



SWITZERLAND

COUNTRY DATA SHEET¹



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

- ➔ For 59 percent of respondents, **the most important issue facing Switzerland at the present time is “global diseases and pandemics.”**² Two other important issues facing Switzerland are “climate change and the environment” (47 percent) and “the economy” (40 percent).
- ➔ **Fourteen percent of respondents in Switzerland see “inequality between women and men” as a top-three issue** in Switzerland today, with more female respondents selecting this issue (19 percent) than male respondents (10 percent).
- ➔ 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” (31 percent of those aged 18 to 24) than older cohorts (14 percent of those aged 45 to 49; 12 percent of those aged 60 and older). Similarly, **20 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 see gender inequality as a top issue**, compared with older age cohorts (nine percent, 45 to 59; 14 percent, 60 and older), with **27 percent of female respondents aged 18 to 24 deeming gender equality as a top issue**.



WHAT DO RESPONDENTS IN SWITZERLAND THINK ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

- ➔ **The vast majority of respondents in Switzerland declare that gender equality is “important” to them personally (77 percent)**, and few (six percent) considering it “unimportant.” More female respondents declare gender equality is “important” to them personally (82 percent) than male respondents (72 percent). Younger respondents also appear more concerned than older respondents (87 percent, aged 18 to 24; 74 percent, aged 60 and older).
- ➔ **Sixty-six percent of respondents in Switzerland think gender equality in Switzerland is “better” now than it was 25 years ago.** More male respondents (70 percent) believe the situation is “better” than female respondents (63 percent). However, younger female respondents (aged 18-24) are the most likely to think that gender equality has improved (81 percent).

¹ This country data sheet captures findings from a public perception survey on gender equality for Switzerland. 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 Switzerland, 1,004 respondents were surveyed, including 517 female respondents, 485 male respondents, and 2 respondents who identified “in another way”. Of the 1,004 respondents, 105 were aged 18 to 24, 343 were aged 25 to 44, 280 were aged 45 to 59, and 276 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.

- ➔ **Most respondents (60 percent) think that the Swiss government “should do more” to promote gender equality**, while 26 percent think it is “doing the right amount” and eight percent think it is “doing too much.”
- ➔ To advance gender equality in Switzerland, **43 percent of respondents think that the government should “reform laws to promote equality between women and men and end discrimination against women.”** This view is held more strongly by female respondents (48 percent) than male respondents (37 percent).
- ➔ **The most agreed-upon reasons as to why women may not be equal to men in Switzerland are “because unpaid care, domestic work, and parental responsibilities are not shared equally between women and men” (49 percent) and “because women and men have different employment opportunities” (49 percent).** A higher proportion of female respondents believe that both the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work (55 percent) and the different employment opportunities between men and women (57 percent) are reasons for gender inequality.



ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Women’s economic justice and rights is the first priority for respondents in Switzerland**, with 32 percent of respondents ranking “implementing access to well paid jobs, equal pay, financial independence, and property rights” as the first area the government of Switzerland should focus on to improve equality between women and men in the country. Seventy-four percent choose this as a top-three area.
- ➔ **In order to improve women’s broader economic opportunities and decision-making powers, achieving “equal pay” (61 percent) is cited as a key measure for government action by respondents in Switzerland, with female respondents prioritizing pay parity more than male respondents (70 percent compared to 51 percent).**
- ➔ **Fifty-seven percent of female respondents in Switzerland have faced any one of the prompted common gender disadvantages in their life.** Thirty-seven percent of them report that they have “not been paid as much as [their] male counterparts,” and 22 percent declare that they have not had “the same access to promotion opportunities in [their] job as [their] male peers.” In addition, nine percent have had “difficulty accessing education and professional training compared with male peers or relatives,” and five percent “have not or will not receive the same inheritance as [their] male relatives.”
- ➔ For 53 percent of respondents in Switzerland, it is “unacceptable” to “let women do the majority of housework, childcare, and elderly care,” with more female respondents finding it “unacceptable” (62 percent) than males (43 percent). Additionally, for 54 percent of respondents, it is “unacceptable” to “ask a woman during a job interview whether she has, or would like to have, children,” with more female respondents finding it “unacceptable” (65 percent) than males (43 percent). The majority of respondents (83 percent) also think it is “unacceptable” that “women earn less than men for the same work.” Again, more female respondents find this “unacceptable” (91 percent) than males (74 percent).

