



**How Does the
South Caucasus
Compare?**

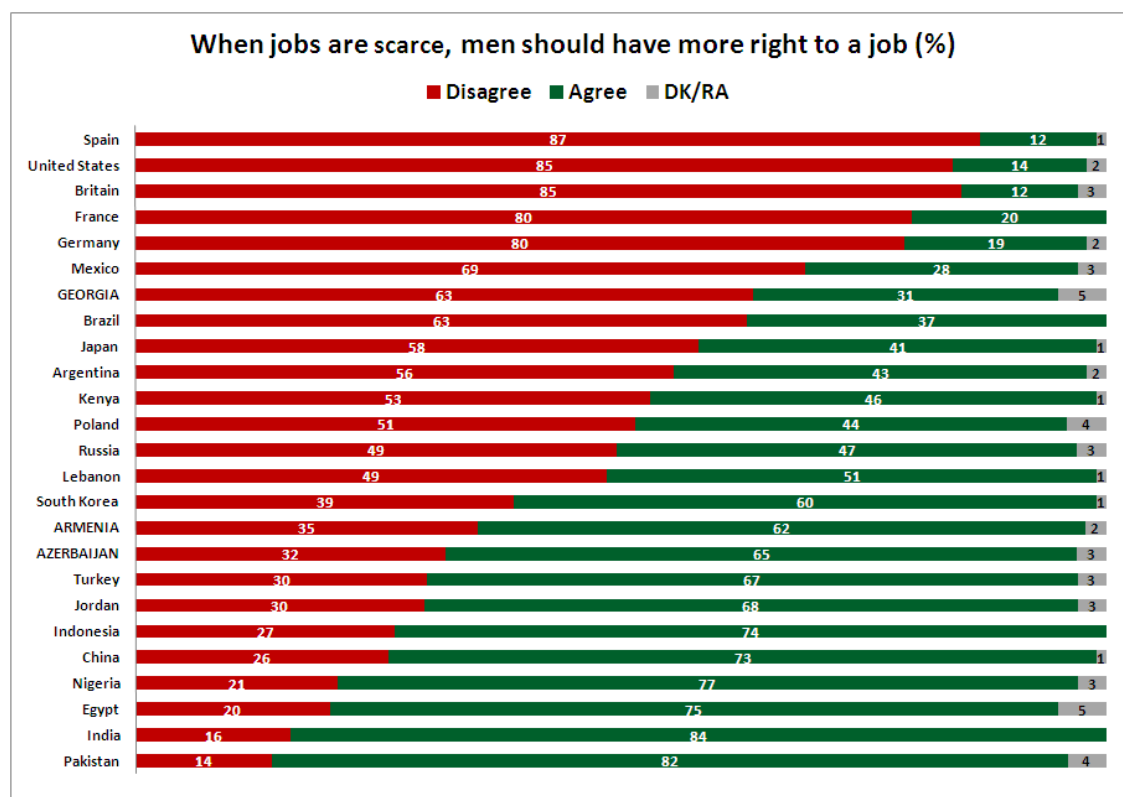
October 5,

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This report aims to put attitudes towards gender in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the three countries of the South Caucasus region, into a global context. Comparing data from the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project 2010¹ with that of the Caucasus Barometer (CB)², an annual nationwide face-to-face survey conducted in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), the report shows that on several crucial questions of gender equality, there are significant cleavages between the South Caucasus neighbors. Armenia and Azerbaijan tend to emphasize more traditional gender roles, and in global terms are often closer in attitude to Middle Eastern and Asian countries. Georgia, meanwhile, is more inclined to aspire to gender equality, and in this sense is closer to countries in Western Europe and the Americas. However, the picture is complicated and, using other data from the Caucasus Barometer, the report shows that gender perceptions in the South Caucasus are deeply nuanced, and do not fit into a conventional picture of equality versus tradition.

The right to a job

The 2010 Pew Global Attitudes Report shows that, when asked whether men have more right to employment when jobs are scarce, countries are divided into three main groups: those that aspire to equality, those that have mixed views and those that emphasize traditional gender roles.



