



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Women in parliament: 1995-2025

30 years
in review



The 2024 election to the United Kingdom House of Commons resulted in a record 40% of seats being held by women, including 50 women MPs from Black and minority backgrounds, up from 39 in the previous Parliament. © House of Commons UK

Overview

The year 2025 marks a momentous milestone for gender equality, commemorating 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This landmark framework set out a roadmap for the world for achieving gender equality, and affirmed that women's rights are indeed human rights. Among its many goals and objectives, the Declaration envisaged a world where women had equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.¹ This year also commemorates 25 years since the adoption of resolution no. 1325 by the United Nations Security Council, which affirms the critical role of women in peace building, security and conflict resolution.² Additionally, 2025 is significant as it comes on the heels of the passage of general recommendation 40 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),³ which underscores the right of women to equal and inclusive representation in all decision-making systems on equal terms with men, and outlines a roadmap for achieving parity.

¹ United Nations, *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*.

² Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), *Resolution no. 1325*.

³ United Nations, *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*.

HIGHLIGHTS

Global trends in the last 30 years

- Over the past three decades, substantial gains have been witnessed in the representation of women in national parliaments, climbing from 11.3% in 1995 to 27.2% in 2025. A similar upward trend is seen in lower or single chambers of parliament, where the percentage of seats held by women increased from 11.6% to 27.2%. Upper houses saw an even greater improvement, with the share of women jumping from 9.4% to 27.4% in this period.
- In 1995, no parliament had attained gender parity; however, by 2025, six parliaments had parity or a greater share of women in their single or lower chambers. Rwanda led the world, with women comprising 63.8% of MPs in the lower chamber in 2025.
- Women held at least 30% of parliamentary seats in lower or single chambers in 71 countries at the beginning of 2025, up from only 5 countries in 1995.
- In 1995, women held less than 10% of seats in lower or single chambers of parliament in 105 countries. As of early 2025, this number is at just 20 countries, reflecting substantial progress. This figure includes three countries with no women MPs in their lower or single chamber.
- Rwanda recorded the largest improvement in women's representation in a lower chamber in this 30-year period (up 59.5 percentage points), followed by the United Arab Emirates and Andorra (up 50 and 46.4 percentage points, respectively). In another 19 countries, women's representation improved by 30 percentage points or more.
- Conversely, in six countries, women's representation declined in this period, with Tuvalu recording the biggest setback (down 7.7 percentage points), followed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Botswana (down 2.5 and 1.3 percentage points, respectively).

HIGHLIGHTS

- Across regions, the Americas saw the greatest increase in women's participation in parliament, with an increase of 22.7 percentage points, all chambers combined. Asia recorded the slowest growth rate, with a gain of just 8.9 percentage points over the past 30 years.
- The share of women Speakers has more than doubled, rising from 10.5% to 23.7%. Regionally, the Americas has the highest share of women Speakers (33.3% as of 1 January 2025), while in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, there are no women Speakers.

Elections in 2024

- Progress on women's parliamentary representation stalled in 2024. The share of women in parliaments was 27.2% as of 1 January 2025, only 0.3 percentage points higher than it was a year ago.
- In 2024, often called the "super year" of elections, 26.5% of MPs elected or appointed across the 73 chambers that saw parliamentary renewals in the year were women. This was 1.4 percentage points higher than the share of women elected or appointed in the previous renewals of these chambers.
- Following parliamentary elections in 2024, the greatest strides in women's participation were made in Palau (lower chamber), followed by the upper chambers of Rwanda and Thailand.

Lastly, 2025 follows the year touted as the global "super year" of elections, during which 59 countries held parliamentary polls for 73 chambers.⁴ Yet despite the momentous occasion, the year saw bare minimum progress. Women's parliamentary representation, which stood at 26.9% as of 1 January 2024, only increased to 27.2% by December 2024, the slowest rate of progress since 2017.

Across the 73 chambers where parliamentary polls were held in 2024, 26.5% of elected MPs were women. This is 1.4 percentage points higher than the share of women elected/appointed as MPs (25.1%) in these chambers in their respective previous polls. While a slightly higher share of women was elected or appointed to lower or single chambers in comparison to upper chambers, the latter recorded higher progress. The average share of women elected or appointed to lower or single chambers was 26.7%, an increase of 1.2 percentage points from their previous renewals. In comparison, in upper chambers women's representation increased from 22.5% previously to 25.1% in 2024.

In all, 33 out of 72 chambers⁵ that held renewals saw women's representation increase. In another 20 chambers, women's representation either remained the same or changed by less than +/-1 percentage point. In the remaining 19 chambers, women's representation declined.

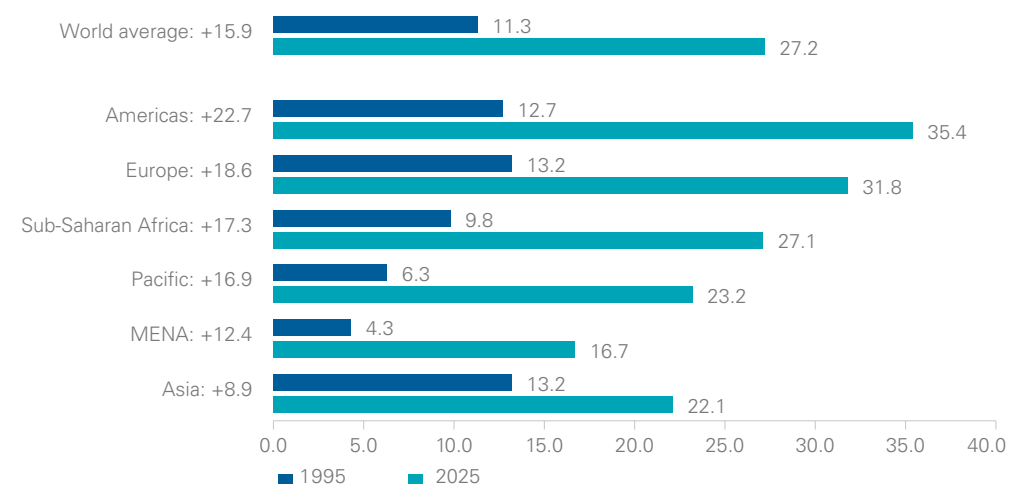
Palau recorded the best improvement in the share of women MPs, rising from 6.3% to 25%, an increase of 18.7 percentage points. While significant, this jump was partly due to the small number of MPs in the Pacific Island nation's parliament, which has only 16 members. Rwanda and Thailand's upper chambers recorded the next highest progress, with increases of 15.4 and 12.5 percentage points respectively.

Global progress since 1995

Between 1995 and 2025, the global representation of women in parliament increased from 11.3% to 27.2%, an improvement of 15.9 percentage points. While progress accelerated between 2000 and 2015, it has slowed in recent years. However, this trend has not been uniform. The Americas region has made the most striking progress over this period, followed by Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. In contrast, the Pacific, MENA and Asia regions have recorded slower progress, with some five-year intervals in which women's representation either remained stagnant or suffered a setback.

Figure 1

World and regional averages of women in parliaments, 1995 and 2025



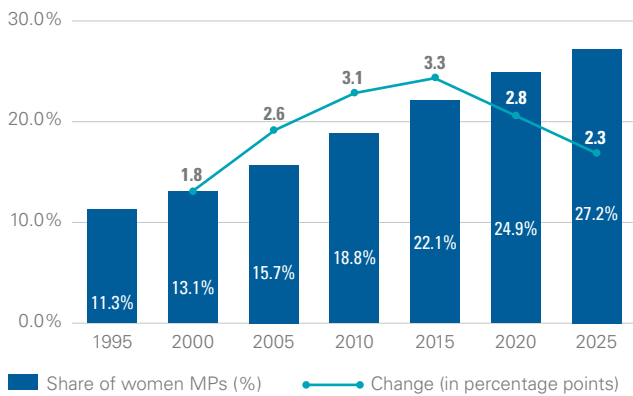
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) data for all houses combined, figures correct as of 1 July 1995 and 1 January 2025 respectively. The baseline year of 1995 corresponds to the time of adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

⁴ IPU, [2024: A super election year?](#)

⁵ Total does not include Tunisia's upper house, which was established in 2024.

