



NEW ZEALAND

COUNTRY DATA SHEET¹



WHAT DO RESPONDENTS THINK ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING NEW ZEALAND TODAY?

- ➔ **The two most prominent issues facing New Zealand at this time are the economy and health-related issues.** *"The economy"*² (identified by 69 percent of respondents) tops the list, with *"global diseases and pandemics"* (54 percent) second. *"Health"* (37 percent) and *"climate change and the environment"* (34 percent) are also considered important.
- ➔ **Six percent of respondents in New Zealand see *"inequality between women and men"* as a top issue** in New Zealand today.
- ➔ These priorities are broadly the same for female and male respondents but differ somewhat by age. Younger respondents are much more likely to care about *"racism and other forms of discrimination against minorities"* (33 percent, aged 18 to 24) than older cohorts (11 percent, aged 45 to 49; 13 percent, aged 60 and older). Similarly, **11 percent of the younger respondents (aged 18 to 24) see gender inequality as a top issue**, compared to four percent in the older age brackets (aged 45 and older), and **13 percent of young female respondents see gender equality as a top issue.**



WHAT DO RESPONDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND THINK ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

- ➔ **The vast majority of respondents in New Zealand declare gender equality is *"important"* to them personally (74 percent),** and few (seven percent) consider it *"unimportant."* More female respondents (80 percent) than male (68 percent) declare that gender equality is *"important"* to them personally. Gender equality also appears more important to younger respondents than to older cohorts (81 percent, aged 18 to 24; 68 percent, aged 60 and older).
- ➔ **Sixty-nine percent of respondents in New Zealand think gender equality in New Zealand is *"better"* now than it was 25 years ago.** Fewer female respondents believe the situation has gotten *"better"* (65 percent) than male respondents (73 percent). Income also affects perceptions of gender equality, as 81 percent of the highest income quintile believe it is *"better,"* compared to only 58 percent of the lowest.

¹ This country data sheet captures findings from a public perception survey on gender equality for New Zealand. 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 New Zealand, 1,004 respondents were surveyed, including 517 female respondents, 484 male respondents, and zero respondents who identified "in another way". Of the 1,006 respondents, 135 were aged 18 to 24, 364 were aged 25 to 44, 243 were aged 45 to 59, and 262 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.

- ➔ **Forty-three percent of respondents think that the New Zealand government “should do more” to promote gender equality**, 41 percent think it is doing “*the right amount*,” and nine percent think it is “*doing too much*.” Younger respondents show stronger support for the government doing more than the eldest respondents do.
- ➔ **Thirty-nine percent of respondents in New Zealand believe that to advance gender equality, their government should “reform laws to promote equality between women and men and end discrimination against women.”**
- ➔ As to the main reasons why women may not be equal to men in New Zealand, many factors are considered important, with few standing out as commanding widespread support. **The most agreed-upon reason for gender inequality is “because unpaid care, domestic work, and parental responsibilities are not shared equally between women and men”** (42 percent, and 53 percent of female respondents compared to 31 percent of male respondents). An age gradient also exists, with more respondents aged 60 and older (54 percent) citing the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work than respondents aged 18 to 24 (35 percent). The second most cited reason as to why men and women may not be equal is because they have “*different employment opportunities*” (37 percent, and 43 percent of female respondents, compared to 29 percent of male respondents).



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ➔ **Gender-based violence is ranked first priority**, with 32 percent of respondents choosing “*end violence against women*” as the most important area the government of New Zealand should focus on to improve gender equality in the country.
- ➔ To end gender-based violence, a high proportion of respondents in New Zealand (62 percent) believe that **their government should “increase accountability for [perpetrators of] physical and sexual crimes against women.”** Female respondents (67 percent) and older cohorts (72 percent, aged 60 and older) express particular support for this action. Respondents also support “*funding programs to support women who have experienced violence*” (44 percent). Younger female respondents aged 18 to 24 are the most supportive of this action (53 percent).
- ➔ **A majority of respondents in New Zealand (53 percent) feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment** in some place or another. The most common situation to feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, is in “*public spaces*,” where 34 percent of respondents and 41 percent of female respondents feel at risk. Younger age groups are also noticeably more likely to feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, in public spaces: 48 percent of those aged 18 to 24 were likely to feel at risk, compared to 23 percent of those aged over 60. **Among female respondents aged 18 to 24, 59 percent feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in “public spaces,”** and only 20 percent do not feel at risk of assault or harassment anywhere.