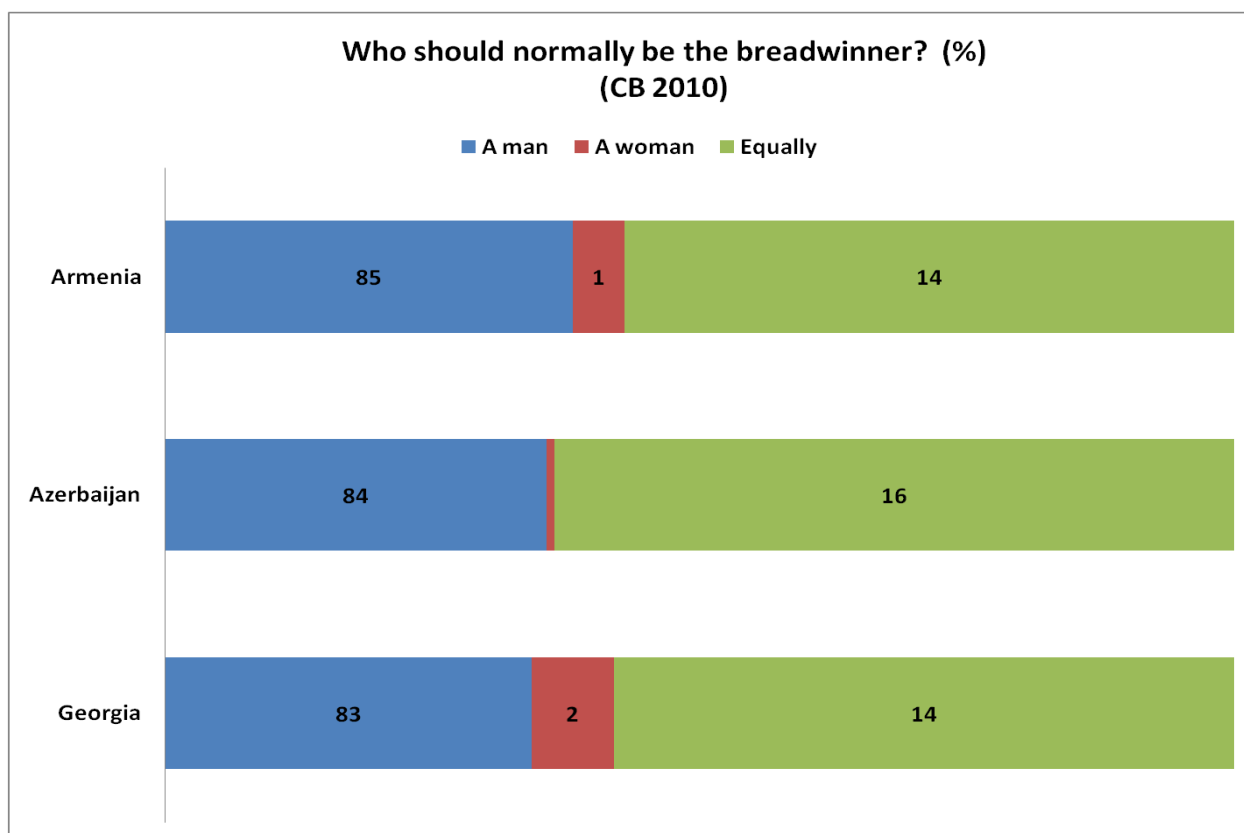
¹ Men's Lives Often Seen as Better: Gender Equality Universally Embraced, but Inequalities Acknowledged. Pew Global Attitudes Project, July 1, 2010, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2010/07/01/gender-equality/>, accessed on July 20, 2011.

² Caucasus Research Resource Centers, (2010) "Caucasus Barometer". Retrieved from <http://www.crrccenters.org/caucasusbarometer/> on May 21, 2011.

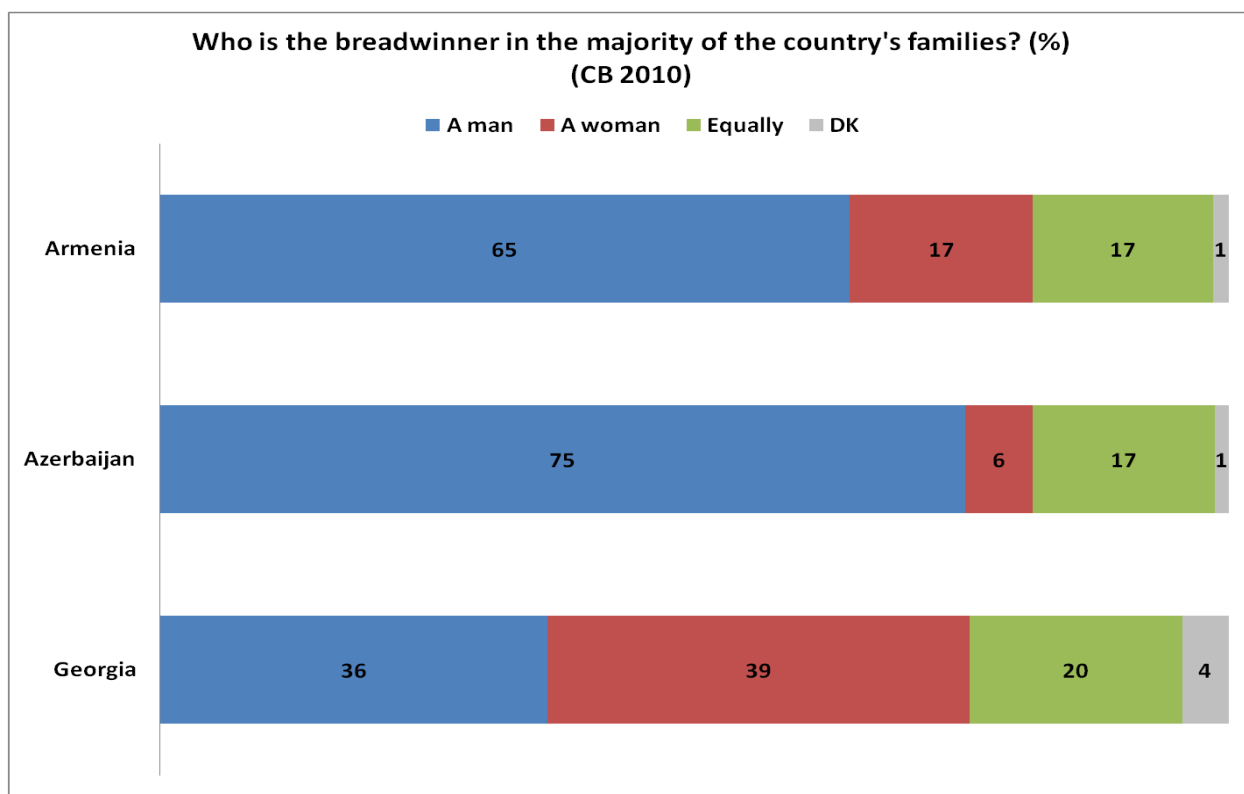
Developed western countries including Britain, the United States and Germany, as well as countries in Latin America show large majorities rejecting the idea that men have more right to a job in tough times. In Georgia too, more than twice as many people disagree with the idea (63%) than agree (31%), indicating that, in this respect at least Georgians' ideas about gender equality are much closer to western values than to the values of its own neighbors.