Figure 2

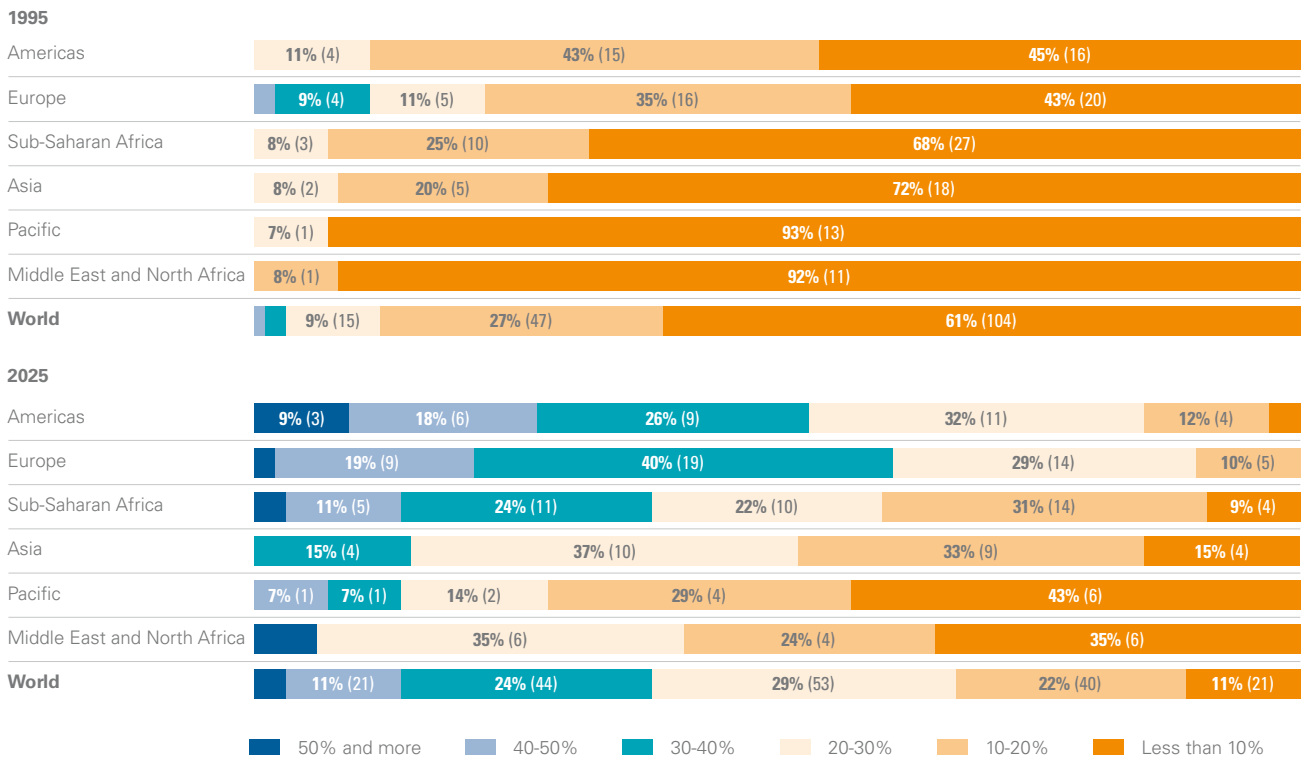
Women in national parliaments, world average 1995–2025



Over a 30-year span, the greatest progress in women’s representation has been achieved by **Rwanda**, the **United Arab Emirates** and **Andorra**, with 59.5, 50 and 46.4 percentage points gained respectively. Rwanda has more women than men in its parliament, while the United Arab Emirates and Andorra have gender parity in 2025.

Figure 3

Number and share (in %) of countries in the region by percentage of women MPs



Note: The numbers in brackets show the absolute number of countries, and the percentages show the share of countries among total countries in the region for which the data is available. The total number of countries for 1995 is 172, and for 2025 is 185.

The past three decades have seen several countries and parliaments take steps to improve women’s participation and representation in parliament by introducing electoral quotas and other policies. In 1995, not a single parliament in the world had parity. Only in one country, Sweden, did women account for 40% or more of the seats in parliament (40.4%). By 2025, six countries around the world had parity or more women in the single or lower chambers of their parliaments. In another 21 countries, the share of women

stands at 40% or more (but below 50%). Forty-four countries now have between 30% and 40% of women MPs in their single or lower chambers, up from only four in 1995. Most encouragingly, while women’s representation was lower than 10% in an overwhelming number of parliaments (105) in 1995, by 2025, this number has reduced to 20. However, even in 2025, three parliaments – Oman, Tuvalu and Yemen – have no women in their single or lower chamber.

Table 1

Top 10 countries for women's representation in single and lower houses of parliament, 1995–2025

| 1995 | | 2025 | |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Country | Share of women (%) | Country | Share of women (%) |
| Sweden | 40.4 | Rwanda | 63.8 |
| Norway | 39.4 | Cuba | 55.7 |
| Finland | 33.5 | Nicaragua | 55.0 |
| Denmark | 33.5 | Mexico | 50.2 |
| Netherlands | 32.7 | Andorra | 50.0 |
| Seychelles | 27.3 | United Arab Emirates | 50.0 |
| Austria | 26.8 | Costa Rica | 49.1 |
| Germany | 26.3 | Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | 46.2 |
| Iceland | 25.4 | Iceland | 46.0 |
| Argentina | 25.3 | Monaco | 45.8 |

Only one of the top 10 countries in 1995 is among the top 10 in 2025 (Iceland). Also, while the list was dominated by Europe at the time, this is no longer the case.

Representation of younger women in parliaments

In addition to women, youth also remain underrepresented in parliaments around the world. Only 2.9% of the world's parliamentarians are aged 30 and under as of early 2025, according to IPU data. The share of MPs aged 40 and under stands at 19.3%, and the share of those aged 45 and under is 32.7%. As a result, younger women remain largely on the margins of parliamentary participation. Encouragingly, although gender disparities persist across the age spectrum, the gap tends to be narrower among younger cohorts of MPs. For instance, the ratio of male to female MPs was about 60:40 in the 21–30 years age group in 2023.⁶ Enabling more young women to participate in politics and amplifying their voices in parliaments can play a critical role not only in making parliaments more representative, but also more dynamic and responsive to the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

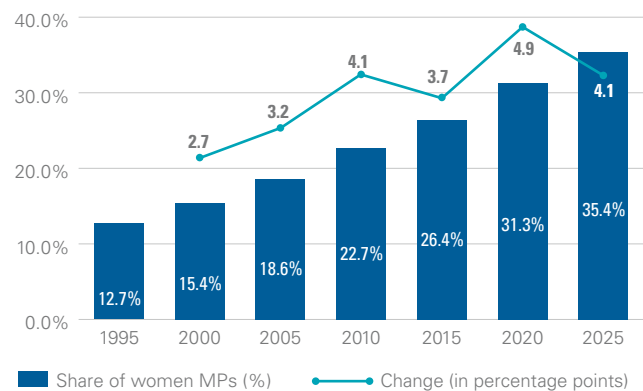
Regional progress

The Americas: Leading from the front**Progress since 1995**

The Americas region has led the world in terms of progress on women's parliamentary representation in the period 1995–2025. In 1995, women accounted for 12.7% of the region's MPs, the third highest representation of women at the time, behind Europe and Asia. By 2025, this figure had risen by 22.7 percentage points, and women now comprise more than one third of MPs (35.4%), the highest of any region.

6 IPU, *Youth in Parliament Infographic 2023*.

Figure 4

Women in national parliaments, the Americas, 1995–2025

As of 2025, three countries in the region – Cuba, Nicaragua and Mexico – have parity or more women than men in their parliaments, and Costa Rica also has near parity, with women holding 49.1% of seats. In comparison, no country in the region had achieved parity in 1995. At the time, women comprised less than one third of parliamentarians in every country. Argentina had the highest share of women MPs, at 25.3%, followed by Cuba at 22.8% and Guyana and Grenada, at 20% each.

