

Gender Discrimination Activity

On a word document, rank the six core countries on their ability to provide gender equality. Which countries get it right and which countries get it wrong? Defend your choices with policies implemented by each country. While defending your ranking, you should discuss policies that affect each country both domestically and internationally.

Submit your completed assignment once finished.

Sources: World Economic Forum (WEF) annual Global Gender Gap Report

People's Republic of China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mexico

1. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Based off of rankings by the World Economic Forum for the Gender Equality Index, the United Kingdom scores highly compared to the other core countries. Policies in the United Kingdom that promote gender equality include the April 2007 Equality Act provision, the Gender Equality Duty, which required all public authorities to draw up three-year gender equality schemes and gender impact assessments of all new policies and legislation in hopes of diminishing gender inequality. Other policies include the Equal Pay Act of 1970 mandating equal pay for equal work, Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, Equality Act of 2010, among other anti discrimination laws. These policies have been primarily designed to target perceived domestic, institutional issues of discrimination; the United Kingdom has, however, worked closely with the UN and respective committees on gender equality to fulfill goals for improving its global ranking.

2. Russian Federation

Having the continued legacies of the Soviet Union gives the Russian Federation some modicum of gender equality. Many contend, however, that true gender equality has not yet been achieved and perhaps Russia has even regressed on this front. This view is largely derived from the continued promotion of traditional gender roles, viewable in such instances as the 2019 Army Poster celebrating International Women's Day. However, in many qualities, Russia has achieved gender equality, with many women holding prominent roles in government and the 1993 Constitution guaranteeing equal rights. The Women's Party of Russia is also a very potent political force. Under the Labour law, women have the right to paid maternity leave, paid parental leave, and unpaid parental leave. This is an example of a domestic policy designed to promote gender equality. The decriminalization of first time domestic violence in 2017 is considered a regressive step, however, as a domestic policy.

3. Mexico

Mexico, though ranking 50th in the WEF Gender Equality Index, has made progress in this arena relative to other countries through implementation of new policies. The National Development Plan and National Gender Equality Policy both included great focuses on advancing substantive equality for women in Mexico, for example. \$1.65 billion USD are dedicated in the federal budget

towards increasing equality in the country. The Political Electoral Reform of 2014 is a significant domestic policy measure that elevated gender parity to a constitutional level for candidacies to Federal and State Congress. Implementation of these policies has been troubled and slow, however, which is why Mexico ranks lower here. The Mexican government has, at least, cooperated with UN Women to work towards compliance with international commitments through myriad programs, such as those designed to increase female economic empowerment, such as in manufacturing and exporting.

4. People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China ranks 103rd overall in the WEF Gender Gap Index, ranked lower primarily due to a lack of educational, economic, and health opportunities and benefits, but the PRC has been making progress in this arena. The constitution guarantees women equal rights to men in all spheres of life, and the literacy rate and life expectancy for women has gone up over the past several decades. The rise in literacy may be attributed to the Nine-Year Compulsory Education Law of 1986 and the 1995 Education Law of the People's Republic of China, both making access to educational programs equal between men and women. The primary detractor for the PRC's ranking relative to other nations is the decline in economic participation for women over the past few decades, where privatization of enterprises as part of restructuring efforts led to the layoffs of low-skilled female employees. The official retirement age for women being earlier than men also exacerbates the economic issues by forcing women out of work earlier. These policies are domestic in nature, but as the People's Republic of China becomes more integrated on the global stage, their economic policies, designed to make them more competitive, have led to regression in terms of gender equality.

5. Federal Republic of Nigeria

Nigeria ranks low on the WEF Gender Equality Index, not far above Iran. Furthermore, its policy implementation towards increasing gender equality has been lackluster. Much of the prospects for gender equality in Nigeria are tied to economic growth, based off of International Monetary Fund analysis - closing the gender gap would potentially lead to higher growth, productivity, and stability. This has not been a focus of Nigeria's government, however, which has instead focused upon alleviating poverty; President Muhammadu Buhari has promised social justice for the poor. Nigerian policies of the present, both of a domestic and international focus, currently inhibit progress in the arena of gender equality, with only 50 percent of Nigerian women participating in the labor force and high numbers of Nigerian girls not going to school. Laws do not promote equal payment or nondiscrimination, and it is illegal for women to work overnight in manual labor. Such a policy both affects Nigeria's economy domestically and internationally, as it inhibits economic growth at home by limiting employment opportunities as well as goods production in manual labor-based fields, leading to a dearth of growth in the Nigerian economy.

6. Islamic Republic of Iran

Women's rights in Iran are limited compared to the rest of the world, constituting only 19% of the workforce and having limited legal rights. Much of the criticism against Iran's gender equality issues is derived from perception of legal discrimination in the country. The World Bank posits that there are 23 legal restrictions for married women under Iranian law, for one example - women are limited in traveling abroad away from home and in receiving equal pay. The Iranian Civil Code

empowers the husband, to illustrate further, in preventing his wife from taking a job. Also, there is a lack of legal protections for women against domestic violence. Women are forced to wear the hijab, as well. Many of these policies are domestically oriented, but bans placed on the free travel of women outside of and into Iran without permission of the husband do affect Iran on an international level. With this in mind, Iran still ranks the lowest of these countries in gender equality.