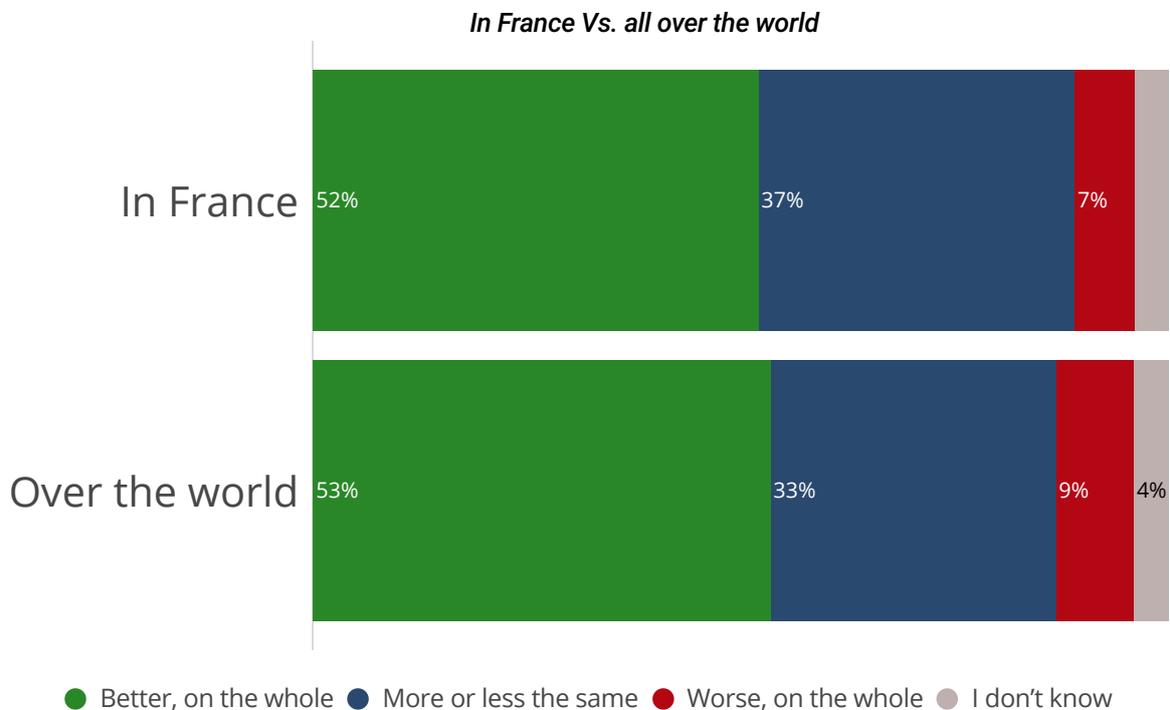
Respondents see the same level of progression on gender equality in France as for the rest of the world. French people therefore assume that equality between women and men has moved forward all over the world. Only a small percentage of French people say that no progress at all has been made.

We can of course question just how much respondents know about gender equality in other parts of the world. But the question seeks more to measure a general impression, rather than an objective knowledge. The answers seem to point to a shared optimism that progress has been made on gender equality in recent decades, just like progress has been made on other societal issues over time.

We must also remember the influence of global movements in favour of gender equality. These movements have been boosted by the power of the internet, dissolving geography, distance and borders.



**In your view, compared to 25 years ago, is equality between women and men in France:**



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 8th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 1010 (in France) - N = 993 (over the world)]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](https://www.focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](https://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 1. GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BEYOND

Upon closer inspection, however, we find that men have a much higher perception of progress on gender equality in the last 25 years (62%) than women (42%). And, following the same logic, women - the supposed recipients of said progress - are much more likely (46%) than men (28%) to say that, in reality, gender equality has neither improved, nor got worse.

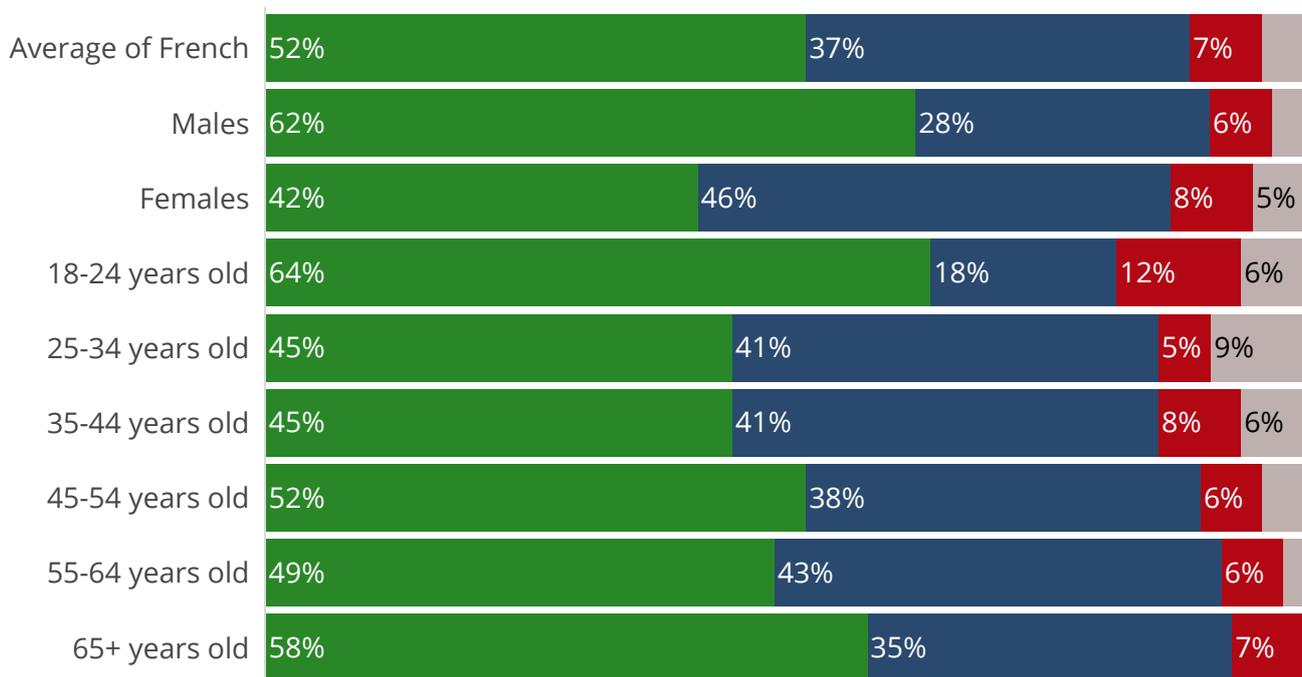
On the other hand, however, the percentages are the same for women and men who think that gender equality has *not* gotten worse.

Those under 25 are, by far the biggest group (64%) to think (or conclude) that gender equality has progressed in France in the last 25 years. In the same vein, only 18% of this age group think gender equality has stagnated. Their optimism is echoed in the views of those aged over 65, a generation which witnessed the birth of women's movements in a country where, at the time, inequality between women and men was much greater.



**In your view, compared to 25 years ago, is equality between women and men in France:**

*According to gender and age*



● Better, on the whole ● More or less the same ● Worse, on the whole ● I don't know

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 8th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 1010]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

1. GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BEYOND

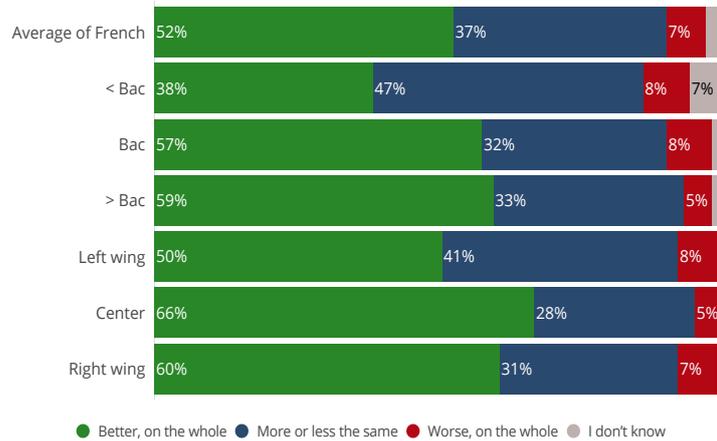
The higher the level of education, the more respondents say that gender equality has progressed in France in the last quarter of a century. For example, among respondents without any educational qualifications, only 38% agree that progress has been made, compared to 59% for those who hold post high-school qualifications. The same difference can be seen between opinions of those with and without high-school qualifications, albeit to a slightly lesser extent (54% compared with 49% respectively) in terms of believing that progress on gender equality has been made in the rest of the world.

Political preference is a major influence on answers to this question. 50% of left-wing voters think that equality has progressed in France (46% for 'elsewhere in the world'). This is a whole 10 percentage points less than right-wing voters, who are more optimistic about progress - or perhaps more easily satisfied?

On this specific question, centre-voters are closer to right-wing voters in their views.

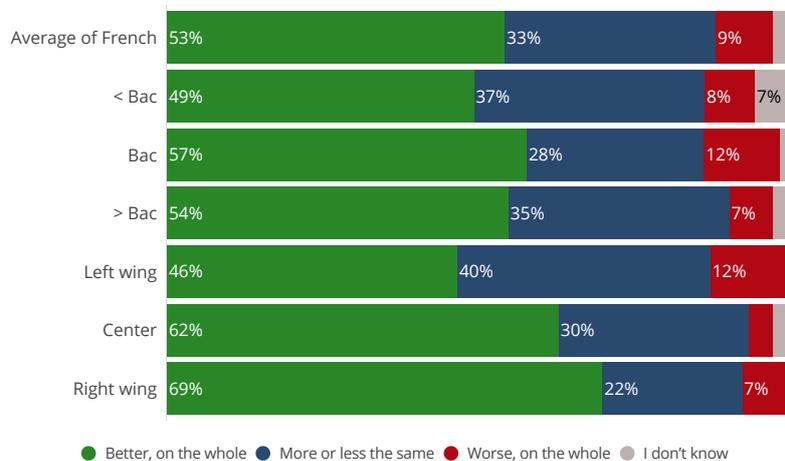
” In your view, compared to 25 years ago, is equality between women and men in France :

According to the level of education and political orientation



” In your view, compared to 25 years ago, is equality between women and men around the world :

According to the level of education and political orientation



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 8th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 993]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## CULTURE, MALE OPPOSITION TO CHANGE, AND MISSING LAWS: PERCEPTIONS OF THE MAJOR OBSTACLES TO GENDER EQUALITY

According to French people, these are the three major obstacles which explain why women are still not considered equal to men, both in France or in developing countries.

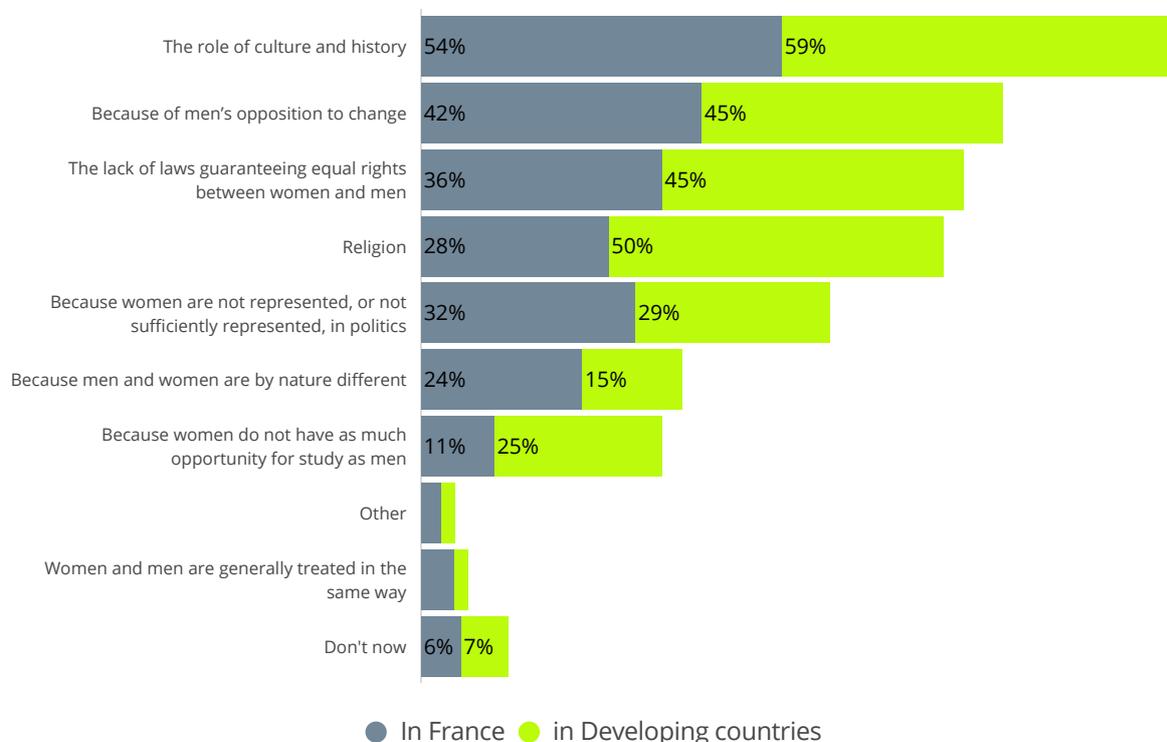
French people consider religion and a lack of laws to implement or protect gender equality as two reasons for inequality in developing countries (unlike in France), along with difficulty for women in accessing education.

Women's under-representation or participation in politics (the 5th most popular answer) is considered an obstacle both in France, and in developing countries.

”

**In your opinion, which of the following are the reasons why women are not considered in the same way as men in France Vs in developing countries?**

(Please select all that apply)



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 1030 for the "situation in France" - N = 973 for the "situation over the world"]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](https://www.focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](https://www.developmentcompass.org)

1. GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BEYOND

Men are answering this question, of course, as observers of a situation which does not directly disadvantage them, while women are thinking about the roots of something which they have experience or might experience. The former treat the question thus from a comfortable distance; the latter from personal experience or assumption of being directly affected at some stage in their lives.

In this way, men are more inclined than women to place the blame for gender inequality on religion in developing countries, while women are more inclined to point to an absence of laws enshrining gender equality, or a lack of gender parity in politics, as the key obstacles.

