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**NORC**<sup>75</sup>  
at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

The Associated Press-NORC  
Center for Public Affairs Research

# HILLARY CLINTON'S CANDIDACY AND THE STATE OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In the wake of Hillary Clinton's historic nomination as the first woman standard-bearer of a major political party, women continue to face obstacles in politics and the workplace, according to a national poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Large majorities of Americans regard women political leaders as equal to men and think a woman would be up to the challenges a president may face. Only 3 in 10 Americans expect Clinton's gender to hurt her chances in November, and the same number think she is being held to a higher standard than other candidates because she is a woman.

But about half of the public think women still have fewer opportunities in politics than men. And while three-quarters of the public say discrimination against women has decreased over the past 25 years or so, an equal number of Americans think it continues to be an issue today for many women.

Women are particularly likely to say they are given fewer chances to succeed in politics. And women are more inclined to say that Clinton's gender is a disadvantage, while men tend to say the fact that she is a woman will help her chances of being elected.

The nationwide poll of 1,096 adults was part of the AmeriSpeak® Omnibus, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC at the University of Chicago's probability-based panel. Interviews were conducted between August 11 and 14, 2016, online and using landlines and cellphones.



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## Three Things You Should Know About The AP-NORC Poll on Gender Discrimination:

Among all American adults...

- 1) Seventy-five percent say women and men make equally good political leaders, but 53 percent say women have fewer opportunities in politics than men.
- 2) Three-quarters think there is at least some discrimination against women in this country, although just as many say it has decreased over the past generation.
- 3) Twenty-nine percent expect Clinton's gender to hurt her chances in November, and 28 percent think she is being held to a higher standard than other candidates because she is a woman.

Some of the poll's key findings are:

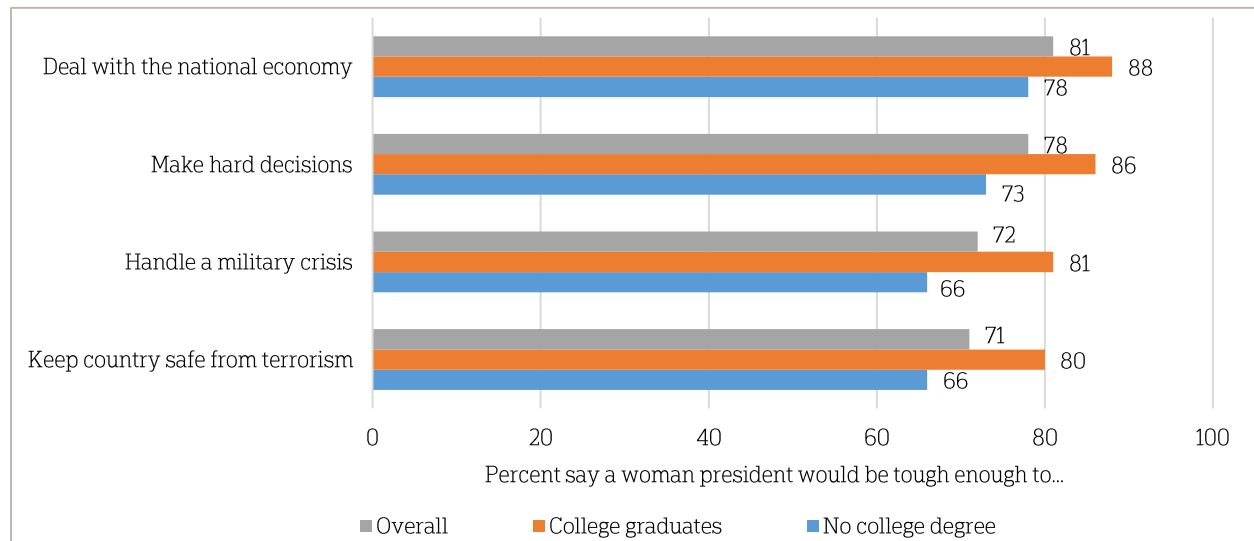
- Seventy-five percent say women and men are equally good at being political leaders. Yet, 53 percent think women have fewer opportunities in politics than men.
- The public is divided on whether Clinton's gender is an advantage, a hindrance or neither for her election prospects this fall. Men are more inclined to say her gender is a benefit to her campaign, and women are more likely to say it is a barrier.
- But 7 in 10 say the historic nature of Clinton's candidacy has no bearing on their own vote choice this year. Nearly 20 percent say the opportunity to elect the first woman president makes them more inclined to vote for Clinton in November, and about 10 percent say it makes them less likely to vote for her.
- Overall, 75 percent think discrimination against women has decreased over the past 25 years or so, but at the same time an equal number of Americans say discrimination continues to be an issue today for many women.
- Forty-nine percent of the public think it would help the economy if the upper management of companies were made up of equal numbers of men and women. Just 2 percent say it would be bad for the economy, while 48 percent think it would make no difference.
- However, just 4 percent of *Fortune* 500 CEOs are women and the workplace is perceived as an uneven playing field for women. More than half of Americans think women have fewer opportunities for job advancement and 6 in 10 say they are at a disadvantage when it comes to salaries.
- In fact, just under half of the women surveyed said they had experienced at least some type of job-related discrimination – getting a job, receiving equal pay, or being appreciated and promoted at work -- because of their gender. Three in 10 men report having been discriminated against in some way at work because of their gender.
- Six in 10 do not expect a Clinton Administration to have any effect on the level of discrimination against women, while a quarter anticipate a reduction in the amount of discrimination women would face if Clinton is elected.

