



## PRESS RELEASE

### Do men and women feel treated equally in workplaces around the world?

More than two years after the #MeToo movement began, Americans are those least likely to say asking a colleague for a date is appropriate and most likely to believe women's careers are hurt more by rejecting advances

**March 5, 2020** — Nearly half (46%) of people around the world think it is acceptable to ask a coworker on a date, according to a [new global Ipsos survey](#), released to mark International Women's Day.

However, Americans disagree that this is appropriate workplace behavior. Just 28% in the United States say asking a coworker on a date is acceptable – the lowest of all 27 countries surveyed – compared to 60% who deem it unacceptable. American women are significantly less likely than American men (19% vs. 37%) to consider that it is acceptable to ask a coworker out.

Four in ten Americans (41% vs. 26% among all people globally) say that rejecting a colleague who wants a date or a romantic relationship is more likely to damage a woman's career than a man's. This opinion is more prevalent in the U.S. than in any other country surveyed.

Across all countries, 22% believe it is acceptable to tell jokes or stories of a sexual nature at work, including 28% of men and 16% of women. Americans are again least permissive of this behavior (along with Mexicans), with just 10% saying this is acceptable.

Most people around the world do not think that workplaces in their country are a level playing field, with 56% saying they disagree that workplaces treat men and women equally. In the United States, that number is even higher (60%), and just 36% believe workplace equality exists. However, there is a big gender gap here; American men are much more likely to believe men and women are treated the same at work (44%), compared to American women (28%).

The survey of over 20,000 people in 27 countries was carried out by Ipsos and the [Global Institute for Women's Leadership](#) at King's College London. It reveals attitudes towards workplaces that many would regard as toxic or at the very least not female-friendly, which have been shown to hold women back in their careers.

The survey finds significant differences in what women and men see as acceptable workplace behavior, reveals where sexism is most likely to be challenged, and looks at whose careers are most likely to be affected by certain choices and responsibilities.



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**Julia Gillard**, former Prime Minister of Australia and Chair of the Global Institute for Women's Leadership, said:

*"The workplace is one of the most important battlegrounds in the fight for equality between women and men, and these findings show we still have some way to go. While those who help fuel toxic work environments are in the minority, it's nonetheless a significant one – and their views can make people's working lives a misery. If employers want to pay more than just lip service to gender equality, they need to invest in creating cultures that value diversity and inspire respect for all."*

### About the Study

These are some of the findings of a survey conducted in 27 countries via Global Advisor, the online survey platform of Ipsos, between January 24 and February 7, 2020. For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of **20,204** adults aged:

- 16-74 in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, and Sweden; and
- 18-74 in Canada, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States of America

The sample consists of 1,000+ individuals in each of Australia, Brazil, Canada, China France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the U.S., and of 500+ individuals in each of the other countries surveyed.

The data is weighted so each country's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of its adult population according to the most recent census data, and to give each country an equal weight in the total "global" sample. Online surveys can be taken as representative of the general working-age population in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the United States. Online samples in other countries surveyed are more urban, more educated and/or more affluent than the general population and the results should be viewed as reflecting the views of a more "connected" population.

Sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. The precision of online surveys conducted on Global Advisor is measured using a Bayesian Credibility Interval. Here, the poll has a credibility interval of +/-3.5 percentage points for countries where the sample is 1,000+ and +/- 4.8 points for countries where the sample is 500+. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please go to: [https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/2017-03/IpsosPA\\_CredibilityIntervals.pdf](https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/2017-03/IpsosPA_CredibilityIntervals.pdf).

Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses. The publication of these results abides by local laws and regulations.



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### About Ipsos

Ipsos is the world's third largest market research company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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