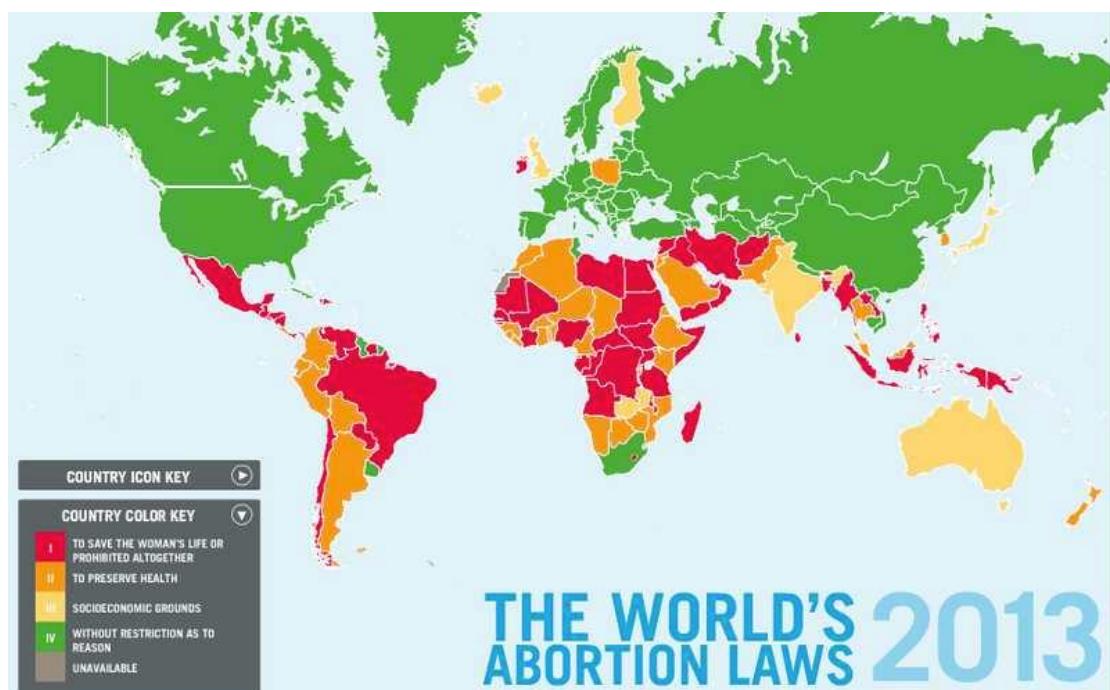


## Economics, Women's Rights, and Abortion

Modern economies rely on the contribution of the widest possible number of people, and the widest and most diverse workforce. This emphatically includes women. The modern American Economy fundamentally relies upon the participation and contribution of women in the workforce. Women are now the majority of college graduates and are fast approaching parity in professional and graduate degrees. Put simply, the modern American economy would sink without women.

But women can only fully contribute to the economy and participate in the workforce if they can fully control their own lives and their own bodies. This means full access to women's health services, including contraception and abortion.

If you look at the world, and think about modern advanced economies, those economies that allow women to fully participate are the most advanced. And those countries that restrict women's rights, including reproductive rights, generally have weak economies.



Map from: <http://www.womenonwaves.org/en/page/460/abortion-laws-worldwide>

A quick glance at this map shows that, in general, access to abortion is available in modern economies, and the more serious restrictions on abortion are in less developed countries. There are some exceptions on both sides of that equation. A number of former Soviet republics in Central Asia have weak economies, and widespread access to abortion, and Australia and New Zealand have moderately restrictive abortion rights, and vibrant economies. But in general there is a strong correlation between a woman's access to abortion, her ability to fully participate in the economy, and the strength of the nation's economy.

The simple reality is that successful modern economies depend on the economic contribution of women, and women will only be able to fully contribute if they can fully control their own lives and their own bodies. If you restrict a woman's ability to control her body, you restrict her ability to fully participate in the economy. And that is bad for a nation's economy. Efforts across the country to restricting a woman's ability to control her own body are bad for business, and harm the nation's ability to compete in an increasingly competitive world economy.

Here are some links to articles or websites that discuss abortion rights around the world:

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life: <http://www.pewforum.org/Abortion/Abortion-Laws-Around-the-World.aspx>

Pregnant Pause: <http://www.pregnantpause.org/lex/world02.htm>

The Center for Reproductive Rights: <http://reproductiverights.org/>