Several nations recorded impressive progress in the region in this three-decade period, with Nicaragua, Ecuador and Mexico making the highest progress, with gains of 38.7, 38.6 and 36 percentage points respectively.

Antigua and Barbuda remains an outlier in the region. With only 5.6% women MPs in its lower chamber in 2025, it recorded the lowest representation of women in single or lower chambers in the region, and also the lowest progress (up only 0.3 percentage points) since 1995. In contrast, the representation of women remains much higher in its upper chamber (41.2%). While both Saint Lucia and Belize made some progress since 1995, they had the next lowest shares of women MPs in 2025, at 11.1% and 15.6% respectively.

With a 38.7 percentage point improvement between 1995 and 2025, **Nicaragua** recorded the most impressive progress in the Americas. While the share of women was 16.3% in 1995, by 2025 Nicaragua had more women than men in its parliament. Parties have been required to ensure equal representation of women among candidates by law in Nicaragua since 2012,⁷ and they are also required to ensure that women and men are placed in alternate positions on their candidate lists. The share of women among MPs has exceeded 40% since the 2011 polls; in 2021, the parliament reached parity, and currently women comprise 55% of all MPs.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, six countries in the region held parliamentary elections for 10 chambers. Across them all, women won 37.1% of seats, up from 35.1% in the previous polls in these chambers combined. Women's representation either remained the same or improved across all chambers that went to polls in the region, with Mexico electing 50% women to both chambers of parliament.

The year saw some notable milestones, including Mexico's first-ever female President, Claudia Sheinbaum, who also appointed a gender-equal cabinet of ministers. In the United States of America, the diversity of women elected to Congress expanded: for the first time, two Black women⁸ were elected to the Senate. Sarah McBride became the first openly transgender person to be elected to Congress,⁹ and several others became the first LGBTQIA+ members from their states to get elected as members of Congress.¹⁰

Encouraging progress in Uruguay and Dominican Republic

Uruguay recorded an impressive improvement, with women's representation jumping 9.1 percentage points in the lower chamber. There has been steady progress in the country in recent years, since the introduction of a gender quota law which mandates that candidate lists for national and departmental elections include at least one-third representation of each gender. This legislation was first applied in the 2014 elections, and 16 women were elected to the House of Representatives (comprising 16.2% of all MPs), and nine to the Senate (29%), effectively doubling the proportion of female senators compared to the 2009 elections (14% of women).¹¹



Diversity in women elected to the United States Congress expanded in 2025. Pictured here Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester, one of two Black women to be elected to the Senate. © AFP/Mandel Ngan

7 International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IPU and Stockholm University, [Gender Quotas Database](#).

8 GLAAD, "[Historic LGBTQ Firsts in 119th Congress](#)," 1 January 2025.

9 NPR, "[Sarah McBride becomes the first openly transgender person elected to Congress](#)," 5 November 2024.

10 GLAAD, "[Historic LGBTQ Firsts in 119th Congress](#)," 1 January 2025.

11 UN Women Fund for Gender Equality, "['Ready for the lists,' say Uruguayan women](#)."



In addition to having one of the few gender parity parliaments, in 2024 Mexico elected its first female President, Claudia Sheinbaum.
© Eyepix/NurPhoto/NurPhoto via AFP

In 2024, the country's parliament also approved an amendment to its law on party financing and included a financial incentive for parties for putting forth women candidates. Elections are publicly subsidized in Uruguay and the amendment provides for a 20% increase in subsidies for every party list headed by a woman, and another 10% for each woman that is eventually elected.¹² In the 2019 elections, women won 19.2% of seats in the House of Representatives. By 2024, their representation had increased to 28.3%, with 28 women elected. However, advocacy groups and experts emphasize that while the gender quota law has been effective, more needs to be done and a parity law will be the way forward.¹³

The **Dominican Republic** saw one of the most significant improvements in women's parliamentary representation in 2024. In the 2020 elections, 53 women had been elected to the 190-member Chamber of Deputies, whereas in 2024, this number rose to 70, leading to an 8.9 percentage point improvement in the share of women MPs (from 27.9% to 36.8%). Since 2019, the Dominican Republic's electoral law has required that party lists include at least 40% of candidates from each gender. A 2023 revision of the law further mandated that men and women be placed in alternating positions on party lists. In the 2024 elections, electoral authorities ensured that these rules were followed by parties when they were fielding candidates, as noted in the preliminary report of the OAS Electoral Mission.¹⁴ The report also identified measures that the country could take to further improve women's participation.

Mexico continues to lead the way

Over the years, Mexico has introduced and implemented a variety of reforms to enable equal participation and representation of women in the country's politics. In 1995, at the time of the Beijing Declaration, women comprised 14.2% of the members of the lower chamber of Mexico's Congress. In 2003, the country introduced a 30% electoral quota for women candidates. At the start of that year, the share of women in the lower chamber was 16%, and jumped to 22.6% following elections in the next year. The electoral quota limit was later increased to 40% in 2009, and in 2014, the country transitioned to a system of gender parity across political levels. The quota law has been supplemented and complemented by several policies and laws to support women's equal representation. In 2021, the country achieved parity in the lower chamber of parliament, and by 2023, it had achieved the same in both chambers. In the 2024 elections, once again, an equal number of men and women were elected to Mexico's parliament.

12 La Diaria, "[Nueva ley de financiamiento de partidos: Un tímido paso hacia Adelante](#)," 8 June 2024.

13 SWI - swissinfo.ch, "[Lejos de la paridad, Uruguay solo alcanza un 29% de mujeres en su Parlamento](#)," 19 November 2024.

14 Organization of American States (OAS), [Preliminary Report](#), 21 May 2024.

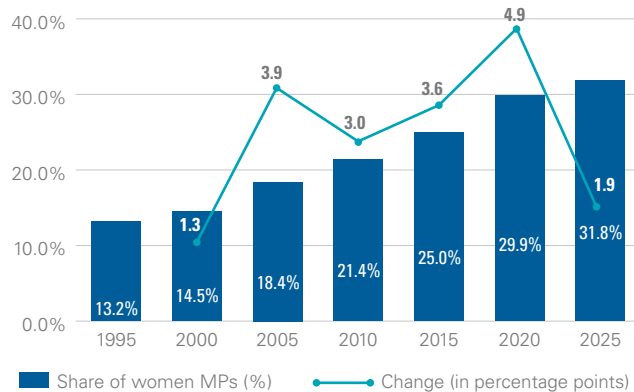
Europe: Noteworthy gains but reasons for caution

Progress since 1995

In 1995, the average share of women in parliaments across Europe was 13.2%. Along with Asia, which had a similar share, this was the highest representation of women across all regions at the time. As of 2025, this share has risen to 31.8%, a jump of 18.6 percentage points, the second-highest progress after the Americas. Europe now has the second highest share of women MPs among all regions.

Figure 5

Women in national parliaments, Europe, 1995–2025



Women comprised 40.4% of MPs in Sweden in 1995, the highest representation of women in the region and across the world at the time. In three other countries in the region – Denmark, Finland and Norway, all Nordic nations – women accounted for one third or more of MPs. As of 2025, Europe is home to one country with parity in its parliament (Andorra), and

nine others where women hold 40% or more of seats. There is no country where the share of women MPs is less than 10%.

Andorra has made the most significant progress in the region in the three decades since 1995. While women accounted for just 3.6% of MPs in 1995, by 2025 this share had increased by a staggering 46.4%. This is also the third-highest improvement recorded by any country in the world in this period. Monaco, too, recorded great improvements – from 5.6% women MPs in 1995, to 45.8% in 2025. Conversely, some of the lowest progress was recorded in the Russian Federation, Hungary and Sweden (up just 3, 3.2 and 4.6 percentage points respectively). While Sweden already had a high proportion of women MPs in 1995 (39.4%) – in fact the highest in the world at the time – representation in Hungary and the Russian Federation remained low (15.2% in Hungary and 16.4% in the Russian Federation).