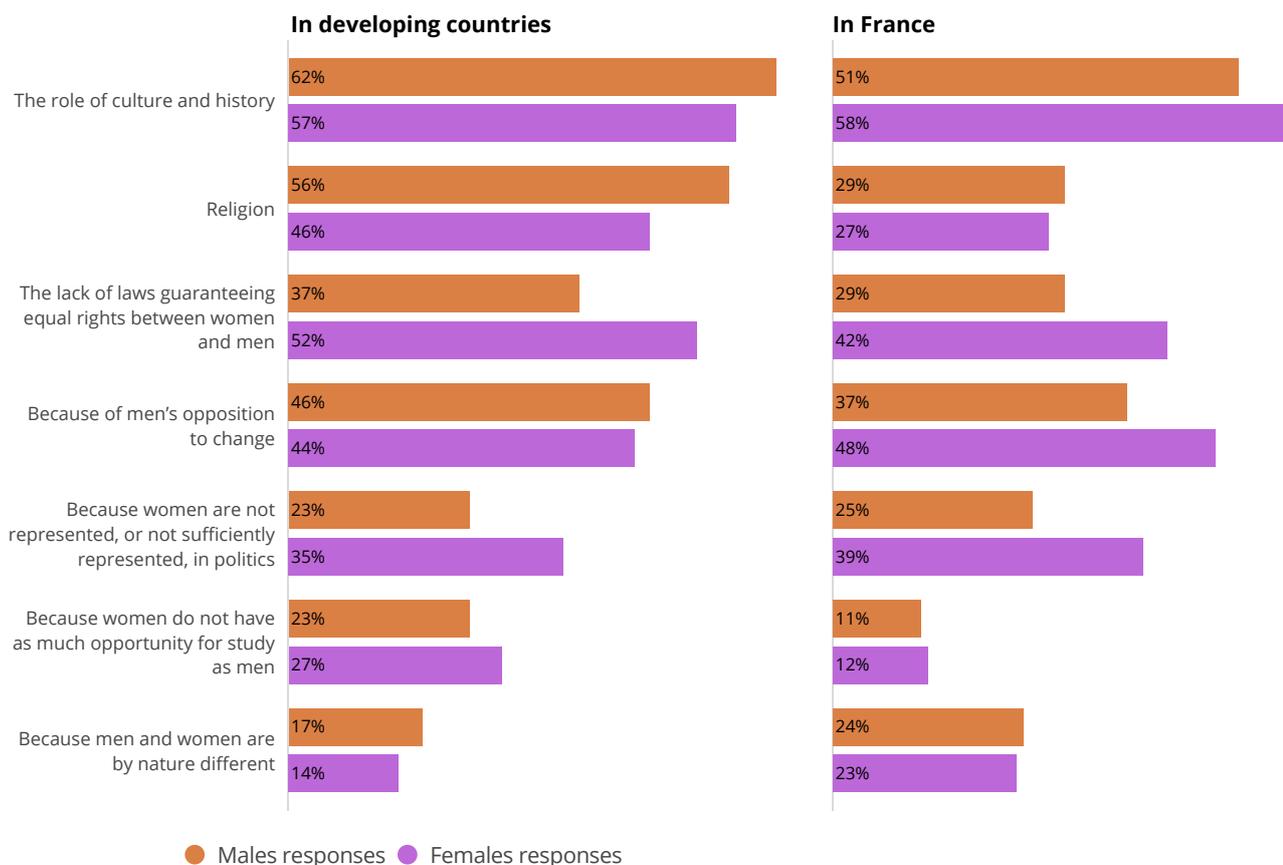
In terms of gender equality in France, there is a much higher response rate for women (+11 percentage points than for men in seeing male opposition to change as a key obstacle.



**In your opinion, which of the following are the reasons why women are not considered in the same way as men in France Vs in developing countries?**

(Please select all that apply)

According to gender



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 1030 for the "situation in France" - N = 973 for the "situation over the world"]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 45% OF FRENCH PEOPLE SAY THERE IS NO END TO POVERTY WITHOUT FIRST FIXING GENDER EQUALITY

Global poverty is frequently depicted around the issues of hunger, education, health and economic independence. One would have thought that resolving gender inequality is not considered a major prerequisite for ending the ravages of underdevelopment.

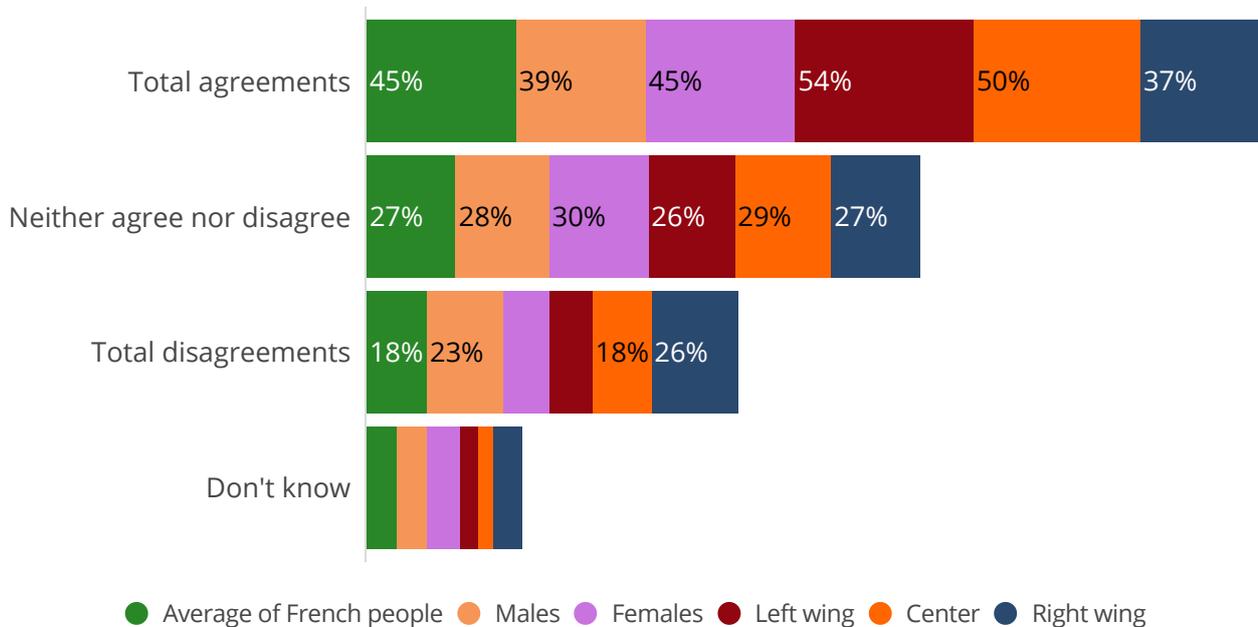
This figure (45%) shows however that gender equality is very much seen as a virtuous circle for the organisation of our societies, just as it is portrayed in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Gender equality is not viewed, therefore, as some far-off ideological battle on progressive values without any practical benefit, but instead as a practical process, necessary to achieve results.

This idea however sits less easily with male respondents (-6 percentage points) compared to left-wing voters (+9 percentage points). Those under 25 are also less convinced (39%) than those over 55 (49%).



**To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? We cannot end global poverty without resolving gender inequalities.**

*According to gender and political orientation*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](http://Focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## **(EFFECTIVELY) TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**



**EQUAL PAY**



## **PRIORITY ISSUES TO MAKE PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

---

Tackling violence against women and achieving equal pay are the two top responses to the question of how to achieve gender equality in the world.

Even if there is some variation between female and male responses to the question, all respondents agree with this analysis of the two major issues to tackle.

Echoing results from other questions in the survey, gender parity and equal access to education are also seen by both sexes as priorities for achieving gender equality. However, the sharing of household tasks or educational responsibility for children receives less attention for priority implementation, as if enough has already been said on these issues in feminist battles of previous generations. However, according to a study by the Harris Interactive Institute, dated April 15, 2020, on the impact of the lockdown on gender inequalities, the sharing of household tasks tended to be more unequal than before between women and men. This was an additional burden on top of the professional tasks for women who were teleworking.

It is as if gender equality was above all a political rather than an individual issue, requiring a national solution and resolution through the reorganisation of society.

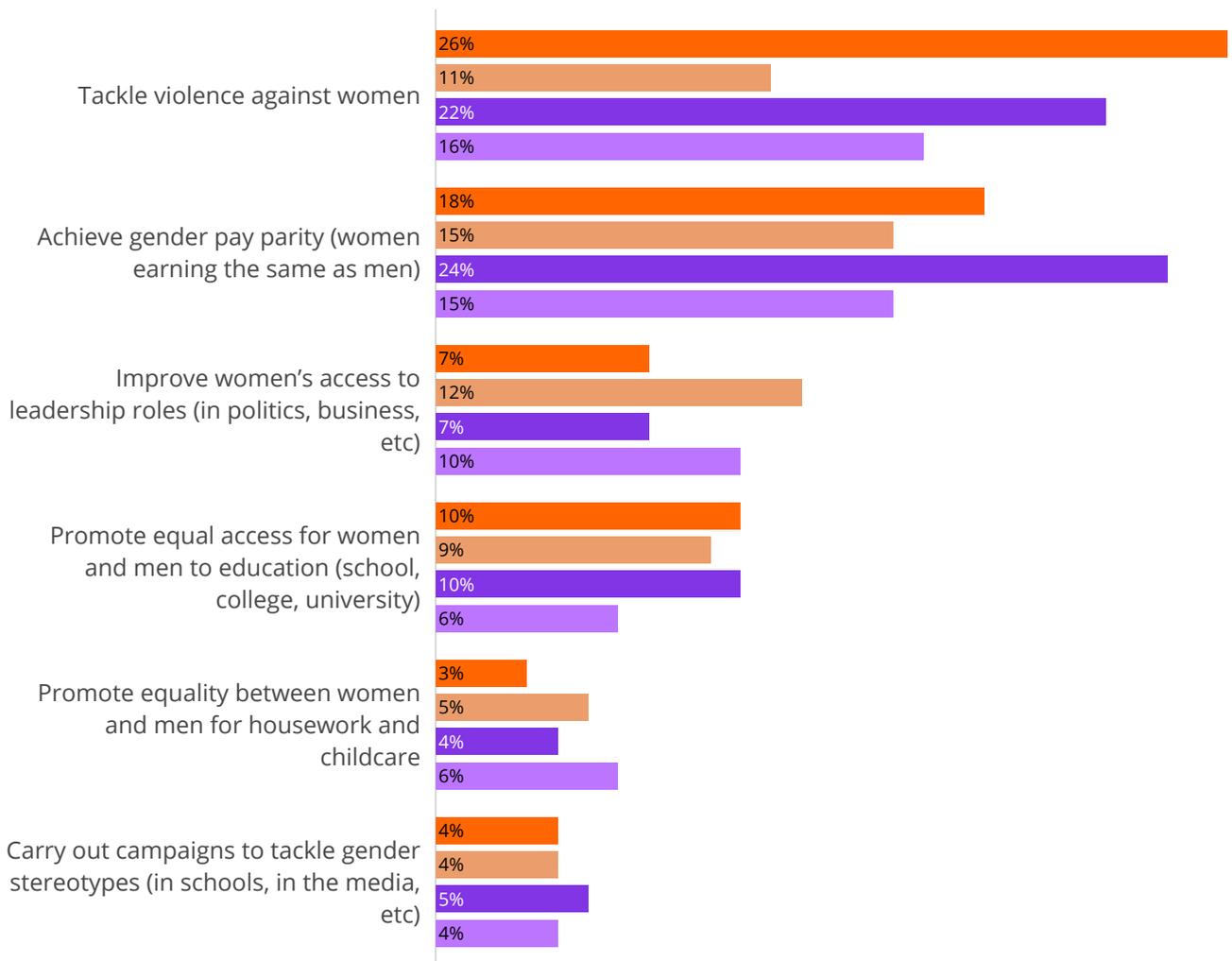
In one way, these answers support the idea of gender equality as an issue for a majority of French people, who seem acutely aware of the causes - and of what is at stake. There is on one hand the recognition of the need to act - especially to address the most urgent angles, such as violence against women.

And, on the other, recognition of the need for wider, deeper and longer-term change to the very fabric of our society, to rebalance economic, political and cultural power between women and men.



**From the following list, please choose the three things which seem the most important to you to improve gender equality in the world, selecting the most important first, then the second, then the third.**

*According to gender*



- Ranked first by males
- Ranked second by males
- Ranked first by females
- Ranked second by females

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](http://Focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

# 59% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK FRANCE SHOULD COMMIT TO GIVING MORE MONEY TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

It is unlikely that many French people have ever heard of the four World Conferences on Women that have already taken place, or the Generation Equality Forum which is due to be held in France in the first semester of 2021.

But what *is* clear is that French people massively support the idea that the French government should use this kind of conference to commit more to promote women's rights in developing countries.

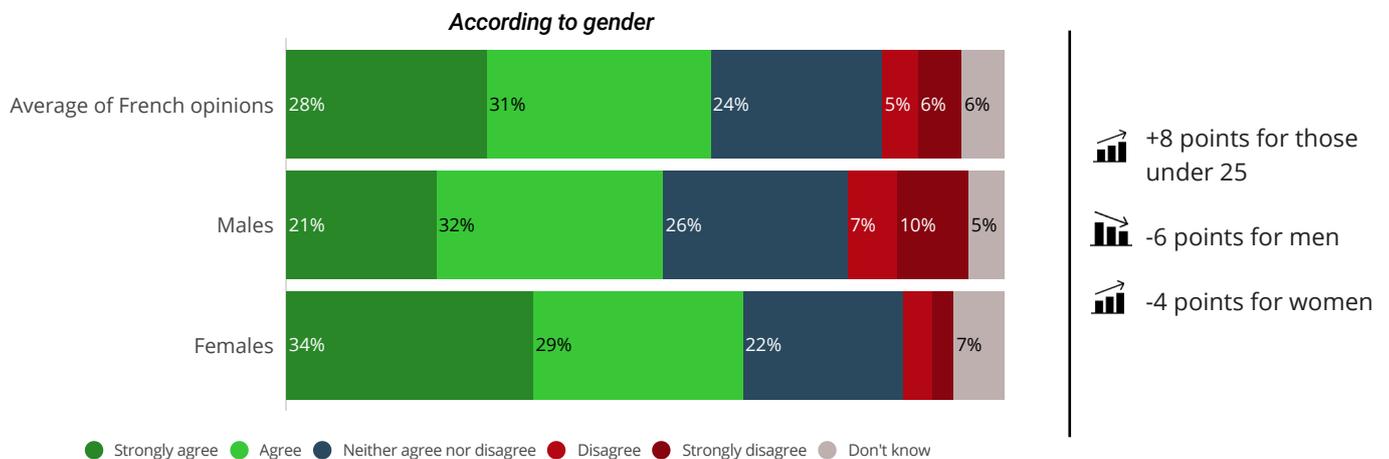
This support is even more remarkable given that the question focuses on promoting human rights - a much less consensual issue than violence against women or gender pay parity - in far-off 'developing' countries, and as such provides no immediate or direct benefit domestically in France.