While countries like Russia, Poland and Kenya show a more even split in opinion, Armenia and Azerbaijan have clear majorities who believe that men are more entitled to jobs than women. In Armenia, 62% of people agree men have more right to a job, compared to 35% who disagree, while in Azerbaijan, 65% agree and 32% disagree. These results put Armenia and Azerbaijan much closer to Middle Eastern and Asian countries such as China, Jordan or Turkey.

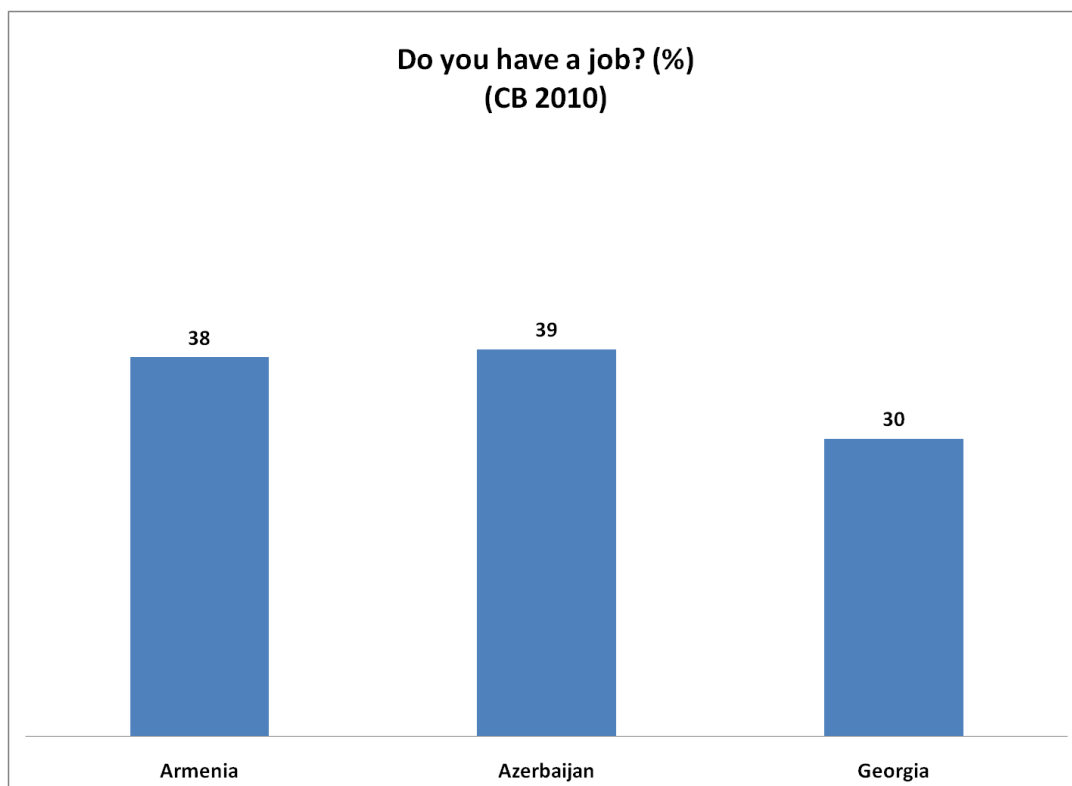
However, other data from the Caucasus Barometer show that Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan have a more similar attitude when it comes to some aspects of gender and employment. More than 80% of people in each country say that a man should ideally be the breadwinner in a family, indicating that all three countries retain certain traditional notions of gender.



In Georgia, the picture is complicated further still. Even though 83% of respondents say a man should be the breadwinner, more Georgians report that, in fact, the main breadwinner in their family is a woman. This contrasts strongly with Armenia and Azerbaijan, where 65% and 75% respectively report that the main breadwinner is a man.

