

WorldPayZinc

Attitudes in the Workplace

A study of sexism and discrimination in Britain

How gender stereotypes and discrimination affect people's views and perceptions of the roles of men and women in the British workplace.

The survey of 2,026 people aged 18 and above was conducted by Vision Critical in November 2013

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Executive Summary

People in Britain are prone to stereotyping men and women based on their gender. Strong opinions on which jobs are for men and which are for women still exist, as do beliefs that men are better in stereotypically masculine roles such as plumber and electrician, whilst women make better nurses and florists.

These are the key findings of the Attitudes in the Workplace study commissioned by WorldPay Zinc. A survey of 2,000 people carried out by Vision Critical touched upon a number of issues related to gender stereotypes, sexism and discrimination.

The survey revealed a number of concerning facts about the opinions of men and women in Britain. Both sexes are still being held back from pursuing occupations that might not be seen as suitable for their gender. 40% of the UK population believe men should not do jobs such as midwife, nurse, nanny or beautician. For women, it's only slightly lower, with 38% saying women should not work in roles such as soldier, mechanic or surgeon.

Another hurdle on the way to equality appears to be trust, with almost a third (32%) of people saying they're suspicious of men choosing to work as beauticians, and of women choosing to work as electricians. Between 16% and 19% would not trust a male nanny, male beautician or male midwife; whereas female pilots, female electricians and female mechanics would not be trusted by 8% - 10% of study participants.

Throughout the survey men expressed more dated opinions and attitudes than women, voicing a lack of trust in both men and women doing jobs not historically associated with their gender. Only 56% of men believe that women should be free to do any job they like. Similarly, only 52% of men think that men should be able to become beauticians, nannies or midwives.

Discriminatory and sexist views also vary across the British regions. Wales appears to have the most open-minded views on the career choices of men and women, as well as being the most trusting of people doing their jobs, no matter what gender they are. At the other end of the spectrum is London, which showed high levels of discrimination and sexism when questioned on their views of the jobs men and women should not do, and beliefs that each gender is inherently better at particular jobs than the opposite sex.

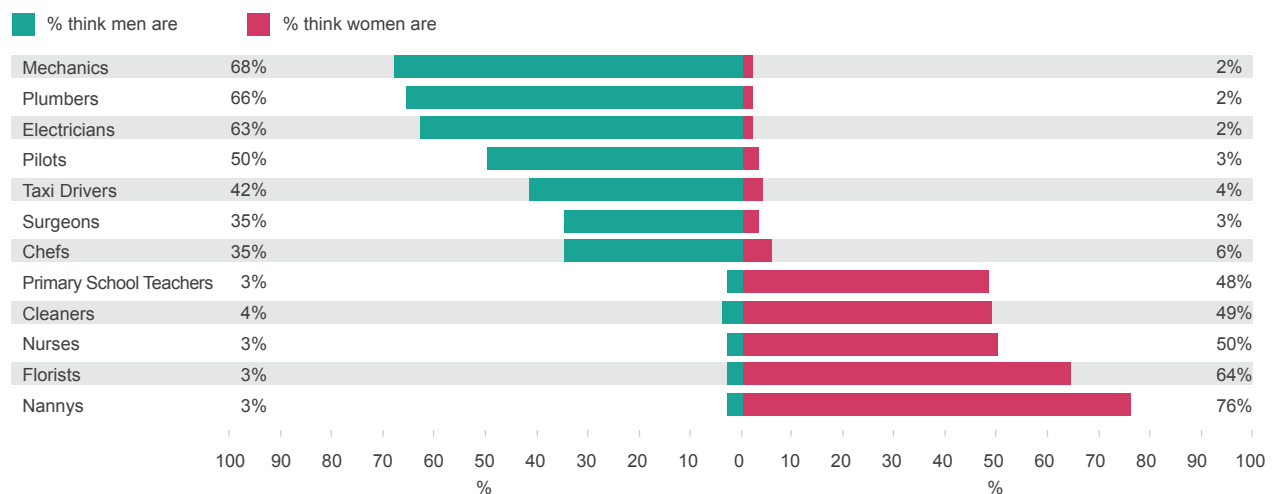
1

That job's not for girls: Gender divide still prevails in the workplace

Careers Brits think men and women shouldn't do

One of the key objectives of the survey was to understand if there is still a divide in public opinion on whether or not men and women are equally well-suited for various jobs. Here is how people in the study answered the questions about occupations that may be traditionally viewed as more male or female:

Which gender are better at the following professions?



