

# Narrowing The Gap



## Economic Inequality

### National Income Data Reveal Gaps by Gender

Women in every industry, at every age, level of educational attainment, race, and ethnicity face a pay gap in the United States, although the size of that gap varies. (Gender pay gaps refer to the difference in earnings between men and women.)

While educational attainment often leads to increased salaries, the pay gap persists even when level of education is taken into account. For example, in higher-income fields such as software development and financial management, the gap in pay between men and women working full-time in the same position can be large, even when women have equivalent educational attainment or experience levels.

There are also pronounced racial/ethnic and gender pay gaps. When looking at disparities within and between races, there were significant gaps for all groups of women in 2015; black and Hispanic women were most disadvantaged.

### U.S. Women's Income by Race (Full-Time Workers)

Race/Ethnicity	Women's Median Annual Income	Compared to Men of Same Race/Ethnicity	Compared to White Men
Asian	\$49,628	81%	90%
White	\$42,026	76%	76%
Black	\$34,426	90%	62%
Hispanic	\$29,949	92%	54%

### National Rates of Business Ownership Vary by Gender

Business ownership can be a pathway to self-sufficiency and financial stability. More than half of all businesses in the United States are owned by men (53.7%), underscoring the gender gap in business ownership. In comparison to men, women own 35.8% of all businesses. The remaining 8.9% of businesses are equally male-/female-owned while 1.6% are publicly held so ownership is not assigned to any gender.

Similarly, the gender gap between men- and women-owned businesses that receive federal government contracts is high. The U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) reports that women-owned small businesses received 5% of federal contracts in 2015, meeting SBA's immediate benchmark goal. However, SBA acknowledged more work needs to be done and continues to work on this issue.

### What Our Research Shows:

#### From the 2016 NYC Equality Indicators Report

The pay gap between men and women increased in 2016. In New York City, women working full-time made almost 20% less than men, compared to 2015, when women made roughly 10% less than men, or 90 cents on the dollar.

Based on our analysis of the 2016 Current Population Survey, the pay gap widens when race and ethnicity are factored in. White women earn 87% of what white men do, and the earnings of Asian women, black women, and Hispanic women are even less, when compared to white men, revealing a larger racial and gender pay gap in NYC than at the national level.

### NYC Women's Income by Race (Full-Time Workers)

Race/Ethnicity	Women's Median Annual Income	Compared to Men of Same Race/Ethnicity	Compared to White Men
Asian	\$44,015	87%	64%
White	\$60,000	87%	87%
Black	\$36,000	90%	52%
Hispanic	\$32,113	92%	47%

The City has taken steps toward decreasing the gender pay gap. In November 2016, Mayor de Blasio signed Executive Order 21 to prevent city agencies from inquiring about applicant's salary history, which can keep women and people of color at lower income levels.

### What Our Research Shows:

#### From the 2016 NYC Equality Indicators Report

Similar to the rest of the United States, the gender gap in business ownership is high in NYC, with less than half as many women owning businesses as men; in our most recent report, 2.2% of NYC women were business owners, compared to 4.5% of men. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, of total businesses in New York City, 67.7% are owned by men in comparison to 32.3% owned by women.

The gender and racial gap in terms of businesses that receive city government contracts is also high, particularly regarding the types of contracts they receive. In Fiscal Year 2016, minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBES) obtained 33.5% of small contracts (up to \$100,000), but only 17.1% of large contracts (more than \$1,000,000).

## Justice Inequality

### Political Gender Gap in Government Representation across the United States

A recent [Equality Indicators report](#) examining gender representation in the 100 largest U.S. cities revealed that women continue to be under-represented among local elected officials, accounting for just 18.2% of elected mayors and 33.6% of city council positions. The report identified several common factors impeding women's political participation, including gendered social roles and negative self-perceptions.

