

Global Gender Gap Is Closing In Many Areas, but Not Fast Enough, Study Says

November 24, 2015 NPR

Although women are entering the workforce in large numbers, they continue to face wage inequality, and now earn what men made in 2006, said the forum's "Global Gender Gap Report 2015."

On education, women still lag men, but the gap has narrowed, especially at the university level, where women outnumber men in almost 100 countries.

In fact, health and education are two areas where women in most high-income countries have completely closed the gap with men, says Saadia Zahidi, head of employment and gender initiatives at the forum, in an interview with NPR:

On gender parity. once again this year, the five top finishers are all in Northern Europe: Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Ireland.

The rankings measure the gap between men and women in categories such as health and education, not the overall condition of their lives. Women may live better in wealthy countries, without achieving true gender equality, Zahidi says.

For that reason, wealthy countries such as Japan (#101) and Saudi Arabia (#134) land pretty far down the list, while some poorer countries fare better, she says.

The U.S. has closed the gap between men and women in education and health. But it doesn't fare as well in labor force participation, wage equality for similar work and political empowerment

The country at the bottom of the list is Yemen, which ranks at or near the bottom in education, literacy, economic participation, wage inequality and political empowerment, Zahidi says.