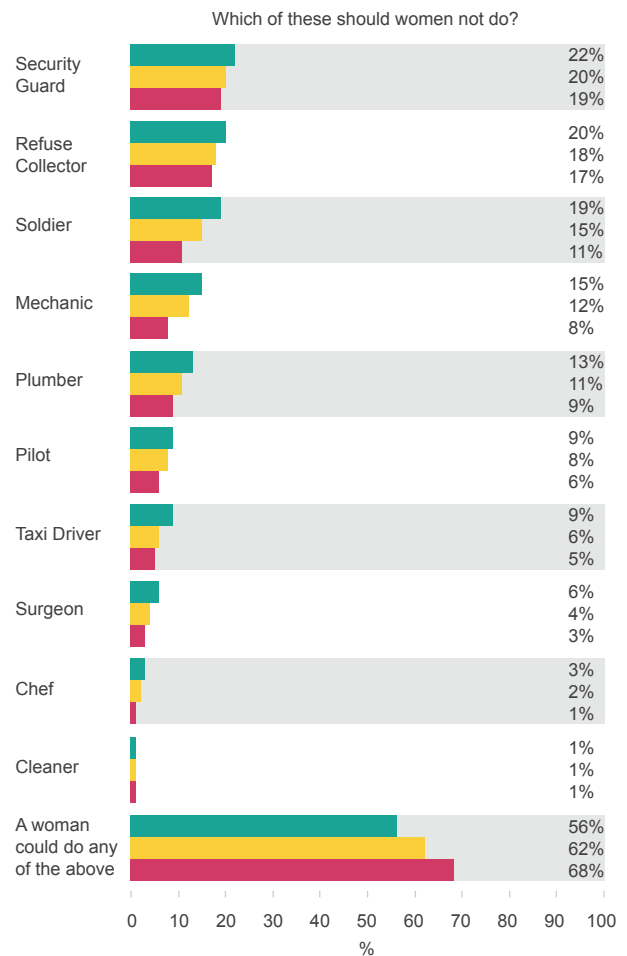
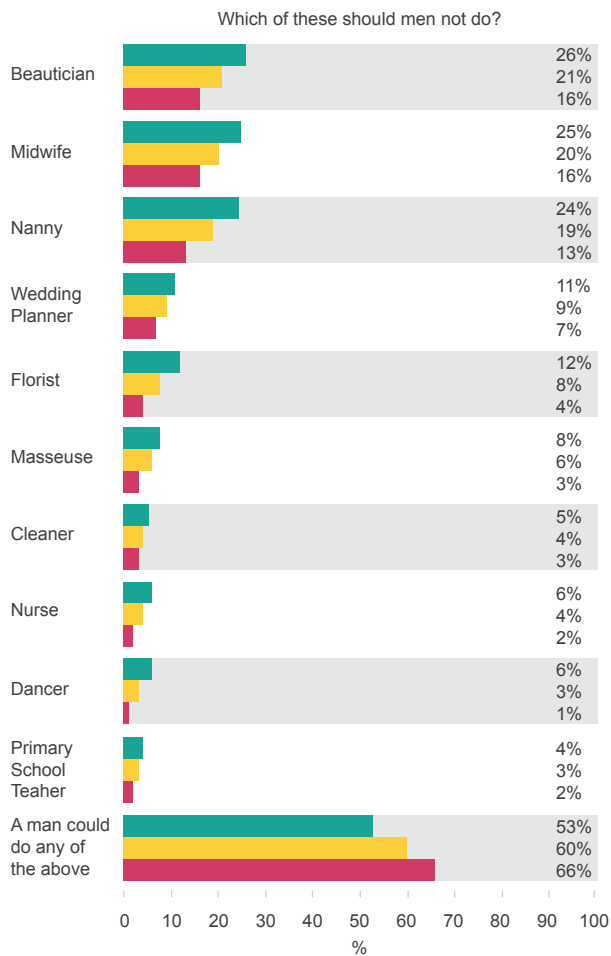
The results, as in the graph above, demonstrate a clear divide, with over 60% of people saying men make better electricians, plumbers and mechanics, and 50% saying men are better pilots. 76% of the survey respondees said women make better nannies, florists and nurses.

To gain a greater understanding of these sexist attitudes, the study also considered the extent to which people believe certain jobs are suitable, or indeed, unsuitable for a man or a woman. Their responses revealed a worrying degree of sexism, with 24 to 26% of all participants saying that men simply should not pursue a career as a beautician, a midwife or a nanny.

In addition, between 19 to 22% of people think women should steer clear of jobs such as security guard, refuse collector or soldier. 15% think women should not be mechanics, and 13% say women should steer clear of a career in plumbing.