As of 1 January 2025, **Andorra** is one of the few countries with parity in parliament, a remarkable shift from just 3.6% women MPs three decades ago. The 46.4 percentage point improvement has been the most striking across all of Europe. In 2022, the country adopted a gender quota mandating that members of either sex comprise at least 40% of all candidates.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, 17 countries in Europe held elections for 20 parliamentary chambers. Women's average representation in these chambers recorded an improvement of 1.3 percentage points, from 30.6% in the previous elections to 31.9% in 2024.



Andorra is one of the few countries in the world, and the only one in Europe, with gender parity in parliament, a remarkable shift from just 3.6% women MPs three decades ago. © AFP/Raymond Roig



For over two decades, Rwanda has led the world in women's representation in parliament. Pictured here, Prisca Uwamahoro (left) and Alice Muzana (right) of the Chamber of Deputies. © Parliament of Rwanda

Women's representation recorded a decline in 8 of the 20 chambers, with the lower or single chambers of Belarus, Portugal, Bulgaria and Austria recording the largest setbacks (down 6.4, 4.3, 3.3 and 3.3 percentage points respectively). In Belgium's lower chamber, there was no change in women's representation compared to the previous election, and in the other 11 chambers the share of women saw some improvement.

In Iceland, Halla Tómasdóttir won the 2024 presidential election, becoming the Nordic nation's second woman President. Later in the year, Kristrún Frostadóttir was appointed Prime Minister, making both the President and Prime Minister of Iceland women. She is also the youngest Prime Minister in the country's history. In the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu won the presidential election a second consecutive time, and in North Macedonia, Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova was elected as the country's first woman President. Additionally, in Malta, Myriam Spiteri Debono was appointed President. Another highlight from the region included the new government in the United Kingdom, which appointed a gender-equal cabinet.¹⁵

Historic highs in Croatia and the United Kingdom

Fifty women were elected to **Croatia's** parliament in 2024, comprising one third of all MPs. This was a 9.9 percentage point improvement compared to the 2020 election, when the share of women elected was 23.2%. It was also the second consecutive election when women's representation recorded a significant rise.

In 1995, women comprised only 7.9% of MPs in Croatia. Electoral quotas for women have been in place since 2008, requiring parties to ensure that 40% of candidates on their electoral lists are women. Parties that fail to meet

this requirement face financial penalties, while financial incentives are given for every elected MP of the under-represented gender. In 2024, women comprised 42.1% of all candidates, similar to their share in 2020, but encouragingly, women's representation still improved. However, 32 of the 165 candidate lists did not meet the quota requirements, with some parties submitting multiple non-compliant lists. Women were also frequently placed in non-winnable positions in the lists, according to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) election assessment report.¹⁶

A record 263 women were elected to the **United Kingdom's** House of Commons in the July 2024 election that saw the Labour Party come back to power after nearly two decades. Women make up 40.5% of the new House, a significant jump from their share in the previous polls (33.8%). This notable improvement occurred despite an overall shrinking of the share of women candidates. Women accounted for 30.7% of candidates in 2024, down from 33.8% in 2019. However, there were significant differences between parties:¹⁷ while the incumbent Conservative Party fielded 34% women candidates, the Labour Party – which won by a sizable majority – had 47% women candidates. The election also resulted in greater diversity among women MPs, with 50 women (representing 7.7% of the House) from Black and minority communities, up from 39 in the previous parliament.¹⁸ The new parliament is also the most ethnically diverse in the country's history, with Black, Asian and ethnic minority lawmakers – both men and women – comprising around 13% of the House of Commons, up from 10% in the previous election.¹⁹

15 UN Women, "Only five women elected in direct presidential elections in 2024," 19 December 2024.

16 Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Republic of Croatia Election Assessment Mission Final Report*, 17 April 2024.

17 Electoral Reform Society, "Candidate selections reflect the barriers for women in politics," 20 June 2024.

18 As per *The Fawcett Society*, a charity advocating for gender equality in public life.

19 Reuters, "UK elects most diverse parliament in history," 5 July 2024.

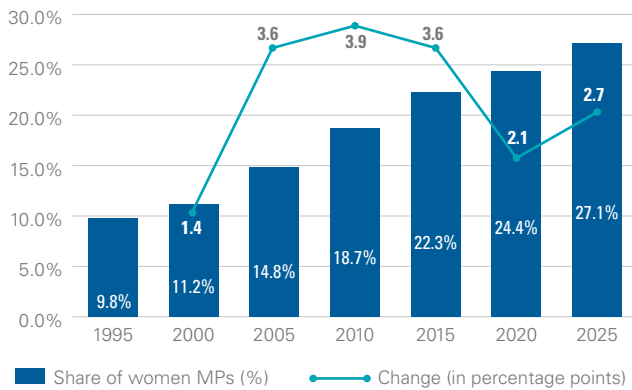
Sub-Saharan Africa

Progress since 1995

In 1995, the share of women MPs in the Sub-Saharan African region stood at only 9.8%. By 2025, this had increased to 27.1%, an increase of 17.3 percentage points, placing the region third in the world in women's representation in parliament.

Figure 6

Women in national parliaments, Sub-Saharan Africa, 1995–2025



In 1995, the highest share of women MPs in the region was in Seychelles (27.3%) followed by Mozambique and South Africa's lower chamber (25.2% and 25% respectively). By 2025, Rwanda led both the region and the world in women's representation in parliament, with 63.8% women MPs in its Chamber of Deputies. Rwanda also saw the most striking improvement in the 1995-2025 period, with the number of seats held by women increasing by 59.5 percentage points, the highest in the region and in the world.



After Rwanda, Ethiopia recorded the second-largest increase in women's representation in the region between 1995 and 2025, with a 39.9 percentage point rise. From just 2% in 1995, women now make up 41.9% of MPs in the country. In addition to Ethiopia, four other countries in the region, South Africa, Cabo Verde, Senegal and Namibia, have between 40% and 50% women MPs in single or lower chambers in 2025.

Conversely, women's representation declined between 1995 and 2025 in two countries in the region: Botswana (-1.3 percentage points) and Guinea-Bissau (-0.2). Four countries (Nigeria, Gambia, Botswana and Guinea-Bissau) still have fewer than 10% women MPs in 2025.

Rwanda saw a dramatic rise in women's representation in its lower chamber, soaring from 4.3% in 1995 to 63.8% in 2025 – an increase of 59.5 percentage points over three decades. This marks the largest improvement not only in Sub-Saharan Africa, but worldwide. This progress is the result of institutionalizing reserved seats and a gender quota mandating that women comprise at least 30% of candidates. However, women's actual representation has exceeded this threshold, and Rwanda has led the world in the share of women MPs in lower or single chambers for over two decades. As of 2025, its upper chamber has also reached gender parity.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, elections were held in 12 countries across 14 chambers in the region. On average, women made up 32.2% of elected or appointed MPs, a small decline from 32.9% in the previous renewals of these chambers. In six chambers, women's representation saw an improvement, with Rwanda's upper chamber recording the most striking progress (up 15.4 percentage points), followed by South Africa's upper chamber (up 5.6 percentage points). Conversely, the share of women MPs declined in five chambers, with the upper chamber of the Democratic Republic of the Congo recording the largest decline (down 5.3 percentage points), followed by the single/lower chambers of Senegal and Namibia (down 3 and 2.6 percentage points respectively).

The region saw a few historic firsts in women's leadership. In Namibia, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah became the first woman to occupy the position of President. She was the incumbent Vice President before winning the election to the top office. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang was elected as Ghana's Vice President, a first for a woman in the country's history. And in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Judith Suminwa was appointed Prime Minister, becoming the first woman to occupy the position.

In 2024, Namibians elected Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah as the first woman President in the country's history. © AFP/Simon Maina

Rwanda raises the bar even higher

Rwanda has led the world in women’s representation in parliament for over two decades. In 2003, the country adopted a new constitution that included a provision mandating a minimum of 30% of seats for women in all decision-making bodies.²⁰ In that year’s parliamentary elections – the first to be held after the 1994 Rwandan genocide – women’s representation nearly reached parity at 48.8%, surpassing Sweden to become the country with the highest share of women in lower or single chambers of parliament. Building on this progress, a law on political organizations and politicians was amended in 2007 to require party lists for all elective offices to have at least 30% women candidates. In the next round of elections in 2008, more women than men were elected to the lower chamber, with women comprising 56.3% of all MPs. In 2024, Rwanda further improved its record, with women’s representation rising by 2.5 percentage points: 61.3% of MPs elected in 2018 were women, and this share increased to 63.8% in 2024.

