

# Cultivating gender equality could cut corruption, research suggests

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[A study](#) in the *European Journal of International Management* has looked at the complex relationship between gender, governance, and corruption in Europe. The research analyzed evidence from 35 European countries

between the years 2010 and 2020 to discern the nuanced relationship between heightened gender inequality and increased corruption. Fundamentally, the research found that a substantial female presence in decision-making positions, especially in societies with robust legal frameworks, was associated closely with transparency and lower levels of corruption.

Andrea Cámara-Payno, Julieta Díez-Hernández, Martyna Novak, and Elena Temiño-Santamaría of the University of Burgos in Burgos, Castilla y Leon, Spain, found that contrary to expectations, they did not identify [gender](#)-based disparities in attitudes toward corruption. Rather, greater representation of women in decision-making roles contributed to enhanced overall gender equality and, it was this that was associated with lower levels of corruption.

It is well-documented that among the European nations, Denmark, Finland, and Norway have good gender equality and adherence to the rule of law. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that these nations have a higher proportion of women in both public and corporate spheres of influence and that this correlates with more effective corruption control than is seen in other nations that are more dominated by men.

This, the research suggests, actually challenges traditional gender theory that would otherwise indicate that gender ultimately becomes of little consequence in terms of attitudes to corruption once a good degree of equality has been achieved.

The issue is complex, of course, and gender equality and decision-making are just part of broader considerations in the context of combating corruption. Nevertheless, the study emphasizes the importance of improving gender [equality](#) and the rule of law in the fight against [corruption](#). The promotion of equal opportunities is thus an important part of societal evolution.

**More information:** Andrea Cámara Payno et al, The attitude towards corruption in the EU under a gender perspective, *European J. of International Management* (2024). [DOI: 10.1504/EJIM.2024.135934](https://doi.org/10.1504/EJIM.2024.135934)

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