

CELEBRATING 10 TEN YEARS



The Associated Press-NORC  
Center for Public Affairs Research

# FIFTY YEARS OF TITLE IX: Where Are We Now?

Fifty years after the passage of Title IX prohibited high schools and colleges from discriminating on the basis of gender, most Americans believe there has been at least some progress in providing equal treatment for women. However, the public perceives somewhat less progress when it comes to protecting against gender discrimination, harassment, and violence than in other areas such as education and sports, according to a new AP-NORC/National Women's History Museum poll.



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Although Title IX is best known for its role in equal treatment for women and girls in athletics,<sup>1</sup> more Americans prioritize its other principles, like protecting all students from sexual harassment and female students from discrimination, than say the same about providing equal opportunities and resources to play sports.

More Americans say there has been a great deal of progress made since Title IX toward achieving equality for white women (49%) but less so for women of color (36%), LGBTQ women (33%), and low-income women (26%).

## Three Things You Should Know

About the AP-NORC/National Women's History Museum Poll

Among American Adults:

- 1) 61% of men perceive a great deal or a lot of progress toward achieving equal treatment for women over the last 50 years, but just 37% of women feel the same.
- 2) 77% of Democrats and 53% Republicans approve of Title IX and its key priorities.
- 3) 49% report solid progress has been made toward achieving equality for white women, compared to 36% who say the same for women of color, 33% for LGBTQ women, and 26% for low-income women.

<sup>1</sup> <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL31709.pdf>

Men are consistently more likely than women to report progress toward equal treatment of women when it comes to areas such as education (58% vs. 38%), sports (51% vs. 31%), and protections against violence (40% vs. 17%). Republicans are also more likely than Democrats to believe there has been improvement in equal treatment over the last 50 years.

The majority of Americans, regardless of gender or political party, approve of Title IX and its key priorities, while at the same time many remain unsure about the actual impact of the law.

About 8 in 10 Americans, including large majorities of both Republicans and Democrats, say it is important for colleges and high schools to protect students from harassment and discrimination as well as to provide equal opportunities for men and women.

A majority of Americans say Title IX has had a positive impact on female students' opportunities in sports and education, but many Americans remain unsure about its impact in areas such as addressing sexual harassment in schools and protecting LGBTQ students from discrimination.

The nationwide poll was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and the [National Women's History Museum](#) from May 12 to May 16, 2022, using AmeriSpeak®, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 1,001 adults. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 percentage points.

## Nearly Half the Public Perceives a Lot of Progress in Achieving Equal Treatment for Women Over the Last 50 Years

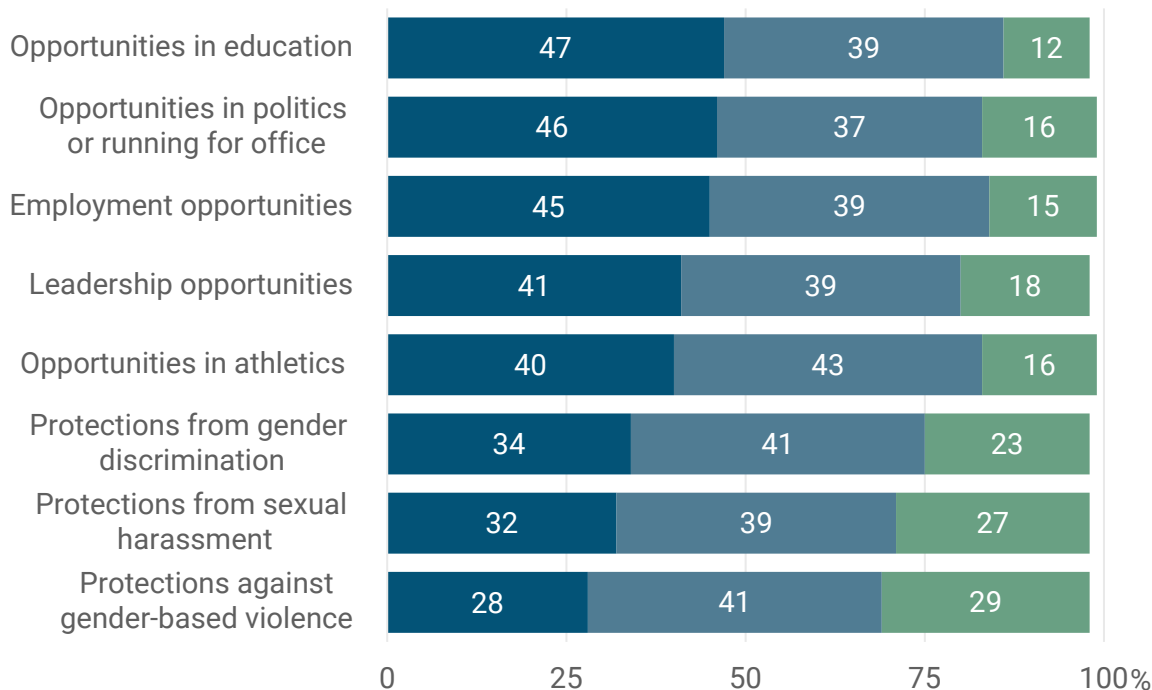
In the 50 years since Title IX was passed, 49% of Americans say a great deal or a lot of progress has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the United States, 41% report some progress, and 10% report only a little or no progress at all.