Jobs that men and women should not do

■ According to men
 ■ Overall
 ■ According to women

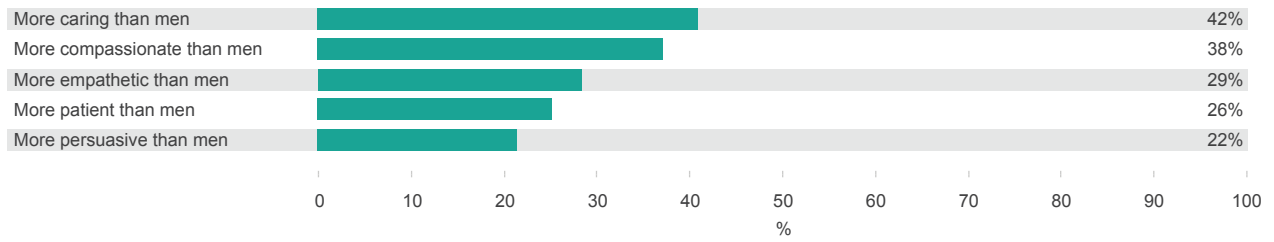


On a more positive note, 60% of respondents believe men can do any job they choose, and 62% think the same of women.

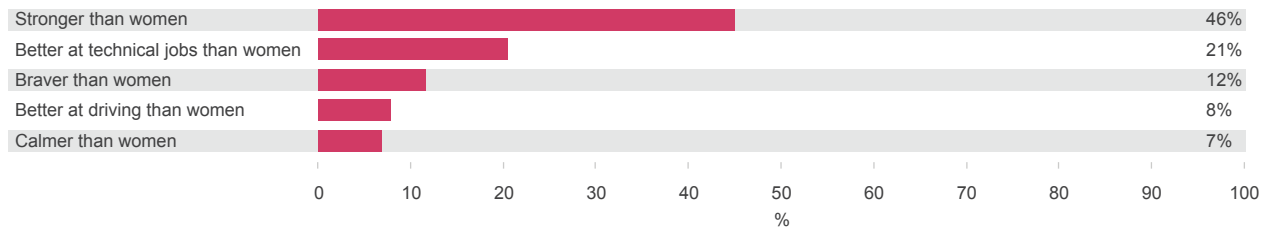
Interestingly enough, there is a noticeable difference between opinions of men and women. In both cases it is men who appear to be more conservative about men becoming beauticians or midwives, or about women becoming security guards or soldiers. Women, on the other hand, appear to be more receptive to the idea of men taking traditionally female jobs and vice versa.

One of the ways to explain these perceptions is to look at how men and women view each other, as shown in the charts below.

Men think women are . . .



Women think men are . . .



As the findings suggest, men still see women as more caring (42%), compassionate (38%), and empathetic (29%) - character traits that are arguably closer to careers of a nurse or a nanny than that of a soldier and or security guard. Men, on the other hand are seen as the stronger sex by 46% of women, and as being better at technical jobs by 21%.

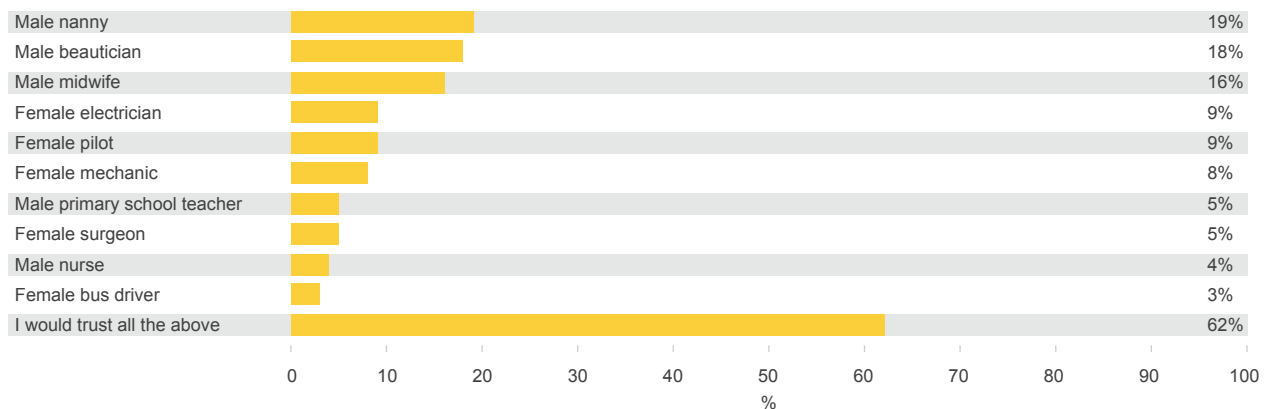
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I don't trust you: Men and women defying gender stereotypes still face a rocky road

Dated gender perceptions are only one part of the narrative of sexism in the UK. As such, the Worldpay Zinc workplace study ventured to find further signs of prejudiced attitudes towards men and women working in jobs which are commonly associated with people of the opposite gender.