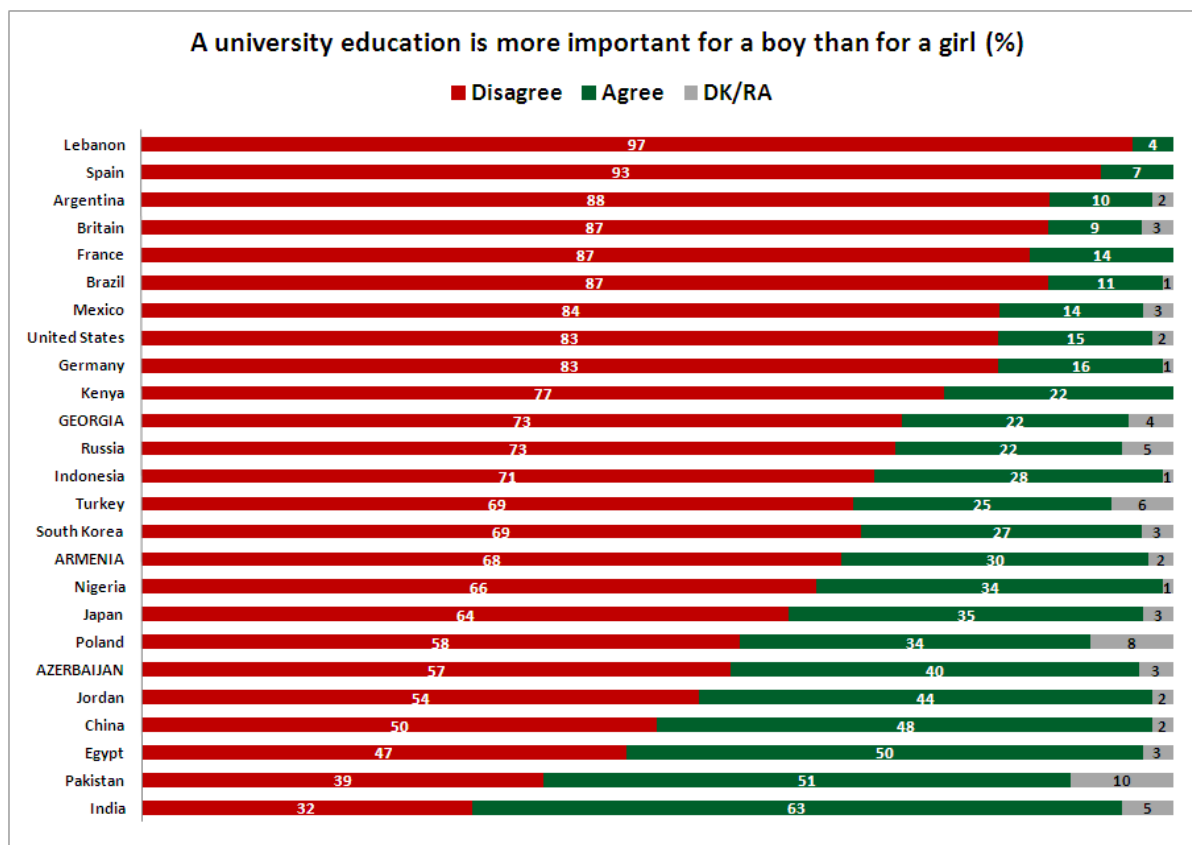


Thus, while Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Georgians all overwhelmingly agree with the traditional idea that a man should be the main breadwinner, the actual situation in Georgia is perceived to be the other way around. This could be a significant factor as to why more Georgians say men should not have preferential access to jobs when they are scarce. Furthermore, jobs fewer people report having a job in Georgia than in Armenia and Azerbaijan. In Georgia, 30% of people say they have a job, compared to 38% in Armenia and 39% in Azerbaijan.



Access to education

According to the Pew 2010 Global Attitudes Survey, many people in most countries around the world reject the notion that a university education is more important for a boy than a girl. The same holds true in the South Caucasus. According to the results of the Caucasus Barometer, a majority of Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Georgians disagree that boys should have privileged access to higher education.



However, there are important differences among the three South Caucasus countries. Once again, Azerbaijan displays a more traditional idea of gender roles, with 40% agreeing that a university education is more important for boys and 57% disagreeing. In Armenia, significantly fewer people agree (30%), while 68% disagree. In Georgia, we see a clearer trend towards aspiring for equality, with 22% of people agreeing that university is more important for boys, and 73% disagreeing.

Women in all three South Caucasus countries are more likely to disagree that university is more important for boys. Nonetheless, there is a clear difference between the countries. 16% of Georgian women agree that higher education is more important for boys, 26% of Armenian women agree, while a third of Azerbaijani women agree.