Americans see more progress in some areas than in others. Nearly half of Americans see a great deal or a lot of progress in achieving equal treatment for women in education, employment, and politics over the last 50 years. Fewer, however, say the same about protections from sexual assault, gender discrimination, and gender-based violence.

## Perceived progress on equal treatment for women is higher in some areas than others.

Percent of adults

■ A great deal/A lot of progress   ■ Some progress   ■ Only a little/No progress



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the United States?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



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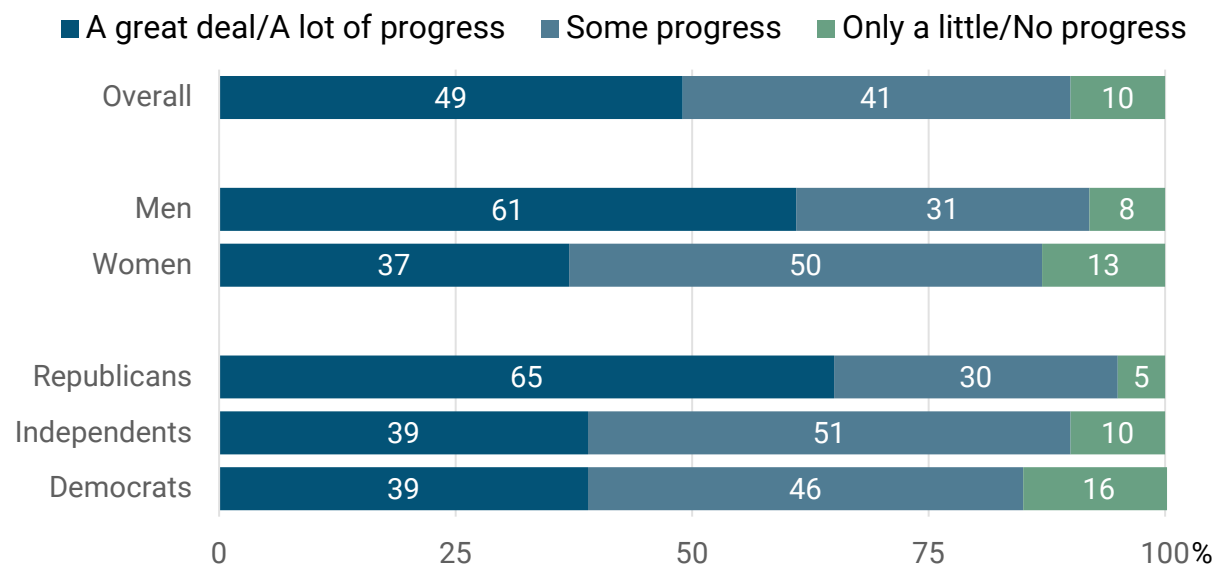
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## Men and Republicans See More Progress Than Women and Democrats

Perceptions of progress toward equal treatment of women vary significantly based on both gender and political partisanship. When it comes to achieving equal treatment for women in the United States, 61% of men say there has been a great deal or a lot of progress, while just 37% of women say the same. And Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say a great deal or a lot of progress has been made (65% vs 39%).

### Men and Republicans see more progress toward equal treatment of women than women and Democrats.

Percent of adults



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the United States?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