According to [Rutgers University's Center for American Women and Politics](#), in 2016 and 2017 women held no more than one-quarter of seats in state or federal legislatures or statewide executive positions:

At the federal level women comprise:

- 104 or 19.4% of 535 legislative seats in the U.S. Congress;
- 83 or 19.1% of 435 seats in the U.S. House; and
- 21 or 21.0% of 100 seats in the U.S. Senate.

At the state level women comprise:

- 74 or 23.7% of the 312 state executives; and
- 1,830 or 24.8% of 7,383 state legislators.

### What Our Research Shows:

#### From the 2016 NYC Equality Indicators Report

In [2016](#), out of 165 elected officials in NYC, only 29.7% were women as compared to 70.3% who were men. These officials include the mayor, comptroller, public advocate, city council members, assembly members, district attorneys, borough presidents, state senators, and U.S. representatives from NYC congressional districts.

The City is making efforts to reduce the gender gap in representation. For instance, there are more women than men among NYC appointed officials, which include positions such as commissioners and deputy commissioners. In July 2015 the NYC government created the [Commission on Gender Equity](#) (CGE) to reduce gender-based inequality throughout the City. CGE's advisory board seeks to identify institutional barriers in NYC agencies that prevent women and girls from achieving equity. This mission extends to representation.

National non-profit groups like [She Should Run](#) and [Running Start](#) seek to increase female representation in government. Their activities range from encouraging young women to become involved in politics to outreach to women who have been [peer-selected](#) to run for office. [She Should Run](#) acts as an incubator for aspiring women leaders, with tools and resources to help them navigate the process. This type of work is especially important, as a key finding of the Equality Indicators' Special Report on [The Political Gender Gap](#) found one of the reasons women don't run for office is a lack of support.

## Education Inequality

### National Disparities in STEM Degree Attainment by Gender

[Women's educational attainment](#) has advanced steadily for decades. In 1960 just 5.8% of women held a bachelor's degree. By 2015, the number had increased to 32.7%. However, women remain dramatically underrepresented in the growing and lucrative fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In [2014](#), 26% of men earned a bachelor's degree in a Science and Engineering field (excluding social sciences), compared to 12% of women.

This disparity in STEM degree attainment may be contributing to the gap in workforce representation in STEM fields. While women made up nearly half (47%) of the total workforce in 2014, they were less well-represented in science and engineering occupations.



**"Nothing changes the gender equation more significantly than women's economic freedom."  
-Gloria Steinem**

### What Our Research Shows:

#### From the 2016 NYC Equality Indicators Report

In NYC, [disparities in STEM degree attainment](#) mirror what is found at the national level. Of those receiving degrees from the City University of New York (CUNY), the largest public educational institution in the country, men (21%) were much more likely to receive a in STEM fields than women (8%).

To begin to address these disparities in STEM degree attainment, CUNY has implemented a variety of initiatives including [Science Now](#), which provides science and engineering research projects for children in grades K-12, and the [STEM Research Academy](#), a two-semester pre-college science course where high school students from backgrounds underrepresented in STEM fields have the chance to strengthen their basic science skills and conduct hands-on research with CUNY faculty.

CUNY is also a founding member of [Women in Technology and Entrepreneurship in New York](#) (WITNY), which seeks to build a stronger pipeline of women who aspire to careers in technology. CUNY partners with [Cornell Tech](#) to deliver computer science curriculum and workshops to women. They also sponsor a [CUNY Tech Meetup](#) for students and members of the broader tech community, including introductions to tech fields and employers.

The Equality Indicators is a project of the [Institute for State and Local Governance](#) (ISLG) of the City University of New York.

The project measures progress towards greater equality across six themes related to **Economy, Education, Health, Housing, Justice, and Services** using 96 indicators. Each indicator is scored from 1 to 100, where 1 represents the most inequality and 100 the least inequality. For more information please visit our website at [equalityindicators.org](http://equalityindicators.org) and follow us on twitter [@equalityISLG](https://twitter.com/equalityISLG)