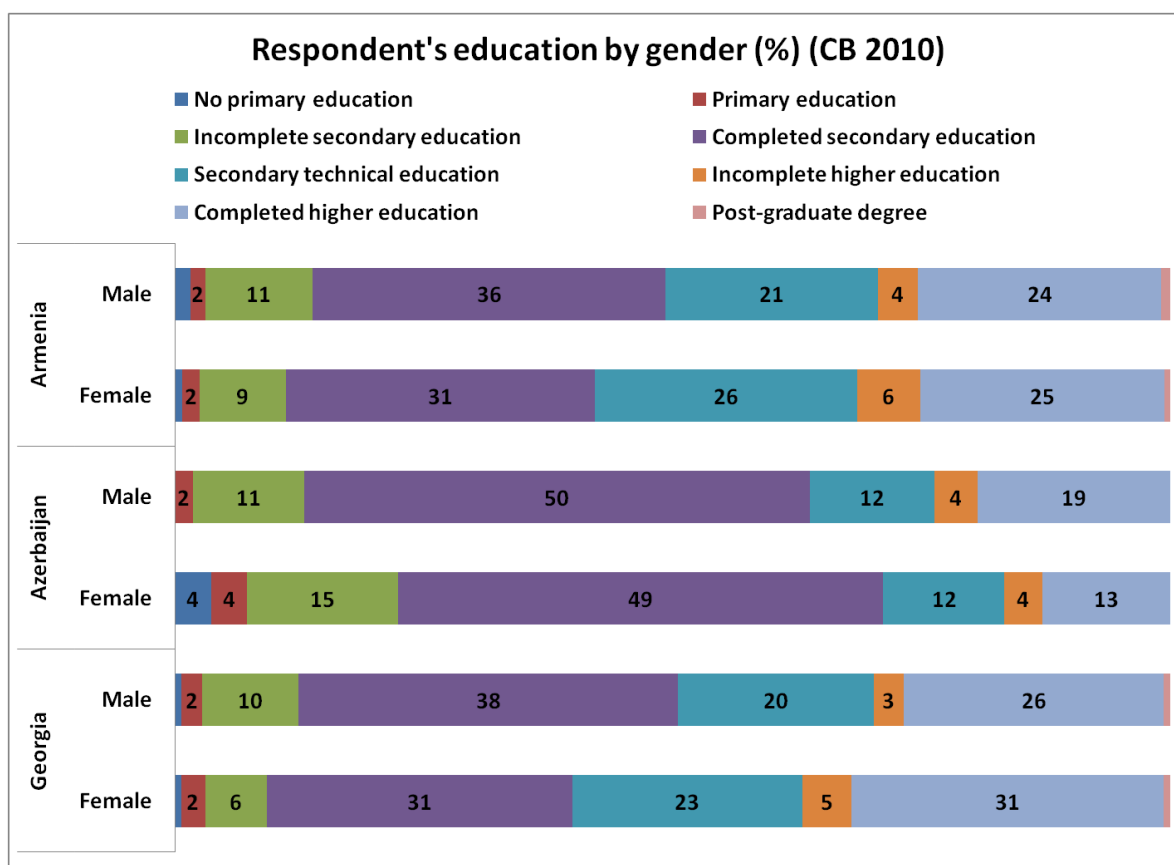
Table 1: University degree is more important for a boy than for a girl. (Numbers in the table are in percentages)

		Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia
Male	Disagree	63	50	65
	Agree	34	46	29
	DK/RA ³	3	4	7
Female	Disagree	72	65	79
	Agree	26	33	16
	DK/RA	2	3	5

³ DK/RA stands for “Don’t know” and “Refuse to answer”.

In a global context, in terms of higher education, most countries are aspiring to equality. Only in Pakistan and India did most people agree that university was more important for boys. However, the degree to which countries aspire to educational equality differs. Furthermore, the data do not fit into an easy geographical or rich world/poor world pattern. Similar proportions of Azerbaijanis and Poles think university is more important for boys, while Georgian attitudes are more similar to those of Kenya, Indonesia and Russia.

