Abortion and Feminism: What New Zealanders Think

An Ipsos Survey – June 2019
A total of 588 New Zealanders aged 18-74 answered questions about abortion in our March Global Advisor survey which ran from Friday 8th March to Tuesday 12th March 2019.

NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

• Currently, an abortion can only be carried out in New Zealand if continuing the pregnancy is seen to pose serious danger to a woman’s mental or physical health. Before an abortion can be carried out, it also needs to be authorised by two certifying doctors or consultants.

• The grounds for an abortion are outlined in the Crimes Act 1961. Carrying out an abortion for reasons other than those listed is a crime.

• There has been an ongoing debate to remove abortion from the Crimes Act 1961. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has requested that potential future reforms treat abortion as a health issue rather than keeping it in the Crimes Act 1961.

• In addition to increasing media coverage of abortion in recent months, there is also a petition request currently before the House of Representatives to take abortion out of the Crimes Act 1961 so it is no longer be considered a crime in New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

• Debates over abortion have become increasingly widespread in the United States following four states passing so-called “heartbeat” bills earlier this year which will ban abortion six weeks into a pregnancy.

• Alabama passed a near-total ban on abortion at any point of a pregnancy in mid-May 2019, including no exceptions for rape or incest.

• In Australia, New South Wales is the last state in which abortion is still technically a crime following the Queensland parliament passing laws in October 2018 to legalise abortion up to 22 weeks gestation.

Key Findings: Abortion

77% represents 2 responses combined:
Abortion SHOULD be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one
OR
Abortion SHOULD be permitted in certain circumstances, such as if a woman has been raped

14% represents 2 responses combined:
Abortion should NOT be permitted under any circumstances, except when the life of the mother is in danger
OR
Abortion should NEVER be permitted, no matter what circumstance exists

The proportion of New Zealanders who believe that abortion should be permitted either in all or in certain situations is above the global average

Support highest in:
Belgium (87%)

Support lowest in:
Malaysia (28%)

In New Zealand

Groups who showed the highest support for abortion being permitted either in all / or in certain situations

Female (78%)

Over $100k household income (88%)

n=588 New Zealanders between the ages of 18 to 74 were asked their opinion about a selection of statements about abortion in our March 2019 Global Advisor survey*.

*Base: New Zealand (n=588); World (n=19,524 from 28 countries)
Net results may not add to the sum of two results due to computer rounding.

GAME CHANGERS
GLOBAL VIEWS ON WHEN ABORTION SHOULD / SHOULD NOT / NEVER BE PERMITTED

Half (51%) of New Zealanders believe abortion should be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one.

A further 25% believe abortion should be permitted in certain circumstances (such as if a woman has been raped), resulting in over three quarters (77%) of New Zealanders believing abortion should be permitted at some level.

This result is above the global total of 68% believing abortion should be permitted at some level.

**Q: Please choose which is closer to your point of view:**

- Abortion **SHOULD** be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one
- Abortion **SHOULD** be permitted in certain circumstances, such as if a woman has been raped
- Abortion **should NOT** be permitted under any circumstances, except when the life of the mother is in danger
- Abortion **should NEVER** be permitted, no matter what circumstance exists
- Don’t know/Prefer not to say

Base: New Zealand (n=588); World (n=19,524 from 28 countries)

Net results may not add to the sum of two results due to computer rounding.

*Samples represent a more affluent, connected population
GLOBAL VIEWS ON WHEN ABORTION SHOULD / SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED

Belgium (87%) and France (86%) have the highest proportion who believe abortion should be permitted either whenever a woman decides she wants one or in certain circumstances (such as if she has been raped).

New Zealand is ranked in 9th position in the world in relation to the proportion who believe abortion should be permitted either whenever a woman decides or in certain circumstances.

Respondents in Malaysia (60%) were the most likely to believe that abortion should NOT be permitted under any circumstances (except when a mother’s life is in danger) or NEVER be permitted.

Q: Please choose which is closer to your point of view:

Abortion SHOULD be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one + Abortion SHOULD be permitted in certain circumstances, such as if a woman has been raped

Abortion should NOT be permitted under any circumstances, except when the life of the mother is in danger + Abortion should NEVER be permitted, no matter what circumstance exists

Base: NZ Feb-Mar 2019 (n=588); World (n=19,524 – from 28 countries)

*Samples represent a more affluent, connected population

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NZ DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN ON WHEN ABORTION SHOULD BE PERMITTED

The proportion who agree abortion should be permitted whenever a woman chooses or in certain circumstances are similar across different age groups income levels and genders.

Q: Please choose which is closer to your point of view:
Abortion SHOULD be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one + Abortion SHOULD be permitted in certain circumstances, such as if a woman has been raped

Base: NZ Feb-Mar 2019 (n=588)
Survey Background

- A total of 588 New Zealanders aged 18-74 answered questions about feminism in our March Global Advisor survey which ran from Friday 8th March to Tuesday 12th March 2019.