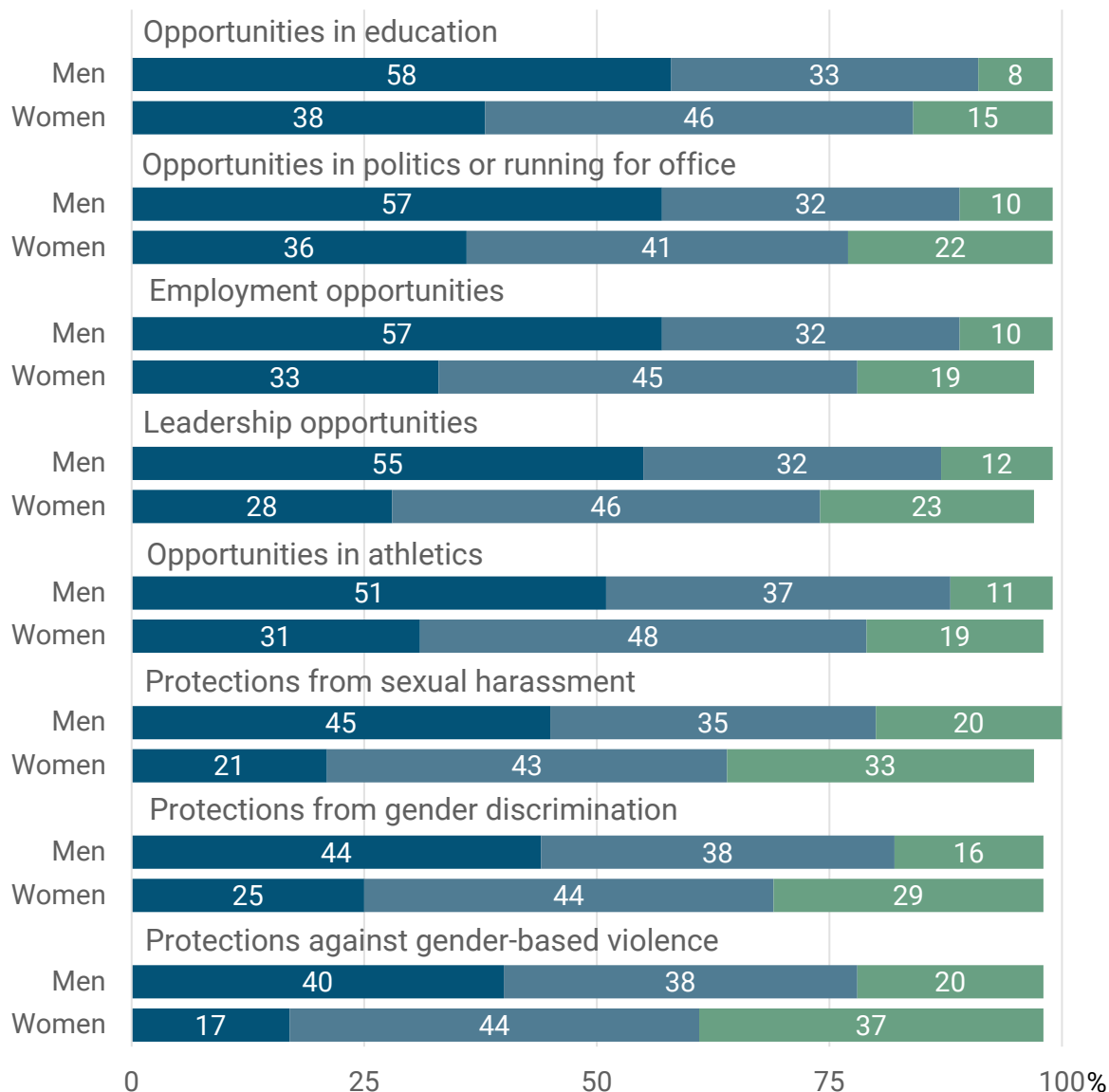


When it comes to specific areas of equal treatment, men perceive more progress than women on each item asked about on the survey.

## Men see more progress toward equal treatment than women in a variety of areas.

Percent of adults

■ A great deal/A lot of progress ■ Some progress ■ Only a little/No progress



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the following areas?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



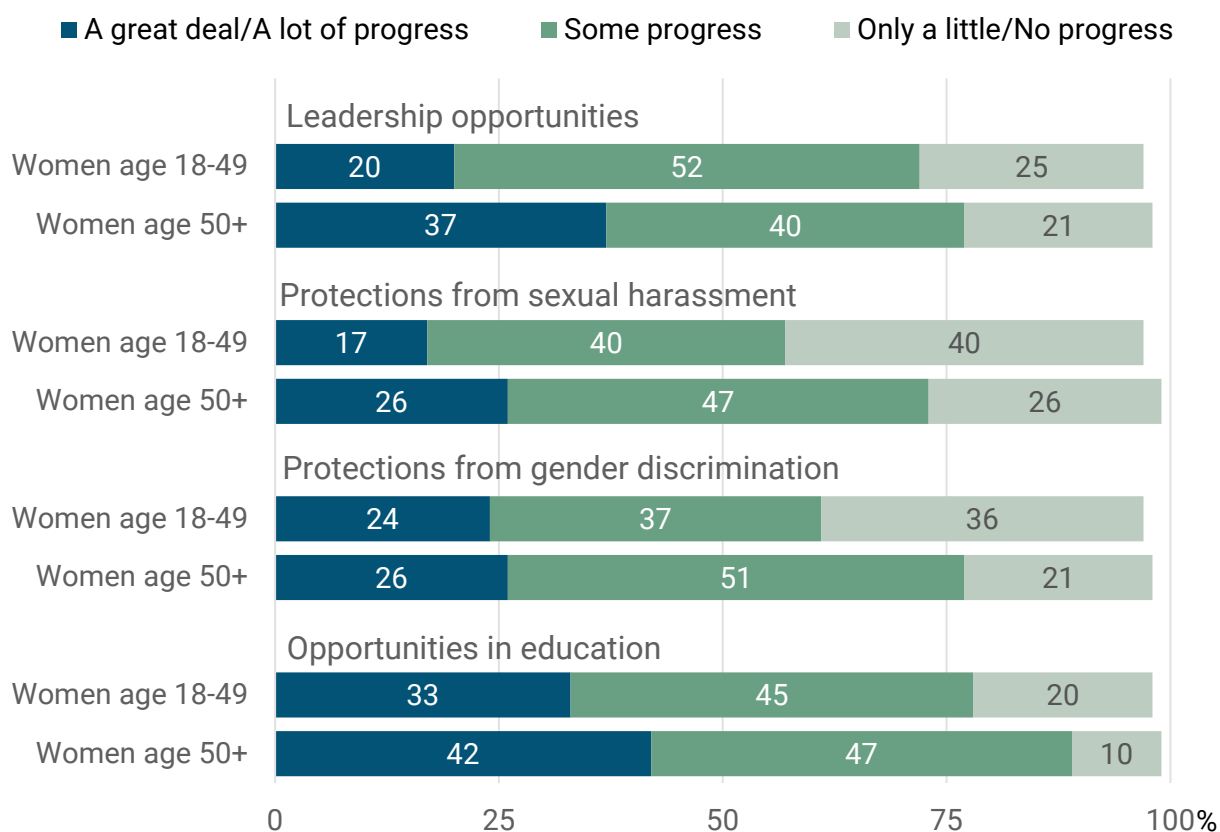
✱NORC

Differences also emerge among women of different ages. Women under age 50 are less likely than older women to think a lot of progress has been made on leadership opportunities. And younger women are more likely than women age 50 and older to think only a little or no progress at all has been made on opportunities in education and protections from sexual harassment and gender discrimination.