Given this firm signal from respondents, it would seem that it is high time to recognise how important the question of respect for women (in terms of their equality, dignity, integrity and rights) has become for French people.

This position is shared by a majority of respondents, regardless of sociodemographic factors. However, there is a slightly higher level of support from women (+4 percentage points) than men (-6 percentage points). There is also a positive correlation with the level of education.



**This year France and Mexico will host a major United Nations international conference on women's rights and gender equality in Paris. During the conference, do you agree or disagree that France should commit to increasing financing for women's rights in developing countries?**



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 8th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](https://www.focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](https://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 61% OF FRENCH PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT GENDER EQUALITY SHOULD BE A PRIORITY FOR FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AID

The forthcoming Generation Equality Forum provides an opportunity for Heads of State and Government attending to commit politically and financially to gender equality in the world's poorest countries. It is interesting to note that in France, host country for the conference, there is massive public support for using France's aid spending to foster gender equality.

This does not appear to be an ideological stance from a 'developed' country, but rather an understanding of gender equality as a pre-condition to development, a major structural element necessary for a transition to a more stable, prosperous nation state.

Indeed, this result indicates a clear association for French people between gender equality and every other aspect of development: political economy, health, education, economic stability, social justice, etc. In other words, in France in 2020, a majority of people see gender equality as a central priority everywhere, rather than a minor issue.

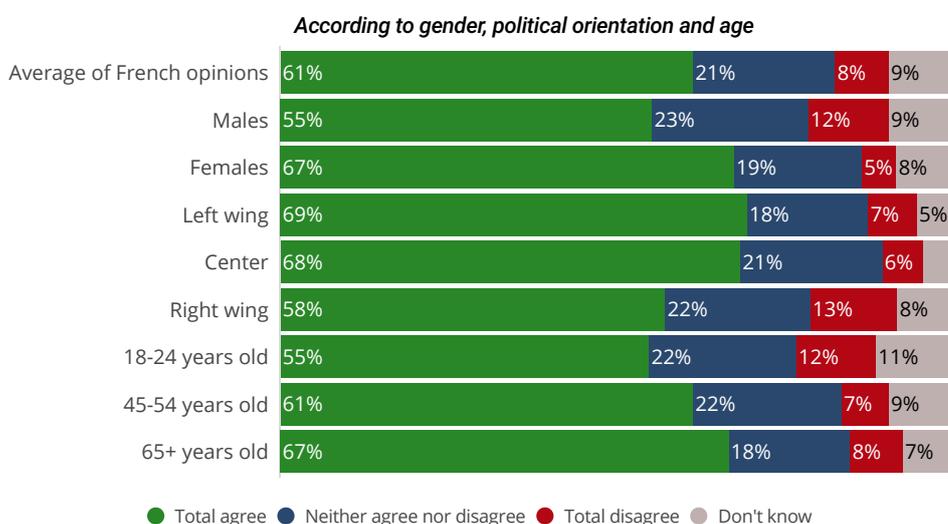
Again, we find greater support for this view from women (67%) than from men (55%). Despite this difference (12 percentage points) between female and male opinions, both remain overwhelmingly in favour of making gender equality a priority for French development aid in developing countries.

There is a slightly lower level of support from right-wing voters (58%) for making gender equality a priority for French aid, whereas centre-voters, with 68%, appear to think similarly to left-wing voters (69%).

We can note also that the older the respondent, the more convinced they are of the importance of making gender equality a primary objective of development funding. In contrast, French people under the age of 25 support this idea slightly less than their elders and are also the most likely to be unable to respond and to oppose it. Perhaps this is because 'young people' in particular lack information or understanding of the issues, causes and consequences of poverty and development.



**Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Supporting gender equality should be a priority area for French aid in the poorest countries."**



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](https://www.focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](https://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 61% OF FRENCH PEOPLE SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A 'FEMINIST DIPLOMACY'

Only 8% of French people disagree with the idea of a 'feminist diplomacy'. Such overwhelming support gives a clear mandate to further develop this new approach.

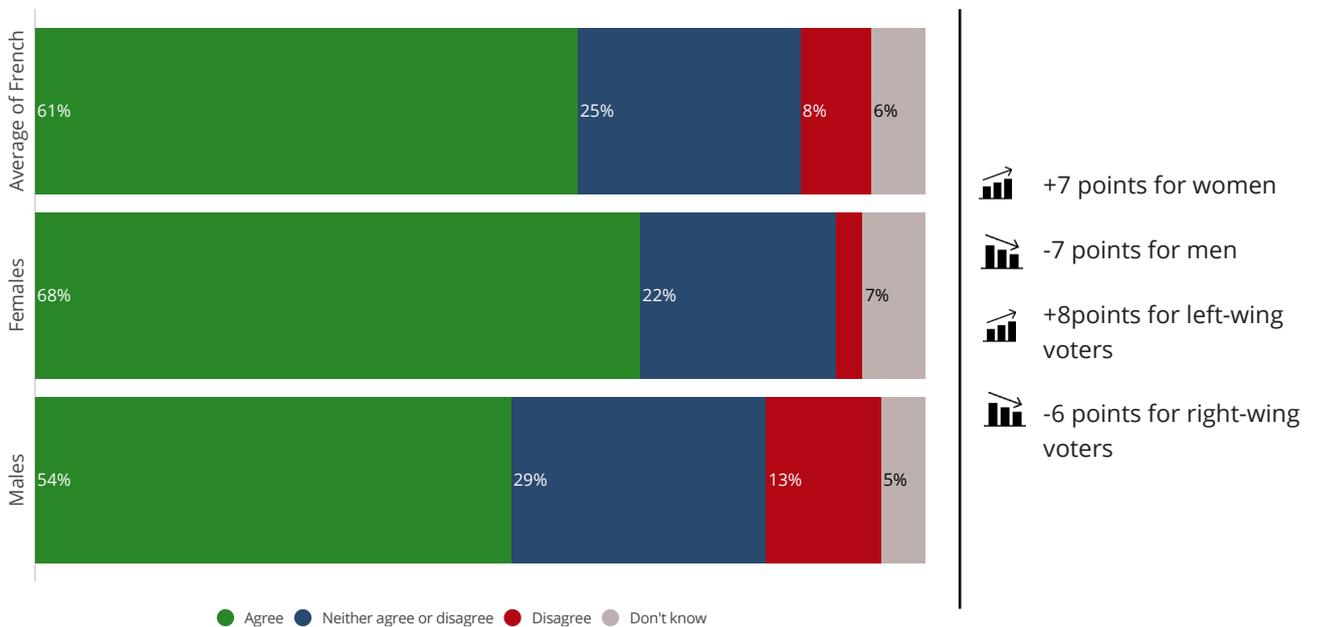
It is curious that this association of the word 'feminist' with 'diplomacy' does not seem to stir debate, given 47% of French people say they would not describe themselves as feminist. This is possibly because it is an adjective describing a movement with which many people prefer not to be associated.

Support for a 'feminist diplomacy' is not influenced by level of education, nor by political preference, even if right-wing voters do appear a little less enthusiastic about the idea.



France has decided to adopt a "feminist diplomacy" to promote women's rights internationally. Please indicate the extent to which you approve or disapprove of this decision?

According to gender



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## A LARGE NUMBER OF FRENCH PEOPLE WOULD BE WILLING TO DO THE FOLLOWING TO GET POLICY-MAKERS TO TAKE ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY:



**SIGN A PETITION**



**VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY**



**BOYCOTT COMPANIES WHO DO NOT SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY**

Almost half of French people (49%) would be willing to sign a petition to call upon policy-makers to tackle gender inequality globally. 45% would be willing to vote for a political candidate supporting gender equality, and 38% to boycott a company perceived as sexist. These figures alone should be enough to catch the eye of politicians and the private sector.

Unsurprisingly, for all three types of action, women are more keen (slightly above average willingness) than men (who are slightly below). We see the same pattern when questioned about willingness to volunteer for an organisation 'working on these issues' or to join a street protest on gender equality.

Perhaps given a long history of activism, left-wing voters score highly (or very highly) in their willingness to take some form of action to encourage policy-makers to tackle inequality between women and men.

Age does not seem to have a linear correlation to answers. Depending on the different type of action, young people under 25 appear as both *more* willing than their elders to take action (when this consists of sharing content on social media, or joining a protest) but also *less* willing (if it involves signing a petition, boycotting sexist companies, or contacting their MP).

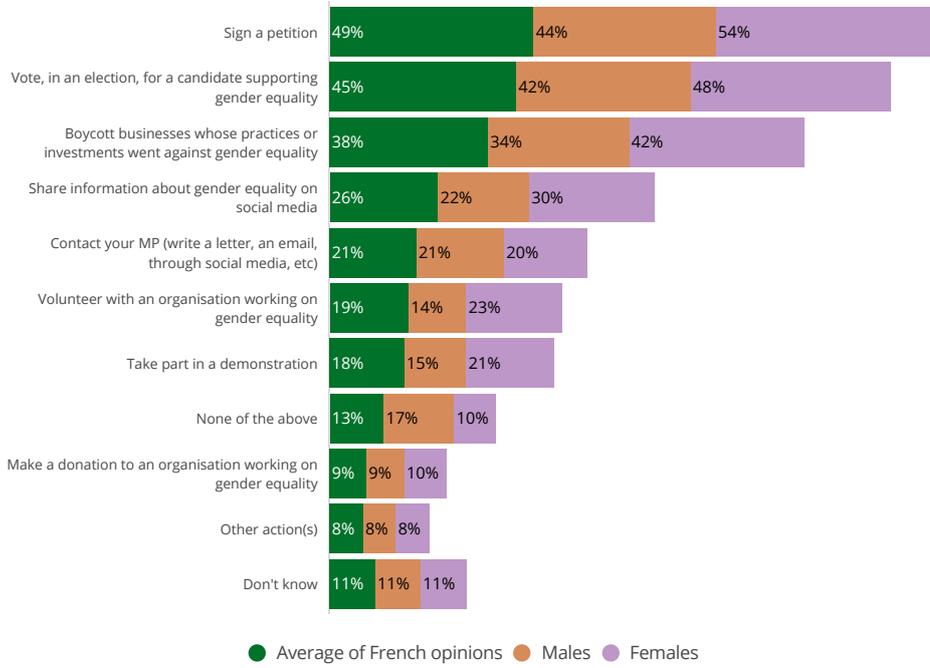
In contrast, those over 65 are more willing to take action in exactly those ways which appeal less to younger generations (signing a petition, boycotting sexist companies, or contacting their MP).

1. GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BEYOND



To encourage policy-makers to tackle gender inequality around the world, which of the following actions would you be willing to take? (please select all answers which apply)

According to gender



Signing a petition:

- +5 points for women
- 5 points for men
- +15 points for left-wing voters

Voting:

- +15 points for left-wing voters

Boycotting:

- +13 points for left-wing voters

Sharing information:

- +5 points for left-wing voters
- +12 points for those under 25

Contacting MPs:

- +6 points for left-wing voters and those over 65

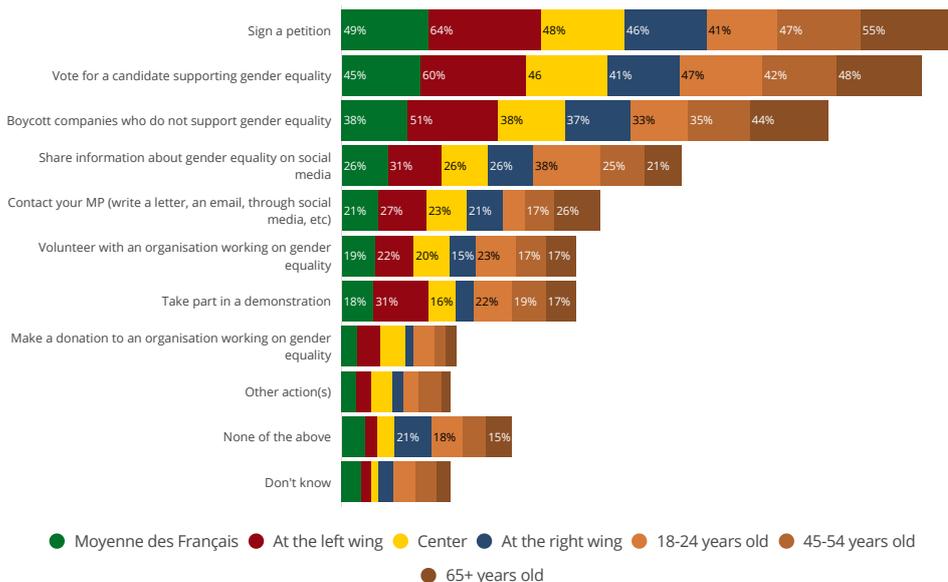
Joining a protest:

- +13 points for left-wing voters



To encourage policy-makers to tackle gender inequality around the world, which of the following actions would you be willing to take?

According to political orientation and age



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : www.developmentcompass.org - Source : www.developmentcompass.org

# **GENDER EQUALITY IN FRANCE: ROOTS, ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

## 68% OF FRENCH PEOPLE RECOGNISE THAT, IN REALITY, WOMEN AND MEN ARE NOT EQUAL IN FRANCE

This question deliberately avoids clarifying how we measure equality or inequality. Rather, it is broader interrogation of the perception of supposed 'facts' of equality in French society.

In other words, how obvious does it seem to people that women and men are not, in reality, completely equal in France?

More women (76%) than men (67%) think this is the case.

