

Young Women's Feminism and Activism 2019

This briefing is based on findings from a survey carried out for Young Women's Trust by Populus Data Solutions from 25th June- 11th July 2019 with approximately 2000 young women aged 18 to 30 in England and Wales, alongside a comparison group of 2000 young men.

Young women identifying as feminist is increasing - politicians need to listen

- **67% of young women aged 18-24 now identify as feminist** (which approximates 1.8 million young women in the UK). This is up from 60% last year, a 12% increase or almost 200,000 more 18-24 year-old women identifying as feminist.
- For 18-30 year old women, 57% identify as feminist, **suggesting there are 3.1 million feminist young women potential voters in the UK**. This is up from 50% last year, a 14% increase, or 380,000 more young women.
- In addition, a third of young men identify as feminist (approximating 1.7 million).
- This is a contrast to previous independent [research](#) which has found that 9% of women, and 4% of men, rising to 19% of young women aged 18-24, identified as feminist.



"It's inescapable. From posting a selfie online to applying for a job, walking home late at night, you can't exist in the world as a woman without being treated differently for it."

"We perhaps feel more comfortable identifying sexism now and taking issue with it."

Young Women's Advisory Panel
Members

As confidence in politicians plummets, political activism is growing

- More than two thirds of young women (69%) say their confidence in politicians has plummeted in the last year. That number rose to 72 per cent among young women aged 18-24 years old.
- 70 per cent of young women with a disability or long-term health condition said they felt they were not listened to by those in power.
- **One in 10 young women took part in a demonstration or protest in last 12 months.**

Young women are increasingly aware of the inequality they face

- A higher proportion of young women in 2019 (**64%**) agreed that **sexism is a major problem in the UK** as compared to 2018 (58%).
- This rises to 67% for young BAME women, 68% for those aged 18-24 and 73% for young women with a disability or long-term health condition.

Young women still face sexism and sexual harassment, including in the workplace

- 74% of young women in 2019 (compared to 71% in 2018) said that women still face discrimination in the workplace.
- 1 in 4 young women fear being fired if they report sexual harassment.
- 31% of young women believe that there has been talk but no action to tackle sexual harassment since the #metoo movement started.



"I feel sexism is still rife within the workplace, especially in more male-dominated industries. While we have made great strides in past decades, there is still a lack of female leadership within many companies, and this has led to a lack of representation of female interests within the workplace."

Young Women's Advisory Panel Member

Young women want urgent progress on women's equality

- Over half of young women think that as things stand, it is unlikely that discrimination because of their sex in the UK will be a thing of the past by the time they are 40.
- Only 15% of young women felt that women's equality had got better in the last 12 months, down from last year when 26% of young women agreed with this statement. The percentage was even lower for young female parents (14%), or young BAME women (13%).

Our findings show that this election, politicians desperately need to reconnect with and listen to young women, including those who face additional discrimination and barriers such as young BAME women, young female parents and young disabled women.

Contact Young Women's Trust

Young Women's Trust works to give economic power to young women by raising their voices, challenging sexist stereotypes and rebuilding workplaces free from discrimination. We do this by:

1. Providing free coaching and CV feedback to young women to help them build their skills, identify their talents and develop strong mental health
2. Advising companies how to build equal workplaces
3. Campaigning for young women to be valued – at work and in their unpaid work
4. Training young activists to share their experiences and be the change

If you'd like more information on our research, email esther.sample@youngwomenstrust.org or visit www.youngwomenstrust.org.