## **AMERICANS ARE CONFIDENT IN A WOMAN'S ABILITY TO HANDLE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENCY.**

Most of the public – three-quarters overall and both men and women alike – say women are equally good at politics as men. Seventeen percent say men generally make better politicians than women and 7 percent say women are better.

Confidence in women as politicians extends to the presidency. More than 7 in 10 say a woman would be able to make the hard decisions required of the president, handle a military crisis, deal with the national economy, and keep the country safe from terrorism. There are few differences between the perceptions of women and men, but there are some distinctions based on education.

**Most say a woman president would be tough enough to handle the difficult tasks charged to the office and better educated Americans are even more inclined to say so.**



**Question: Generally, do you think a woman president would be tough enough or not tough enough to...[ITEM]?**

Nearly half (47 percent) say electing a woman to the presidency would be good for the country, while 41 percent think it would have little effect. Just 11 percent say it would be bad for the country.

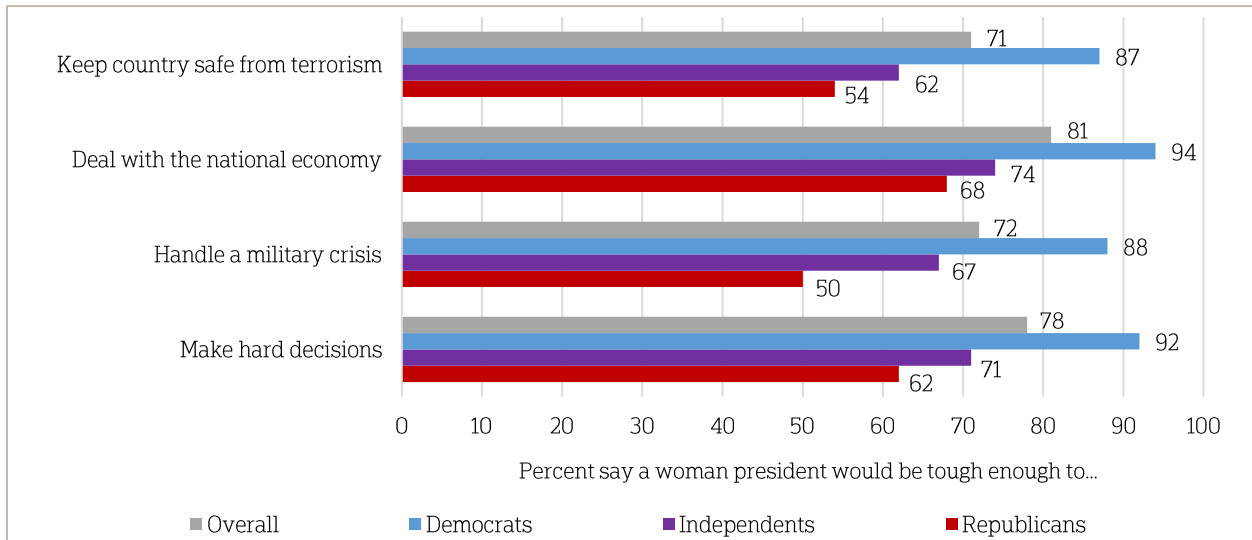
Despite positive views of women as politicians, 53 percent say women have fewer opportunities in politics than men. This view is borne out by the current makeup of the United States Congress, where just 19 percent of seats in the House of Representatives and 20 percent of seats in the Senate are filled by women.<sup>1</sup> Women are particularly likely to say they are given fewer chances to succeed in politics; 6 in 10 women compared to just 4 in 10 men say women receive fewer political opportunities.