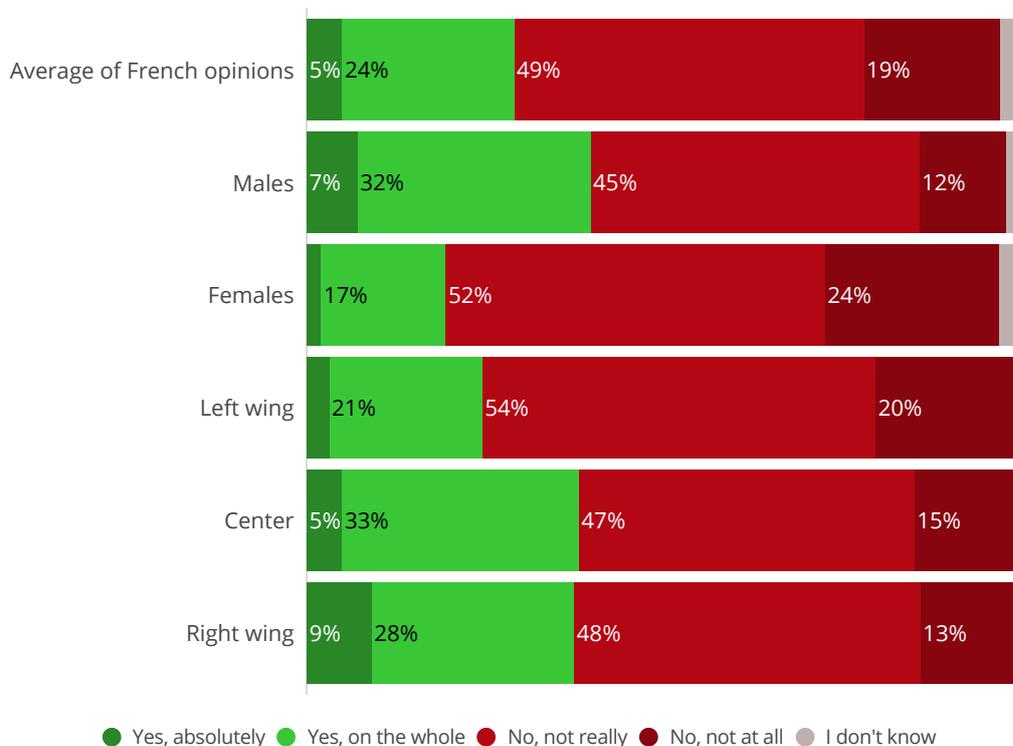
29% of French people however do think that gender equality has already been, or has nearly been, achieved.

On this question, there is a 13 percentage points difference between left-wing voters at 24% (who are clearly less convinced that gender equality has been achieved in reality in France), compared to right-wing voters (37%) and centre-voters (38%).



**Would you say that women and men in France are completely equal?**

*According to gender and political orientation*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](http://Focus2030.org) - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 64% OF FRENCH PEOPLE ARE AWARE THAT WOMEN ARE PAID LESS THAN MEN FOR THE SAME WORK

The fact that women earn less than men for the same work - the 'gender pay gap' - is familiar news to most French people. However, and even when faced with numerical evidence that the average salary for women is 23% lower than for men in France<sup>6</sup> - we still see a gendered response to this question. Only 57% of men compared to 72% of women (a 15 percentage points difference) acknowledge this gender pay gap. And yet, in theory, answers to this question should be based on fact, rather than individual opinion.

Left-wing voters, traditionally more involved in social issues, are above the average in recognising the gender pay gap (+9 points). In contrast, when we look at the responses according to a breakdown of votes for candidates in the second round of the French presidential election of 2017, those who voted for far-right candidate Marine Le Pen seem to share a similar perception of this question to those who voted for centre candidate Emmanuel Macron (64% and 68% respectively).

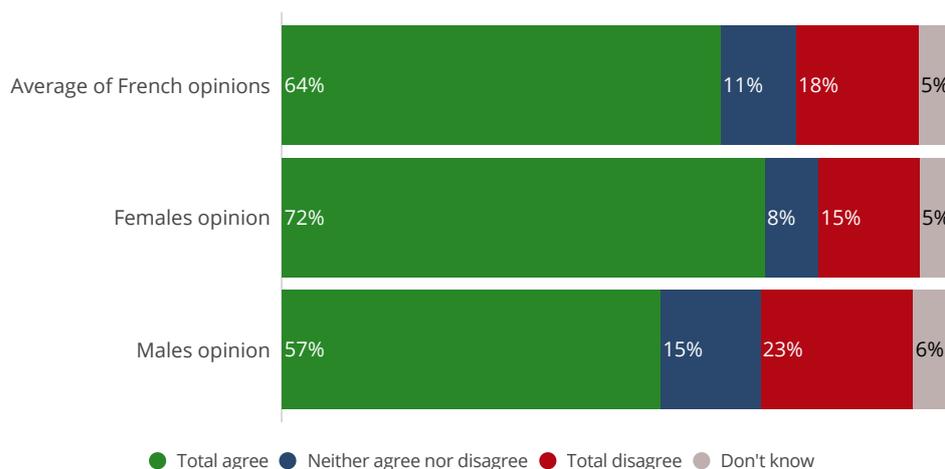
Those under 25 are the least likely to recognise the gender pay gap in France. Perhaps this is because young people are thinking in terms of the situation for their own generation, the first for which a gender pay gap is less pronounced.

Level of education does not have any linear correlation with responses to this question.



**“Women often earn lower wages than men for the same jobs”. To which extent do you agree or disagree with this statement :**

*According to gender*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ±2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

(6) Le revenu salarial des femmes est inférieur de 23 % à celui des hommes, selon une l'étude de l'INSEE, « France, portrait social, Édition 2019 ».

## FEMINIST AND PROUD? 40% OF FRENCH PEOPLE SAY THEY ARE FEMINIST... BUT 47% SAY THEY ARE NOT

The same opposition between those who consider themselves feminist, and those who don't, is mirrored in women's answers.

The reluctance over the word 'feminist' is in direct opposition to the overwhelming support shown by French people for gender equality. Our results cannot provide an answer to this contradiction, but it is likely that people do struggle to identify with the feminist movement which the adjective represents, whose vision or strategy have been perceived as being controversial on occasions.

In the same way that historically the word 'feminist' is associated with progressive social movements on the left, we see the same support in our survey from left-wing voters who are more likely to say they are feminist (56%) compared to right-wing voters (34%). Centre-voters are closer to left-wing views than to the right.

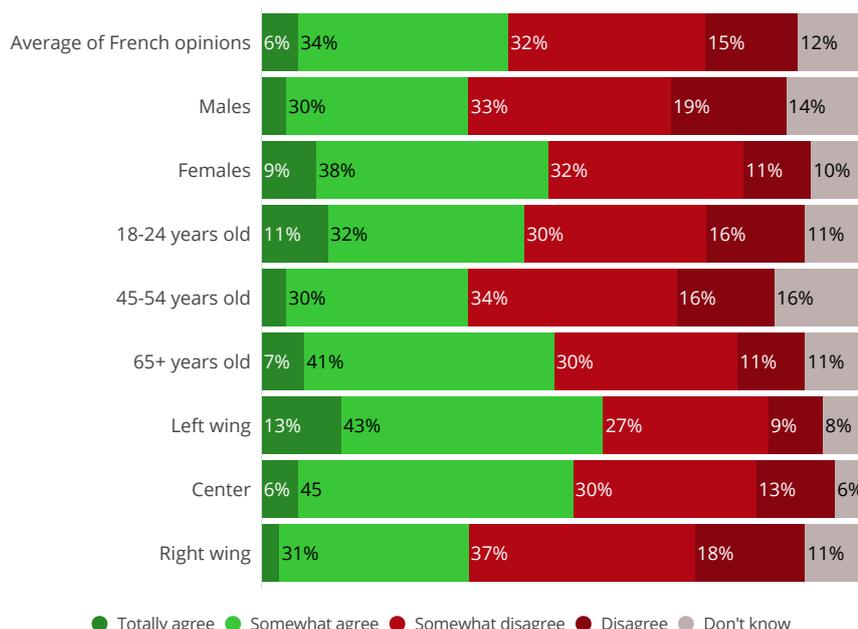
Those under 25 and those over 65 are the most relaxed about being feminists, compared to the age groups in between. Again, perhaps this implies that the elder generation has remained loyal to the emergence of the feminist movement and ideology of the 1970s. For those under 25, interestingly, there is a clear division of high and low identification: even though 43% of those aged between 18-25 agree they are - on the whole, or very much - feminists, 46% refuse any such label.

Lastly, it is worth remembering that people seem to be much more relaxed about the word 'feminist' when they do not have to apply it to themselves. As we have already seen, 61% of French people say France should adopt a 'feminist diplomacy'.



### Would you say you are "feminist"?

According to gender, age and political orientation



● Totally agree ● Somewhat agree ● Somewhat disagree ● Disagree ● Don't know

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [focus2030.org](http://focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## FRENCH PEOPLE ARE WELL AWARE OF THE HIGH RATE OF FEMICIDE IN FRANCE

---

40% of French people are aware that a woman is killed every three days in France by her partner or ex-partner.

37% of people are aware that femicide occurs frequently in France, even if they overestimate the frequency (assuming one femicide occurs every day).

Only 13% say they 'don't know', and only 10% choose answers which are completely out of sync with the stories and slogans so vividly shared by feminist organisations in recent widespread public protests against the high rates of femicide in France.

Answers to this question demonstrate that these recent campaigns seem to have achieved their objective of raising awareness with the public on femicides. Even if the figures we see in response to this question do not tell us how effective this campaigning has been in terms of actually reducing the number of femicides in France, we at least can see how aware people are about the issue, which is of course an essential first step to ensure public support for political decisions or campaigns aiming to better protect women, and their rights.

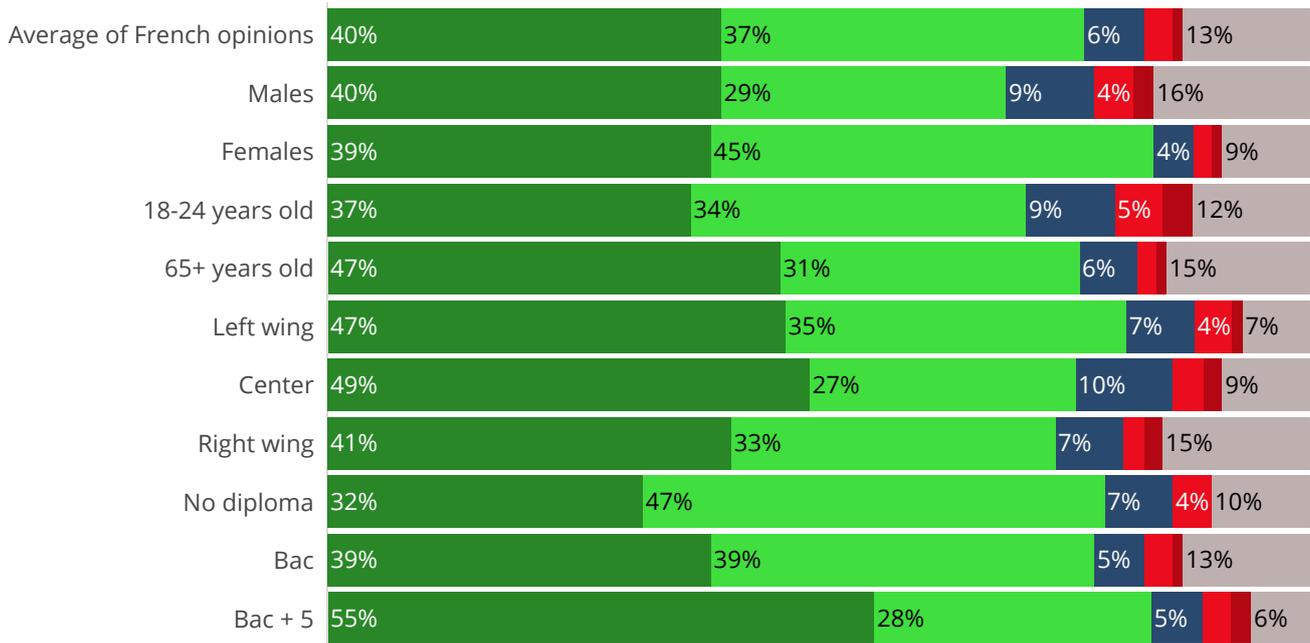
Looking more closely, we see that more men (46%) than women (34%) choose the correct response to the question, but in actual fact, 15% more women are correct in saying there is 'at least' one femicide every three days in France.

Correct answers were more frequent amongst respondents aged over 65 (+7 percentage points) and those with post-graduate qualifications (+15 percentage points).

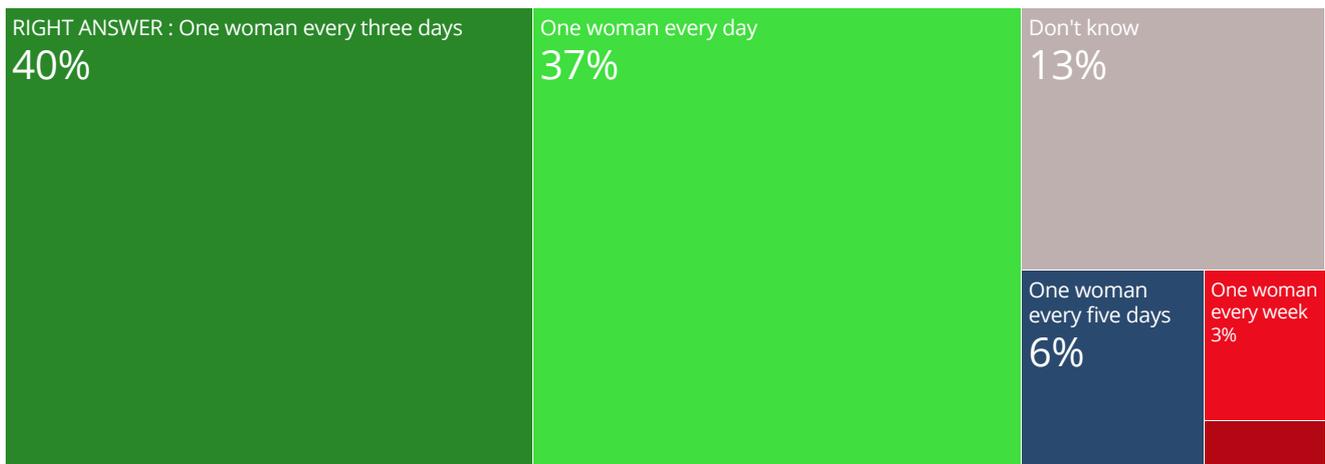


According to you, in France, on average, how many women die from domestic violence?

According to gender, age, education level and political orientation



● RIGHT ANSWER : One woman every three days ● One woman every day ● One woman every five days  
● One woman every week ● One woman every month ● Don't know



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 73% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SHOULD INCREASE SPENDING ON PREVENTING FEMICIDE

A large majority of men (68%) and women (77%) support this claim, attesting that tackling femicides have largely become a priority identified by the greatest number in French society. This overwhelming support, mostly likely due to recent awareness-raising campaigns and a growing media coverage of gender-based violence, shows that femicide has become a priority for a large number of people in France.

It is as if people have suddenly woken from a carefully-maintained stupor which, until that point, had prevented them from recognising, pointing out and condemning the most violent manifestation of domination between the sexes.