One of the prominent indicators of a positive attitude is trust. As a positive predisposition towards strangers and abstract groups of people, trust or social trust is often used as a measure of social cohesion and consensus in society. When prompted with a question about trust, respondents in the survey gave the following answers:

Which of these might you not trust?



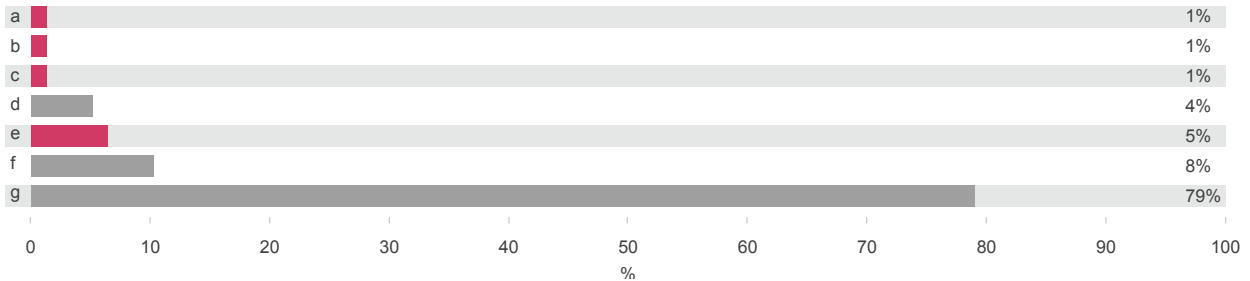
Whereas 62% of people would trust men and women in jobs that might be fairly uncommon for them to do, between 16% and 19% of people wouldn't trust a man working as a midwife, beautician or nanny.

Distrust towards women seems significantly lower, with between 8% and 9% of respondents saying they would be sceptical of a female electrician, pilot or mechanic.

At a closer look, the distrust of women in particular roles is strongly felt. One person in ten (9%) might not trust a female pilot, 5% would be genuinely worried if they found out their flight was piloted by a woman and a total of 3% would either get off the plane, change their flight, or complain about their flight being piloted by a woman.

If you were told your plane was going to be piloted by a woman how would you feel?

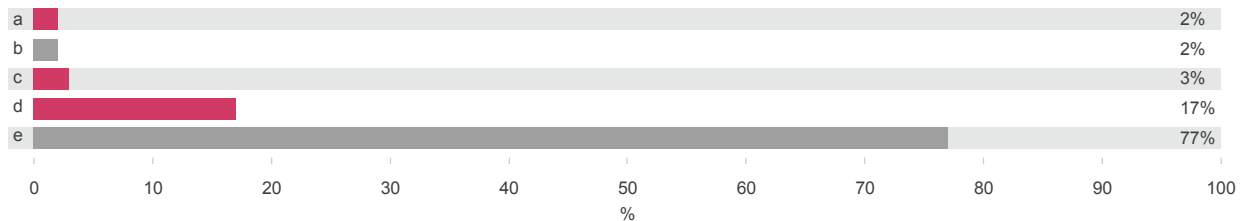
- a. I would complain
- b. I would change my flight
- c. I would get off the plane or not board it
- d. I would be more worried or scared than if it was a male pilot
- e. I would be worried they would not be as good as a man but I would fly anyway
- f. I would be pleased - I think a woman would make a safer pilot than a man
- g. It would make no difference to me



Similarly, people have reservations about female mechanics. 17% of respondents said they would let a female mechanic do the work, but would prefer a man did it instead. A total of 5% would either explicitly ask for a man to do the job or leave the garage altogether.

How would you feel about a female mechanic working on your car?