- ➔ The majority of respondents in New Zealand (70 percent) think it is “unacceptable” “for women to always obey their partner,” while nine percent deem it “acceptable.” More female respondents believe this is “unacceptable” (78 percent) than male respondents (62 percent). A significant proportion of respondents also believe that it is “acceptable” “for women to refuse sexual intercourse with their partner” (78 percent), with more female respondents declaring it is “unacceptable” (87 percent) than male respondents (70 percent). Respondents also consider “unacceptable” to “whistle at a woman in the street or to touch a woman without her consent” (83 percent). More female respondents find this “unacceptable” (89 percent) than male respondents (77 percent).
- ➔ Fourteen percent of female respondents have had their “freedom of movement restricted by a family members or a partner.”



ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Promoting women’s economic justice and rights is the second most highly-ranked priority**, with 25 percent of respondents ranking “implement access to well paid jobs, equal pay, financial independence, and property rights” as top priority. Sixty percent identify this as a top-three important area.
- ➔ **In order to improve women’s broader economic opportunities and decision-making powers, “achieving equal pay” (52 percent) and “preventing violence and harassment in the workplace” (47 percent) are seen as key measures for government action by respondents in New Zealand.** The importance of gender pay parity is greater among female (60 percent) than male respondents (43 percent).
- ➔ **Fifty percent of female respondents in New Zealand declare they have faced any one of the prompted common gender disadvantages in their life.** Twenty-four percent of female respondents report that they have “not been paid as much as male counterparts,” and 22 percent have not “had the same access to promotion opportunities in [their] job as male peers.” In addition, seven percent have experienced “difficulty accessing education and professional training compared with male peers or relatives,” and nine percent “have not or will not receive the same inheritance as [their] male relatives.”
- ➔ Fifty-seven percent of respondents find it “unacceptable” to “let women do the majority of housework, childcare, and elderly care,” with more female respondents finding it “unacceptable” (66 percent) than male respondents (48 percent). Additionally, for 66 percent of respondents, it is “unacceptable” “to ask a woman in a job interview whether she has, or would like to have, children,” with more female respondents finding it “unacceptable” (74 percent) than male respondents (58 percent). The majority (82 percent) also believe it is “unacceptable” that “women earn less than men for the same work,” with more female respondents finding it “unacceptable” (90 percent) than male (72 percent).

- ➔ The economic impact of the pandemic seems to have affected women and men similarly in New Zealand, with respondents of both gender reporting fewer hours of paid work (22 percent, female respondents; 25 percent, male respondents) and losing their jobs (six percent, female respondents; eight percent, male respondents). **Gender differences do arise in housework, however, with 40 percent of female respondents declaring their “time doing housework has increased” in this period, compared to 31 percent of male respondents. Fifty-eight percent of female respondents aged 18 to 24 report an increase in their time doing housework, compared to 25 percent of male respondents of the same age group.**



FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

- ➔ **Feminist movements and leadership is respondents’ third priority overall**, with nine percent ranking “*improve women’s participation and leadership in politics, and cultural and social movements*” as top priority. Forty percent identify this as a top-three choice.
- ➔ **For 32 percent of respondents “supporting women’s political leadership and participation” is a key action that the New Zealand government should take, followed by “achieving equal representation of women in politics” (29 percent).** This view was held more strongly among female (33 percent) than male respondents (24 percent) and was highest for female respondents aged 18 to 24 (43 percent). Additionally, 27 percent of respondents think that “*achieving equal representation of women on boards of companies*” is an action the New Zealand government should focus on, a view which is held more strongly among female respondents (30 percent) than male respondents (23 percent).
- ➔ The implementation of gender quotas on political decision-making bodies is seen as “*a good way to advance gender equality in New Zealand*” for 33 percent of respondents, with almost the same proportion disagreeing (34 percent). More female respondents “*agree*” (40 percent) with gender quotas than “*disagree*” (25 percent), whereas more male respondents “*disagree*” (43 percent) with gender quotas than “*agree*” (26 percent). Younger respondents aged 18 to 24 are most likely to agree with gender quotas (44 percent) compared to older respondents aged 60 and older (26 percent). Overall, younger female respondents aged 18 to 24 were most strongly in favor of gender quotas (51 percent) compared to other groups.



TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Technology and innovation for gender equality is respondents’ fourth most cited priority for government action**, with seven percent ranking “*invest in technology to improve women’s access to health services, education, and economic opportunities*” as top priority. Thirty-six percent of respondents think it is a top-three area.

- ➔ In order to promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality, 53 percent of respondents in New Zealand would like the government to “provide equal opportunities for girls and women to study and work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)” and 41 percent of respondents support “increasing the safety of digital spaces for girls and women.” More female respondents support increasing opportunities for girls and women in STEM subjects (59 percent) as well as increasing the safety of digital spaces (45 percent) compared to male respondents.



BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- ➔ Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights is the fifth most cited priority, with seven percent of respondents identifying “provide access to contraception and family planning, good maternal health, and sex education in schools” as top priority. Thirty-five percent identify this area as a top-three choice.
- ➔ To advance women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, 37 percent of respondents think the government should “increase access to sexual health services.” “Increase access to accurate information including sexual education in schools” is also an important action for 36 percent of respondents.
- ➔ Ten percent of female respondents in New Zealand have had difficulty in their lives “accessing [their] chosen method of contraception,” rising to 21 percent among those aged 18 to 24. Four percent also report having had “difficulty accessing abortion and post-abortion care” in their lifetime. Again, this is more pronounced (eight percent) among younger female respondents aged 18 to 24.
- ➔ During the COVID-19 pandemic, three percent of respondents in New Zealand have had “difficulties accessing contraception and other sexual health services.” Respondents aged 18 to 24 have had the most difficulty (10 percent). Two percent of respondents in New Zealand have had “difficulties accessing abortion options and/or post-abortion care” during the pandemic.



FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- ➔ The sixth most prioritized issue is feminist action for climate justice, with two percent of respondents identifying the “promotion of women’s participation in climate change action” as top priority. Thirteen percent identify this as a top-three important area.
- ➔ To promote women’s efforts to respond to climate change, 39 percent of respondents think that the government of New Zealand should “promote the training and hiring of women in jobs related to climate change.” This proportion is higher among female (44 percent) than male respondents (34 percent). Younger female respondents are most supportive (53 percent) of their government taking this action.



NEW ZEALAND FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Forty-five percent of respondents in New Zealand hold the view that their government should “increase funding for gender equality in New Zealand.” And 37 percent think that the government should “increase its funding for international projects and organizations fighting for gender equality around the world.”** A higher proportion of younger respondents support funding for gender equality projects generally, whether domestically (54 percent among 18 to 24, compared with 36 percent among respondents aged 60 and older) or abroad (53 percent among 18 to 24, compared with 27 percent among those aged 60 and older). This figure is even higher among younger female respondents (aged 18 to 24), of whom 60 percent support an increased funding for gender equality projects domestically and 56 percent support more international funding.
- ➔ **Forty-three percent of respondents in New Zealand “agree” that “achieving gender equality is essential to end poverty in all countries,” compared with 22 percent who “disagree.”**



WHAT ACTIONS ARE RESPONDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND WILLING TO TAKE?

- ➔ To encourage policymakers to tackle gender inequality around the world, 41 percent of respondents in New Zealand would be willing to “sign a petition” (50 percent of female respondents and 31 percent of male respondents). Thirty-eight percent would “vote in an election for a candidate supporting gender equality” (46 percent of female and 30 percent of male respondents). Additionally, 37 percent of respondents would be willing to “promote gender equality in everyday conversations and interactions” (42 percent of female respondents and 32 percent of male respondents).



IMPACT OF COVID-19

- ➔ **Seventy-nine percent of respondents “agree” that “the government’s response to support people through the COVID-19 pandemic has met the needs of women and men equally,”** with older respondents more likely to agree than younger respondents (83 percent, aged 60 and older; 75 percent, aged 18 to 24). Only four percent of respondents “disagree.”
- ➔ **Eighty-two percent of respondents in New Zealand also “agree” that “women should be involved in all aspects of the global health response and recovery efforts to COVID-19.”**
- ➔ **Fifty percent of respondents “disagree” that “inequality between women and men will rise as a consequence of COVID-19.”** Twenty-nine percent “neither agree nor disagree,” with only 15 percent agreeing. Male respondents are more likely to “disagree” (59 percent) than female respondents (41 percent).

- ➔ The health impact of the pandemic has broadly fallen on male and female respondents equally, with eight percent experiencing “*physical illness*,” seven percent experiencing the “*illness of a family or household member*,” five percent experiencing the “*death of a family or household member*,” and 13 percent experiencing “*difficulties accessing medical treatments, medicines, health and hygiene supplies*.”
- ➔ However, gender affects experiences of stress and mental health. Notably more female respondents (32 percent) than male respondents (21 percent) have experienced “*emotional stress and mental health issues*” during the COVID-19 pandemic. Female respondents aged 18 to 24 (52 percent) report higher levels of stress than younger male respondents (24 percent) or female respondents aged 60 and older (17 percent).

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: <http://womendeliver.org/citizens-call-for-a-gender-equal-world/>.