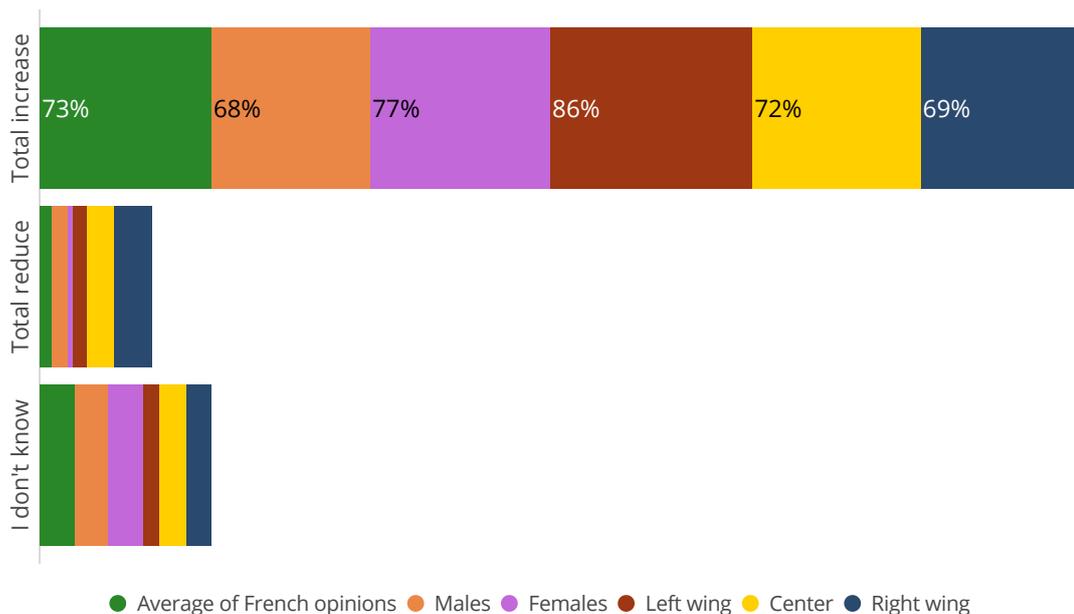
Women and left-wing voters are the most likely to call for urgent action. However, consensus on this question is such that from a political point of view, there would be little risk in increasing government spending to prevent femicides; indeed there is strong support across the political spectrum for this investment.

Contrary to what we might expect, those under 35 are slightly less enthusiastic (-8 percentage points) about this proposal, and also more likely to return a 'I don't know' answer. Spending more on preventing femicides seems less of a priority to them than to older generations, as if they believed (wrongly) that their generation is safe from such an old-fashioned problem.

”

**Given the number of “femicides” (the murder of a woman or girl because they are female) in France, do you agree that the [French] government should increase available funding to prevent these crimes?**

*According to gender and political orientation*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## SEXISM, WHAT SEXISM? DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT IS, AND WHAT ISN'T, ACCEPTABLE

---

In terms of defining what is or isn't sexism, women and men have very different views on some behaviour, and similar views on others.

For example, both women and men agree that:

- You should not whistle at a woman in the street
- You should not touch a woman without her agreement
- Women and men should be paid the same salary for the same work
- Raising or looking after children should be a shared task (more than housework, 7 percentage points difference in opinion).

In contrast, more men than women consider that the following behaviours as acceptable (or more women than men consider them *unacceptable*) :

- Asking a woman during a job interview whether she already has, or intends on having, children (10 percentage points difference between female and male responses)
- Maintaining certain professions or trades only for women or men (11 percentage points and 13 percentage points difference)
- Telling or sharing sexist jokes (12 points difference)

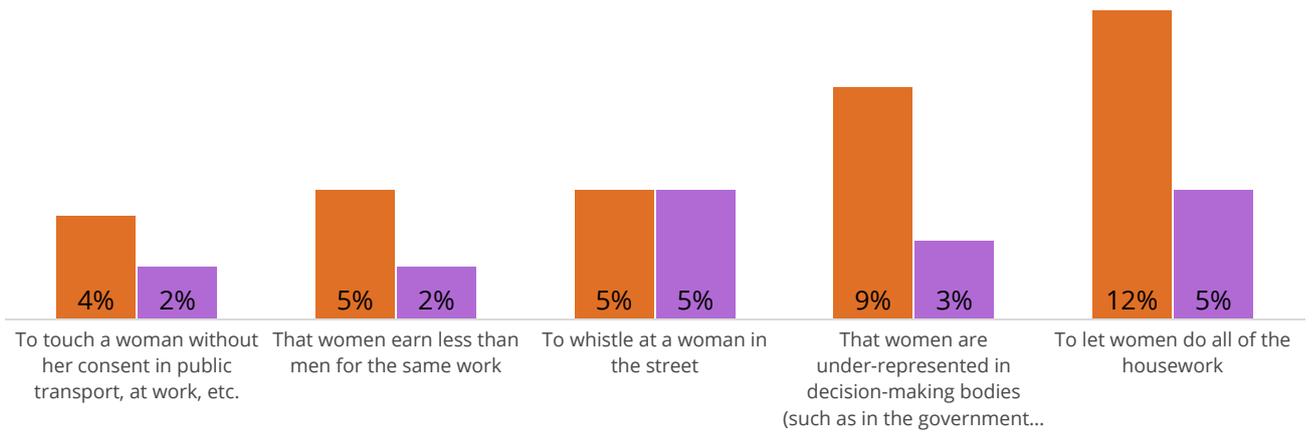
It is worth noting that a certain number of women seem to share views which condone an 'ordinary sexism', accepted as an everyday thing. For example, that women should look after the children (an average of 16% of men and women agree) or that there is a natural gender split in terms of professions or trades which are better left to one or the other sex.

In terms of sexist jokes, there appears to be some influence from age and political preference. Sexist jokes seem acceptable to around 20% of those under 45. This is twice as many as for those over 55, who are much more critical about this behaviour. Centre- and right-wing voters are, like those under 45, more relaxed about sexist jokes.

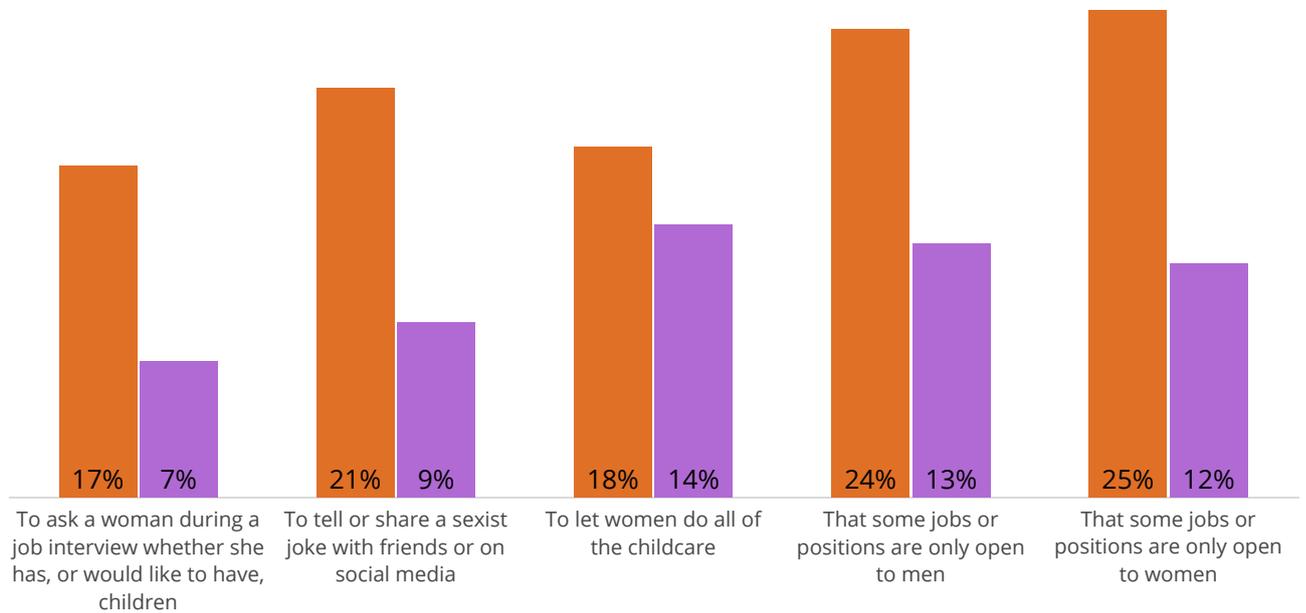
On the other hand, age does not appear to have a linear correlation on views on childcare, professional occupations or gender pay parity. Level of education does not seem to influence opinion either. However, political preference does: more centre- and right-wing voters, for example, are comfortable about asking a woman her marital status or if she plans to have children at interview. Perhaps these voters might suppose that such a question is a little bit sexist, but forgiveable, in the name of good business management.

” Please tell us if you think the following things are acceptable or unacceptable:

According to gender



● Acceptable Males ● Acceptable Females



● Acceptable Males ● Acceptable Females

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 61% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK IMPOSING PARITY IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES WOULD HELP IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY IN FRANCE

69% of women agree (or strongly agree) with this idea: 17 percentage points more than for men. This shows that, to a certain extent, opinions are formed based on personal interest. In this case, given their exclusion from decision-making structures, a majority of women seem to think that only enforced parity will speed up the agonisingly slow progress toward equal participation in the different decision-making positions – major or minor – which make up French society. In other words, our views and actions are determined by our own self-interest, and influence our behaviour and interests.

The older the respondent, the greater their support for this idea: the difference between views of those aged between 18-15, and those over 65, is 14 percentage points.

Those with the highest educational qualifications seem less convinced of the benefits of parity. The same is found for centre- and right-wing voters.

On this question it is also interesting to look at the very low number (13%) of French people who say that they do not think that parity in decision-making bodies is an effective way to make progress on women's rights in France.

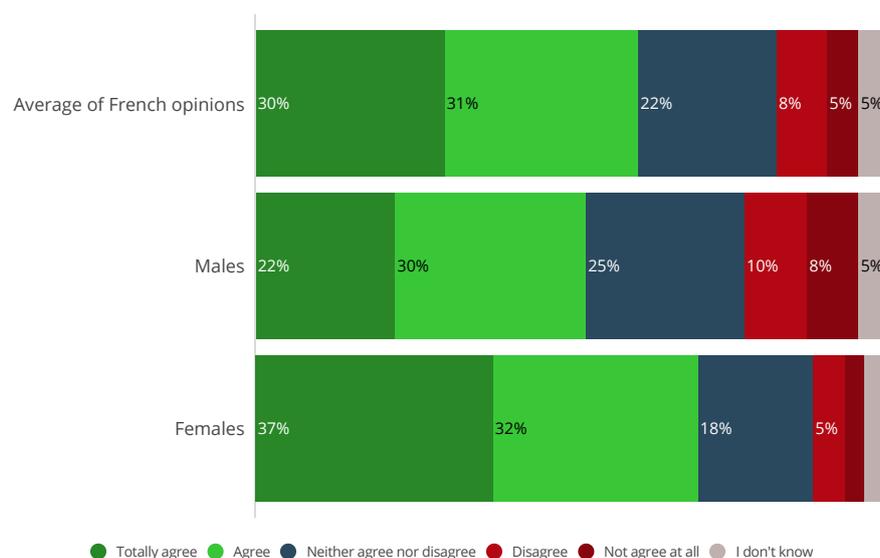
An average of only 20% of French people are wary about the idea of parity (without however being actively opposed to it).

In summary, parity may not be universally popular, but it would appear that this form of positive discrimination generates little opposition; indeed, that it seems to offer a promising approach for improving gender equality in France.



**Do you think that imposing gender parity – that is – having the same number of women and men in decision-making bodies (e.g. political, media, economic, cultural) is a good way to advance the role of women in France ?**

*According to gender*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 8th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 51% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING (A LITTLE OR A LOT OF) ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY

Again, it is important here to examine the difference in answers between women and men for this question.

Views on the government's action on gender equality seem (for the most part at least) to depend on whether you are a woman or a man.

In this way, 61% of men think that the French government is taking action (a little, or a lot) to support gender equality, compared to only 41% of women.

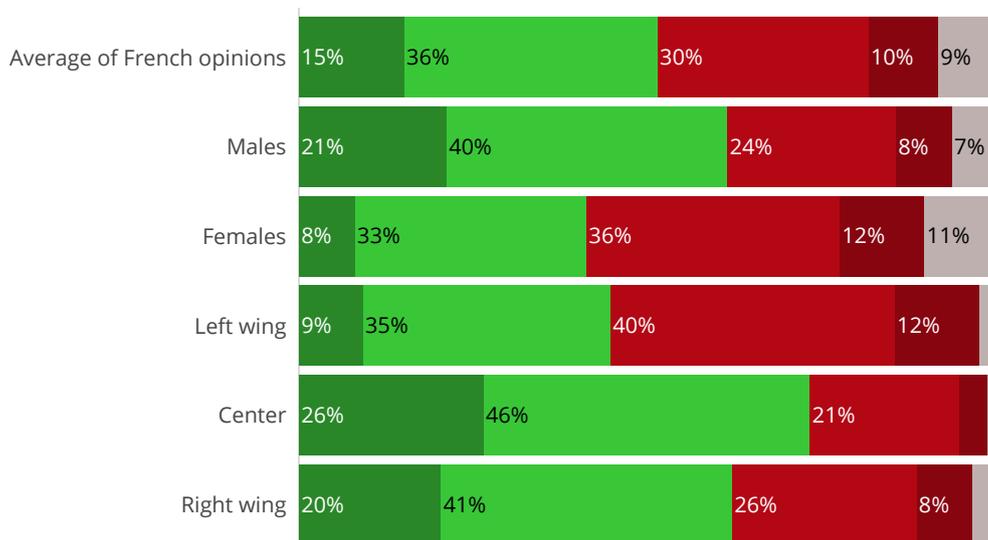
Since this question asks respondents for their views on the quality of the government's action on this issue, it is also unsurprising to note that political preference has a direct influence on answers. We see for example a direct correlation between satisfaction and centre-voters (72%) compared to left-wing voters (44%) who presumably think the government should be doing (much) more.

Level of education does not seem to have a great deal of influence on respondents' views for this question.