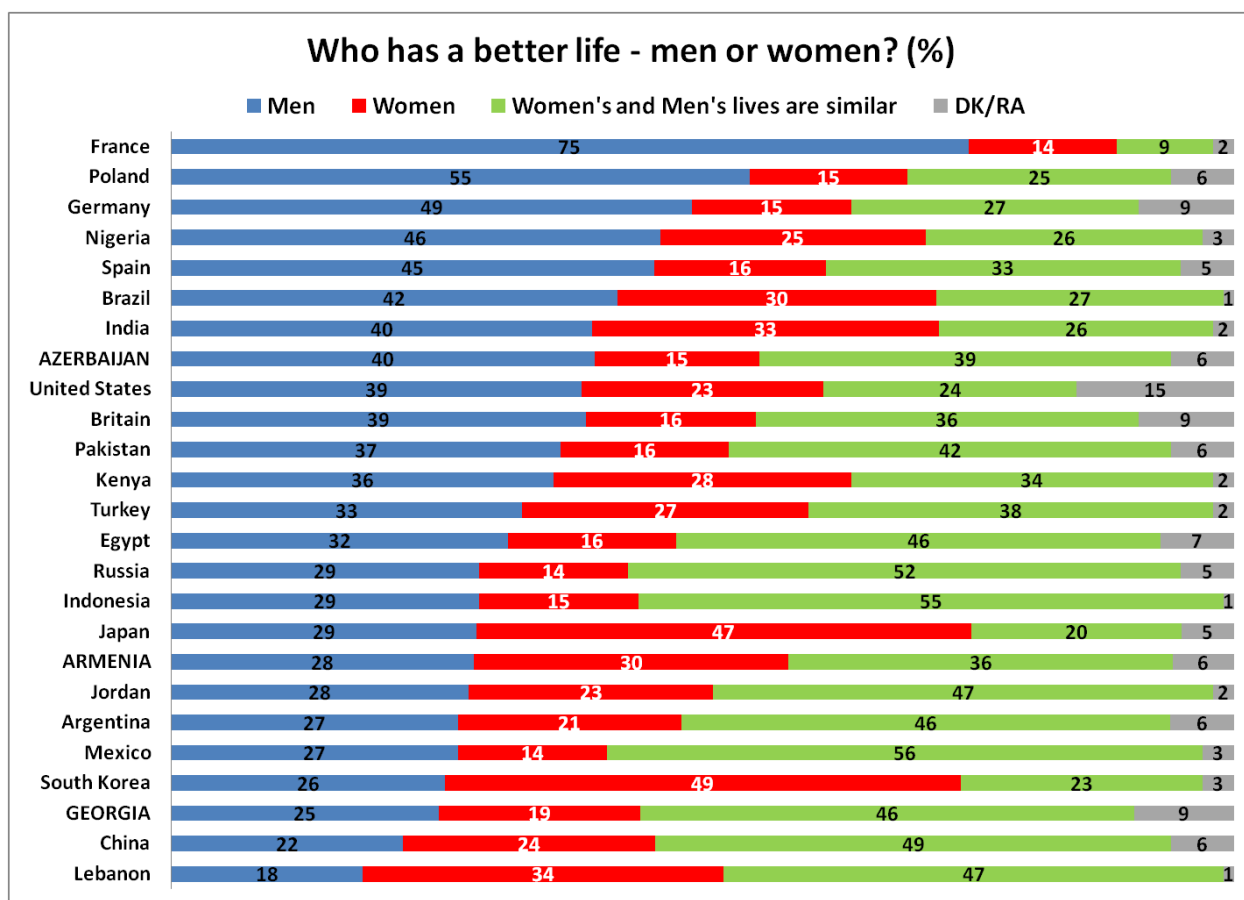
Interestingly, in the South Caucasus, attitudes towards the relative importance of higher education for boys and girls are reflected in overall educational outcomes, with larger numbers of Georgian women having completed higher education (31%) than women in Armenia (25%) and Azerbaijan (13%).



More women than men in Armenia and Georgia have completed higher education. In Azerbaijan, more men than women complete higher education (19% to 13%). It is possible that the relative amount of women and men experiencing higher education across the three countries could contribute to ideas about whether it is more important for boys or girls.

Who has a better life, men or women?

When asked which gender has a better life, Pew found results across the globe to be very mixed, something that can also be observed in the South Caucasus.



In Azerbaijan, 40% of people think men have a better life, compared to 28% in Armenia and 25% in Georgia. However, almost exactly the same proportion of Azerbaijanis (39%) say that men and women's lives are broadly similar.

Among the South Caucasus countries, Georgia is the least likely to see men as having better lives (25%) and the most likely to see woman and men's lives as being similar (46%). In Armenia, meanwhile more people think that women have better lives (30%) than men (28%). This puts Armenia together with China, Lebanon, Japan and South Korea as the only countries surveyed that think women have better lives.