Although these questions were asked about a generic woman president without any specific reference to Hillary Clinton, there are some indications that the public is thinking of Clinton when considering the potential for any woman in the White House.

Republicans are less likely than Democrats to rate a woman as tough enough to handle many of the tasks of the presidency. In addition, Republicans are less likely than Democrats to say women and men make equally good political leaders (62 percent vs. 82 percent) and that electing a woman as president would be good for the country (21 percent vs. 73 percent). Those with an unfavorable opinion of Clinton are also less likely to say a woman president would be good for the country or is up to the responsibilities of the office.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fas.org/sfp/crs/misc/RL30261.pdf>

**Democrats are more likely than Republicans to see a woman president as tough enough for the office.**



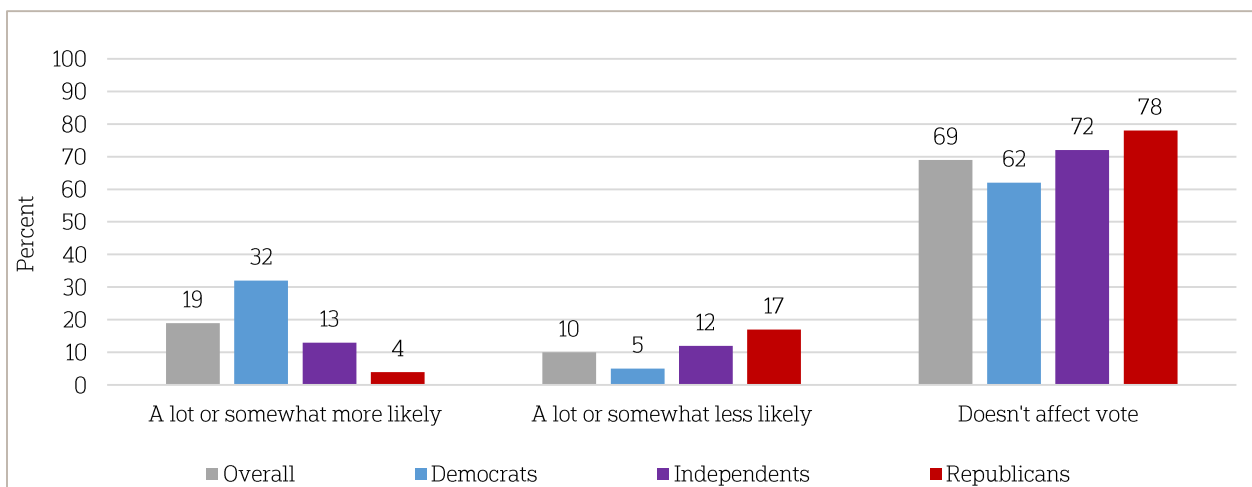
Question: Generally, do you think a woman president would be tough enough or not tough enough to...[ITEM]?

**VIEWS VARY ABOUT THE IMPACT OF A WOMAN PRESIDENT.**

The majority of the public says the possibility of making Clinton the first woman president of the United States will play no role in their vote choice. While no differences emerge between women and men on this question, Democrats are more inclined to say they will vote for Clinton because she is a woman, while Republicans and independents are more likely to say they will vote against Clinton for that reason.

There are, however, limitations to questions that require people to self-report influences on their vote choice. Although people may be trying to be candid in their assessment, they may lack the introspective ability to provide an accurate response about what motivates their decision.