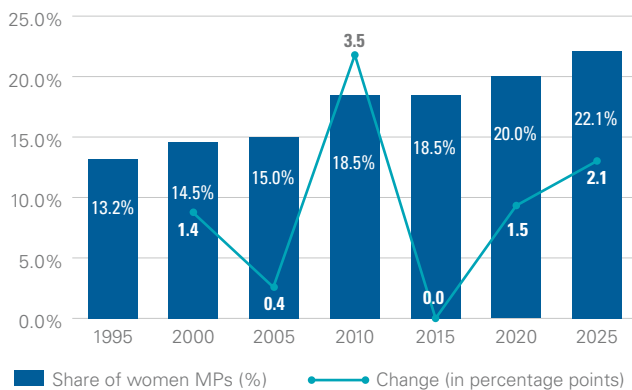
Asia: From leading the world to lagging behind

Progress since 1995

In 1995, women held an average of 13.2% of parliamentary seats in Asia, the highest among all regions, alongside Europe. By 2025, this share had increased by only 8.9 percentage points, reaching 22.1%. Asia now has the second-lowest share of women MPs, ahead of only the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Figure 7

Women in national parliaments, Asia, 1995–2025



Asia stands apart from other regions, as no country in the region has achieved parity or even 40% women in its parliament in 2025. Uzbekistan leads the region with 38% women MPs in its lower chamber, followed by Timor-Leste (35.4%) and Nepal (33.5%). Aside from these three, no other national parliament in the region has a chamber where women comprise even a third of all MPs.

20 International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IPU and Stockholm University, [Gender Quotas Database](#).

Uzbekistan also recorded the greatest progress in the region in the period between 1995 and 2025, rising by 32 percentage points, followed by Singapore (up 25.6 points) and Tajikistan (up 24.2 points). In contrast, two countries, Maldives and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, saw declines of 3.1 and 2.5 percentage points respectively.

With 38% women MPs in its lower chamber, not only does **Uzbekistan** lead the Asian region in women’s parliamentary representation, but also in the progress made in the past three decades (+32 percentage points). In 2004, the country adopted a gender quota that mandates a minimum of 30% women among party candidates. The representation of women has improved steadily in the years since. The electoral quota requirements were increased to 40% in the 2024 polls, leading to further improvement.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, 15 countries in the region held elections for 18 chambers. On average, women accounted for 17.5% of elected or appointed MPs across the region. While low, this share was an improvement of two percentage points from the previous elections for these chambers.

In nine chambers, women’s representation recorded an improvement. Thailand’s upper chamber saw a 12.5 percentage point improvement in the share of women MPs in 2024 as compared to the previous election (22.5%, up from 10%). Additionally, Paetongtarn Shinawatra became the country’s youngest Prime Minister and second woman to occupy the position. Mongolia recorded noteworthy progress (up 8.1 percentage points), followed by the lower chambers of Japan and Uzbekistan (up 6 percentage points each). In contrast, in Bhutan, women’s representation suffered a severe setback, falling 10.6 percentage points.

Japan and Mongolia march forward

A record 32 women were elected to Mongolia’s parliament in the June 2024 election. Together, they comprise a quarter (25.4%) of all MPs, an 8.1 percentage point improvement from 2020. The 2024 elections were the first to be held after the 2023 constitutional amendment,²¹ which expanded parliamentary seats from 76 to 126 and introduced a mixed electoral system.²² Further, the new law raised the candidate quota for women from 20% to 30%, required party lists to follow a gender-parity zipper system, and introduced financial incentives to encourage political parties to support more women candidates. As a result, the share of women candidates rose from 24.9% in the last election to 38.8% in 2024. Mongolia plans to further increase the candidate quota for women to 40% by 2028.

21 International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, [“In Mongolia, electoral reform ushers in a record number of women to parliament,”](#) 11 June 2024.

22 UNDP, [“Challenges, progresses and milestones of Mongolian women parliamentarians discussed,”](#) 4 November 2024.



In 2024, the Mongolian Parliament recorded an increase of 8.1 points in the percentage of seats held by women, thanks to an enhanced quota law. © IPU/Parliament of Mongolia

A record 73 women were elected to Japan's lower chamber in 2024. Together, they make up 15.7% of all MPs, a significant improvement from the previous legislature where this share was only 9.7%. Women also ran in higher numbers, accounting for 23.4% of all candidates in the fray, another record high. Japan's Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality aims for women to comprise at least 35% of candidates in elections by 2025.²³ While two political parties, the Japanese Communist Party and Sanseito, exceeded this target in 2024 (with women comprising 37.3% and 37.9% candidates respectively), women comprised only 16.1% of candidates from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. The main opposition, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, had 22.4% women candidates.²⁴

In Bhutan, women's parliamentary representation falls to an all-time low

Only two women were elected to Bhutan's National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament, comprising just 4.3% of all MPs, which is an all-time low.²⁵ This marked a sharp decline from 14.9% in the outgoing legislature. This setback came on the heels of the 2023 upper house election, in which only one woman was elected alongside

19 men.²⁶ While a higher number of women (26) ran in the primary round for the 2024 elections than in previous years, only six women advanced to the general round, through which MPs are elected.^{27,28} This was even lower than in 2018, when 10 women reached the general round, and 7 won seats.²⁹

The IPU Gender Partnership Group held a dialogue session with the delegation from **Bhutan** during the 149th IPU Assembly in October 2024 in Geneva to discuss ways to improve women's political participation. Bhutan's parliament requested the IPU to fund a study on women's leadership in politics, which is ongoing. The IPU will continue its cooperation with Bhutan's parliament to build capacity, raise awareness, and support gender equality initiatives through research, training and advocacy. Potential measures to advance women's representation in Bhutan include introducing quota legislation, strengthening political party frameworks for nominating women, and enhancing support systems for female candidates during elections. Conducting public awareness campaigns on women's leadership potential would further support gender equality efforts.

23 Government of Japan, *The Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality*, March 2021.

24 The Asahi Shimbun, "Record number of women run in election; ratios low in coalition," 16 October 2024.

25 Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS), "Only two women elected to National Assembly, lowest since 2008," 10 January 2024.

26 Himal Southasian, "The path to women's political participation in Bhutan," 8 May 2023.

27 The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, "Bhutan chooses an experienced hand at a critical time: Analysis of Bhutan's election dynamics," 5 February 2024.

