

USA: A century after women gained the right to vote, still a lot of work to do on gender equality

About three-in-ten men say women's gains have come at the expense of men.

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Pew Research Center (07.07.2020) – <https://pewrsr.ch/2ZNAumx> – A hundred years after the 19th Amendment was ratified, about half of Americans say granting women the right to vote has been the most important milestone in advancing the position of women in the country. Still, a majority of U.S. adults say the country hasn't gone far enough when it comes to giving women equal rights with men, even as a large share thinks there has been progress in the last decade, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

Among those who think the country still has work to do in achieving gender equality, 77% point to sexual harassment as a major obstacle to women having equal rights with men. Fewer, but still majorities, point to women not having the same legal rights as men (67%), different societal expectations for men and women (66%) and not enough women in positions of power (64%) as major obstacles to gender equality. Women are more likely than men to see each of these as a major obstacle.

Many of those who say it is important for men and women to have equal rights point to aspects of the workplace when asked about what gender equality would look like. Fully 45% volunteer that a society where women have equal rights with men would include equal pay. An additional 19% say there would be no discrimination in hiring, promotion or educational opportunities. About one-in-ten say women would be more equally represented in business or political leadership.

In terms of the groups and institutions that have done the most to advance the rights of women in the U.S., 70% say the feminist movement has done at least a fair amount in this regard. The Democratic Party is viewed as having contributed more to the cause of women's rights than the Republican Party: 59% say the Democratic Party has done at least a fair amount to advance women's rights, while 37% say the same about the GOP. About three-in-ten (29%) say President Donald Trump has done at least a fair amount to advance women's rights, while 69% say Trump has not done much or has done nothing at all. These views vary considerably by party, with Republicans and Republican leaners at least five times as likely as Democrats and those who lean Democratic to say the GOP and Trump have done at least a fair amount and Democrats far more likely than Republicans to say the same about the Democratic Party.

Views of the role the feminist movement has played in advancing gender equality are positive overall, though fewer than half of women say the movement has been beneficial to them personally. About four-in-ten (41%) say feminism has helped them at least a little, while half say it has neither helped nor hurt them. Relatively few (7%) say feminism has hurt them personally. Democratic women, those with a bachelor's degree or more education and women younger than 50 are among the most likely to say they've benefitted personally

from feminism.

Views about how much progress the country has made on gender equality differ widely along partisan lines. About three-quarters of Democrats (76%) say the country hasn't gone far enough when it comes to giving women equal rights with men, while 19% say it's been about right and 4% say the country has gone too far. Among Republicans, a third say the country hasn't made enough progress, while 48% say it's been about right and 17% say the country has gone too far in giving women equal rights with men.

There is also a gender gap in these views, with 64% of women – compared with 49% of men – saying the country hasn't gone far enough in giving women equal rights with men. Democratic and Republican women are about ten percentage points more likely than their male counterparts to say this (82% of Democratic women vs. 70% of Democratic men and 38% of Republican women vs. 28% of Republican men).

The nationally representative survey of 3,143 U.S. adults was conducted online from March 18-April 1, 2020.1

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