**Which of the following statements do you feel closest to?**

*According to gender and political orientation*



- The government is very involved in gender equality in France
- The government is somewhat involved in gender equality in France
- The government does not get involved enough for gender equality in France
- The government does not get involved at all for gender equality in France
- I don't know

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample. [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](http://Focus2030.org) - Source : [www.devcommlab.org](http://www.devcommlab.org) - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## ONLY 23% OF FRENCH PEOPLE THINK THAT WOMEN CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM OF THEIR COUNTRY IN CASE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This question looks at how much confidence French women have in the 'justice systems of their country' (without actually naming France in the question) in relation to the protection or defence of women overall. For French people, then, it is a direct assessment of whether the French justice system is meeting women's needs.

It would seem that French people are rather pessimistic about the capacity of their justice system to protect women. Perhaps this is a result of stories in the media, portraying the failure of the judiciary to protect women's rights. In any case the institution of French justice is seen to be failing in its duty to defend and protect women through weak capacity to take action, ineffectiveness, and, by extension, a lack of credibility.

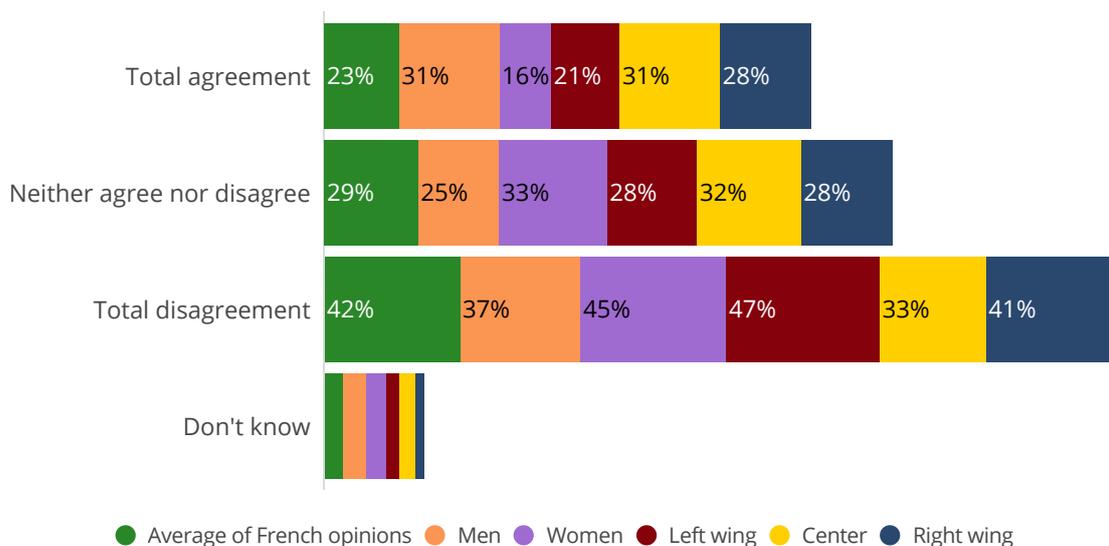
Around 30% of French people seem to have a 'mixed' opinion on this question. And even though men and women share the same (negative) view overall, women take an even dimmer view of their justice system and women's rights.

In terms of political preference and views on this question, it is centre-voters who seem the most positive (or least negative) on this issue, which is likely to be seen, by some, as the measure of the actions of the government in power on this subject.



**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "women can rely on the justice system in this country to defend and protect them if they are victims of violence"**

*According to gender and political orientation*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on [Focus2030.org](http://www.focus2030.org) - Source: [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

**GENDER EQUALITY AS A  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:  
REVELATIONS AND  
CONFESSIONS**

## INEQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN: AN ASSESSMENT DRAWING ON REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCE

---

We asked respondents about four specific situations in order to see whether these were 'gendered' or not, i.e. whether women and men differed widely in their experience of those situations. From the results, it is very clear that our societies are indeed strongly gendered. Half of all female respondents, for example, say they have been paid less at some point in their lives simply because they are a woman.

This injustice, experienced on a personal level, corresponds to official statistics mentioned earlier, i.e. the gender pay gap of 23% in France<sup>(7)</sup>. Only 14% of men consider they have in the past been paid less because they are a man.

35% of women say they have also been hindered in their professional life because of their gender, compared to 19% of men. For example, take 'maninterrupting', or the interruption of a woman by a man in a meeting or discussion. Is this phenomenon, widely denounced by feminists, a regular occurrence?

Going by the results in our survey, the answer is yes. 48% of women say they are frequently interrupted by men during meetings or discussions, which is double the other way round. Even more disturbing, in 2020, is the extraordinary gap revealed on opinions on housework: 68% of women consider that (because they are a woman) they have had to spend a lot of time on housework, compared to only 19% for men.

On the other hand, however, a similar proportion of only 6% of women and 9% of men share the view of poor healthcare or treatment because of their gender.

Mirroring results found in other studies, these answers are a reminder that gender inequality is just as present in the professional and public sphere as it is in the private sphere. From this data in particular we see in notably how such inequality affects women's professional lives, especially in terms of pay. Inequal investment and responsibility for housework also remains a major recurring theme.

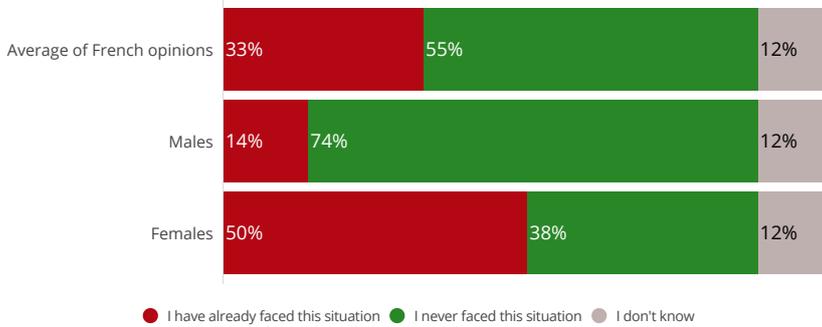
There does seem to be some hope, though. Those under 25 seem to have had better experiences, or not to have experienced these situations in the same way.

The level of education does not seem to have an influence on the perception of inequality.

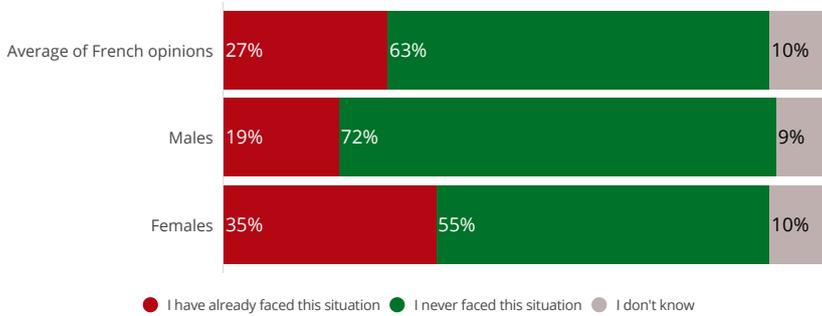
(7) The gender pay gap in France is estimated at 23% less for women, according to the French National Statistics Office INSEE, « France, portrait social, Édition 2019 ».

”During my life, because of my gender (woman or man), it happened to me: ...”

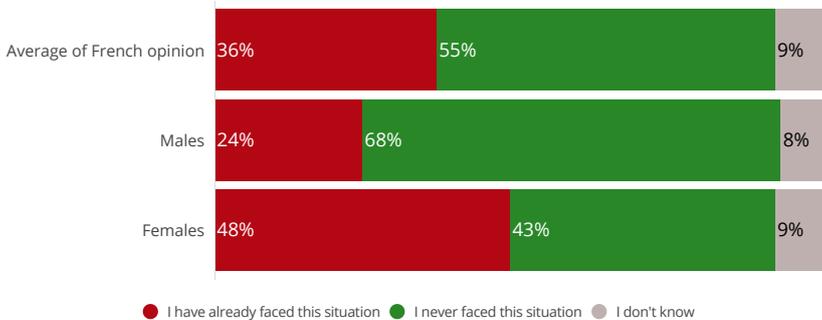
**being paid less than other colleagues**



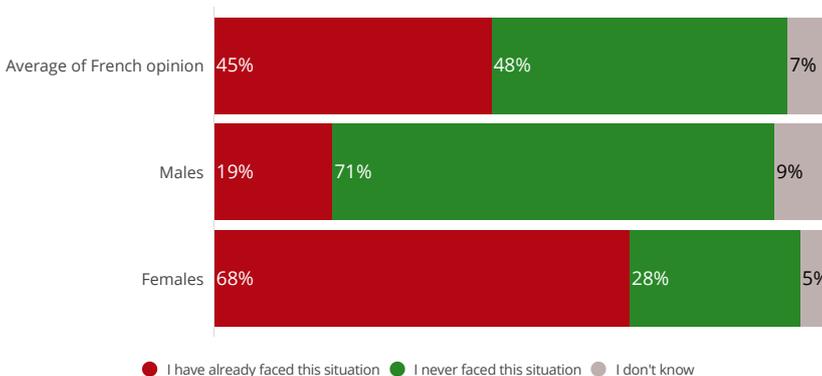
**being prevented from progressing in my career**



**being interrupted by someone of the opposite sex when I am talking**



**spending a lot of time on household tasks**



**Paid less:**

-17 points for those under 25

Less frequent for right-wing voters and those with educational qualifications

**Hindered in professional life/career:**

-11 points for those under 25

Identical answers regardless of vote in the 2nd round of the French 2017 Presidential elections

Identical answers regardless of the level of education

**Frequently interrupted in discussions:**

+9 points for left-wing voters compared to right-wing voter responses

Age or level of education do not influence

**Spending a lot of time on housework:**

-8 points for those under 25

Less frequent for centre- and right-wing voters

Level of education does not directly affect views, BUT the higher the level of income, the less this inequality is mentioned

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## WHAT EACH INDIVIDUAL STANDS TO GAIN FROM GENDER EQUALITY

---

When questioned on this point, it is quickly obvious that women and men do not share the same views on what they stand to gain from a 'perfect' gender equality.

For women, gender equality would mostly mean better (or equal) pay, spending less time on housework, and more time on their career. For them, equality is about salary, personal and professional development, and breaking down the cultural designation of family- or household-related tasks as being for women only (housework or childcare).

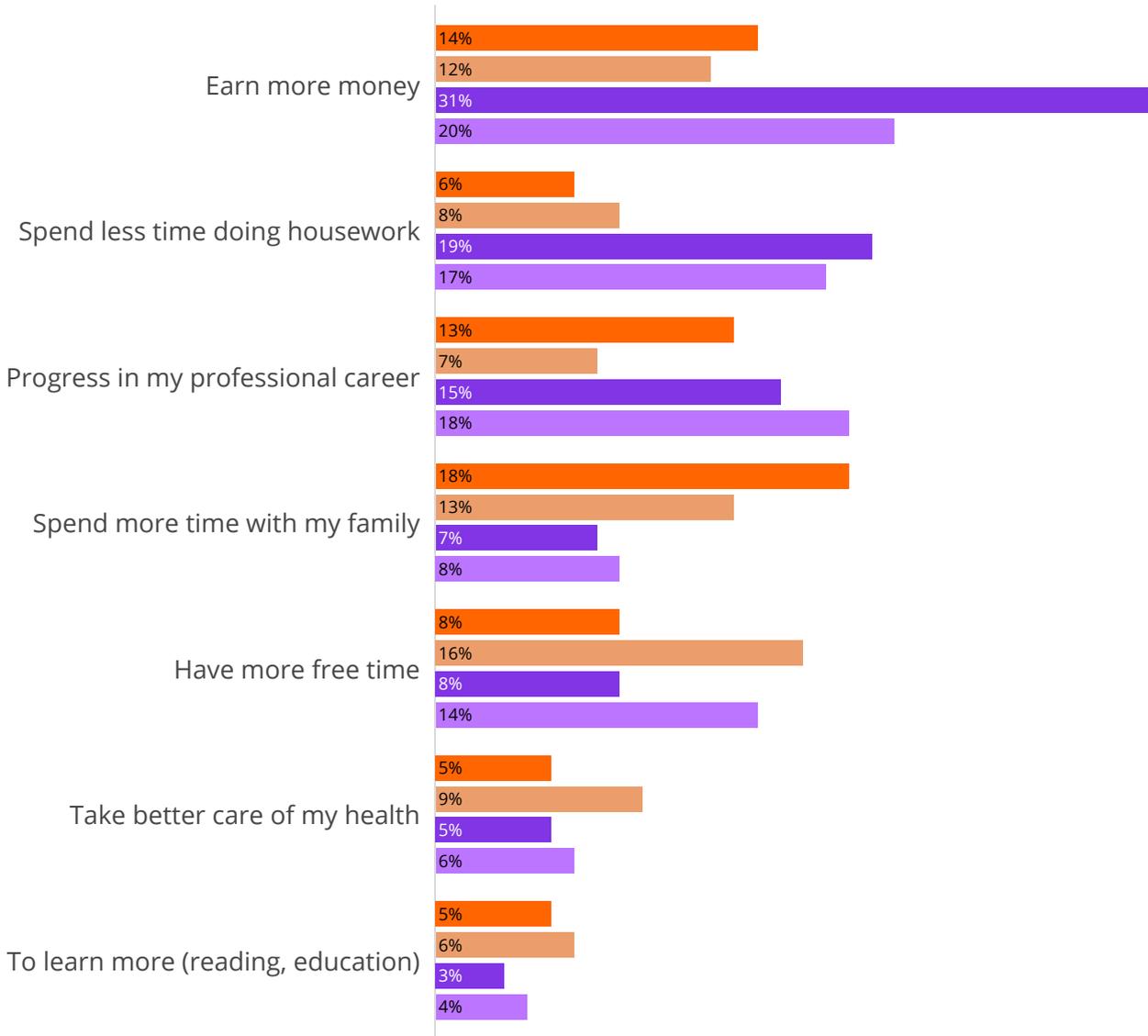
For men, gender equality is seen in terms of benefits of having more time: to be more present at home and with family (spending time with the children for example) but also in terms of more time alone. The latter was also a benefit that was highlighted by women.

To a lesser degree than for women, men also seem to think that gender equality would allow them to earn more. Perhaps that is a simple projection of two equal salaries combining to provide a more comfortable household budget overall.



From the following list, please choose the three biggest benefits you would gain in your everyday life if women and men really were equal.

For me, if women and men really were equal, I could...



- Ranked first by Males
- Ranked second by Males
- Ranked first by Females
- Ranked second by Females

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## THE PLACES WE FEAR MOST FOR ASSAULT: THE STREET, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In response to the question 'Where are you most scared of being assaulted (verbally, physically, etc)?' the answers gave the top two physical locations as the street (56% on average) and public transport (40%). In third position, not limited to a specific physical setting, was the internet (15%).