- 311 women answered one specific survey question about feminism: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In my country, I have full equality with men and the freedom to reach my full dreams and aspirations.

- The other question asked both our female and male respondents to tell us to what extent they agree or disagree with a bank of eight statements relating to feminism and women’s rights.

- This survey follows worldwide media coverage of the #MeToo movement.
Key Findings: Feminism

In my country, I have full equality with men and the freedom to reach my full dreams and aspirations. (Women only)

GLOBALLY

92% of Chinese women believe that they have full equality with men

19% of Turkish women believe that they have full equality with men

AGREE/SOMEWHAT AGREE

76% 74% 72% 70% 67%

Global Average: 60%

IN NEW ZEALAND

Just over two-thirds of New Zealanders believe there is currently an inequality between women and men.

18% of New Zealanders say they are scared to speak out and advocate for the equal rights of women because of what might happen to them.

n=588 New Zealanders between the ages of 18 to 74 were asked their opinion about a selection of statements about feminism in our March 2019 Global Advisor survey*.

*Base: New Zealand (n=588); World (n=9,817 from 28 countries)
Net results may not add to the sum of two results due to computer rounding.
Just under a quarter (23%) of New Zealand women agree “very much” with the statement “In my country, I have full equality with men and the freedom to reach my full dreams and aspirations” with a further 53% who “agree somewhat”.

This level of 76% agree is higher than the global total of 60%.
GLOBAL WOMEN’S VIEWS ON HAVING FULL EQUALITY WITH MEN AND FREEDOM TO REACH THEIR FULL DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS

With 76% agreeing that “In my country, I have full equality with men and the freedom to reach my full dreams and aspirations” New Zealand ranks higher than countries such as Canada, Australia, Great Britain and the US. Only women in China (92%), Russia (83%) and Malaysia (78%) are more likely to than those in New Zealand to agree with this statement.

Respondents in Brazil (39%), Japan (33%), Spain (28%) and Turkey (19%) were the least likely to agree with this statement relating to women’s rights.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In my country, I have full equality with men and the freedom to reach my full dreams and aspirations.

Question asked to females only.

Base: Females - New Zealand (n=311); World (n=9,817 from 28 countries)
NEW ZEALAND’S VIEWS ON FEMINISM STATEMENTS

Just over two-thirds (68%) of New Zealanders believe there is currently an inequality between women and men in terms of social, political and/or economic rights (agree very much or somewhat).

However, most New Zealanders believe in equal opportunities for men and women (95%) and the majority define themselves as feminists (63%) and would advocate and support equal opportunities for women (61%).

There is still 18% of New Zealanders saying they are scared to speak out and advocate for the equal rights of women because of what might happen to them.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements pertaining to women’s rights, feminism, etc.?

Base: NZ Feb-Mar 2019 (n=588); World (n=9,817 from 28 countries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree Very Much (%)</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat (%)</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat (%)</th>
<th>Disagree Very Much (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe in equal opportunities for men and women – that women should be treated equally to men in all areas based on their competency not their gender</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe there is currently an inequality between women and men in terms of social, political and/or economic rights</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I define myself as a feminist – someone who advocates for and supports equal opportunities for women</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I advocate and support equal opportunities for women – I do more than just think about these things; I actually speak up and am out to change things for women in my country</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared to speak out and advocate for the equal rights of women because of what might happen to me</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that men are more capable of doing things in society such as working, earning money, being educated and teaching women</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that women should not aspire to do anything outside of the household and should produce children and tend to their family</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that women are inferior to men</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEW ZEALAND WOMEN’S VIEWS ON FEMINISM STATEMENTS COMPARED TO AUSTRALIA, GREAT BRITAIN AND GLOBALLY

While New Zealand tends to compare favourably in terms of their level of agreement with these statements compared to the Global Total, the results are inline with the results of Australia and Great Britain.

More than half (58%) of males in New Zealand define themselves as feminists along with 68% of females.

A higher proportion of New Zealand females (22%) are scared to speak out and advocate the equal rights of women because of what might happen to them than males (14%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% agree very much + agree somewhat</th>
<th>Global Total</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe in equal opportunities for men and women – that women should be treated equally to men in all areas based on their competency not their gender</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe there is currently an inequality between women and men in terms of social, political and/or economic rights</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I define myself as a feminist – someone who advocates for and supports equal opportunities for women</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I advocate and support equal opportunities for women – I do more than just think about these things; I actually speak up and am out to change things for women in my country</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared to speak out and advocate for the equal rights of women because of what might happen to me</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>I believe that men are more capable of doing things in society such as working, earning money, being educated and teaching women</td>
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<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that women are inferior to men</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements pertaining to women’s rights, feminism, etc.?:

Base: NZ Feb-Mar 2019 (n=588); World (n=9,817 from 28 countries)
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