There are not any significant differences between younger and older men.

### Younger women see less progress than older women in achieving equal treatment in various areas.

Percent of adults



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the following areas?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



National Women's History Museum

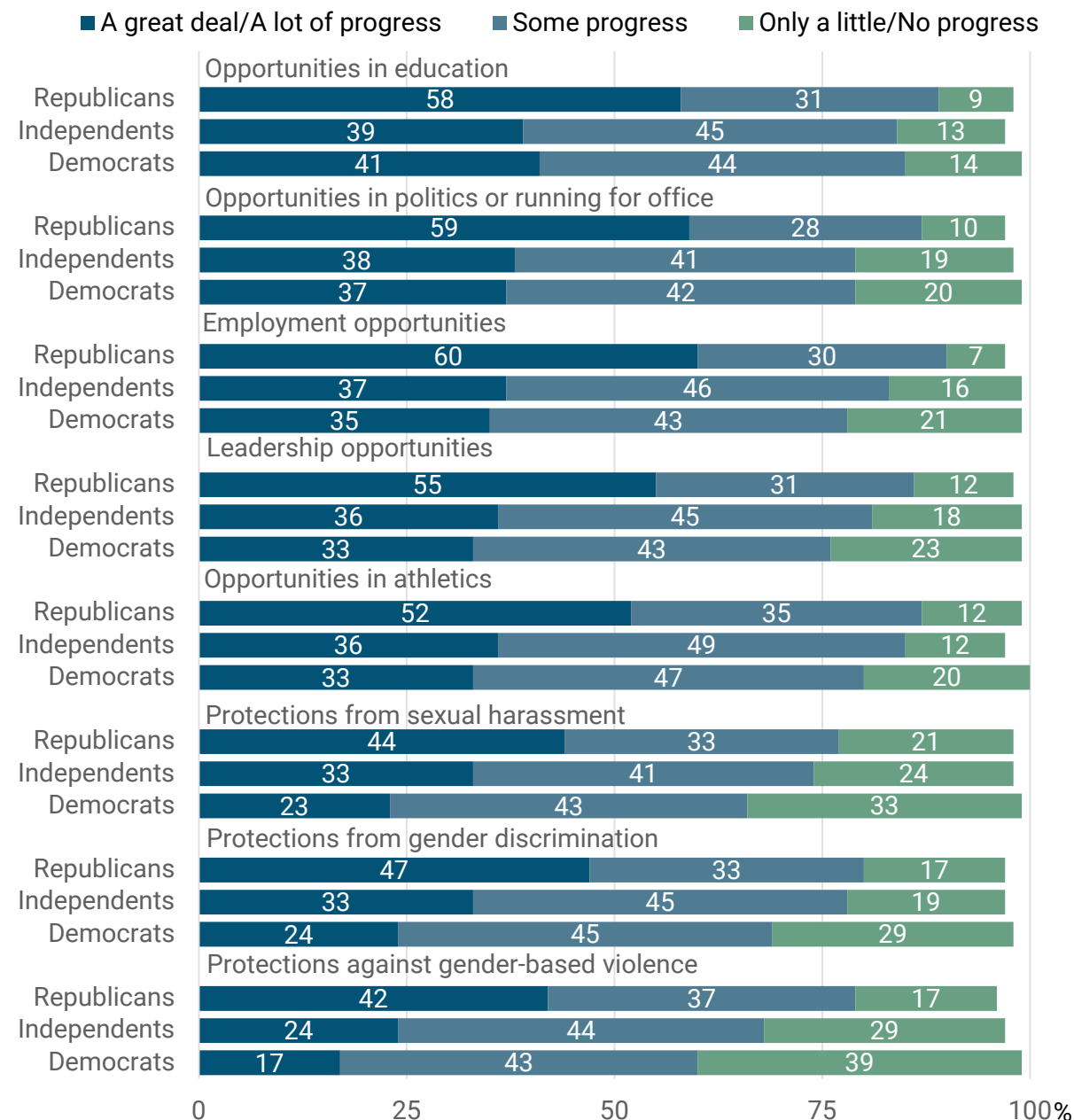


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And, compared to Democrats, Republicans also see more progress in each area of equal treatment.