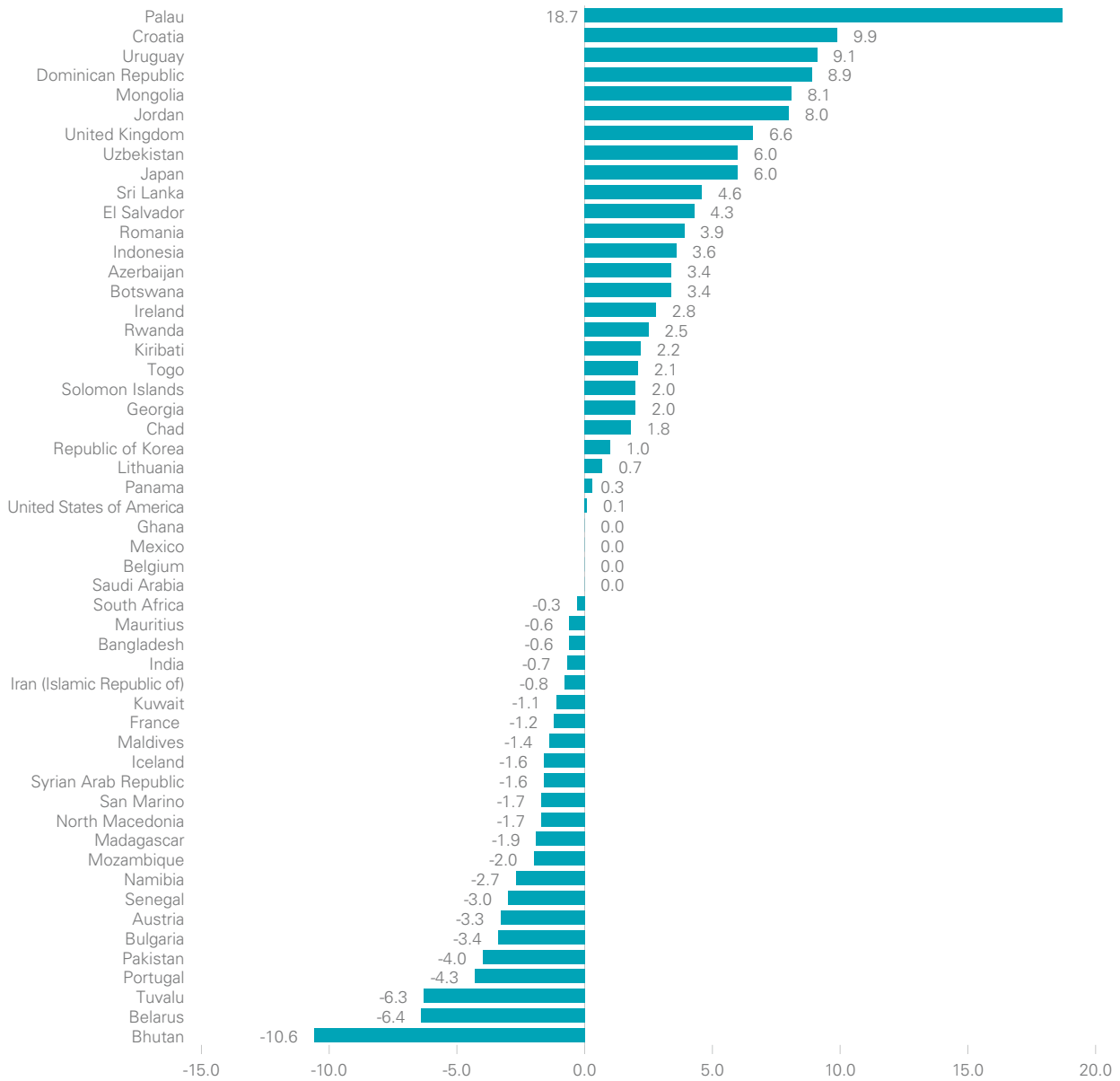
28 Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS), "Only two women elected to National Assembly, lowest since 2008," 10 January 2024.

29 Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS), "Gender norms, lack of faith in women's leadership deter women from joining politics," 5 January 2024.

Figure 8

Parliamentary renewals in 2024

Progress and setbacks (in percentage points) of women in lower or single houses of parliament renewed in 2022



In 2024, a record 73 women were elected to Japan's lower chamber. However, with 15.7% women MPs, the country remains well below the region's average of 21.1%. © AFP/ Richard A. Brooks

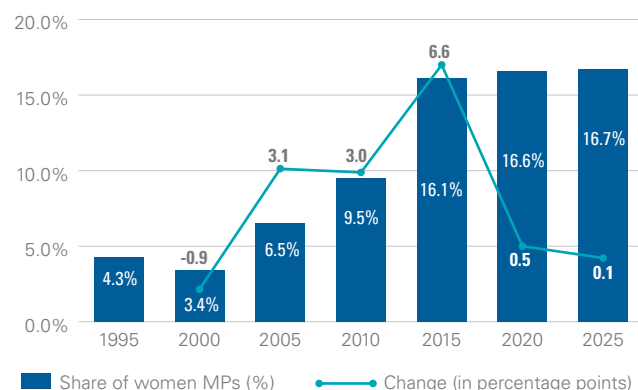
Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Progress since 1995

In 2025, women comprise 16.7% of MPs in the MENA region. Thirty years earlier, in 1995, this figure stood at just 4.3%, the lowest among all regions at the time. While the region has made progress, it continues to lag behind all others in women's representation in parliament.

Figure 9

Women in national parliaments, MENA, 1995–2025



Some countries in the region have recorded impressive progress in this period. The United Arab Emirates has seen an improvement of 50 percentage points: from no women MPs in 1995 to achieving parity in late 2019, it continues to be among the leaders in this metric. Morocco and Mauritania also made notable gains of 23.7 and 23.3 percentage points respectively, and moved from having only 0.6 and 0% women MPs to women making up more than a fifth of parliamentarians.

However, in 2025, with the exception of the United Arab Emirates, no other country in the region is close to parity. Iraq, with 28.9% women MPs, has the second-best representation of women parliamentarians in the region, followed by Egypt with 27.7% women MPs.

In 1995, the **United Arab Emirates** had no women in parliament. By 2006, one woman had become an MP, and their numbers gradually increased in subsequent years. The 2019 Presidential Decree No. (1) established a mandatory quota of 50% for women, and there has been parity in parliament ever since. With a 50 percentage point improvement, the UAE leads the region in progress on women's representation in parliament. In 2015, it became the first Arab country to have a woman Speaker of its national parliament.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, five countries in the MENA region held elections for six parliamentary chambers. Women accounted for 13.9% of elected or appointed MPs, one percentage point higher

than in the previous renewals of these chambers. The most notable progress was made in Jordan's lower chamber, which recorded an 8 percentage point increase in women's representation. However, in all other chambers, women's representation either declined slightly, or as was the case of Saudi Arabia, remained unchanged.

In Jordan, new laws pave the way for more women in parliament

Jordan's lower chamber recorded an 8 percentage point improvement in the share of women MPs following the 2024 election. While the share of women MPs in the previous election was 11.5%, they now comprise nearly a fifth (19.6%) of all MPs. In the upper chamber, however, women's representation recorded a marginal decline, dropping from 15.4% to 14.5% in 2024.

These were the first elections held after the implementation of a constitutional amendment³⁰ explicitly recognizing the equality of men and women in Jordan, and new electoral laws that introduced a number of changes to the political system.³¹ One of the changes included was an increase in the number of seats reserved for women from 15 to 18. Another change mandated that every third candidate on electoral lists of parties should be a woman.³² As a result, twenty-seven women were elected, paving the way for the highest-ever share of women in Jordan's lower chamber.³³

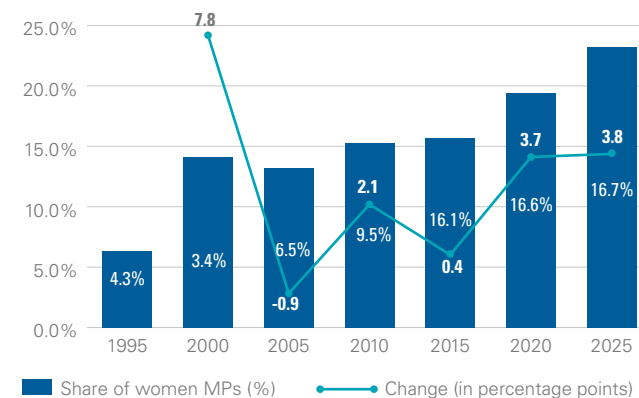
Pacific

Progress since 1995

In the Pacific region, women's representation in parliament has risen to 23.2% by 2025, an improvement of 16.9 percentage points. Three decades ago, the region had the second-lowest share of women MPs globally, but by 2025, it had moved up one position in the rankings.

Figure 10

Women in national parliaments, Pacific, 1995–2025



30 Deutsche Welle, "Jordan's ambitious push for gender equality," 2 March 2022.

31 Al Jazeera, "Jordan elections: How will electoral reforms impact the September 10 polls?," 10 September 2024.

32 The Jordan Times, "Experts predict higher representation of women in 20th Lower House of Parliament," 7 September 2024.

