

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN NEW YORK: HIGHLIGHTS

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) has prepared a report on the *Status of Women in New York* to inform state residents about the progress of women in New York relative to women in other states, to men, and to national trends. In addition to this report, IWPR staff have produced reports on 12 other states and the District of Columbia as well as a national report that summarizes key findings for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

In each report, various indicators describe women's status in four important areas: political participation, employment and earnings, economic autonomy, and reproductive rights. Basic health and demographic data are also provided. On three of the four aspects of women's well-being for which IWPR calculated composite indicators (employment and earnings, economic autonomy, and reproductive rights), New York ranks in the top third of the nation, whereas it ranks in the bottom third of the nation for political participation. Despite its mixed ratings nationwide, New York does relatively well when compared with the other states in the Middle Atlantic region (New Jersey and Pennsylvania).

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Ranks

The composite political participation rank is based on women's voter registration and turnout, women elected officials at the state and federal levels, and women's institutional resources in the state (such as a state commission for women). The national rank is of a possible 50, because the District of Columbia is not included in this ranking. The regional rank is of a maximum of three and refers to the states in the Middle Atlantic region.

- New York ranks 37th in the nation and second in the Middle Atlantic region on the political participation composite indicator.
- New York ranks 46th in the nation on women's voter registration. There are two million unregistered women who are eligible to vote in the state of New York.

Facts and Figures

- Six of New York's 31 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives of the 104th Congress were filled by women. New York ranks 33rd among all states in terms of women in elected offices.
- Since 1964, female voters in the United States have outnumbered male voters, but voter turnout is relatively low for both sexes by international standards. Fifty-eight percent of eligible women and 55.5 percent of eligible men in New York reported that they voted in the November 1992 election.

Chart I. How New York Ranks on Key Indicators

	National Rank*	Regional Rank*
COMPOSITE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION INDEX	37	2
Women's Voter Registration, 1992-1994	46	3
Women's Voter Turnout, 1992-1994	37	1
Women in Elected Office Composite, 1996	33	2
Women's Institutional Resources, 1996	6	1
COMPOSITE EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS INDEX	10	2
Women's Median Annual Earnings, 1990	5	2
Ratio of Women's to Men's Earnings, 1990	6	1
Women's Labor Force Participation, 1994	50	3
Women in Managerial and Professional Occupations, 1994	7	2
COMPOSITE ECONOMIC AUTONOMY INDEX	13	2
Percent with Health Insurance Among Nonelderly Women, 1991-1992	26	3
Educational Attainment: Percent of Women with Four or More Years of College, 1990	12	2
Women's Business Ownership, 1992	24	1
Percent of Women Above the Poverty Level, 1990	30	3
COMPOSITE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS INDEX	2	1
<p><i>See Appendix I of The Status of Women in the States, available from IWPR, for a detailed description of the methodology and sources used for the indices presented here.</i></p> <p>* The national rankings are of a possible 51, referring to the 50 states and the District of Columbia, except for the political participation indicators, which do not include the District of Columbia. The regional rankings are of a maximum of three and refer to the states in the Middle Atlantic region (New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania).</p>		

Calculated by the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

Ranks

The composite employment and earnings rank is based on women's median annual earnings, the female/male earnings ratio, women's labor force participation, and the proportion of working women in professional and managerial positions. The national rank is of a possible 51, referring to the 50 states plus the District of Columbia.

- New York ranks tenth in the nation and second in its region on the employment and earnings composite indicator.
- New York's worst employment and earnings indicator is women's labor force participation, on which it ranks 50th in the nation and last in its region.

Facts and Figures

- Compared with women in the nation as a whole, New York women enjoy slightly greater earnings equality with men. In 1990, the ratio of the median annual earnings of women to those of men for full-time, year-round workers aged 18 to 65 was 68.5 percent in the United States and 73.3 percent in New York.
- In New York, women with children are less likely to engage in labor market activity than are mothers in the United States as a whole. In New York, 52.7 percent of women with children under age six are in the labor force, compared with 59.7 percent in the U.S. as a whole.

ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

Ranks

The composite economic autonomy rank is based on women's access to health insurance, women's educational attainment, women's business ownership, and the proportion of women living above the poverty line.

- New York ranks 13th in the nation and second in its region on the economic autonomy composite indicator.
- New York ranks 30th in the nation and worst in its region in terms of the percent of women living above the poverty threshold.
- New York's best rank is for women's educational attainment on which it ranks 12th in the nation and second in its region.

Facts and Figures

- Women in New York are slightly more likely to have health insurance than are women nationwide. Although women in New York and women in the U.S. as a whole are equally likely to have employer-based health insurance, a slightly greater proportion of women in New York rely on Medicaid (15.3 percent) than women in the U.S. (13 percent).
- The business receipts of women-owned businesses in New York increased by 62 percent in constant dollars between 1987 and 1992. This compares with an increase of 87 percent in business receipts for women-owned firms nationally, and 35 percent for all firms in the United States during this time period, also adjusted for inflation.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Ranks

The composite reproductive rights rank is based on information on legislation relating to access to legal abortions, the availability of public funding for abortions and infertility treatments, the position of the governor and state legislature on reproductive choice, maternity stay laws, and legislation regarding adoption by gay or lesbian couples.

- New York ranks second in the nation and first in its region on the reproductive rights composite indicator.

Facts and Figures

- Mandatory consent laws require that minors notify one or both parents of the decision to have an abortion or gain the consent of one or both parents before a physician can perform the procedure. New York had no mandatory consent law as of January 1995.
- Sixty percent of counties in New York have abortion providers, a high proportion when compared with the nation as a whole (16 percent).

HEALTH AND VITAL STATISTICS

- In New York fertility and infant mortality rates are virtually identical to those of the U.S. The percent of low birth weight babies is also comparable to that of the nation as a whole, although the percent of low birth weight African-American babies is slightly lower than the national average.
- Twenty-four percent of the population of New York is enrolled in HMOs compared with 20 percent in the United States as a whole. However, both Medicare and Medicaid recipients in New York are less likely than those nationwide to be enrolled in an HMO.

BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

- Compared with the nation as a whole, New York has a slightly larger proportion of women over age 65, a more racially and ethnically diverse female population, a higher proportion of single women, and a larger proportion of women living in urban areas.
- New York has a slightly smaller proportion of married-couple families than does the nation and a greater than average proportion of single mothers and single people living in non-family households.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) is an independent, non-profit, scientific research organization founded in 1987 to meet the need for women-centered, policy-oriented research. This fact sheet is based on the report The Status of Women in New York, part of a larger research project funded by the Ford Foundation. The data used in the report come from a variety of sources, primarily government agencies, and individuals and organizations in New York assisted in reviewing the report. The Advisory Committee for the report in New York is chaired by Francine Moccio, Institute for Women and Work, and includes: Gale Brewer, Office of the Public Advocate for Intergovernmental Affairs; Marilyn J. Flood, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of New York City; Barbara T. Rochman, Women's City Club of New York; Elinor Guggenheimer, New York Women's Agenda; Mary Murphree, Women's Bureau, Region II, United States Department of Labor; Janet Oliver, OJJO Solutions; Judith R. Sidel, Center for Women in Government, State University of New York at Albany; and Marie C. Wilson, Ms. Foundation.

This Research-in-Brief was written by Stacey Friedman and prepared by Megan DeBell in February 1997. The full report, The Status of Women in New York, is available for \$10.00 from the Institute for Women's Policy Research. Members and affiliates of the Institute's Information Network receive regular reports and information, as well as a discount on all publications. For copies of the New York report or more information on membership, contact: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 1400 20th Street, NW, Suite 104, Washington, DC 20036, phone 202/785-5100, fax 202/833-4362, or visit our web site at <http://www.iwpr.org>.