## Republicans see more progress toward equal treatment in each area asked about than Democrats.

Percent of adults



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equal treatment for women in the following areas?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



National Women's History Museum



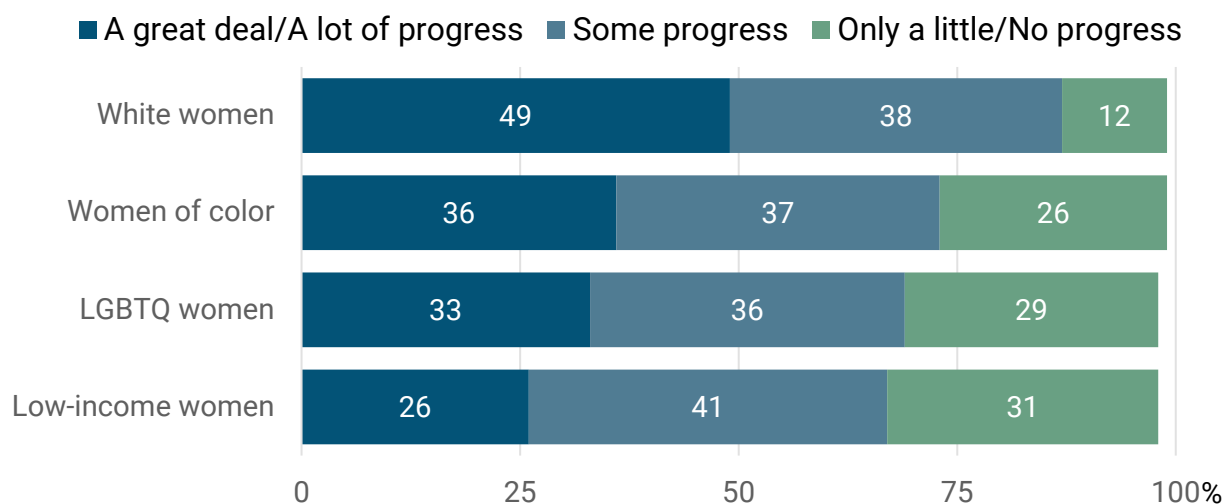
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## More Americans See Progress Toward Achieving Gender Equality for White Women than for Women of Color, Low-Income Women, and LGBTQ Women

The public believes there has been more progress toward achieving equality for white women in the last 50 years compared to women of color, low-income women, and LGBTQ women. About half say a great deal or a lot of progress has been made for white women, compared to about a third who say the same for women of color and LGBTQ women, and about a quarter for low-income women.

### Americans see more progress toward equality for white women compared to other groups of women.

Percent of adults



**Question:** Over the last 50 years, how much progress do you think has been made in achieving equality for each of the following groups in the United States?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



National Women's History Museum



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Men are more likely than women to say there has been a lot of progress for women of color (46% vs 28%), LGBTQ women (42% vs 25%), low-income women (37% vs 16%), and white women (58% vs 40%).

Likewise, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to see a lot of progress for women of color (55% vs 19%), low-income women (40% vs 13%), and LGBTQ women (44% vs 23%).

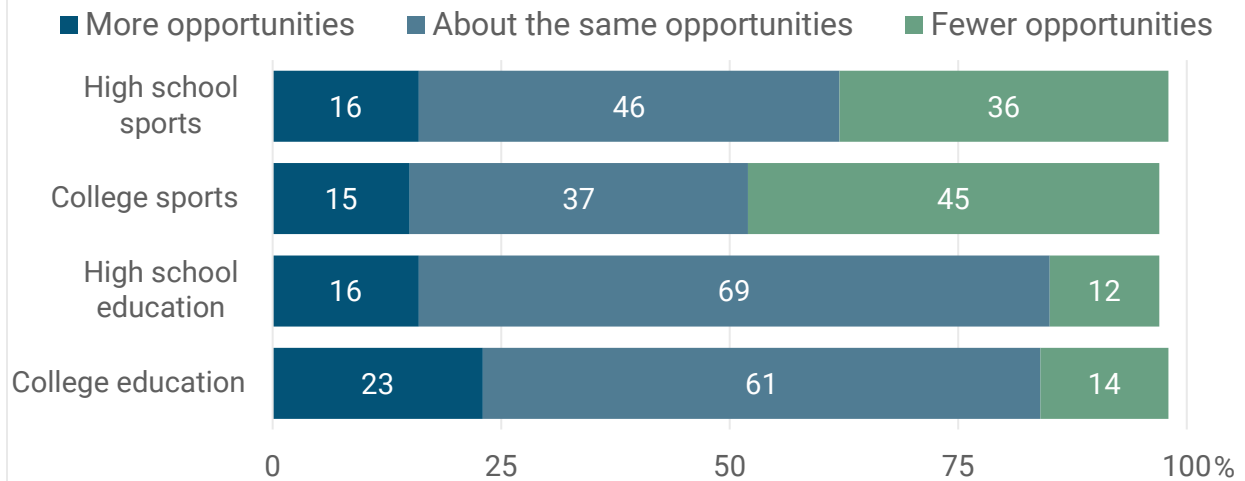
## Most Americans Say Women Have the Same Opportunities as Men When it Comes to Education, but Fewer Say the Same About Sports

Most Americans believe women have the same opportunities as men when it comes to high school (69%) and college education (61%), but fewer say the same when it comes to high school (46%) and college sports (37%).