33 World Bank Group, Gender Data Portal, [Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments \(%\)](#).



The Australian Parliament has seen the biggest gain in women's representation in the Pacific region over the past 30 years. The country has also been leading the way on addressing gender-based violence against women in parliament. © Martin Ollman / GETTY IMAGES ASIAPAC / Getty Images via AFP

While the Pacific regional average has improved, it masks significant intra-regional variation. New Zealand and Australia stand in contrast to the Pacific Islands in terms of women's representation. Both countries recorded high progress in the past three decades: the share of women MPs increased from 8.8% to 39.1% in Australia, and in New Zealand it rose from 21.2% to 45.5%. In contrast, the average share of women in lower/single chambers of parliament for Pacific Islands remains below 10% (8.1% as of 1 January 2025).

Most Pacific Islands have small parliaments, so even small changes in absolute numbers can lead to big changes in terms of percentages. Yet only Palau recorded a 25 percentage point improvement (from 0 to 25% women MPs) in this 30-year period. In other Pacific Island nations, the improvement was less stark, and in two (Tuvalu and Vanuatu), a decline was recorded. As of 2025, women comprise less than one fifth of MPs in all Pacific Island national parliaments, excluding Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia. Among them, Tuvalu is one of three countries in the world with zero women in the lower or single chamber of parliament. In another five, women's representation remains below 10%.

Australia leads the Pacific region when it comes to progress on women's parliamentary representation in the past three decades. The share of women MPs in the lower chamber rose from 8.8% in 1995 to 39.1% in 2025, a jump of 30.3 percentage points. Progress in Australia has been driven by political parties' adoption of voluntary quotas, most notably by the Labour Party, one of the country's two major political parties.³⁴ It initially set a target of a 35% quota for women in winnable seats in 1994, and later revised it in 2012 to require that both men and women make up at least 40% of candidates. More recently, the country has engaged in critical conversations on gender-based violence against women in parliament, and has introduced notable initiatives to address the issue.

The 2024 elections

In 2024, four countries in the Pacific region held parliamentary polls across five chambers. Only 14 women were elected across the 142 seats, comprising 9.9% of all MPs. This was 3.4 percentage points higher than the share of women elected in the previous rounds of polls in these chambers. In Palau, there were four women among the 16 MPs elected in 2025. This 25% share was an 18.8 percentage point improvement on the 2020 elections, when only one woman was elected. In the Marshall Islands, Hilda Heini was elected President.

34 Parliament of Australia, "[Quotas for women in parliament](#)," 19 April 2021.

Women in top leadership of parliament

Of the 81 Speakers who were elected or appointed to various chambers in 2024, only 22 were women (27.2%). All of them were elected in different chambers across only three regions: the Americas (4), Europe (13) and Sub-Saharan Africa (5). No new women Speakers were elected or appointed in the Asia, MENA or Pacific regions. On average, new female Speakers were younger than the average Speaker (54 years old compared to 62.8 years old) and younger than their male counterparts who assumed office in 2024 (average age: 58 years old).

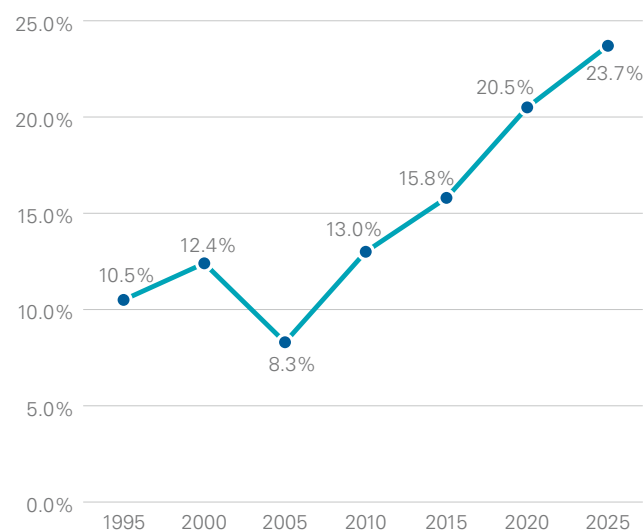


As of 1 January 2025, the Chairperson of Uzbekistan's Senate, Tanzila Narbaeva, was among the 12.8% of women Speakers in Asia, as compared to the global share of 23.7%. © AFP/Ahmad Gharabli

As of 1 January 2025, women comprised 23.7% of all Speakers across parliaments. This is a small decrease compared to their share a year ago (23.8%). However, there has been progress over a longer period: in 1995, women comprised only a tenth of all Speakers (10.5%).

Figure 11

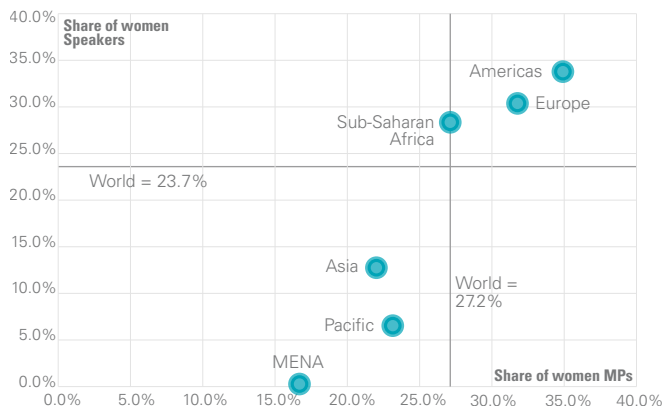
Women Speakers of Parliaments, all chambers combined, Progress of women speakers, 1995-2025



Regional trends for Speakers are similar to the patterns observed for women's overall representation in parliament. With women occupying 33.3% of Speaker positions, the Americas region had the highest share of female Speakers. It is followed by Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa with 30.4% and 28.4% of women Speakers respectively. In Asia, women comprised 12.8% of all Speakers, and in the Pacific region, this share was 6.3%. The MENA region had no women Speakers as of 1 January 2025.

Figure 12

Regions with a higher share of women MPs also have a greater share of women Speakers (data as of 1 January 2025)



Women were more likely to be Speakers of upper chambers than of lower or single chambers. As of 1 January 2025, 29.6% of Speakers in upper chambers were women, compared to 21.3% in lower chambers and 21.1% in single chambers.

Among the 82 countries with a bicameral parliament, only 5 had female Speakers leading both chambers. These include the Bahamas, Belize, Germany, South Africa and Uruguay. In contrast, 43 parliaments had male speakers in all chambers.

As of 1 January 2025, women held 265 out of 951 chair positions across the five types of parliamentary committees (foreign affairs, defence, finance, human rights and gender equality) included in the IPU's Parline database. This represents 27.9% of committee chairs, up from 27.2% in 2024. However, when excluding gender equality committees, the proportion of women drops to 19.6%, though this is still an improvement from last year's 18.9%.

Figure 13

Share of women chairs of standing parliamentary committees (%), 1 January 2025

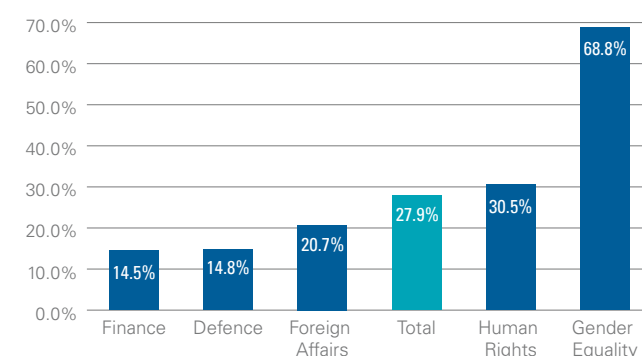
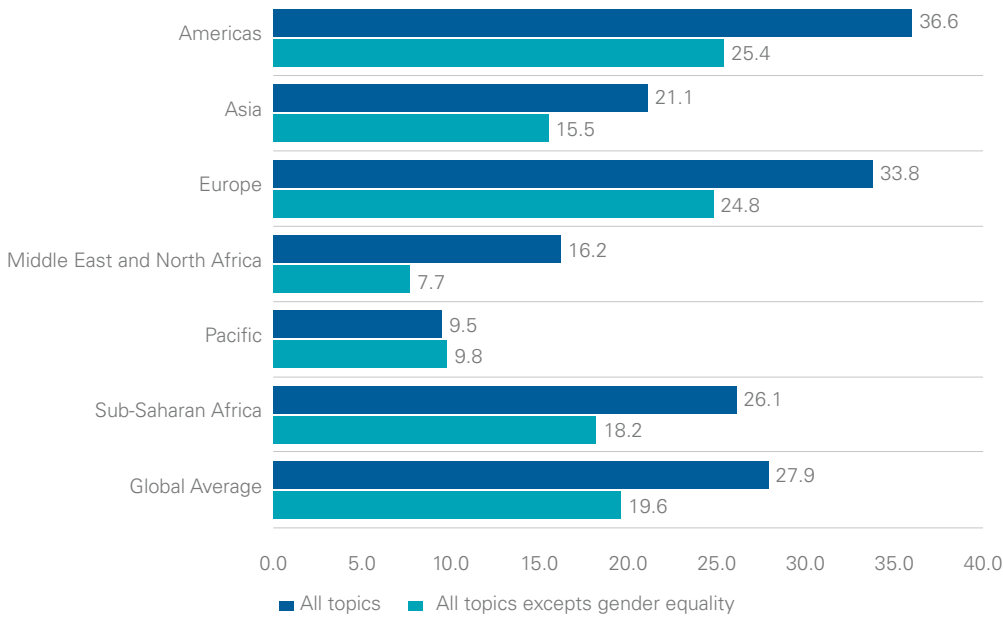