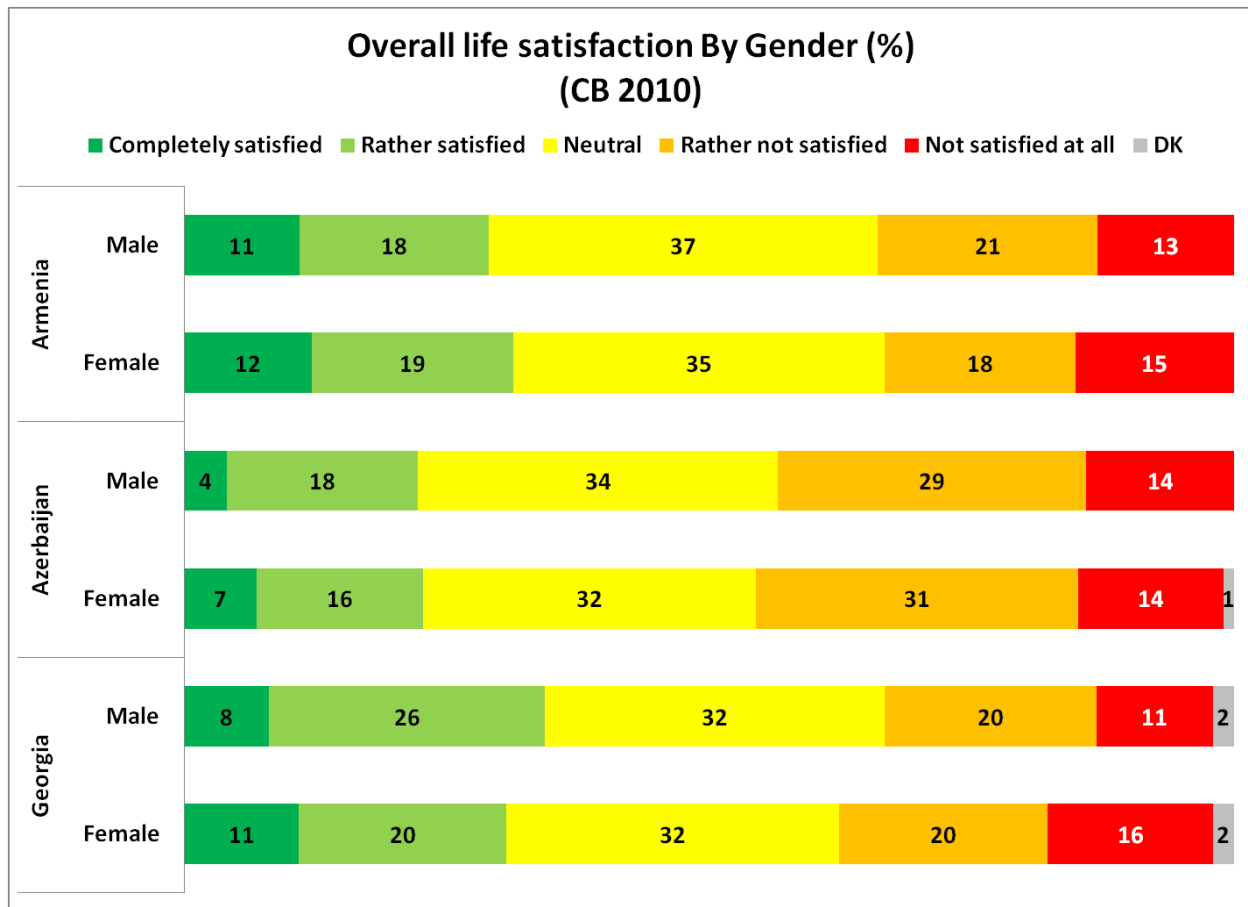
Across the world, Pew found that women were generally more likely to say that men had a better life in their country. This is also true for the South Caucasus, where in each country more women said men had better lives than women. In Azerbaijan, almost half (48%) of women said men had better lives, compared to just 10% who said women did. In Georgia, 29% of women said men had better lives, almost twice as many as those that said women had a better life (16%). In Armenia, opinions were more evenly split, 32% of women said men had a better life, while 27% said women did. Notably, in Georgia, almost the same amount of men and women (50% and 48% respectively) said lives were similar for both genders.

Table 2: Who has a better life: men or women? (Numbers in the table are in percentages)

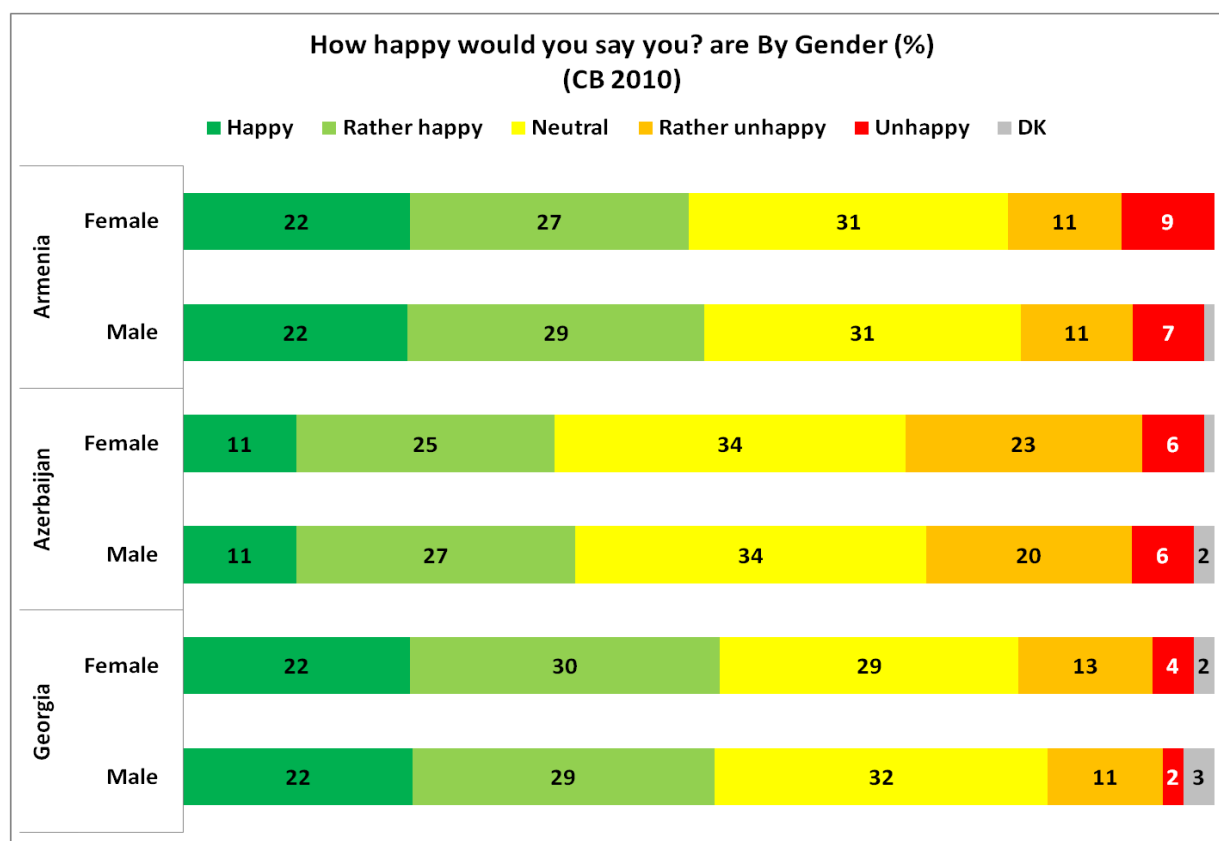
		Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia
Male	Women	33	21	19
	Men	24	33	22
	Women's and men's lives are similar	37	41	50
	DK/RA	7	5	10
Female	Women	27	10	16
	Men	32	48	29
	Women's and men's lives are similar	36	36	48
	DK/RA	5	6	7