## A majority of Americans believe women have equal opportunities in education, but fewer say the same for athletics.

Percent of adults



**Question:** For each of the following, do you think women have more opportunities than men, about the same amount of opportunities, or fewer opportunities than men?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



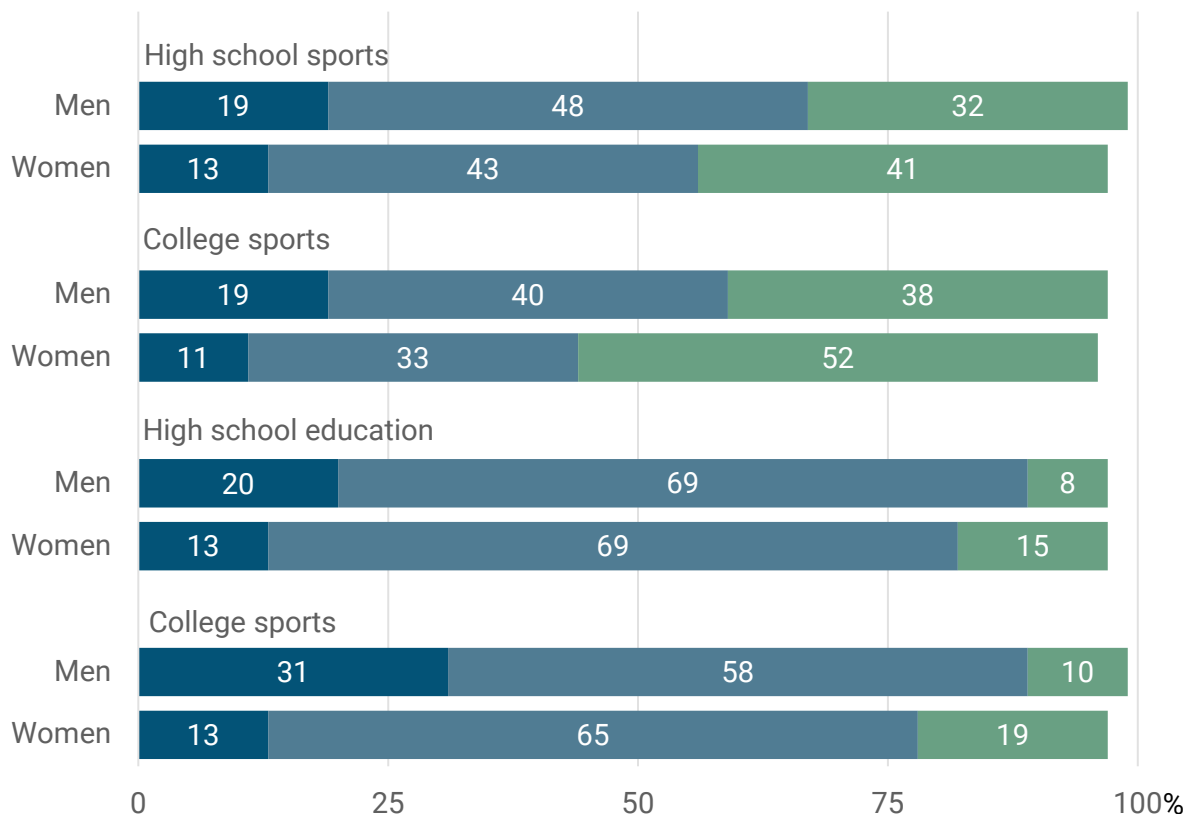
APNORC.org

Men are more likely to say that women have more opportunities in education at the high school and college levels, and sports at the college level. Women are more likely to say that women have fewer opportunities in these areas.

## Men are more likely to say that women have more opportunities in college and high school education.

Percent of adults

■ More opportunities ■ About the same opportunities ■ Fewer opportunities



**Question:** For each of the following, do you think women have more opportunities than men, about the same amount of opportunities, or fewer opportunities than men?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say that women have fewer opportunities in high school sports (44% vs 26%) and college sports (51% vs 37%).

## Most Americans Approve of Title IX and Report that its Key Priorities Are Important

Sixty-three percent of Americans approve of Title IX, while only 5% disapprove. Seventeen percent of Americans neither approve nor disapprove of the law, and 13% are not sure. Majorities of both Democrats (77%) and Republicans (53%) approve of the law, as do majorities of both men (62%) and women (63%).

