

# Perceptions related to gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression, 2018

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, December 9, 2019

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In 2018, the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) was conducted, the first of three surveys dedicated to collecting data and increasing knowledge about gender-based violence as part of *It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence*. The first data from the SSPPS—an overview of Canadians' experiences of gender-based violence and other unwanted experiences of inappropriate sexual behaviour in public places, online, and in the workplace—was published on December 5.

In addition to measuring Canadians' experiences of violence and other unwanted behaviours, some questions measuring perceptions and attitudes were included as well. Measuring attitudes can provide further insight as to how certain behaviours are perceived broadly, and can facilitate the identification and monitoring of longer-term trends, which is important given the ways in which these perceptions can influence behaviours.

The results show that the majority of women and men in Canada believe that people should be able to express their gender however they choose (85% of women and 78% of men) and that same-sex and opposite-sex couples should have the same rights to adopt children (79% of women and 70% of men). Women were more likely than men to agree that those who report sexual assault are almost always telling the truth (62% versus 47%), and that there are significant obstacles that make it harder for women to get ahead (72% versus 55%).

Today's release focuses on Canadians' perceptions of gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression in Canada. A summary of women's and men's perceptions and attitudes is now available in the *Juristat Bulletin—Quick Fact* article "[Perceptions related to gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression](#)" and the accompanying infographic "[Perceptions related to gender equality in Canada, 2018](#)."

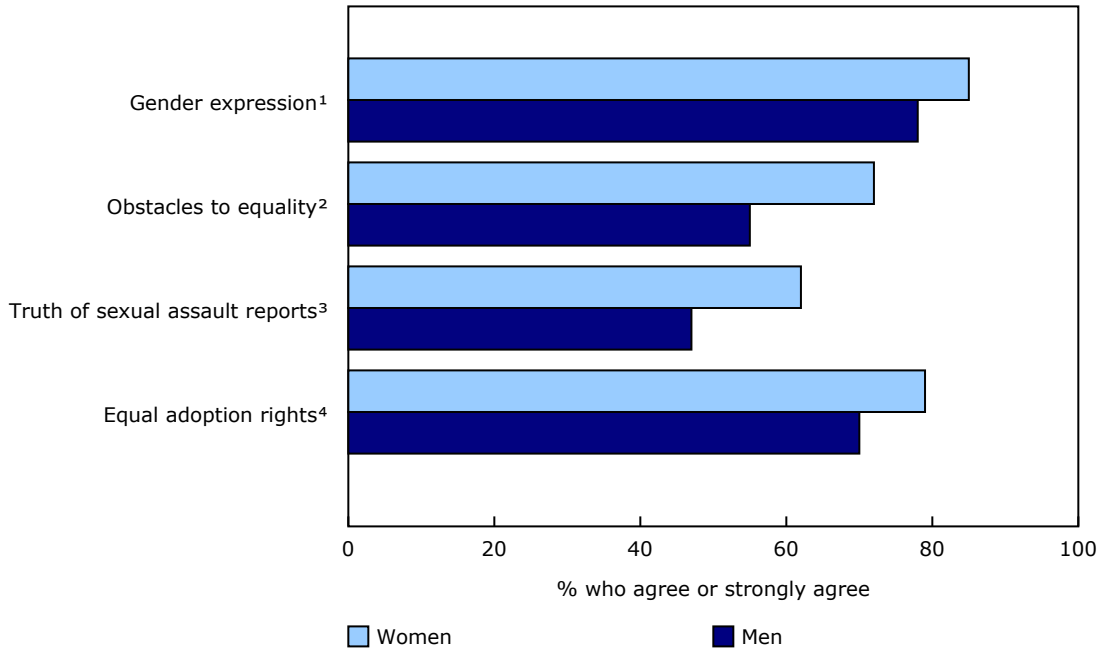
## Most Canadians support freedom of gender expression and equal adoption rights

About four in five women (85%) and men (78%) agreed or strongly agreed that people should be able to express their gender however they choose. Similarly, most women (79%) and men (70%) believe that same-sex and opposite-sex couples should have the same rights to adopt children.



**Chart 1**

**Levels of agreement with statements related to gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression, 2018**



1. The full statement was: People should be able to express their gender however they choose.  
2. The full statement was: There are significant obstacles that make it harder for women to get ahead than men.  
3. The full statement was: People who report sexual assault are almost always telling the truth.  
4. The full statement was: Same-sex and opposite-sex couples should have the same rights to adopt children.  
**Note(s):** All differences between women and men are statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ .  
**Source(s):** Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (5256).

Most women and men also indicated that they would support a family member who came out as transgender. About 1 in 10 women (8%) and men (11%) stated that they would not support a transgender family member.

The majority of women (62%) and almost half of men (47%) agreed that those who report sexual assault are almost always telling the truth. Of note, 27% of women and 36% of men neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

### Note to readers

This *Juristat Bulletin—Quick Fact* is based on results from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS), conducted in 2018. The development and collection of this survey and the analysis of its results was funded by the federal department Women and Gender Equality Canada.

The analysis was conducted according to gender, based on the question which allowed respondents to specify if they were male, female, or gender diverse. A dedicated analysis of the transgender and gender diverse population is planned for a forthcoming report.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree):

- People should be able to express their gender however they choose
- There are significant obstacles that make it harder for women to get ahead than men
- People who report sexual assault are almost always telling the truth
- Violence between partners can be excused if people get so angry they lose control
- It is understandable that someone would react violently if they suspect their partner of having an affair
- If a family member of mine came out as transgender, I would not be able to support them
- People have the right to check who their partner has been calling or texting at all times
- Same-sex and opposite-sex couples should have the same rights to adopt children.

For analysis of results from the SSPPS pertaining to violence and unwanted sexual behaviours, see the *Juristat* article, "Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces" and the infographic, "Inappropriate sexual or harassing behaviours in Canada, 2018."

### Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5256](#).

The article "[Perceptions related to gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression](#)" is now available as part of the publication *Juristat Bulletin—Quick Fact* ([85-005-X](#)).

The infographic "[Perceptions related to gender equality in Canada, 2018](#)," which is part of the series *Statistics Canada — Infographics* ([11-627-M](#)), is also released today.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).