



Brand South Africa

Research - Internal Analysis 2022 Global Gender Gap Report

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1. **What is the Gender Gap Report (GGR)**

The Gender Gap Report (GGR), published annually by the World Economic Forum seeks to assess the state of gender parity globallyⁱ. It is seen as highly reputable, with little criticism of its objectives and methodology. The report uses both soft and hard measures in its assessments, including labour force surveys produced by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and accounts for indexes instituted by the UN, especially in relation to literacy rates, access to health care and human development more generally. Significantly the report seeks to understand gender gaps and limits itself from assessing issues around gender empowerment, and the levels of literacy and employment etc.

Further, it is an outcome-based measurement and does not assess the levels, amount and intent of measures implemented. Significantly for example, it is a measurement of gender performance within the country with countries compared in relation to how close the gap between genders is apparent within the sub-indexes. Moreover, it sees gender equality as optimal, providing no points to countries whose gender gap sees women participate more than men in the specific measure assessed.

Significantly, in this regard it takes as a starting point the fact that men are advantaged more generally, thus scoring a country between 0 and 1 in relation to the participation and role of women, with 0 being the worst and 1 representing gender parity. Further, it assesses four specific outcomes; namely economic participation and opportunity, health care and survival, political empowerment, and educational attainment.

Moreover, it utilises both fact and survey-based indicators; the economic opportunity and participation sub-category for example sees measurements of participation by using statistics from the International Labour Organisation and outcomes of the Forum's own conducted Executive Opinion Survey (OES). Other sources of information include the World Bank's economic outlook, statistics from the International Monetary Fund and UNESCO amongst others.

The report has been published annually since 2006, with the 2022 version assessing 146 countries, excluding Russia. In addition, the 2022 report was conducted in partnership with LinkedIn, Coursera and the WTW, with these portals used to provide hard facts on gender participation, wages and studying and upskilling.

2. Gender parity in 2022

The 2022 GGR saw gender parity increase to 0.681 (or 68.1%), up from 0.679 in 2021, with it being calculated that it would take 132 years for full gender parity, down from 136 in 2021, but up from pre-covid levels. Further, in relation to the sub-indexes, educational attainment decreased to 0.944 when compared to the 0.952 amount in 2021, economic opportunity and participation increased to 0.603 up from 0.587 last year, health care and survival increased to 0.958 when compared to 2021's 0.957, while parity in political participation remained unchanged at 0.22.

Regionally North America remained the most gender equal continent scoring 0.769 (76.9%), with Europe scoring 76.6% and Sub-Saharan Africa scoring 0.687, an increase of over 1 point since 2021, much of which is attributed to enhances in parity in economic participation in Nigeria and Kenya. South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East remain the most unequal scoring 62.3% and 63.4% respectively. In real terms

the report assesses that it would take 98 years for gender parity to realise in sub-Saharan Africa, 197 years in South Asia, 60 years in Europe and 59 years in North America. It is noteworthy that a score closer to 1 and/or closer to the 100% is seen as better, with increases seen as improvements.

At a country level, Iceland was ranked 1st, with a gender gap of 0.908 (90.8%), followed by countries such as Sweden (0.86), and Norway (0.845). 30 countries enhanced their rankings by over a point in 2022, with 57 increasing by less than a point. 12 countries saw drops by more than a percentage point, while a further 46 saw marginal decreases. Kenya enhanced its score by over 3.7 percentage points to 72.9, while Saudi Arabia enhanced its score to 0.636, 3.3 points higher than its 2021 score. Benin, 0.612, dropped by the most, 4.1 points, while Algeria at minus 3 (60.2) and Malawi, 63.2, minus 3.3 followed closely.

At a sub-indicator level gender parity was most apparent in relation to health and survival, scoring between 93 and 98%, while education was scored between 0.81 and 0.95 on average. 47 countries reported parity in literacy, with over 64 countries reporting parity in relation to primary school access; 75% of countries assessed received a score of 0.90 and over in this index. It is thus predicted that the gap in educational attainment would be closed in 22 years, while political participation will take 155 years and economic opportunity and participation 151 years to be realised if the trend remains constant.

3. South Africa remains consistent

South Africa has enacted and promulgated legislation and policies to ensure gender parity, including at a constitutional level. Further the promotion of equality and prevention of unfair discrimination act (2000), and employment equity act (1998) also sought to realise equality, allowing for preference to be provided to marginalised communities and groups, including womenⁱⁱ. The country thus remained consistent in the 2022 report, scoring 0.782, up from 0.781 in the 2021 report. This was not enough to alter its position, with the country ranking 20th.

At a sub-index level, the country saw an increase in its rank in relation to political empowerment (12th), up from 14th in 2021, and educational attainment, where it

scored 0.998 (41st) when compared to its rank of 69 in 2021 (0.994). This does indicate a large success, with parity being achieved in educational attainment and opportunities.

It scored 0.979 in the health care and survival index, the same as in 2021, yet enhanced its position to 32nd, while despite scoring less, 0.949 in 2022 when compared to 0.958 in 2021, it remained ranked 92nd in relation to gender parity in economic opportunities and participation.

Indicator	2022 POS	Score	2021 POS	Score
Overall	20	0.782	20	0.781
Political Empowerment	12	0.502	14	0.493
Educational Attainment	41	0.998	69	0.994
Health and Survival	32	0.979	37	0.979
Economic Opportunities and Participation	92	0.649	92	0.658

The country’s position amongst its main competitors has also largely remained unchanged. It is ranked above India, China, Brazil Nigeria and Egypt; however, it ranked behind Rwanda and Namibia continentally. Further, both Rwanda (0.811) and Namibia (0.807) enhanced their scores by a larger proportion when compared to South Africa and are thus ranked 6th and 8th.

Country	Rank	2022 Score	2021 Score
Rwanda	6	0.811	0.805
Namibia	8	0.807	0.805
South Africa	20	0.782	0.781
Brazil	94	0.696	0.695
China	102	0.682	0.682
Nigeria	123	0.639	0.627
Egypt	129	0.635	0.639
India	135	0.629	0.626

4. Conclusion

South Africa still has much to do to realise gender parity, especially in relation to actualization and outcomes. The country is currently dealing with issues of tremendous gender-based violence, which mostly impacts women. Over 10 thousand incidents of sexual assault reported between January and March 2022 according to official crime statistics, with 4600 of these incidents occurring in the victims and/or rapist's home. 900 women were also killed during the same period. Further, inadequacies in support has led to cases being withdrawn and prosecutions failingⁱⁱⁱ.

Women led households are 40% poorer than those led by men despite supporting extended dependents in 48% of cases when compared to the 23% of men led households doing the same^{iv}. In addition, there remains a wage gap of between 23 and 35%, a fact borne out by the GGR, which concluded that gender parity in wages measured at 0.23 in Sub Saharan Africa, the most globally.

However, the GGR does point to some of the successes especially in relation to educational access and the ability to receive health care, which is almost at a state of parity.

References

ⁱ <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022/digest>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-06-06-gender-gap-women-have-been-hammered-by-covid-19-south-africa-needs-urgent-policy-reform/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://mg.co.za/news/2022-07-13-south-african-police-are-failing-victims-of-gender-based-violence-report->

^{iv} <https://www.usb.ac.za/usb-insights/equal-pay-for-equal-work-how-does-south-africa-measure-up/>