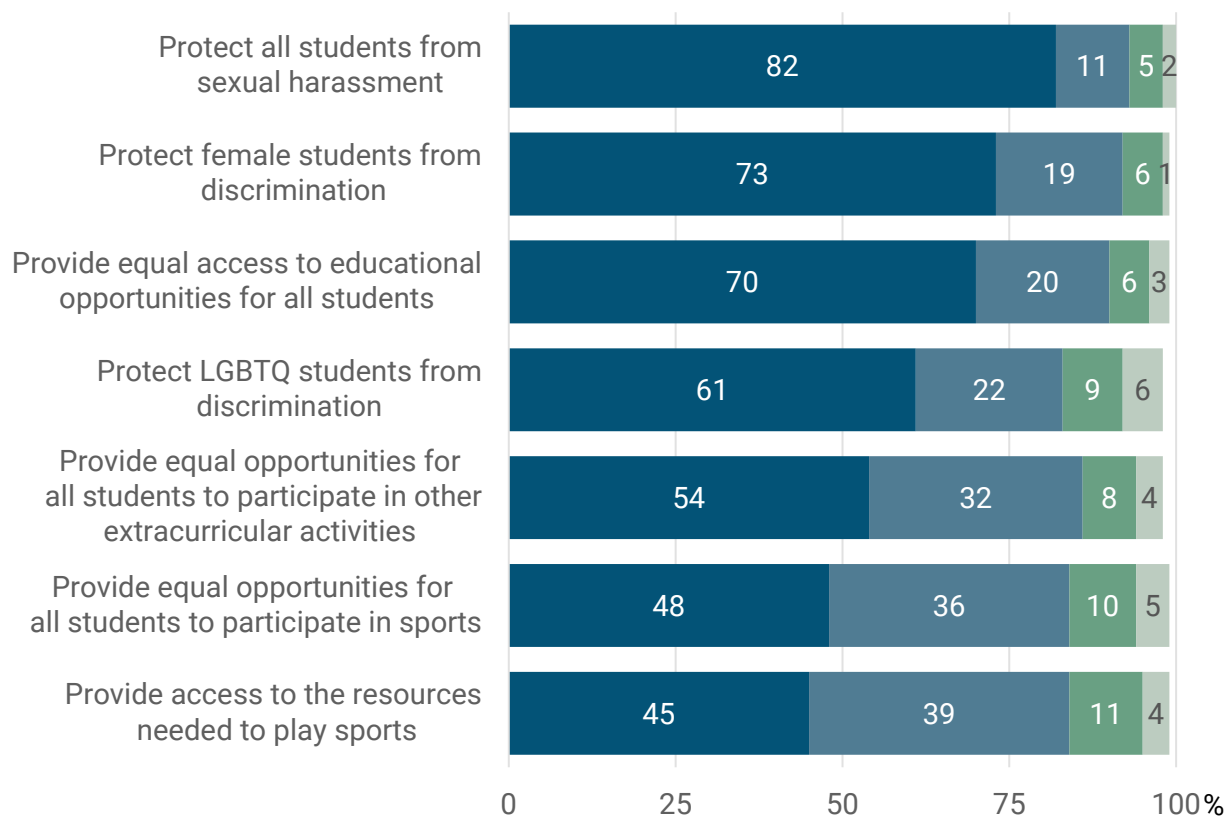
The public believes the key priorities that Title IX aims to protect are important. About 8 in 10 say providing equal opportunities and funding for all students is important or essential for colleges and high schools. And 9 in 10 report it is either essential or important that all students are protected from sexual harassment and that female students are protected from discrimination.

And while Title IX is often known for its protections in sport,<sup>2</sup> the public prioritizes many other aspects of the law above athletics.

### Most Americans consider the priorities that Title IX protects important.

Percent of adults

■ Essential ■ Important but not essential ■ Not too important ■ Not at all important



**Question:** How important is it to ensure that high schools and colleges do each of the following?

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



National Women's History Museum



✱NORC

Women are more likely than men to say that it is essential to protect all students from sexual harassment (86% vs. 77%), female students from discrimination (79% vs. 67%), and LGBTQ students from discrimination (65% vs. 56%).

<sup>2</sup> <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL31709.pdf>

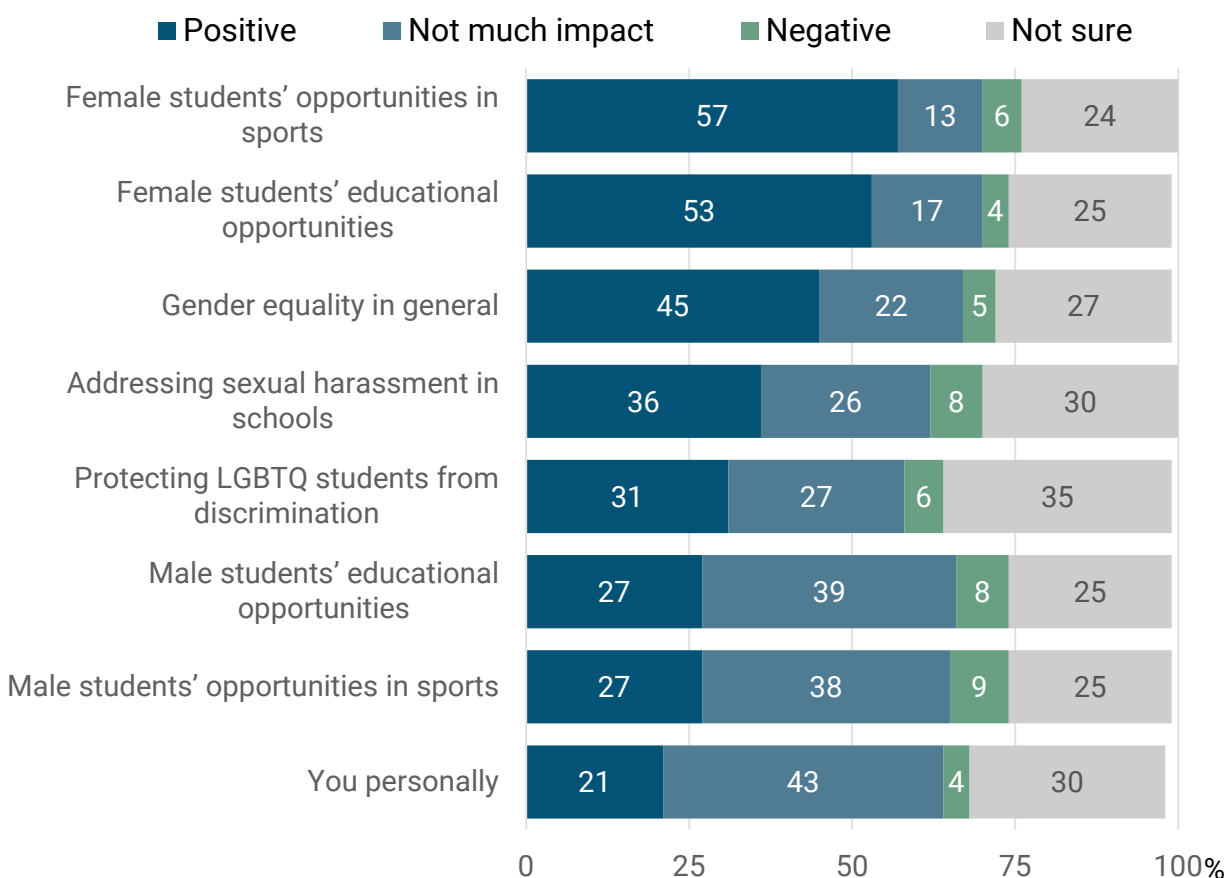
Ninety-five percent of Democrats believe protecting LGBTQ students from discrimination is essential or important, compared to 69% of Republicans.