Although answers coalesce across the two groups in terms of ranking the places where this assault might take place, there is a 20% gap between female and male responses, and systematically more women than men who say they are afraid of being assaulted. Only 15% of women have never been scared of being assaulted (verbally or physically) compared to 30% for men.

It is important to note that only gender and age influence opinions on this question (since fear of assault tends to gradually fall from the age of 55).

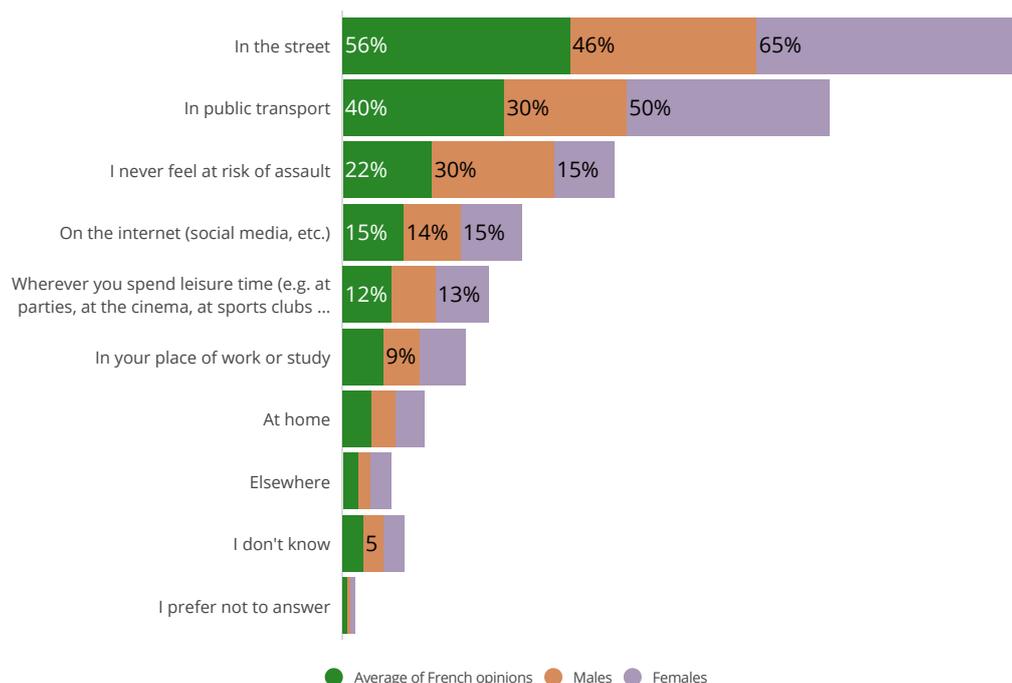
These answers show the extent to which gender-disaggregated data are important, to take into account the impact of public policies on the population, as much in social policy as for infrastructure or urban planning.

Gender is thus the determining factor when we take into account the feeling of insecurity: none of the other sociodemographic categories (education, political preference, post code) have any real influence on opinions for this question.



**In general, where do you feel most at risk of being assaulted (physical, verbal, etc)?**

(Please select any answers that applies)



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## A MAJORITY OF 55% OF FRENCH PEOPLE HAVE NO PREFERENCE AS TO THE SEX OF THEIR FIRST CHILD

---

To test whether sexist stereotypes persist in today's society, we also asked respondents the question, 'If you could choose/if you could have chosen the sex of your first child, would you prefer/would you have preferred a girl or a boy?'

We found that a majority of French people had no preference as to the sex of their first child. And yet, for those who *did* express a preference, there was a visibly higher proportion (+5%) who opted for a boy over a girl.

This pattern is even stronger when we isolate answers from male respondents: 24% said they would rather have a boy than a girl (16%), i.e. a difference of 8% in favour of a male 'heir'. For female respondents who said they did have a preference as to the sex of their first-born child, however, that preference was then equally spread between a girl and a boy.

We cannot of course deduce from these figures the reasons for current or future fathers to prefer to have a son, at least as their first-born child. We can simply speculate that it might be linked to a desire to see the family name continue, or perhaps that for a man, raising a son might appear easier than raising a daughter.

The level of education does not seem to influence opinion for this question. However, age does seem to be an influencing factor. Young people (18-34) are more likely to choose one or other sex (a quarter opting for a girl, another quarter for a boy). The older the respondent, the less inclined they are to have a preference. Perhaps this simply reflects the passage of time for respondents: the question being relevant in real-life for some, while still theoretical for others.

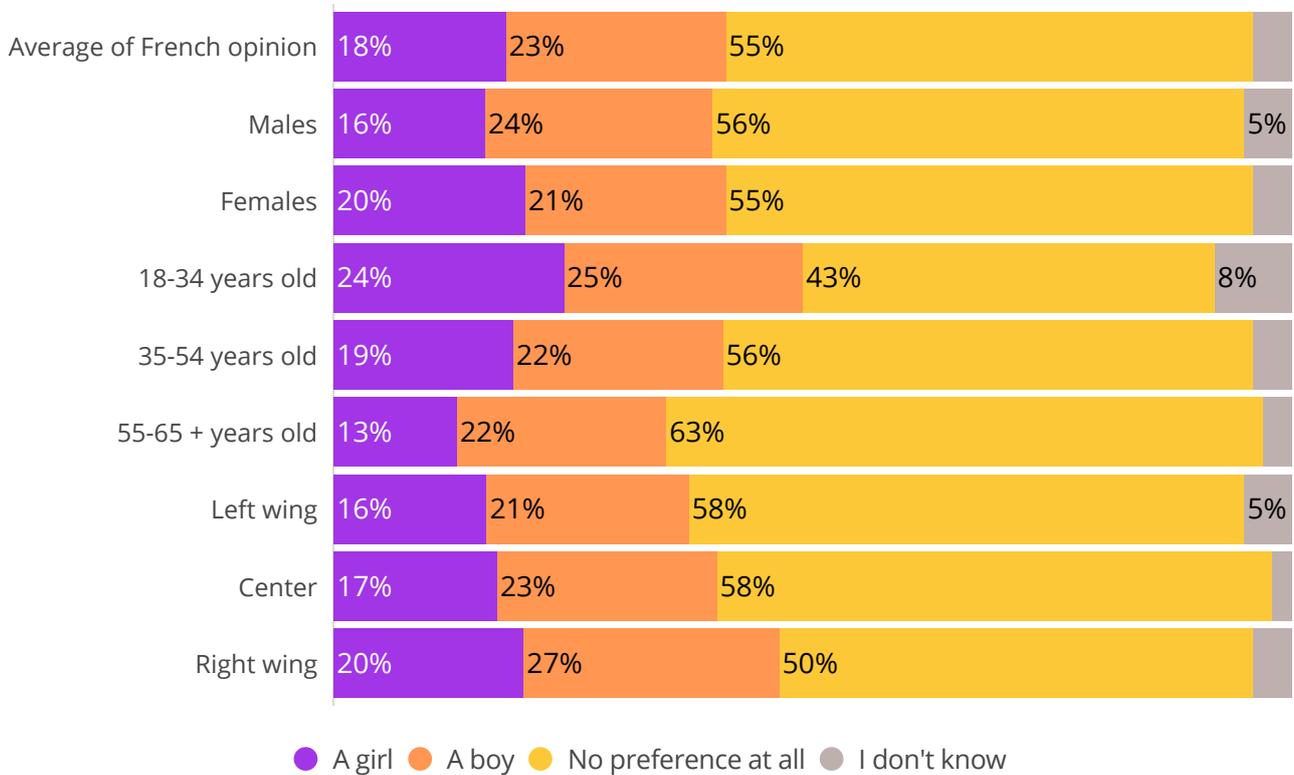
That said, for those over 55 who had a preference, we see a clear choice of a boy as the first-born.

Lastly, right-wing voters are the most likely to have a preference over the sex of their first child (50%), and the highest numbers (for those that do) of wanting that first baby to be a boy.



If you could choose, or had been able to choose, the sex of your first child, would you prefer or would you have preferred:

*According to gender, age and political orientation*



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. National margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## IT IS (MORE OR LESS) ACCEPTED THAT WOMEN CAN REFUSE SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH THEIR PARTNERS (IN THE CASE OF HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES)

---

We wanted to dig deeper to see how persistent gender stereotypes still were today, especially after the public and political debate of recent years on gender equality, particularly following the #MeToo movement in 2017. To this end, we put a certain number of opinions or statements to our respondents, to see how likely they were (or not) to agree.

The first specific statement was about consent. In answer to whether women could refuse to have sexual relations with their partners (in the context of a heterosexual relationship), 88% of women agreed, compared to only 73% of men. This represents a 15 percentage points difference in opinion on sexual consent between the two sexes.

Taking into account the 'I don't know' and 'I prefer not to answer' responses, 7% of men do not agree with this principle of sexual consent (with 13% giving a 'neither agree nor disagree' answer), compared to 3% for women (results are weighted against an error margin of +/-2%).

Regarding the other statements put to respondents:

- 44% of women and 51% of men said that men are 'stronger' than women. It is likely that this question may have been interpreted as being about physical force, given the connotation of the word 'stronger' and masculinity.
- More ironically but just as predictably, 25% of women agree that they are more intelligent than men, a view which (unsurprisingly) is shared by only 14% of men.
- Both sexes agree that women are more often victims of domestic violence than men. This shows the extent to which people (women and men) have become aware of femicide as a social phenomenon.
- 73% of women do not agree that 'women tend to exaggerate when they say they have been victims of harassment or rape'. But only 56% of men share this opinion, and 11% even agree with the statement, believing that such accounts from women are generally questionable.

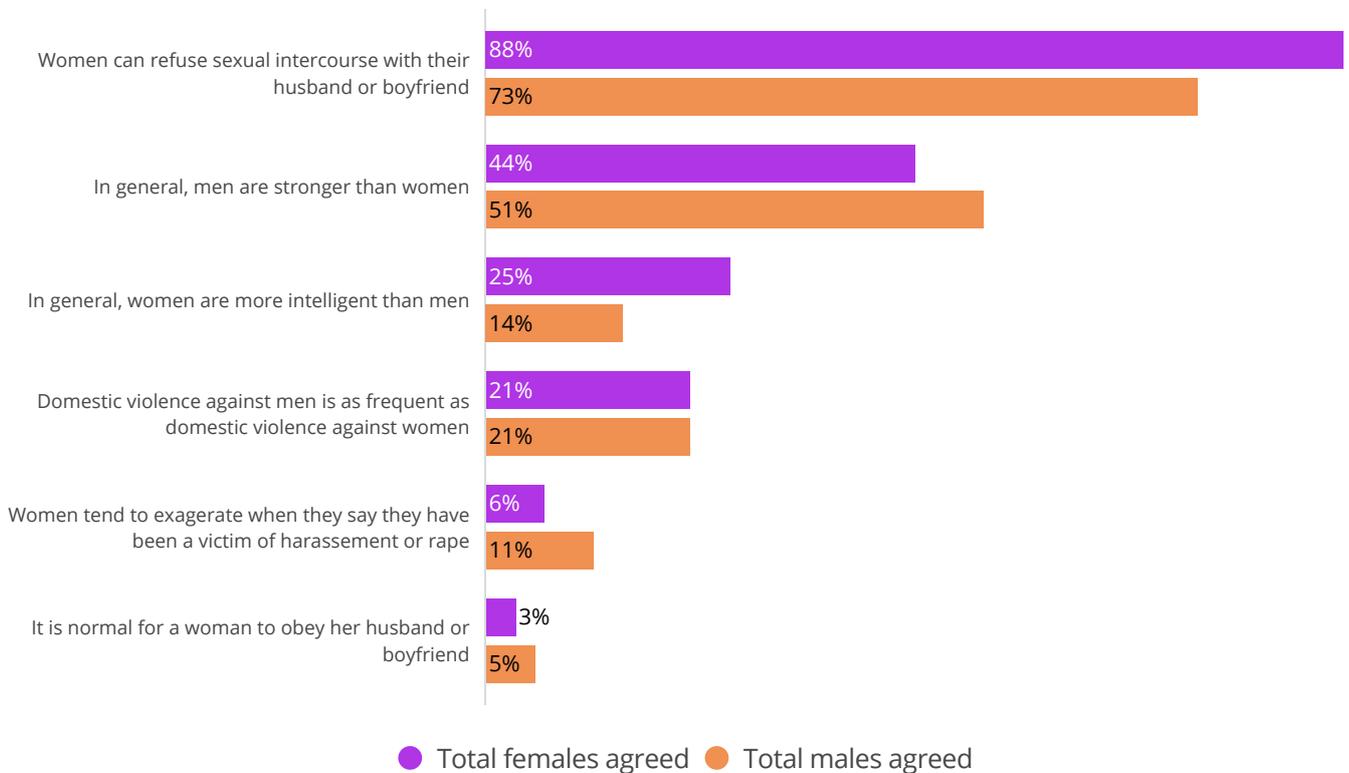
We find then across these different statements, and the responses, that gender stereotypes remain omnipresent, even if they may have softened since the revolutionary era of student protests in France in 1968. The answers reveal a constant, measurable and systematic difference in opinion between men and women: the principle of sexual consent is accepted generally but not unconditionally; there is still a view that women tend to exaggerate in saying they are victims of male behaviour; and the old clichés that women are more intelligent, but men are stronger.

These embedded stereotypes are the backdrop for sexist behaviour, conscious or unconscious, such as the persistence of sexist jokes, condemned by feminists but forgiven by men (see page 28).



## How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

### According to gender



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## WHICH KINDS OF GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT HAVE WOMEN AND MEN EXPERIENCED?

When French people are asked whether they have experienced certain situations of sexism, gender-based violence or harassment in their lives, the extent to which women say they have been victims is striking.

10% of women say they have been victims (often or occasionally) of sexual assault, 44% of sexist insults or comments, and 21% of harassment.<sup>8</sup> These results - like so many from this survey - echo statistics seen elsewhere on gender-based violence or sexism. For example, in 2017, 219 000 women in France suffered physical or sexual violence from their partners.<sup>9</sup>

Unsurprisingly, we do not see the same levels in men's answers to this question.