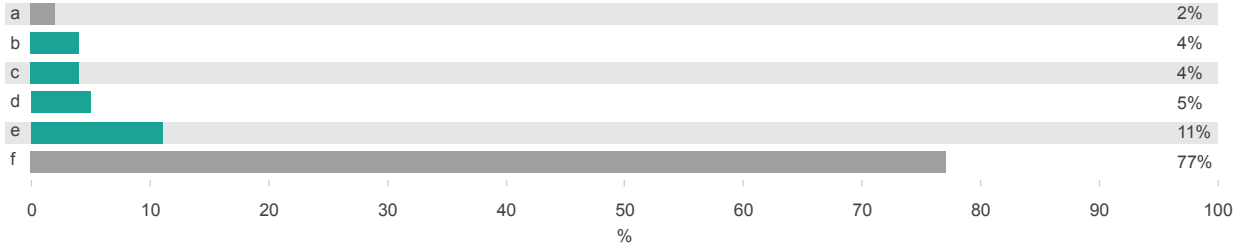
- a. I would not let them and I would leave the garage
- b. I would be pleased - I think a woman would be better than a man
- c. I would ask for a man to do the job instead
- d. I would let them do the work but would prefer a man did it
- e. It would make no difference to me



Men choosing certain careers come under fire too. 4% of respondents say they wouldn't trust a male nurse and 11% say they would feel uncomfortable receiving treatment from a man in the nursing profession. 5% would ask to be seen by a female nurse instead. A further 4% of participants admit they would be confused by a male nurse, initially assuming they were a doctor, and 4% would be concerned that a male nurse is less caring than a woman.

If you were to be treated by a male nurse, how would you feel?

- a. I would be pleased - I think a man would be better than a woman
- b. I might be surprised they weren't a doctor - I have been confused like that in the past
- c. I imagine they would be less caring than a woman
- d. I would ask to be seen by a female nurse instead
- e. I would not say anything but would feel uncomfortable that it wasn't a female nurse
- f. It would make no difference to me



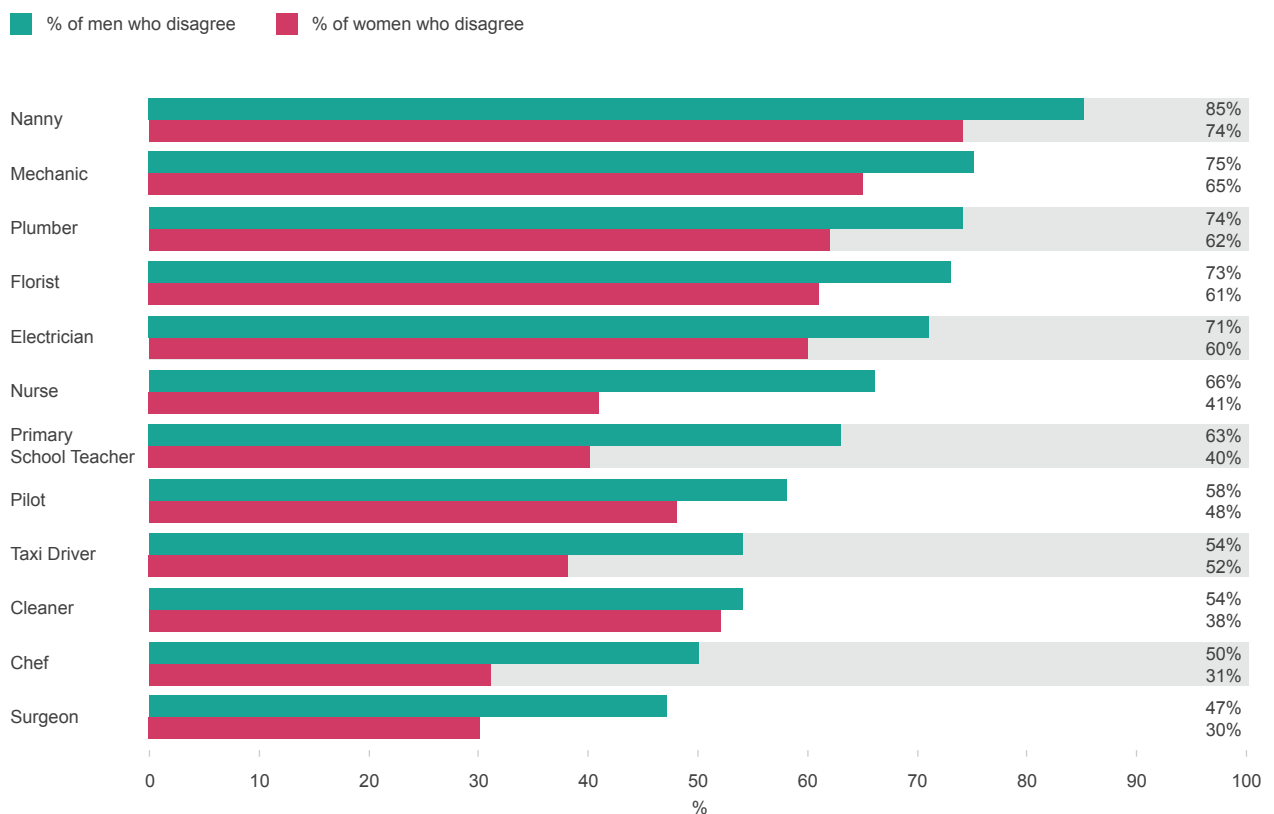
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Who is more sexist? Men Vs Women