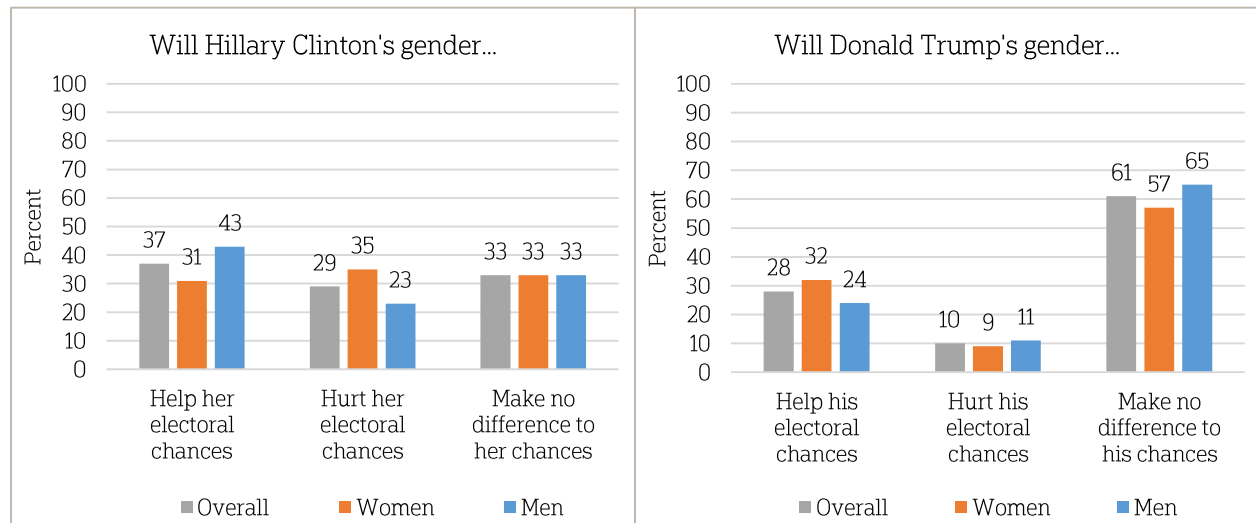
**The prospect of the first woman president will not impact most Americans' vote in November.**



Question: Does the fact that, if elected, Hillary Clinton would be the first woman president of the United States make you more likely to vote for her, less likely to vote for her, or does it not affect your vote either way?

Regardless of whether they report that the possibility of having the first woman elected president has any influence on their own vote decision, the public is split on how they think it will impact other voters. The public is divided into thirds about whether being a woman will be an advantage, a hindrance, or neither for Clinton's election prospects in November. Men are more likely to say it is helpful, while women are more likely to say being a woman will hurt her chances. Most Americans say Donald Trump's gender will not make a difference in the upcoming election, although women are more likely than men to say being a man will help him.

**Americans are split on the effect of Hillary Clinton's gender, but largely united on the impact of Donald Trump's.**



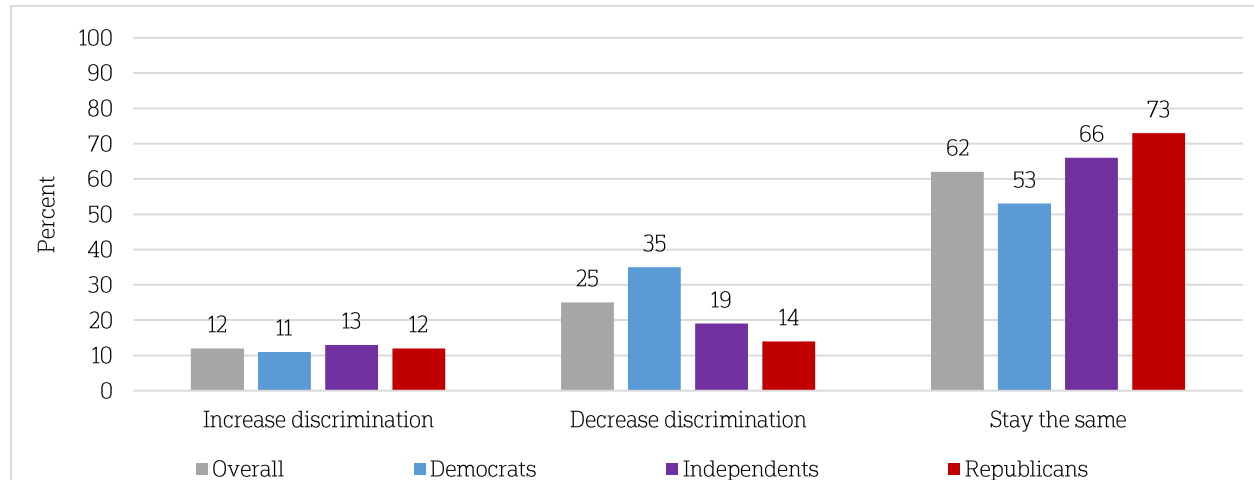
**Questions: Do you think the fact that Hillary Clinton is a woman will help her, hurt her or won't it make a difference to her chances of getting elected this fall? Do you think the fact that Donald Trump is a man will help him, hurt him or won't it make a difference to his chances of getting elected this fall?**

When it comes to how she is treated generally, 40 percent of Americans say Clinton is being held to a higher standard than other candidates, 36 percent say the same standard, and 23 percent say a lower standard. And 28 percent say she is being held to a higher standard because she is a woman.