- ➔ The economic impact of the pandemic seems to have affected women and men similarly in Switzerland, with 20 percent reporting that they “*couldn’t do as many hours of paid work as [they] usually would,*” six percent reporting “*losing their jobs,*” and 10 percent facing “*unexpected financial hardship.*” The increase in time spent doing household work is also the same for female and male respondents (33 percent), as is time spent caring for others (16 percent). However, age differences exist with younger people having increased their time spent doing household work in comparison to older people (44 percent, aged 18 to 24; 23 percent, aged 60+). During the COVID-19 pandemic, female respondents aged 18 to 24 are particularly likely to have noticed their “*time doing household work has increased*” (48 percent) compared to male respondents of the same age cohort (36 percent).



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ➔ **Gender-based violence is the second most highly-ranked priority**, with 34 percent of respondents ranking “*end violence against women*” as top priority. Seventy percent identify this area as a top-three choice.
- ➔ To end gender-based violence, **a majority respondents in Switzerland (64 percent) believe that the government should “increase accountability for [perpetrators of] physical and sexual crimes against women.”** Respondents also support action to “*end traditional practices that are harmful to girls and women*” (49 percent) and “*fund programs to support women who have experienced violence*” (42 percent). One in three female respondents aged 18 to 24 (33 percent) also identify the need to “*address the unequal balance of power between women and men at home.*”
- ➔ **A majority of respondents in Switzerland (54 percent, and 57 percent of female respondents) feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment** in some place or other. The place where respondents most commonly feel at risk, or know of someone who feels at risk, is in “*public spaces*” (39 percent, and 45 percent of female respondents). Younger respondents are also more likely to feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, in “*public spaces:*” 57 percent of those aged 18 to 24, compared to 34 percent of those aged over 60. **Among female respondents aged 18 to 24, 65 percent feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in public spaces**, and only nineteen percent do not feel at risk, or do not know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in any of the listed places.
- ➔ The majority of respondents in Switzerland (83 percent) believe it is “*unacceptable*” for “*women to always obey their partner,*” and six percent deem it “*acceptable.*” More female respondents than male respondents deem this “*unacceptable*” (89 percent and 77 percent, respectively). A significant proportion of respondents also believe that it is “*acceptable*” for “*women to refuse sexual intercourse with their partner*” (69 percent), with more female respondents declaring this is “*acceptable*” than male respondents (78 percent vs 60 percent). The vast majority of respondents in Switzerland also believe that it is “*unacceptable*” to “*whistle at a woman in the street or to touch a woman her without her consent*” (85 percent).



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 a top priority area to improve gender equality in Switzerland. Forty-four percent identify this as a top-three area.
- ➔ **For 39 percent of respondents, "supporting women's political leadership and participation" is a key action that the Swiss government should take.** This view is held more strongly by female respondents (44 percent) than male respondents (34 percent), especially female respondents aged 18 to 24 (50 percent). Twenty-eight percent of respondents would also like their government to *"achieve equal representation of women in politics"* and *"support specifically young women's participation in politics and movements."*
- ➔ Forty-three percent of respondents *"agree"* that *"imposing gender quotas in all political decision-making bodies is a good way to advance gender equality in Switzerland,"* with 27 percent disagreeing. Women aged 18 to 24 are more supportive of gender quotas compared to other age groups (55 percent).



BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights is the fourth most cited priority**, with four percent of respondents ranking *"provide access to contraception and family planning, good maternal health, and sex education in schools"* as top priority. Twenty-four percent identify this as a top-three important area.
- ➔ To advance women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, **37 percent of respondents in Switzerland think the government should "increase access to accurate information including sexual education in schools"**. Additionally, 34 percent of respondents support *"increasing access to sexual health services"* and *"increasing youth engagement in the implementation of sexual and reproductive health."*
- ➔ **Six percent of female respondents have had difficulty in their lives "accessing [their] chosen method of contraception," rising to 10 percent among those aged 18 to 24.** Three percent have had *"difficulty accessing abortion and post-abortion care"* in their lifetime.
- ➔ During the COVID-19 pandemic, three percent of respondents in Switzerland have had *"difficulties accessing contraception and other sexual health services"* and one percent have had *"difficulties accessing abortion options and/or post-abortion care."*



TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Technology and innovation for gender equality is the fifth most cited priority**, with four percent of respondents identifying “invest in technology to improve women’s access to health services, education and economic opportunities” as top priority. Twenty-nine percent believe this as a top-three area of importance.
- ➔ To promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality, **respondents would like the government to “provide equal opportunities for girls and women to study and work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)” (47 percent) and “increase the safety of digital spaces for girls and women” (40 percent).**



FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- ➔ **The sixth most cited priority issue is feminist action for climate justice**, with three percent of respondents ranking “promote women’s participation in climate change action” as top priority. Seventeen percent identify this as a top-three area of importance.
- ➔ To promote women’s efforts to respond to climate change, 38 percent of respondents would like the government to “promote the training and hiring of women in jobs related to climate change.” Thirty-two percent of respondents also support “increasing girls’ and women’s participation in the development of solutions to tackle climate change.”



FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Forty-nine percent of respondents in Switzerland “agree” that their government should “increase funding for gender equality in Switzerland.” In addition, 45 percent believe that the government should “increase its funding for international projects and organizations fighting for gender equality around the world.”** More female than male respondents support increased funding, both for domestic projects (58 percent and 40 percent, respectively) and international projects (52 percent and 39 percent, respectively). Additionally, a higher proportion of younger respondents support funding for gender equality projects generally, whether domestically (64 percent among those aged 18 to 24, compared with 45 percent among those aged 60 and older) or abroad (67 percent of those aged 18 to 24, compared with 40 percent of those aged 60 and older). This proportion is even higher among younger female respondents (aged 18 to 24), of whom 72 percent support increased funding for gender equality projects domestically, and 76 percent support increased international funding.
- ➔ **Fifty-three percent of respondents in Switzerland “agree” that “achieving gender equality is essential to end poverty in all countries,” and 17 percent “disagree.”**



WHAT ACTIONS ARE RESPONDENTS IN SWITZERLAND WILLING TO TAKE?

- ➔ To encourage policymakers to tackle gender inequality around the world, 41 percent of respondents would “vote in an election for a candidate supporting gender equality” (46 percent of female respondents and 35 percent of male respondents). Forty percent would be willing to “sign a petition” (46 percent female respondents and 34 percent male respondents). Additionally, 30 percent would be willing to “promote gender equality in everyday conversations and interactions.”



IMPACT OF COVID-19

- ➔ Seventy percent of respondents “agree” that “the government’s response to support people through the COVID-19 pandemic in Switzerland has met the needs of women and men equally.” Nine percent of respondents “disagree.”
- ➔ Seventy-nine percent of respondents believe that “women should be involved in all aspects of the global health response and recovery efforts.”
- ➔ There is disagreement as to whether “inequality between men and women will rise as a consequence of COVID-19.” Overall, more respondents “disagree” (38 percent) than “agree” (22 percent), but a large proportion also cited “neither agree nor disagree” (34 percent). Disagreement with the statement is more driven by male respondents (45 percent) and younger respondents aged 18 to 24 (46 percent).
- ➔ More female (29 percent) than male respondents (18 percent) have experienced “emotional stress and mental health issues” as a result of COVID-19, with female respondents aged 18 to 24 (42 percent) reporting higher levels of stress than young male respondents (35 percent) and female respondents aged 60 and older (20 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/>.