According to the study, men’s sexism and gender discrimination is more pronounced than women’s, with 10% of male participants giving strong opinions on the roles men and women should or shouldn’t do. Women, on the other hand, were consistently more open-minded about people’s choice of profession, and were more likely to accept that a man or a woman can pursue any career they wish.

Worldpay Zinc asked respondents whether certain professions were better suited to men or women. Men were consistently biased towards one gender or another, and fewer men than women think that both genders are equally good (or bad) at a given job:

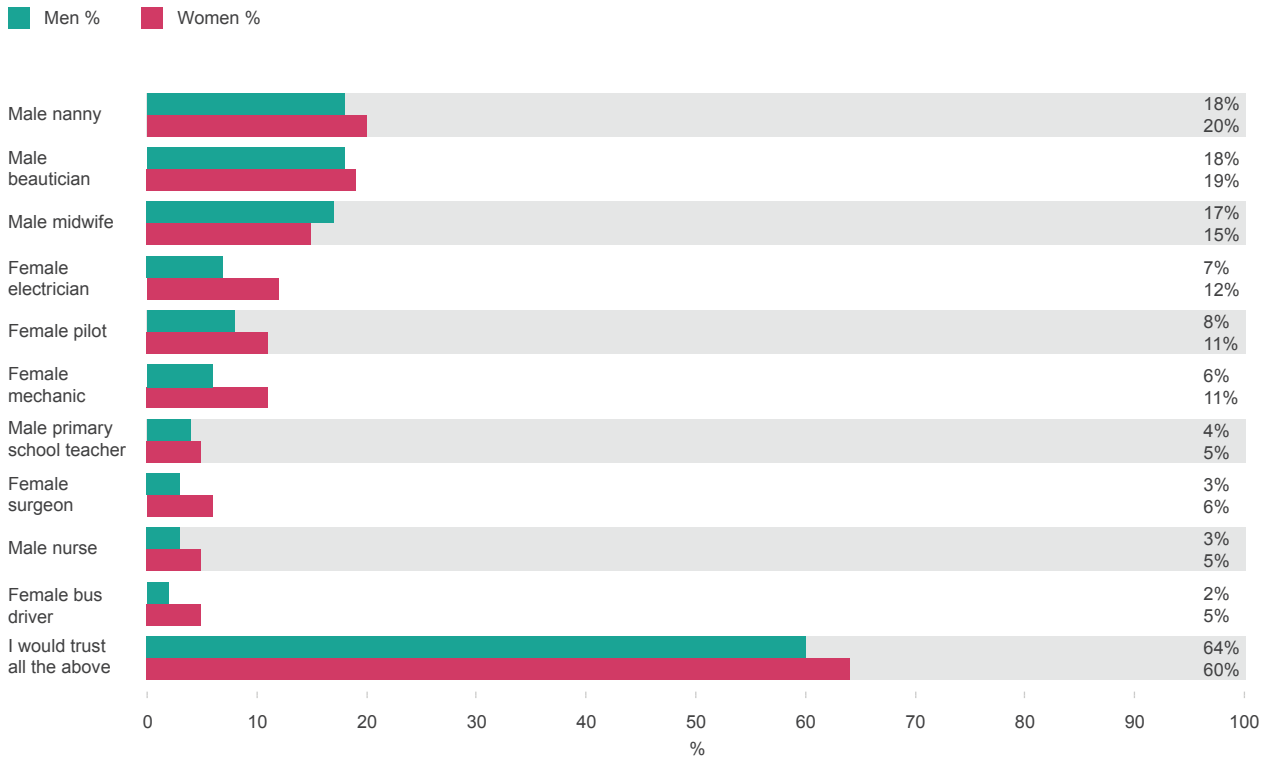
“Neither gender are better than the other at these jobs”



As demonstrated in the above graph, men were 14% more likely than women to express a sexist view on the aptitude of men and women for different jobs, with differences as high as 25% for Nurse and 23% for Primary School Teacher.