A third of the public say electing a woman to the presidency would be good for the country and Clinton is the right person to be the first woman president. In addition, nearly a quarter say not only would a woman president would be beneficial, it is important to them personally that a woman presides over the country during their lifetime.

The public is split on whether Clinton is a positive role model for American women, with 53 percent saying she is and 45 percent saying she is not. Democrats (84 percent) overwhelmingly say Clinton is a positive role model, while few independents (36 percent) and even fewer Republicans (19 percent) say the same.

Most Americans (62 percent) say Clinton getting elected to the presidency will have little effect on discrimination against women in the United States. Twenty-five percent expect it to result in a decline in discrimination and 12 percent say it will lead to an increase.

**Most think if Hillary Clinton is elected the level discrimination against women would not change.**

**Question: Do you think discrimination against women will increase, decrease or stay about the same if Hillary Clinton is elected as the first woman president?**

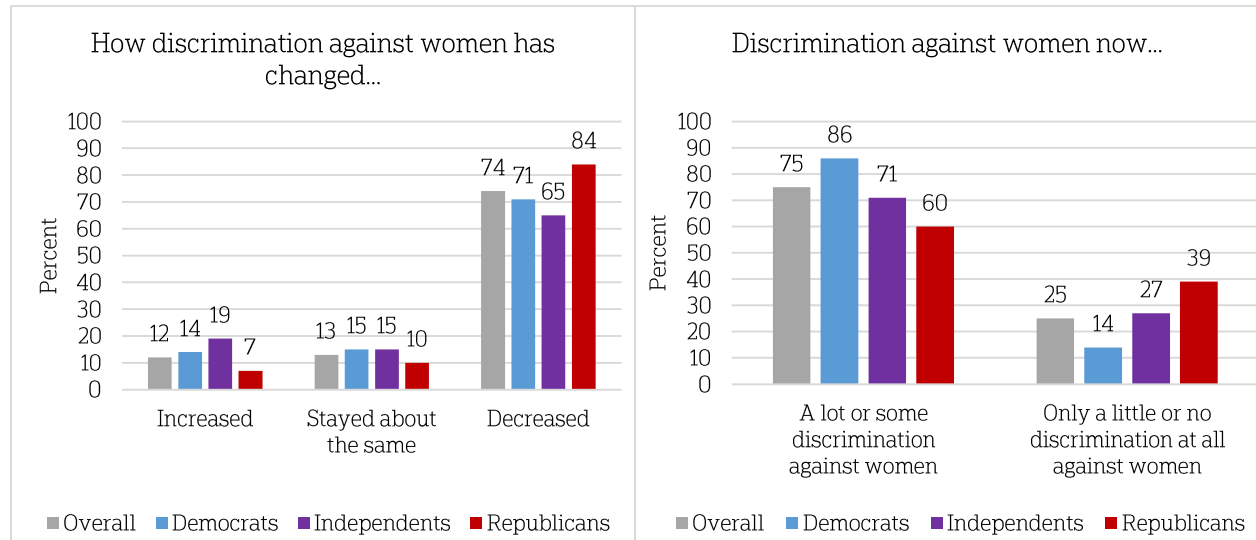
## **MOST SAY DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN HAS WANED, BUT FEEL IT IS STILL A PROBLEM, ESPECIALLY IN THE WORKPLACE.**

Most Americans say discrimination against women is getting better, but it is still an issue for many women today. Three-quarters say discrimination against women has decreased compared to when their parents were the same age, with similar numbers of men and women saying so. But, three-quarters of the public also says women continue to face some or a lot of discrimination these days, with women more likely than men to say there is still discrimination (82 percent vs. 67 percent).

A majority of Democrats, independents, and Republicans say discrimination against women has declined, though Republicans are most likely to say so. A majority of all partisans also say there is still at least some discrimination against women today, but Democrats are most likely to feel that way.

Republican women are more likely than Republican men to say there is some or a lot of discrimination against women (74 percent vs. 46 percent), while there is little difference between Democratic men and women.

