

Japan Ranks 104th in Gender Equality

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Equality (Noun) /ɪˈkwəːlɪti/ the state of having the same rights, values, opportunities, etc.
Example: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a major achievement in the fight for racial equality.
2. Rank (Verb) /ræŋk/ to be or put someone or something on a list that shows how good, important, etc. they are
Example: Manny Pacquiao still ranks as the best boxer of all time according to RingCentral.
3. Wealthy (Adjective) /ˈwelθi:/ having a lot of money or valuable possessions
Example: The family sure is wealthy with all five huge houses in the major cities of the country plus other two mansions in Beverly Hills, California.
4. Pension (Noun) /ˈpɛnʃən/ money given to a person by a government or company when they retire
Example: She decided to get a part-time job because she was struggling to live on her pension.
5. Introduce (Verb) /ˌɪntrəˈduːs/ to make something available or put in use for the first time
Example: It is polite to introduce yourself to everyone that you meet for the first time.
6. Reform (Noun) /rɪˈfɔːrm/ change made to a system, law, organization etc. in order to improve it
Example: People are hoping for a good leadership and are expecting a government reform.



Women in Japan only have about 79% of the rights that men do, according to the World Bank's 2023 gender equality report. That means Japan ranks 104th out of 190 countries for gender equality. The report, which was released in February, is called Women, Business and

the Law 2023. It gives countries a score out of 100, where 100 is total equality between men and women.

Japan scored 78.8, which means women there have 78.8% of the rights that men do. That score is only just above the global average of 77.1 — and it's a long way behind other wealthy countries. Canada, France and Germany all scored 100, along with 11 other nations in Europe. The UK got 97.5, the US got 91.3 and South Korea scored 85.

The report looked at a number of different rights women have compared to men, including things like marriage rights, pay and pensions. Japan got 100 on pensions, but just 20 on pay. In recent years, Japan has been falling in the World Bank gender equality rankings, going from 74th in 2020 to 103rd in 2022 — and now one place further down in 2023.

Across the world, many countries have been slow to introduce reforms to improve equality, according to the report. There are still almost 2.4 billion women of working age who do not have the same rights as men, it said. The report adds that at the current rate of change, it will be at least 50 years before women everywhere have the same rights as men.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on the World Bank's 2023 gender equality report?
2. Does it surprise you that Japan's gender equality ranking has fallen since 2020?
3. Do you think women everywhere will have the same rights as men in 50 years?
4. What obstacles do women often face in the workplace in your country?
5. Would you say that men are more likely to get promoted to highly-paid positions in your line of work? Why do you think this is the case?
- 6.
- 7.