Similarly, men are more likely to distrust people in roles perceived as being outside of accepted gender norms:

Which of these might you not trust?



There are a number of ways to explain this set of findings. One being evidence that men are more reluctant to embrace change. According to an American sociologist Michael Kimmel: “For nearly two centuries, we men have met insecurity by frantically shoring up our privilege or by running away.” And, whereas the world has made strides towards gender equality, Kimmel says: “men have done very little to prepare for this completely different world. What has not changed are the ideas we have about what it means to be a man. That’s where men are these days: our lives have changed dramatically, but the notions we have about what it means to be a man remain locked in a pattern set decades ago, when the world looked very different.”

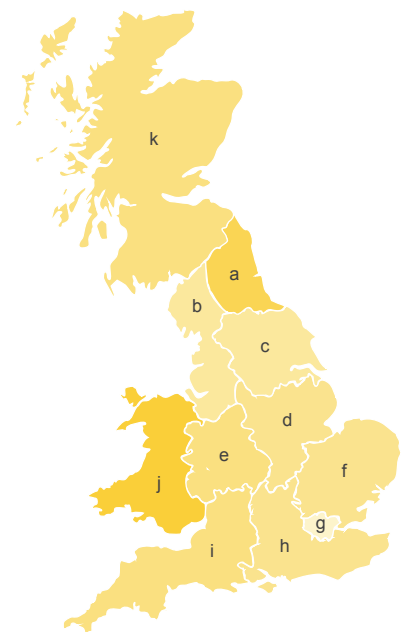
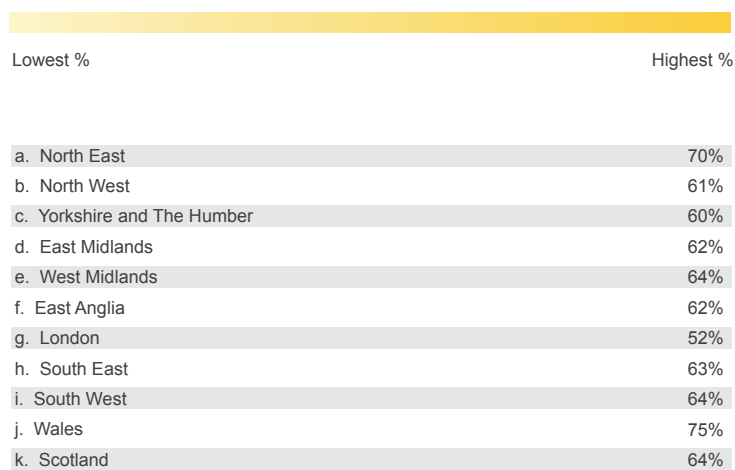
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Sexism across Britain: gender stereotypes and attitudes mapped

In general, the Welsh tend to show less gender bias, whereas Londoners express more sexually discriminatory opinions on the occupations men and women should not do. Overall, more than a quarter of respondents in every region in the UK have sexist views on the career choices of men and women and lack trust in people defying gender stereotypes.

As well as a difference in opinions of men and women, the workplace study also discovered varying attitudes to gender stereotypes across different parts of Britain. Below are a number of maps that illustrate different perceptions of gender stereotypes.

Map 1. Trust

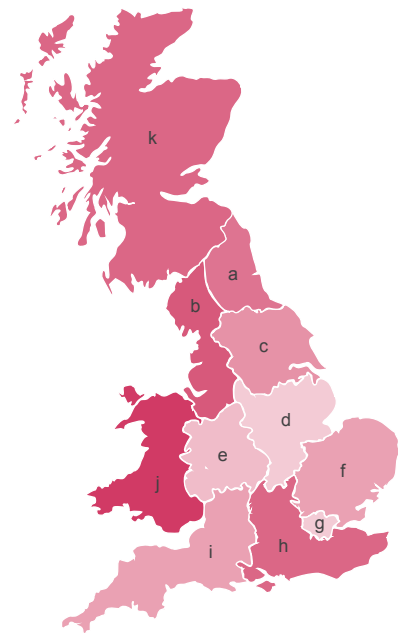
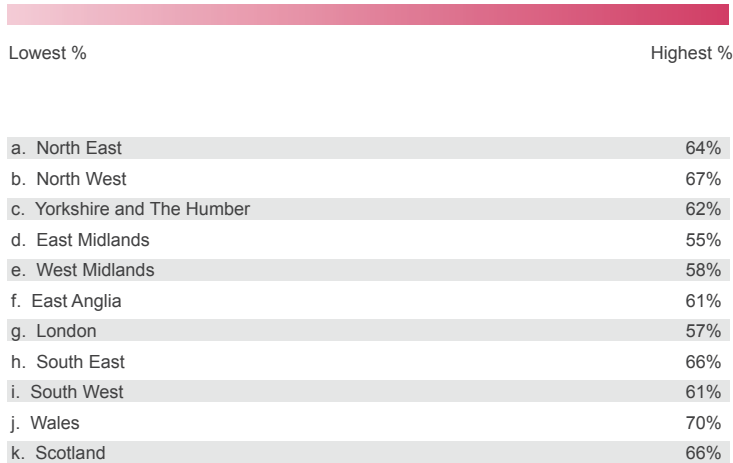


