



# India

## Progress Map India

The map below describes India as a very progress-oriented country – especially in the areas of the economy and society, but less so on political issues.

The issue where India wishes for progress the most is the empowerment of women. In addition, gender equality in general – and related to this the improvement of (external) child care – are also strong progress issues. This is no coincidence: India is lagging behind in terms of gender equality (ranked 131st of 188 on the UN Gender Equality Index), the educational level of women is significantly lower, and violence against women is a recurring issue.<sup>1</sup> India also wants to improve the political representation of its lower castes – compared to the empowerment of women, however, this is not as clearly prioritized.

The second range of topics where India wants to see faster progress is the transition of the labour market. The idea of finding a purpose in one's work is traditionally a post-materialistic value associated with the generation of millennials in the countries of the west. This year's Progress Barometer indicates that this is also of high priority for Indians, as is lifelong learning. There is a clear willingness to spend more (taxpayers') money on research. On the other hand, digitalization and the transition from an economy focused on manufacturing to one that is based on services is viewed with slightly more circumspection. People are not necessarily opposed to the development of agricultural land for better infrastructure and the expansion of cities, but they are not enthusiastic either. The same holds true for the deepening of the urban-rural divide.

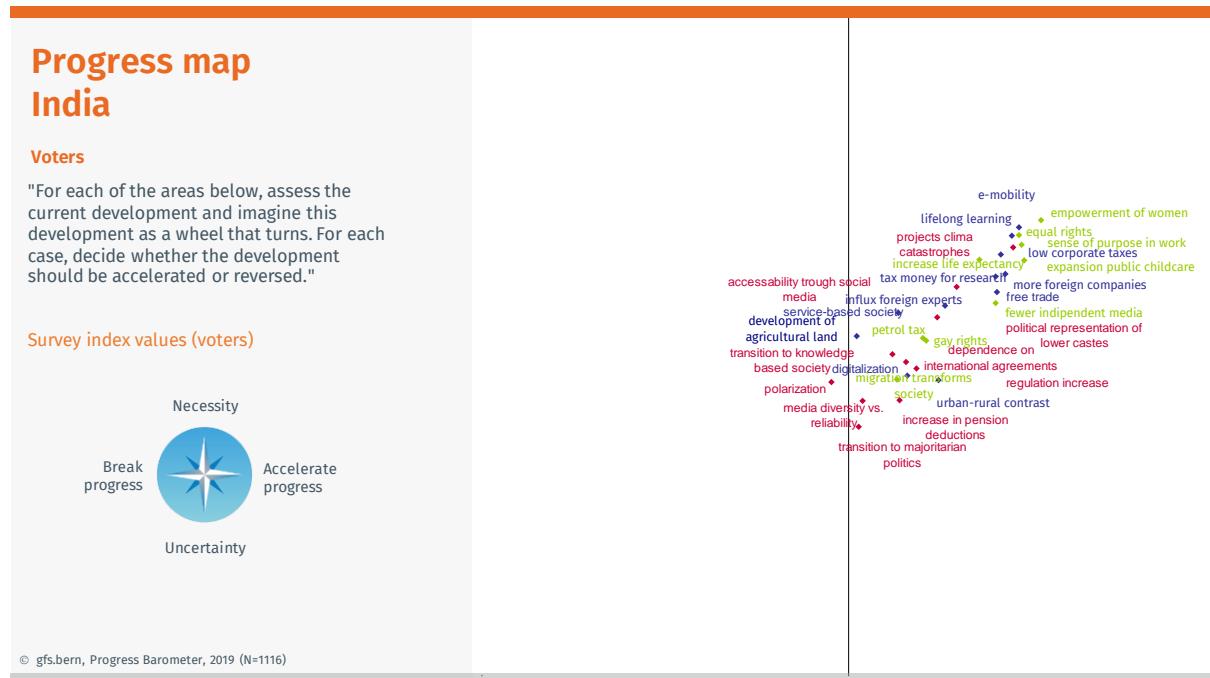
Opening India up to more free trade, the influx of foreign experts and providing attractive conditions for (international) companies in order for them to relocate is something India is willing to embrace.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/03/12/why-indias-modern-women-say-its-a-burden-to-be-female/>

Twenty-two of the world's 30 most polluted cities are in India.<sup>2</sup> The idea of preserving (or even expanding) individual mobility without putting even greater pressure on the environment therefore falls on fertile ground in India. As in all other countries surveyed, e-mobility is one of the issues where there is the greatest desire for progress. The introduction of a new petrol tax, on the other hand, is met with less enthusiasm in the country which used to be the world's fastest-growing economy but is now increasingly heading towards a slump.<sup>3</sup>

As regards the process of transition away from a political system that is pluralistic to one that is more majoritarian, people want to maintain the status quo. Media diversity often comes at the price of less accuracy in information. This is also a development where Indians want to see the wheels of progress stop turning.



## Desire for Progress in India

India shows the greatest willingness for progress in the area of society, where it is number 3 after Brazil and China in the ranking of all 16 countries surveyed.

Slightly less strong, but still amongst the highest is India's readiness for progress when it comes to the economy and finally also politics.

## India's self-assessment of progress

When asked how Indians themselves would rate progress in their country, 66% are of the opinion that their country is currently very progressive or somewhat progressive when it comes to social issues, 65% think the same of economic progress and 61% think political progress has been made. Indians thus have a much higher opinion of the progress their country has made over the last ten years than people do of their own country's progress in the other 16 nations surveyed.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/mar/05/india-home-to-22-of-worlds-30-most-polluted-cities-greenpeace-says>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/6efe817a-12a7-11ea-a7e6-62bf4f9e548a>

## Further information



**Future prospects:** 12% of Indians feel their personal future is quite bleak – in contrast to 44% who view the future with some optimism or mixed feelings. When it comes to the prospects of the next generation, Indians are somewhat less pessimistic than people in the other countries: 44% take the view that there is a risk their children will not be as well off as the respondents themselves. And although they see themselves as part of India's middle class, they fear that their social and economic status is increasingly under pressure (73%); 43% of all Indians are very or quite confident that they will have enough money to live comfortably in their retirement.



**Battle against climate change:** Although India's voters are not altogether enthusiastic about the introduction of a fuel tax (35%), there are still clear signs of a desire to see more measures to combat climate change: 74% agree that the state must do more to prevent companies from polluting the environment; 69% are also of the view that the economy is too one-sided in focusing on growth and that sustainability is being ignored.



**Assessment of the past 10 years:** In various areas, the situation in India has improved over the last 10 years, according to Indian society. Most Indians feel there has been an improvement in political participation (54%), social security (53%), national unity (65%), the stability of economic relations, innovation (70%), sustainable technologies (58%) and both urban (57%) and rural (56%) infrastructure.



**Social cohesion:** According to Indian voters, only a small minority is getting richer, while no one else is benefiting from developments (68%). The idea of resolving conflicts without weapons and violence is historically embedded in the democratic process of India; 66% of Indian voters still share this opinion today. Greater social cohesion is also called for when it comes to the position of the lower castes in Indian society.