**Most say women still face discrimination, though it has decreased.**



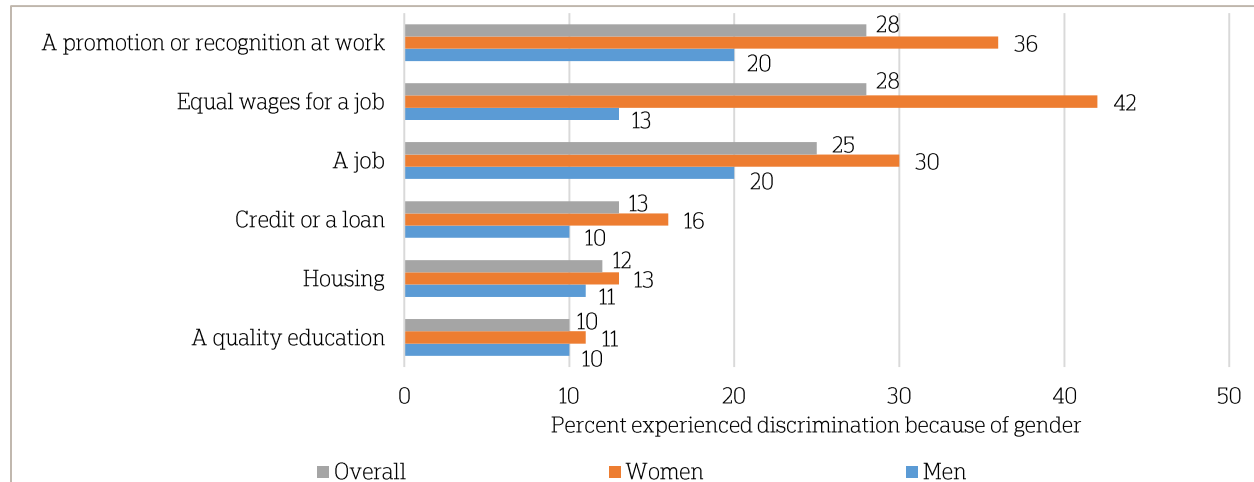
**Questions: Compared to when your parents were your age, do you think discrimination against women in the United States has increased, stayed about the same or decreased?  
How much discrimination do you think there is against women in the United States today?**

When it comes to specific areas of life impacted by discrimination, education is generally seen as an equal playing field. A majority (58 percent) thinks that women and men have the same amount of opportunities to advance their education, with little difference by gender.

However, it's a different story in the workplace. A majority of Americans say women have fewer opportunities for job advancement (52 percent) and for salary improvement (58 percent) than men. Women are particularly likely, when compared to men, to say they get fewer opportunities for both job advancement (63 percent vs. 41 percent) and salary increases (68 percent vs. 48 percent).

More women than men say they have directly experienced discrimination in the workplace. Half of women say they have been discriminated against because of their gender in either in getting a job, receiving equal pay, or being promoted or recognized. About a quarter of women report they have experienced all three types of discrimination. Just 3 in 10 men report experiencing discrimination in the workplace because of their gender.



**More women than men say they have experienced gender discrimination in the workplace.**

**Question: Have you yourself ever been discriminated against because of your gender in getting...[ITEM]?**

The obstacles women face at work are reflected in the makeup of the leadership of major American companies. As of June 2016, women made up just 4 percent of CEOs of *Fortune* 500 companies.<sup>2</sup> Nearly half (49 percent) of the public thinks it would be good for the national economy if there were equal numbers of men and women in upper management positions of companies. Just 2 percent say it would be bad, while 48 percent say it would make no difference. Adults under age 45 are more likely than older adults to say gender equality in the boardroom would be good for the economy, and women are more likely than men to say it would be good for the economy.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

### Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face).

Interviews for this survey were conducted between August 11 and 14, 2016 with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,096 completed the survey—832 via the web and 264 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 30.8 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 21.3 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 94.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 6.2 percent.

<sup>2</sup> <http://fortune.com/2016/06/06/women-ceos-fortune-500-2016/>



The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.6 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under- and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and household phone status. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over, were used for all analyses.

All differences reported between subgroups of the U.S. population are at the 95 percent level of statistical significance, meaning that there is only a 5 percent (or lower) probability that the observed differences could be attributed to chance variation in sampling.

A comprehensive listing of the questions, complete with tabulations of top level results for each question, is available on The AP-NORC Center website: [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org)

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