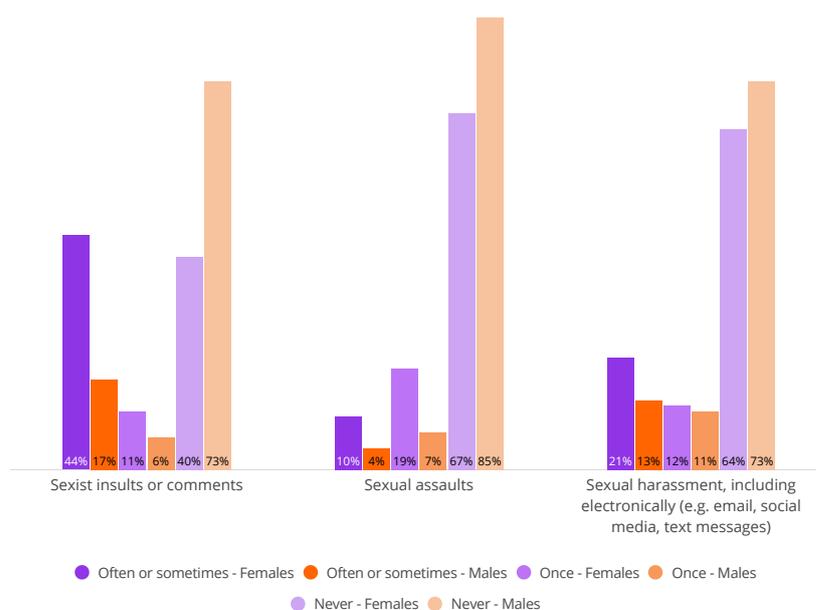
Political preference, logically, does not appear to influence the probability of experiencing sexism, gender-based violence or harassment.

However, there does appear to be an inverse correlation between (female) age and experiencing this kind of harassment or sexism. There are many ways of interpreting this result, but one explanation might be that it is easier for younger generations to recognise and therefore quantify the violence as such.

Lastly, we find that the most educated women are also most likely to say they have been victims of sexist insults or comments. Of course, we cannot conclude from this result that sexism is more frequent for highly-educated women. Again, the answers might simply result from a greater ease or liberty to identify and condemn sexism when it happens.

### ” Have you ever personally been a victim of any of the following behaviors?

According to gender



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 2003]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

(8) Women aged between 18-75, living in average households in mainland France. Source: « Cadre de vie et sécurité » report 2012-2018 - INSEE-ONDRP. Data appearing in «La Lettre de l'Observatoire National des Violences Faites Aux Femmes», No. 13, November 2018

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE DANGER OF BEING FEMALE IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

26% of French women say they have been victims of violence because they are women. The question as it is formulated does not probe into the nature of that violence, but it hardly needs to. The fact that more than one in four female respondents say they have been victims paints an alarming picture of the dangers of everyday life for women in today's world.

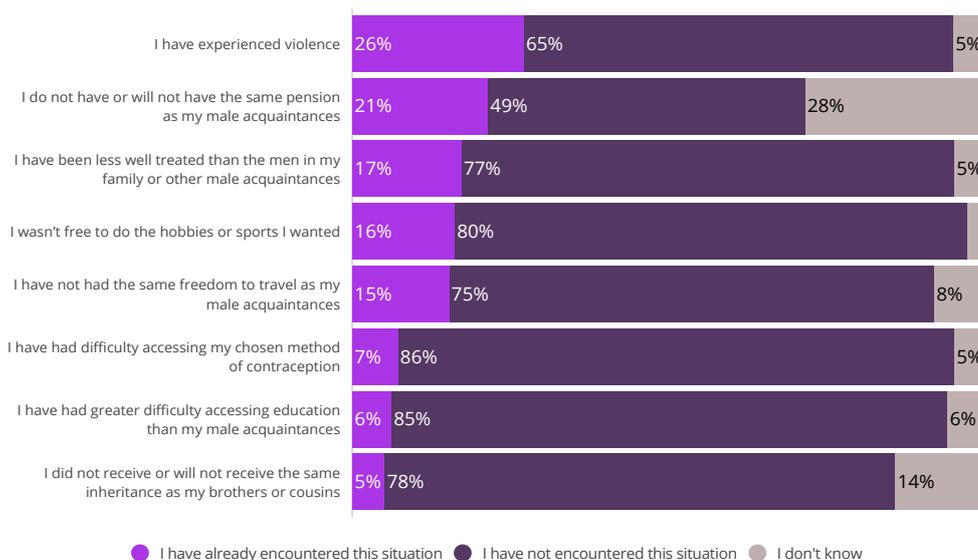
Once again, gender inequality is viewed by women as resulting in financial and material losses. For example, when it comes to retirement, 21% of women think that they have or will have a smaller pension than men. On this specific angle, it is worth noting that 28% of women say they do not know whether they will receive a lower pension than the men in their families or friendship groups. Combining the two percentages shows how concerned women are about a pension system which appears only to fit the perfectly linear and uninterrupted careers of men.

The other aspect which stands out for this question is the principle of freedom. 16% of women say they have been restricted in four key areas, simply because of their sex:

- Hobbies or past-times
- Travel
- Educational choices (which school to attend)
- Choice of contraception



**Have you ever experienced any of the following situations, as a woman? (please select all answers that apply)**



### Violence:

 +7 points education level > high-school diploma

 -6 points for right-wing voters

### Not treated as well as the boys/men in my family:

 -5 points for right-wing voters

### Not the same freedom to travel:

 +6 points for left-wing voters

### Lack of access to chosen contraceptive method:

 -7 points for right-wing voters

 +6 points for those under 35

The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [1159 adult females]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

## 49% OF MEN SAY THEY NOW PAY MORE ATTENTION TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS

---

Those men who say they now pay more attention to women's rights are more likely to be under 25 (+6%), with post-graduate qualifications (+6%) and left-wing voters (+11%).

31% say they have in the past defended a woman who was being assaulted. This is a rather interesting result; on one hand, it implies a high level of awareness and support for women's rights; but on the other hand, it is proof of the frequency of such assaults (carried out thus by other men?) in the first place.

A quarter of men say that they think relationships between women and men have become 'more complicated'. We do not know from the answers at what point this complexity seemed to arise. But it is likely (especially for certain men) that the #MeToo movement was a watershed moment, a seachange in relations between women and men, a redefinition of the boundaries of what was or wasn't acceptable, and the unleashing of many women's voices; voices which until then had not particularly worried men as long as they remained an individual rather than a collective story, of no particular national interest.

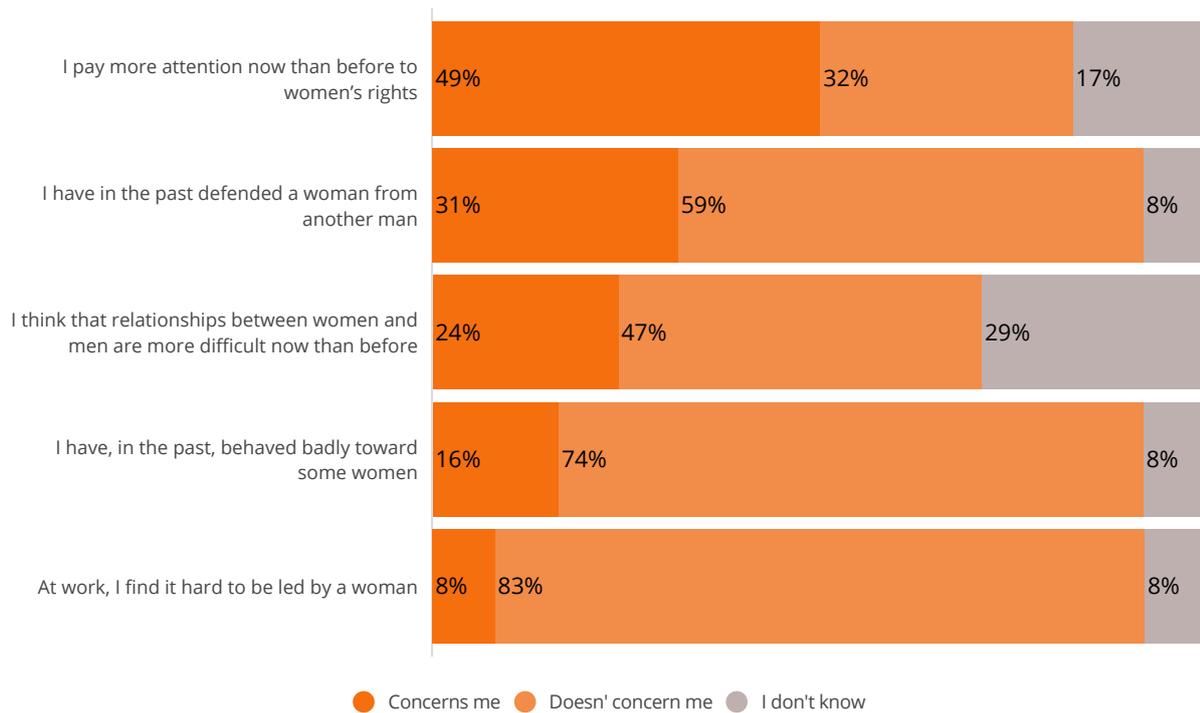
In this survey (conducted anonymously and on-line) 16% of men felt they could admit that they had not always behaved well towards women. There is no particular factor which seems to pre-determine this sort of confession, except perhaps age (more common for those between 25-34). It is an avowal which again should be seen in the context of re-emergence of feminist movements, who have used the public space to clearly define what is and isn't acceptable, as well as the consequences of transgressing those boundaries.

Indeed, men find themselves faced with a new standard of politically correct which has been embedded into public opinion. Some men realise that some of the things they used to say or do in the past, which perhaps they did not even think twice about at the time, are now unjustifiable.

This new awareness can be attributed to a changing public debate on women's rights in French society.



From the following statements, please select those that apply to you, if applicable.



The data and analyses are part of the Development Engagement Lab by University College London and University of Birmingham. Fieldwork was conducted between February 5th to 13th 2020 by YouGov using an online sample, [N = 1159 adult men]. Data are weighted to be nationally representative. Notional margin of error = ± 2%. More information about methodology on Focus2030.org - Source : [www.developmentcompass.org](http://www.developmentcompass.org)

#### **Pay more attention than before:**

+6 points for those under 25 and for those with post-graduate qualifications

+7 points for left-wing voters

#### **I have, in the past, behaved badly toward some women:**

+6 points for those between 25 and 34

little variation regardless of political preference or level of education

## The International Development Barometer: a Focus 2030 publication

The International Development Barometer is a Focus 2030 publication based on the findings of a series of opinion polls carried out under the 'Development Engagement Lab' research projet (2018-2024) conducted by researchers at University College London and the University of Birmingham (UK).

The questions analysed in this Barometer were written by Focus 2030 following collective consultation alongside UCL and University of Birmingham researchers with 20 partner organisations from the French development sector (NGOs, think tanks, and institutions).

At a time of great political, technological, economic and ecological change on a global scale, this projet aims to better understand French understanding and perceptions of the world, particularly of modern-day global challenges and extent to which French citizens support (or not) action undertaken by those working on development to help the world's poorest populations and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals worldwide.

Concentrating particularly on subjects which development actors and organisations have brought to the forefront in recent years (climate change, inequality, human rights, women's rights, access to healthcare or treatment), this project intends to analyse and explain the evolution of French people's opinions, behaviour, understanding or perceptions on these questions. By making our data and analysis freely available, Focus 2030 hopes to better break down and illuminate these fascinating links between the individual and their views on key development issues.

Focus 2030 takes full responsibility for the results and analysis presented in this Barometer, which does not represent in any way the positions or views of our partner organisations.

To use any of the data from this edition, or other other of Focus 2030's International Development Barometers, please contact:

Fabrice Ferrier, Director Focus 2030: [fabrice@focus2030.org](mailto:fabrice@focus2030.org)

## Find out more about the Development Engagement Lab

The Development Engagement Lab (DEL, 2018-2024), is a research project based on opinion polls conducted online by YouGov in France, Germany, the UK and the US. It is a comparative study, financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and run by Jennifer van Heerde-Hudson (UCL) and David Hudson (University of Birmingham).

Find out more here: <https://www.developmentcompass.org>



## METHODOLOGY

The [Development Engagement Lab](#) (DEL, 2018-2024) opinion polls are carried out by [YouGov](#) in four countries: France, Germany, the UK and the US.

YouGov is a opinion polling institute established in 2000 in the UK, with 31 offices in 21 countries (including in France, since November 2011). YouGov has a panel of 5 million people across 28 countries, representing all ages, socio-economic categories and genders. This panel enables a representative sample of national populations for different opinion polls. In France, the panel has 175,000 people.

More information is available [here](#).

### **Survey methods used by the Development Engagement Lab (DEL)**

YouGov carries out its opinion polls on line, using a system called 'active sampling'.

With this system, restrictions are introduced to ensure that only those people contacted are authorised to participate in the survey. This means that all of the respondents to the survey have been pre-selected by YouGov, from their panel of registered respondents, and only those chosen from the panel can participate.

### **Which respondents take part in DEL surveys?**

The panel members are recruited from several different channels, such as classic advertising, or through various different websites. Various socio-demographic information is recorded for each new panel member.

Respondents have a log-in and password, and can only reply once to each online survey.

### **The analysis of the data**

Once the survey is complete, the final data are weighted statistically against the national profile of adults aged over 18. The weighting is carried out for age, social class, region, level of education, political votes at recent elections, and political preference. 'Active sampling' therefore ensures an accurate and proportional representation in participation in the survey. Combined with statistical weighting, the sample provides representative findings for the whole of the population of the country under study (including those who do not have access to internet).

### **Reimbursement for participation**

Respondents earn 'YouGov points' each time they take part in a survey. Depending on the size of the survey, taking part in between 10-15 polls will earn around 400 points. 5000 points equal a monetary value of around 56 € (£50). Participants must reach a minimum of 5000 points before being able to claim any kind of reimbursement.

### **Margin of error**

The margin of error for DEL surveys (which involve between 2000 and 6000 respondents) is  $\pm 2\%$ .

**For more information, see [www.focus2030.org](http://www.focus2030.org)**

## Focus 2030

---

Focus 2030 is a registered non-profit organisation working with international solidarity and development actors on communication, mobilisation and advocacy projects supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our aim is to promote political, media and public attention for international development issues, the fight against poverty and global inequality, in order to ensure ambitious, transparent and effective public policies in these areas.

Focus 2030 structures its work around 3 main axes:

- DATA, in the production and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data through public opinion surveys on international development and publication of facts and figures on development;
- INNOVATION, in the support and financing of innovative research and campaigns on the Sustainable Development Goals and development finance, and;
- DEVELOPMENT, in bringing together our community of development actors (NGOs, think tanks, international organisations and public institutions) to facilitate exchange and co-construction of joint work.

Focus 2030 works principally in France and Spain.

---

**Editor:**

Fabrice Ferrier

**Contributors:**

Fabrice Ferrier

Arnaud Gaillard

# INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BAROMETER N°7 FOCUS 2030

---