## Many Americans Remain Unsure About the Actual Impact of Title IX

Despite the public consensus that Title IX's priorities are important, many are unsure of its impact. About a third of the public is unsure if Title IX had an impact on addressing sexual harassment in schools or protecting LGBTQ students from discrimination, while about a quarter are unsure of its impact in other areas. Fewer than 1 in 10 believe Title IX has had any type of negative impact.

### Many Americans remain unsure about the impact of Title IX.

Percent of adults



**Question:** Based on what you know about Title Nine, would you say it generally has had a positive impact or negative impact, or has it not had much impact on each of the following? If you are not sure, you can say that, too.

**Source:** AP-NORC poll conducted May 12-16, 2022, with 1,001 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



When respondents are asked whether Title IX has had a positive or negative impact on them personally, men are more likely than women to say that Title IX has had no impact on them personally (50% vs. 37%). However, women are more likely than men to acknowledge that they are unsure whether Title IX has impacted them personally (34% vs. 26%).

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to report that Title IX has had a positive impact on women's educational opportunities, protecting LGBTQ students from discrimination, gender equality in general, and on them personally. Republicans, meanwhile, are more unsure about the impact on addressing sexual harassment, protecting LGBTQ students, gender equality in general, and them personally.

College-educated Americans are more likely than those with less formal education to say that Title IX did not have much of an impact on them personally (55% vs 37%).

## METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with funding from The National Women's History Museum.

Data were collected using the 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). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between May 12 and May 16, 2022, with adults aged 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,001 completed the survey—948 via the web and 53 by telephone. Panel members were invited by email or by phone from an NORC telephone interviewer. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents were offered a small monetary incentive for completing the survey. The final stage completion rate is 21.0 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 19.5 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 77.1 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 3.2 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/-4.0 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 47 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them, for completing the survey in less than one-third the median interview time for the full sample, or for straight-lining all grid questions asked of them. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

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 noncoverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2022 Current Population Survey. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over. The sample is also weighted to match the average of self-identified party identification in the previous two waves of the AmeriSpeak Omnibus survey and this current survey.

Complete questions and results are available at: [apnorc.org](https://apnorc.org)

Additional information on the AmeriSpeak Panel methodology is available at: <https://amerispeak.norc.org/about-amerispeak/Pages/Panel-Design.aspx>.

For more information, email [info@apnorc.org](mailto:info@apnorc.org).

## About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press (AP) is an independent global news organization dedicated to factual reporting. Founded in 1846, AP today remains the most trusted source of fast, accurate, unbiased news in all formats and the essential provider of the technology and services vital to the news business. More than half the world's population sees AP journalism every day. [www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org)
- NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest objective and nonpartisan research institutions in the world. [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals. In its 10 years, The AP-NORC Center has conducted more than 250 studies exploring the critical issues facing the public, covering topics like health care, the economy, COVID-19, trust in media, and more. Learn more at [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org).

## About the National Women's History Museum

Founded in 1996, the National Women's History Museum (NWHM) is an innovative online museum dedicated to uncovering, interpreting, and celebrating women's diverse contributions to society. A renowned leader in women's history education, the Museum brings to life the countless untold stories of women throughout history, and serves as a space for all to inspire, experience, collaborate, and amplify women's impact—past, present, and future. We strive to fundamentally change the way women and girls see their potential and power.

The NWHM fills in major omissions of women in history books and K-12 education, providing scholarly content and educational programming for teachers, students, and parents. We reach more than four million visitors each year through our online content and education programming and, in early 2023, we will mount our first physical exhibit at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in downtown Washington, D.C. The Museum is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)3. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and visit us at [womenshistory.org](http://womenshistory.org).