



GREAT BRITAIN

CITIZENS CALL FOR A GENDER-EQUAL WORLD : A ROADMAP FOR ACTION¹



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WHAT DO RESPONDENTS IN GREAT BRITAIN THINK ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

- ➔ Both female and male respondents in Great Britain generally consider gender equality important. **Seventy-five percent of female and 64 percent of male respondents say that gender equality is personally important to them.**
- ➔ **Sixty percent of female and 66 percent of male respondents think that, compared to 25 years ago, gender equality is “better.”** However, **25 percent of female respondents think that it has stayed “more less the same” over the past 25 years** and eight percent of them think it has “worsened.”
- ➔ **Fifty-nine percent of respondents in Great Britain think the government “should do more” to promote gender equality,** including 66 percent of female respondents and 52 percent of male respondents. Twenty-nine percent of respondents want the government to do “a lot more” and 30 percent “a bit more.” The demand for action is stronger among younger respondents, where 73 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 think the government “should do more.”
- ➔ **To advance gender equality in Great Britain, 42 percent of respondents think the government should “reform laws to promote equality between women and men and end discrimination against women.”** Thirty-one percent want the government to “conduct regular reviews of progress in the pursuit of gender equality,” and 26 percent of respondents think the government should “focus efforts on marginalized women to leave no one behind.”
- ➔ **Forty-seven percent of female respondents and 34 percent of their male counterparts think that “the unequal distribution of unpaid care, domestic work, and parental responsibilities” is a main reason for gender inequality in Great Britain.** “Because women and men do not have the same employment opportunities” is also a widely-held explanation, with 39 percent of female respondents and 29 percent of male respondents in Great Britain considering it a main reason. Additionally, 32 percent of respondents see “religion and culture that do not treat women and men as equals” as a main reason.

¹ This country data sheet captures findings from a public perception survey on gender equality for Great Britain. This work is co-led by Focus 2030 and Women Deliver. The survey was executed through an online poll, conducted by Deltapoll in 17 countries. Approximately one thousand respondents in each country were surveyed in July/August 2020. Demographic data collected included: gender, age, income level, education level, last vote in national elections (where applicable), ethnicity (where applicable), migrant status, and region of residency. In Great Britain, 1,003 respondents were surveyed, including 517 female respondents, 485 male respondents, and 1 respondent who identified “in another way.” Of the 1,003 respondents, 120 were aged 18 to 24, 335 were aged 25 to 44, 250 were aged 45 to 59, and 298 were aged 60 and older. Please see www.focus2030.org and www.womendeliver.org for more information.

² Text in italics and quotes reflect survey response options presented to respondents.



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ➔ **Ending gender-based violence is the top priority** for respondents in Great Britain, as 32 percent of respondents say *“ending violence against women”* is the most important issue the government should focus on to improve gender equality. Sixty-five percent rank gender-based violence as one of their top three issues.
- ➔ Among a range of measures shown, **57 percent of respondents in Great Britain think the government should “increase accountability for [perpetrators of] physical and sexual crimes against women”** in order to end gender-based violence. Fifty-four percent think the government should *“end traditional practices that are harmful to women and girls (for example, child marriage and female genital mutilation).”*
- ➔ In Great Britain, **55 percent of female respondents — and 82 percent of female respondents aged 18 to 24 — feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in some place or another.** The most common place is *“public spaces,”* where 42 percent of female respondents — and 67 percent of female respondents aged 18 to 24 — feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment. Twenty-three percent of female respondents feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, *“online,”* and 11 percent do *“in the place where [they] work or study.”* **Eight percent of female respondents in Great Britain feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment “at home.”**
- ➔ Ten percent of respondents in Great Britain think it is *“acceptable” “for women to always obey their partner,”* while 72 percent think this *“unacceptable.”* Seventy-nine percent of respondents think it is *“acceptable” “for women to refuse sexual intercourse with a partner,”* while seven percent think it is *“unacceptable.”* Eleven percent think it is *“acceptable” “to whistle at a woman in the street or touch her without her consent,”* while 74 percent consider it *“unacceptable.”* Eighteen percent think it is *“acceptable” “to share a sexist joke on social media,”* and 53 percent think it is *“unacceptable.”*
- ➔ Eleven percent of female respondents in Great Britain, and 25 percent of them aged 18 to 24, state that they have had their *“freedom of movement restricted against [their] will by family members or a partner.”*



ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Promoting women’s economic justice and rights is a close second priority**, with 21 percent of respondents ranking *“implementing access to well paid jobs, equal pay, financial independence, and property rights”* as the number one issue that the government should focus on to improve gender equality. Fifty-nine percent of respondents think women’s economic justice is a top-three issue.
- ➔ In order to improve women’s economic opportunities and decision-making powers, the most popular measure chosen by respondents in Great Britain is *“achieve equal pay for men and women,”* with 58 percent of female and 44 percent of male respondents supporting this measure. The second most popular action is *“preventing violence and sexual harassment in the workplace,”* with 42 percent support from respondents. Of the eight prompted measures, only four percent of respondents in Great Britain think the government should do none and not improve women’s economic opportunities.

