



Global Gender Gap Report 2021

Originally published: World Economic Forum (2021)

Introduction

Gender gaps in societies have started to become growing concerns as the COVID-19 pandemic has struck. The reform towards gender parity has started to slow down due to the additional pressures societies are facing. The World Economic Forum Centre for the New Economy and Society has conducted research to grow these initiatives of closing the gender gap, increasing women's participation in the workforce, and fix issues within the gender gap. The report benchmarks the four key dimensions which are Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. The average distance completed to parity currently is at 68%, and has declined 0.6 percentage points compared to 2020. This percentage translated to years estimates that it will now take 135.6 years to close the gender gap worldwide.



Key Highlights

- Within the four key benchmarks highlighted above, Political empowerment currently has the largest gender gap. Women only represent about 26.1% of 35,500 parliament seats and 22.6% of 3,400 ministers. In over 80 countries, women have never been named head of state. The WEF estimates it will take 145.5 years to attain gender parity in Politics.
- The gender gap in the Economic Participation and Opportunity is the second largest, with only about 58% being closed. The estimated time to achieve gender parity is about 267.6 years. The cause of this is due to trends seen in society where women are becoming more skilled but they are still unable obtain leadership positions in the workforce.
- The last two benchmarks, Educational Attainment and Health and Survival are on the verge of becoming closed. Educational Attainment has seen a gender parity of about 95%, but still estimates the 5% of take about 14.2 years to close. Health and Survival has seen a gender parity of about 96%, but the estimated time for this benchmark remains undefined.
- If we look at the rankings, India currently sits at 140 spot of 156. India's average distance completed to parity is currently at 62.5%, right below the global average. Comparing the results from 2006, India has dropped -28 in terms of ranking.
- Each of the four benchmarks were also looked at from the country perspective. In India, the Economic Participation and Opportunity benchmark was only 32.6% towards gender parity which is quite low. The labour force participation was a factor in this calculation and estimated 79.6% were male workers and 22.3% were female workers in India.
- The next benchmark Educational attainment is 96.2% towards gender parity but still ranks at 114th out the 156 countries. The largest contributor to this benchmark is the literacy rate split between male and female which is 82.4% male and 65.8% female. More than 75% of children enrol in primary education, 95% in secondary and over 92% in tertiary education.
- In Health and survival, the benchmark is about 93.7% towards gender parity but still ranks quite low at 155 out of 156. The factor driving this percentage is health life expectancy in years being very similar in male and female of about 60 years old.
- The last benchmark Political empowerment is only 27.6% towards gender parity and ranks at 56 out of 156. The factors driving this benchmark are women in parliament being about 14.4%, women in ministerial positions being about 9.1% and years with female head of state being 15.5 years.
- The benchmark shows India's decline in about 4.2% compared to previous edition also accounts the drop in ranking 28 spots. The majority of this decline is in the Political empowerment benchmark as there has been a significant decline in share of women among ministers. This Economic participation and opportunity also took a decline as women's labour force participation rate decreased from 24.8% to 22.3%.
- Ultimately, this report has shown the deficiencies that India faces in terms performance within the four benchmarks. Through unique initiatives, different organizations have the opportunity to take this data and create gender parity amongst all in every nation.

Read more: [Global Gender Gap Report](#)

Author: Jeet Vaghela, PILOT at Pratham