# Julia Gillard Advocates for Gender Equality Amid Global Concerns



**Gillard Discusses Gender Equality at Hay Festival**

Former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard spoke at the Hay Festival on June 1, 2024, expressing concerns over the slow progress of gender equality globally. She highlighted a recent poll by King’s College London’s Global Institute for Women’s Leadership, which found that 51% of respondents believe men are overly supportive of gender equality, and 46% feel men are discriminated against. Particularly notable was that 60% of men aged 16-27 think women’s equality has gone too far.

Gillard stressed the need for feminists to clarify that gender equality benefits everyone and is not about giving women unfair advantages. She emphasized eliminating the zero-sum game mentality and supporting measures like female quotas in politics, which have proven successful in Australia. The World Economic Forum estimates that achieving global gender equality could take 130 years.

As Chair of King’s College London’s Global Institute for Women’s Leadership, Gillard emphasized the importance of good research to accelerate change. She also discussed the persistent issue of unconscious biases, noting that charismatic men are often mistakenly perceived as better leaders compared to collaborative women and men.

**Mexico Poised to Elect Its First Female President**

Mexico is set to elect its first female president, with Claudia Sheinbaum of the Morena party and Xóchitl Gálvez, an opposition coalition candidate, as the main contenders. This historic event is reflective of Mexico’s evolving policies towards gender parity, including a 2019 constitutional amendment mandating gender parity in all government branches.

The shift towards female political representation has been driven by feminist activists and supportive legislation, resulting in half of Mexico’s legislature being comprised of women. The outcome of this election will see a woman become the commander of the armed forces and the head of the country’s second-largest economy. However, Mexican women still face significant challenges, such as violence and wage disparity.

Both Sheinbaum and Gálvez have advocated for progressive policies, but some conservative groups and young feminists remain skeptical about their commitment to addressing critical issues like domestic violence and the gender pay gap. Despite these concerns, the election of a female president marks a significant cultural milestone in Mexico, indicating broader possibilities for women's leadership in the country.