- ➔ **Sixteen percent of female respondents in Great Britain say that they are “not paid as much as [their] male counterparts where they work.”** Furthermore, **15 percent of female respondents feel that they “have not had the same access to promotion opportunities in [their] job as [their] male peers.”** Six percent of female respondents “have not or will not receive the same inheritance as male relatives” and nine percent “have had difficulty accessing education and professional training compared with [their] male peers or relatives.”
- ➔ Eighty-one percent of respondents in Great Britain think it is “unacceptable” “that women earn less than men for the same work,” and eight percent think it is “acceptable.” Additionally, 61 percent of respondents think it is “unacceptable” “to ask a woman during a job interview whether she has, or would like to have, children,” while 19 percent think this is “acceptable.” There is a gendered difference of opinion on the division of care and domestic work, as 66 percent of female respondents think it is “unacceptable” “to let women do the majority of housework, childcare, and elderly care,” compared to 50 percent of male respondents.
- ➔ During the Covid-19 pandemic, 39 percent of female respondents in Great Britain say that “their time doing household work has increased.” Fourteen percent of female respondents also say their “time dedicated to the care of others has increased.” Eighteen percent of female respondents “could not do as many hours of paid work as [they] usually would” and seven percent “lost [their] job.”



FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

- ➔ **Feminist movements and leadership is the third most prioritized issue,** with 11 percent of respondents choosing “improve women’s participation and leadership in politics, and cultural and social movements” as their first priority for government action to improve gender equality. Forty-five percent say feminist movements and leadership is a top-three priority.
- ➔ The most popular measures to increase women’s involvement in politics and movements are “achieve equal representation of women in politics” (36 percent) and “support women’s political leadership and participation” (35 percent). Thirty-three percent of respondents think the government should “achieve equal representation of women on the boards of companies.” Twelve percent think the government should do none of the prompted measures and not improve women’s representation in leadership, in politics, and in movements.
- ➔ Specifically, when asked about imposing gender quotas in political decision-making bodies, 42 percent of respondents think this is a good way to advance gender equality in Britain, and 23 percent think it is not. Younger respondents are more supportive of gender quotas than older respondents, but support is greater than opposition across all age groups apart from respondents aged 60 and older.



TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Technology and innovation for gender equality is the fourth most cited priority**, as six percent of respondents say *“investing in technology to improve women’s access to health services, education, and economic opportunities”* should be the first priority by the government to improve gender equality. Thirty-two percent of respondents see it as a top priority.
- ➔ To promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality, 52 percent of respondents want the government to *“provide equal opportunities for girls and women to study and work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).”* The second and third most popular measures in this area are to *“address barriers preventing girls and women from accessing, designing, and developing technology”* (40 percent) and *“increase the safety of digital spaces for girls and women”* (40 percent). Ten percent of respondents think the government should do none of the prompted measures and not promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality.



BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights is the fifth most often cited priority**, as six percent of respondents say *“providing access to contraception and family planning, good maternal health, and sex education in schools”* is their first priority for government action to improve gender equality. Thirty percent of respondents see it as a top priority.
- ➔ In order to improve women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, the most popular measures the government could take are *“increase access to accurate information including sexual education in schools”* (36 percent), *“increase access to sexual health services”* (33 percent), and *“increase youth engagement in the implementation of sexual and reproductive health services”* (32 percent). Only seven percent think the government should do none of the prompted measures and not improve women’s rights to sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- ➔ Eight percent of female respondents in Great Britain state that they *“have had difficulty accessing [their] chosen method of contraception.”*



FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- ➔ **Feminist action for climate justice is the sixth priority chosen by respondents**, as four percent choose “*promote women’s participation in climate change action*” as their top priority for the government. Fourteen percent of respondents see it as a top priority.
- ➔ To promote women’s efforts to respond to climate change in Great Britain, 40 percent of respondents think the government should “*promote the training and hiring of women in jobs related to climate change,*” and 33 percent want the government to “*increase girls’ and women’s participation in the development of solutions to tackle climate change.*” Eighteen percent of respondents think the government should do none of the prompted measures and not promote women’s efforts in response to climate change.



FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Fifty-one percent of respondents in Great Britain think their government should increase its funding for gender equality in Britain**, while 16 percent disagree. Among female respondents, 57 percent want their government to increase national funding for gender equality.
- ➔ Forty-two percent of respondents think that the British government should increase its funding for international projects and organizations fighting gender equality around the world, while 24 percent disagree.
- ➔ Fifty percent of respondents in Great Britain believe that achieving gender equality is essential to end poverty in all countries. Only 17 percent of respondents disagree.



WHAT ACTIONS ARE RESPONDENTS IN GREAT BRITAIN WILLING TO TAKE?

- ➔ To encourage policymakers to tackle gender inequality around the world, 40 percent of respondents in Great Britain would “*sign a petition*” and **36 percent would “vote in an election for a candidate supporting gender equality.”** Thirty-five percent would “*promote gender equality in everyday conversations and interactions,*” and 23 percent would “*share information about gender equality on social media.*” 22 percent would “*purchase or boycott products from companies based on their views on gender equality.*”



IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- ➔ Respondents in Great Britain agree (83 percent agree, three percent disagree) that women should be involved in all aspects of the global health response and recovery to Covid-19.
- ➔ Most (53 percent agree, 16 percent disagree) believe that the government's response to support people through the Covid-19 pandemic in their country has met the needs of women and men equally.
- ➔ Twenty-two percent of respondents think that inequality between women and men will rise as a consequence of Covid-19.
- ➔ The emotional toll of the Covid-19 pandemic seems to impact female respondents more than male respondents in Britain. Thirty-eight percent of female respondents, compared to 21 percent of their male counterparts, say that they have "experienced emotional stress or mental health issues" during the pandemic. Among female respondents aged 18 to 24, 49 percent have "experienced emotional stress or mental health issues."

This country data sheet is a supplement to Citizens Call for a Gender-Equal World: A Roadmap for Action, a global report on the findings from a 17-country public perception survey on gender equality. For the full report and all country data sheets, please visit: www.focus2030.org and <http://womendeliver.org/citizens-call-for-a-gender-equal-world/>.