IPU – UN Women Parliamentary Meeting

7 March 2023

#CSW67

Women in Politics 2023
Women in Parliament in 2022 report

Women in parliament in 2022
The year in review

Introduction

In 2022, women’s leadership in the world’s parliaments continued with a slow pace of incremental growth as the world re-emerged after two years of COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and losses. Women reached new milestones in parliamentary representation around the globe and the context for women’s political leadership continued to expand. Gender issues and women’s rights shaped voter behaviour and electoral outcomes in countries from Brazil to Hungary and from Australia to the United States of America.

Women’s participation in parliament has never been as diverse and representative as it is in many countries today. Dramatic changes in technology and parliamentary operations that were introduced during the pandemic are becoming institutionalised, helping to make parliaments more modern, gender-sensitive and family-friendly workplaces. Women’s leadership has also been illustrated in the response to the climate crisis. But barriers such as gender-based violence and unequal access to campaign finance maintained and deepened the gap between women and men in politics in many parts of the world.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The share of women in national parliaments stood at 26.8% on 1 January 2023, a year-on-year increase of 0.4 percentage points that continues a decade of incremental progress but represents the slowest growth in six years.
- In the 41 countries that held elections in 2022, women lost an average of 3.6% of seats up for election, meaning a 2.3 percentage point decrease relative to the previous elections in those countries.
- Legislative quotas continued to be decisive factors in women’s representation in all regions of the world. Chancellors with legislated quotas for parliamentarians in legislatures and government formed legislated and voluntary parity pacts that secured 36.8% of women in 2022, versus 22.3% in countries with no quotas. Parliamentarians in countries with quotas experienced less volatility, as legislation is women’s representation.
- The most notable gains in women’s representation in elected chambers in 2022 came in Slovenia, Malta, Equatorial Guinea, Colombia and Australia. Nearly 40% of mandates in the year saw expansion or no growth (24 chambers).
- The Senate of Australia was the only chamber to select women to over 50% of seats in 2021 (56.9%).
- It became the highest-ranking upper house in the world in terms of women’s representation outside one with only five upper chambers in the world to exceed 25%. Six other countries elected women’s leadership between 40% and 50% of seats.
- The Americas remained the region with the highest representation of women, with women account for 33.2% of members elected to 12 chambers in 8 countries that held parliamentary elections in 2022. Overall, as of January 2023, women accounted for 36.7% of all parliamentarians in the region, across all chambers and countries.
A global snapshot of women in parliament in 2023: The gains

26.5% of parliamentarians are women

+0.4 percentage point increase from last year

No functioning parliament has zero women MPs

Increased diversity

6 countries (up from 5 in 2022) have achieved gender parity in their parliaments:

- Cuba
- New Zealand
- Rwanda
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- United Arab Emirates
A global snapshot of women in parliament in 2023: The losses

Rate of progress has plateaued at +0.4 percentage points in 2022, slowest rate in six years

80 years for parliaments globally to achieve gender parity at this rate

Less than 1/3 of lower/single chambers have 30% or more women MPs
Regional trends following 2022 parliamentary elections

**Americas**
- 34.9%
  - Highest regional average - great progress (+1.1 percentage points in 1 year)
  - Gender parity in Cuba, Mexico and Nicaragua
  - Colombia - the greatest gains in the region
  - Stagnation in Brazil and the United States despite progress in diversity

**Europe**
- 31.0%
  - Stagnation (-0.1 percentage points in 1 year)
  - Slovenia and Malta largest gains - quota laws
  - Slovenia and Denmark elected more than 40% women

**Sub-Saharan Africa**
- 26.5%
  - Overall same average as last year
  - Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Lesotho biggest gains
  - Strongest outcome - Senegal (44.2% of seats held by women) - parity law

**Pacific**
- 22.6%
  - At least 1 woman member in every parliament
  - Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Lesotho biggest gains
  - Strongest outcome - Senegal (44.2% of seats held by women) - parity law
  - Women in 6.5% of seats in the region aside from New Zealand and Australia
  - Overall progress due to New Zealand and Australia

**Asia**
- 21.0%
  - Stagnant
  - Progress in South-East Asia (+1.2 percentage points, 21.8% on average)
  - Women in 6.5% of seats in the region aside from New Zealand and Australia
  - Overall progress due to New Zealand and Australia
  -立法ized quotas only in Nepal

**MENA**
- 16.3%
  - Setback overall (-0.6 percentage points)
  - UAE only MENA country with parity
  - Bahrain elected record high number of women in parliament (8)
  - Algeria - one of the lowest percentages in the world (4.3% in the upper house)
Women in top parliamentary leadership in 2023

22.7% of Speakers of Parliament
+0.7 percentage points from last year

Argentina, the Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America – women Speakers in both chambers

Chairs of gender equality committees (65.9%)
Chairs of defence committees (12.5%)

In 2022, first women Speakers in Angola, France, Monaco, Montenegro, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Slovenia
2023

Women in the executive
Women Heads of State and Government

11.3% Heads of State
9.8% Heads of Government

Increases over the last ten years from 5.3% and 7.3%, respectively

Europe continues to have the highest number of women-led countries (16)
Women Cabinet Ministers

22.8% of Cabinet Ministers are women

13 countries, mostly European, have 50% or more women Cabinet Ministers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% Women in Cabinet</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>62.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Andorra, Colombia, Germany, Netherlands, Norway</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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</table>
Portfolios held by Women Cabinet Ministers

Lead policy areas: gender equality, human rights and social affairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>% women</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women and gender equality</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and children’s affairs</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social inclusion and development</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and social security</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous and minority affairs</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vs only 12% of Defence Ministers and 8% of Transport Ministers
2023
Lessons learned
Quotas critical for representation

In elections in 47 countries, women were elected to 25.8% of parliamentary seats (2022)

Countries with quotas elected 30.9% women; those without quotas elected only 21.2%

Quotas ensure a level of women’s representation but do not always act as a shield:

☒ Somalia saw a severe setback to representation (-4.7 percentage points) despite a quota law

Quotas must be clear, well drafted and supported by strong enforcement mechanisms
Violence Against Women MPs

A key obstacle to equality in politics

8 out of 10 women MPs in Africa experienced psychological violence in parliament (2021 IPU + African Parliamentary Union study) – similar to 2016 (global) and 2018 (Europe) studies

Senegal: Six-month jail terms for 2 MPs who attacked a pregnant MP in the National Assembly

United States of America: Speaker Pelosi’s husband attacked in their home

France: 40 parliamentary cases of inappropriate behaviour (sexual harassment and bullying) registered January 2021 to September 2022

Parliaments have work to do to become safe spaces for women.
Gender parity in politics by 2030
COVID-19 pandemic and climate change crises reveal goal of gender parity in politics is crucial

Why gender parity:
- Improve gender equality
- Open politics to diverse women
- Create an enabling space
- Reflect society
- Efficient, effective, legitimate institutions

How to achieve gender parity?
- National Plans of Action
- Gender quotas in law
- End discriminatory laws
- Electoral spending caps
- Legislate against gender-based violence
- Target parity in public life
- Mandate and finance gender mainstreaming
Thank you!