While these results might suggest that attitudes towards gender differences are more muted in Georgia than Armenia and Azerbaijan, the data are difficult to interpret. Looking at the global context, Azerbaijan's results are almost the same as Britain, in spite of clear differences in the gender situation pertaining in those two countries. Georgia finds itself close to Mexico and Argentina, while Armenia is in the small group of countries that are more likely to say women have a better life than men.

However, when it comes to actual life satisfaction, roughly similar proportions of men and women in each country say they are completely or partially satisfied, middling, or completely or partially dissatisfied, with their lives.



The same is true of how happy men and women in the three countries say they are. This suggests that the perceptions of gender advantages and disadvantages in the South Caucasus are out of step with most people's life experience. It would be interesting to explore whether and to what extent this disconnect applies to other countries.



Conclusion

Attitudes to gender are deeply nuanced and complex in each of the three countries of the South Caucasus, as they are across the world. By putting the gender attitudes of the South Caucasus countries in a global context, it is possible to discern a general trend. In most cases, Georgia is more likely to exhibit an aspiration towards equality; however, this is still informed by several deeply conservative social values. Azerbaijan, meanwhile, adheres more strongly to traditional gender roles, while still displaying certain aspirations for equality in fields like higher education, and not showing a strong preference for male children. Armenia, in the main, exhibits values somewhere in between, but even so, Armenians tend to think women have better lives than men. This report is a preliminary attempt to put gender perceptions in the South Caucasus in a global context. Deeper statistical analysis would shed more light on where Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia stand in relation to other countries around the world, and further investigation of data from the Caucasus Barometer would provide more depth and background to the issue of gender perceptions across the three countries. Readers seeking to look at this subject in more depth are encouraged to visit www.crrc.ge/oda, where our powerful online data analysis tool allows users to explore the full data set of the 2010 Caucasus Barometer.

Survey Methodology

The data used in this article is taken from Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project Survey in spring 2010, as well as the CRRC's 2010 Caucasus Barometer (CB) survey. The CB is the single largest coordinated data gathering effort in the South Caucasus covering political, social and economic issues in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Results for the CB are based on 6,000 face-to-face interviews with adults over the age of 18 years old in the three countries. Nationwide fieldwork was completed from November 09, 2010 to November 30, 2010 in Georgia, from November 15, 2010 to December 11, 2010 in Armenia and from December 03, 2010 to December 26, 2010 in Azerbaijan. The CB employs multi-stage cluster sampling and interviews were conducted in Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani languages.

The margin of sampling error is ± 4.5 percentage points and the error attributable to random effects or sampling is \pm the margin of error with 95% confidence. Error or bias can be introduced into the findings of opinion polls when conducting surveys via sampling error, question wording and other general difficulties. This report has undergone rigorous review to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Please notify CRRC if you identify inaccuracies by writing to nana@crccenters.org. Any errata will be highlighted in the CRRC blog at <http://crcc-caucasus.blogspot.com> where we also welcome your comments and suggestions.

About the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC)

The Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) is a network of resource, research and training centers established in 2003 in the capital cities of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia with the goal of strengthening social science research and public policy analysis in the South Caucasus. A partnership between the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Eurasia Partnership Foundation, USAID and local universities, the CRRC network offers scholars and practitioners stable opportunities for integrated research, training and collaboration in the region.⁴

The mission of CRRC is “to strengthen social science research and public policy analysis in the South Caucasus by creating a regional network of sustainable, university-oriented institutions, and by building the capacity of South Caucasus scholars to conduct high-quality research.” CRRC has informed its current and future activities with a mantra of “In, For and About” the South Caucasus.

⁴ Since 2004, CRRC has conducted surveys on a wide range of topics including media, corruption, migration, attitudes towards the EU, political attitudes, and social cohesion in the South Caucasus. The main CRRC website is: <http://www.crrccenters.org/about/history/>. A complete list of projects can be found at: <http://www.crrccenters.org/activities/research/>.