This map shows the proportion of participants who would trust either gender, in any job. 75% of respondents from Wales and 70% from the North East of England show no gender bias, believing that men and women are equally capable of fulfilling a whole host of professions. London and Yorkshire, on the other hand, are most suspicious of men and women who have made career choices contrary to entrenched gender stereotypes. Only 60% of people from Yorkshire, and 52% of people from London, would trust either gender, in any job.

There was a similar distribution of responses to questions about the capability of men and women in certain roles.

Map 2.1. “A woman can do any job” - % that agree

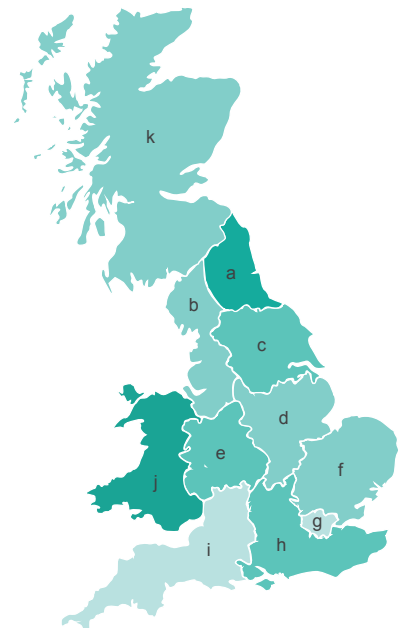
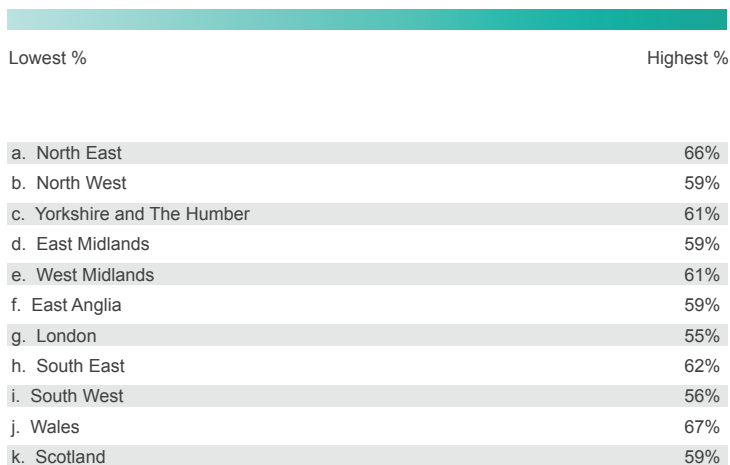
This map shows the proportion of respondents who believe that women simply should not do certain jobs.



Wales and the North East are again shown to be the least affected by gender stereotypes. 67% and 66% of respondents, respectively, said women can do any job, including soldier, bin collector or mechanic. London and South West holds a stronger bias, with only slightly more than half of participants (55% and 56% respectively) agreeing that women can pursue any career they wish.

Map 2.2. “A man can do any job” - % that agree

This map shows the proportion of respondents who believe that men simply should not do certain jobs



For men, the situation is fairly similar. As little as 55% of people in East Midlands, and 57% of people in London, believe that occupations such as beautician, midwife, or wedding planner are suitable for men. The North West and Wales, were again less biased, with 67% and 70% respectively, saying men can do any job.

Conclusion

Geraldine Wilson, Managing Director, WorldPay Zinc.

“We launched WorldPay Zinc to make life easier for mobile tradespeople and small businesses, and we’re disappointed to see that their lives may still be blighted by these outdated stereotypes.

“Our service is designed to help businesses of every sector, whether they are run by men or women. And while our study suggests there is still a way to go before we are able to achieve equality in the workplace, attitudes are changing for the better.

“While the study shows that some stereotypes are hard to shift, it’s great to see these preconceptions being challenged and overcome by some people.”