



Press Release – 8 March 2018

International Women's Day: Ipsos study finds global misperceptions of equality and the need to Press for Progress

Auckland, 8 March 2018 – To mark International Women's Day, and in the wake of the #metoo campaign, a new global study by market research company Ipsos, ***Global Misperceptions of Equality and the Need to Press for Progress***, across 28 countries highlights the level of concern people around the world have about a number of equality issues, with sexual harassment topping the list globally.

Some of the key findings are:

New Zealanders are more concerned about domestic abuse and equal pay than people in most countries:

When asked “which two or three issues are the most facing women and girls in your country”, 32% of New Zealanders cited domestic abuse, compared to 20% globally.

Equal pay was the second-most likely issue to be mentioned, cited by 26% of Kiwis, more than the international average of 19%.

By comparison, the most commonly cited issue of concern internationally was sexual harassment, mentioned by 32% of the global sample compared to 24% of New Zealanders.

New Zealanders are wildly over-optimistic about the pace of change for economic equality:

New Zealanders generally estimate that global economic equality (equality between women and men based on economic, health, education and political indicators) will be achieved within the next 48 years, whereas, at the current rate of progress, this gap won't be closed for another 217 years, in 2235 (according to The World Economic Forum). The average guess across countries is that it will be achieved in 35 years, with a large number of countries perceiving that it will be 20 years or less.

43% of New Zealanders are concerned about Jacinda Adern being a new mother while Prime Minister:

Although 57% said that they had no concerns whatsoever, 34% said that while they generally approved, they did have some concerns, and 9% completely disapproved. Interestingly, At 61%, older people tended to fully-approve more, as did women (62% fully approving versus 50% of men).

Those who had concerns mainly focussed on her performance as Prime Minister (66% of those with some worries), with 23% concerned about her 'at home' family situation.

New Zealanders are much less likely to feel that reports of sexual harassment will be ignored:

29% of New Zealander said that such reports tend to be ignored; much lower than the international level of 50%.

New Zealanders are less favourable towards increased female responsibilities:

The majority view around the world is that women need to be better represented, with 61% globally agreeing that things would work better if more women held positions with responsibilities in government and companies. Yet in New Zealand, this figure was lower, at 52%. Globally, the disagreement level with this belief was 26%, and 30% in New Zealand.



Press Release – 8 March 2018

New Zealanders hugely overestimate women's representation in business leadership:

Misperceptions about reaching equality may be influenced by the fact that perceived aspects of women's lives are better than they actually are. In particular, people hugely overestimate the extent to which women are represented in business leadership. New Zealanders estimate that, of the world's top 500 companies, 20% has a female CEO – when the actual figure is just 3%. The average global estimate was 19%.

GLOBAL FINDINGS

Sexual harassment is seen as the top equality issue facing women globally

Three in ten people (32%) across the globe believe that sexual harassment is the biggest equality issue facing women and girls in their country – the top answer picked out from a long list of equality issues.

In **New Zealand**, one in four (24%) cite this as issue, slightly behind equal pay which was mentioned by 26%.

Sexual harassment is a particular concern in Peru (58%), and for around half the people in Malaysia (51%) Turkey (51%) Mexico (48%) and India (47%). At the other end of the scale it is considered much less of a problem in Serbia and Russia (7% respectively) and around one in five say it is an issue in Poland (18%), Saudi Arabia (19%) and Japan (20%). The second most selected issue globally is sexual violence (by 28%).

Despite the level of concern about sexual harassment, half of people around the world still think that reports of sexual harassment are ignored

The Ipsos study also finds that despite the #metoo campaign and high profile cases shining a light on the issue of sexual harassment, in many countries people still believe that women who come forward will not be taken seriously. Across all 28 countries, half (50%) agree that, these days, reports of sexual harassment are generally ignored compared with 40% who disagree. Indeed, in sixteen of the countries, the majority view is still that reports of sexual violence are ignored including Peru, Turkey, Mexico, Chile and South Korea.

New Zealanders are much less likely to feel that reports of sexual harassment will be ignored, with 29% feeling that such reports tend to be ignored; much lower than the international level of 50%.

Conversely, in Australia, Great Britain, Sweden, Canada and the US most people do not think that reports of sexual harassment are ignored (in Britain by 57% to 30%).

New Zealanders are less likely to be discussing the issue of sexual harassment with their families - despite the high profile public debate on sexual harassment, few people globally say they are talking about the issue with their family; only 15% say they are talking about it 'a lot' (9% in New Zealand) compared with twice the proportion (30%) who say they aren't talking about it at all (47% in New Zealand).

There is strong support, however, for a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment: three-quarters (75%) of people around the world feel that this is essential to bring about change in society (77% in New Zealand). Just one in six (16%) disagree (14% in New Zealand).



Press Release – 8 March 2018

Most say equality is important but close to half around the world think things have gone ‘far enough’ when it comes to giving women equal rights

More generally, the vast majority of people (70%) around the world agree that achieving equality between men and women is important to them personally (and this figure rises to three quarters - 74% - of women, compared to two thirds - 66% - of men).

In **New Zealand**, 76% of women say gender equality is important to them – but only 60% of men agree.

Conversely, views are split on whether things have gone far enough in their country when it comes to giving women equal rights, with 45% around the world agreeing with this statement and the same proportion disagreeing. In eleven of the countries, the majority view is that things have gone far enough on equality, and across the countries there are similar levels of agreement among men and women.

Nevertheless, in **New Zealand**, most do not think things have gone far enough – only 34% feel things have gone ‘far enough’, with women understandably agreeing with this less (28%) and men more (41%).

Across the countries surveyed, **New Zealanders** at 51% were less likely than the global average of 57% to define themselves as a feminist (someone who advocates and supports equal opportunities for women) while three in ten (32%) disagree.

Commenting on the results, Jonathan Dodd, Research Director at Ipsos New Zealand, said:

"One of the first steps on the path to achieving women's equality is getting people to recognise that we still have a long way to go - but our unique new study shows many of us around the world have a very wrong idea on that.

We underestimate women's experience of harassment, are wildly optimistic about when economic equality will be achieved and over-estimate their representation in business leadership. There is a sense of complacency among many people and in many countries that we've already come far enough.

New Zealanders tend to be more concerned, especially on domestic abuse, but are less likely to feel that sexual harassment complaints will be ignored. Hopefully this reflects a good scenario of increased recognition and concern, coupled with an increased likelihood to follow-up reports of abuse and harassment. But we know that actual levels of abuse and harassment are usually much more than what the average person estimates, so this should not be an excuse for complacency."

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Press Release – 8 March 2018

Technical notes:

- In total 19,928 interviews were conducted between 26 January – 9 February, 2018.
- The survey was conducted in 28 countries around the world, including New Zealand, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Great Britain, and the USA.
- Approximately 1000 individuals aged 16-64 or 18-64 were surveyed in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, Great Britain, and the USA. Approximately 500 individuals aged 16-64 were surveyed in New Zealand, Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey.
- The “actual” data for each question is taken from a variety of verified sources. A full list of sources/links to the actual data can be found on the Ipsos website.
- Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

GAME CHANGERS

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We make our changing world easier and faster to navigate and inspire clients to make smarter decisions.

We deliver with security, speed, simplicity and substance. We are Game Changers.

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