Figure 14

Share of women committee chairs across topics (%) including and excluding gender equality

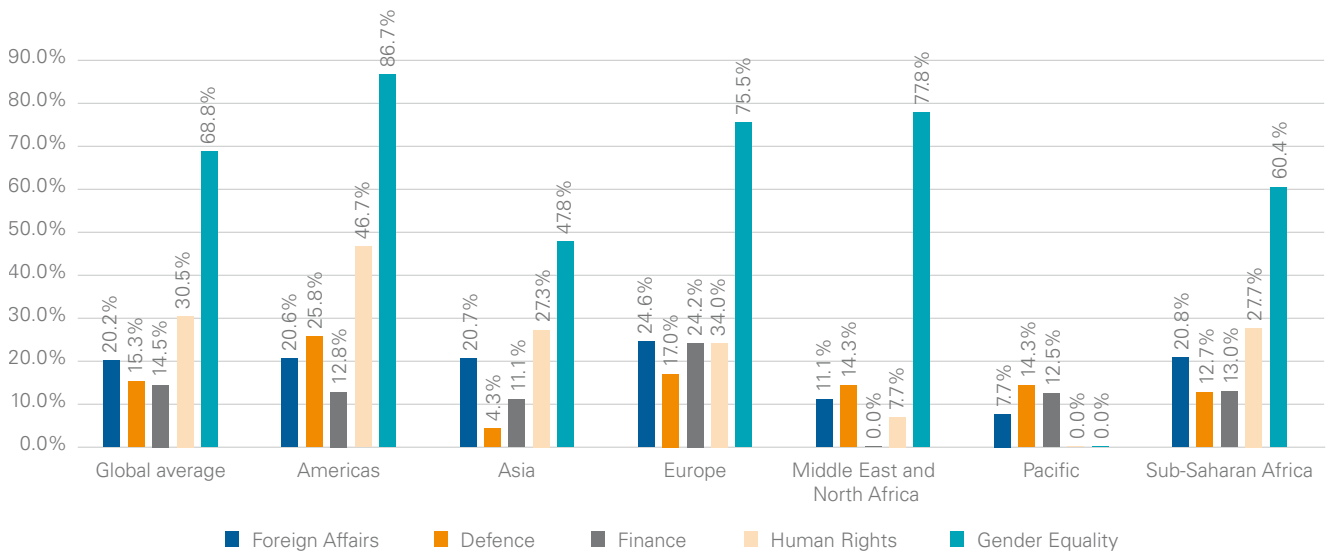


Women were most likely to chair committees on gender equality (68.6% of chairs), followed by human rights (30.5%) and foreign affairs (20.7%). In contrast, only 14.5% of finance committees were chaired by women, and 14.8% of defence committees. Compared to 2024, modest gains were made in the share of women committee chairs for foreign affairs (up 0.6 percentage points), defence (up 1.6 percentage points),

and finance (up 1.1 percentage points), while remaining largely unchanged for committees on human rights (up 0.1 percentage point) and gender equality (up 0.3 percentage points). Committee chairs aged 45 or under account for a small share of such positions (15.8%), with women in this age group making up just 7.1% of committee chairs.

Figure 15

Female chairs of parliamentary committees (%)



As with the share of women MPs and Speakers, the Americas region had the highest share of women chairs of committees (36.6%), followed by Europe (33.8%), and Sub-Saharan Africa (26.1%). Conversely, the lowest percentage of

women committee chairs were in the Pacific (9.5%), MENA (16.2%) and Asia (21.1%) regions. If the gender equality committees are excluded, these shares drop in all regions except the Pacific.



In 2025, the IPU is presided over by Dr. Tulia Ackson (right), the third woman to hold this position. IPU's leadership, including male champions such as Secretary General Martin Chungong (left), have been advancing gender parity in the Organization. © IPU

Women at the IPU: Advancing equal voice and power

Throughout its 135-year history, the IPU has steadily paved the way for women's participation in politics. By many accounts, it has also led the way, most notably as the first global organization to introduce internal quotas to enhance women's role in its decision-making. Women MPs have played a role at the IPU since the 1920s, and since the 1980s, they have had a dedicated structure – the Forum of Women Parliamentarians – to give female representatives a stronger voice in the Organization. Quotas have been introduced and made increasingly ambitious to enhance women's participation in the Organization's decision-making processes. For instance, on the IPU Executive Committee and the Bureaux of the IPU's Standing Committees, each sex must be represented by no less than one third of elected members. Modalities for the composition of more recently established bodies require a 50-50 gender ratio. In addition, a combination of sanctions – namely the restriction of the number of delegates and of voting rights for single-sex delegations – and incentives – the visibility given to gender-balanced delegations – has served to promote an increased share in women delegates at IPU Assemblies, reaching at times close to 40%. Many such measures have been put

forward by the Gender Partnership Group, which brings together two men and two women MPs from the Executive Committee. Male allies have played a crucial role over the past decades in advancing equal representation and power for all.

Women in leadership roles

- Until 1995, no woman had ever been elected IPU President. Since then, three women have been elected to the position: Ms. Najma Heptulla (India) in 1999, followed by Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron (Mexico) in 2017, who was also the youngest President in the IPU's history. Dr. Tulia Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania) was elected as the third woman President in 2022.
- The share of women in the Executive Committee has increased from 30.8% in 1995 to 50% today. Quotas for women in the Executive Committee were first introduced in 1988.
- Women have also made strides in the IPU's Standing Committees. Thirty years ago, women only occupied 2 out of 12 presiding officer positions (both as vice-presidents). In 2025, four out of eight presiding officers are women (two presidents and two vice-presidents).

Women delegates

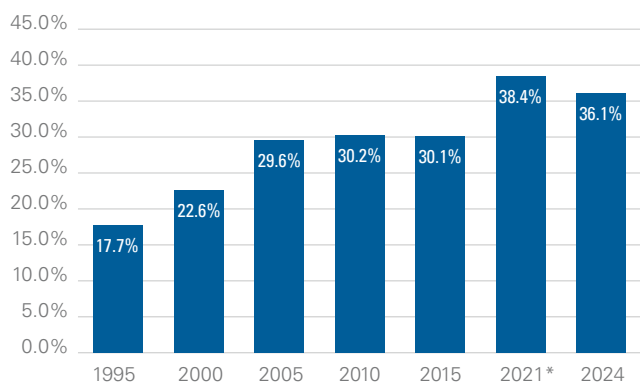
- Over the past 30 years, women’s representation at IPU Assemblies has consistently been higher than the share of women in parliaments worldwide. In 1995, 17% of seats were held by women delegates (compared with 11.3% of seats held by parliamentarians). That figure stabilized at about 30% in the early 2000s, before reaching a record high of 39% in 2021 and hovering around 36% since then.

Women’s movement

- 2025 marks the 40-year anniversary of the IPU’s Forum of Women Parliamentarians. The Forum has been instrumental in steering the IPU’s gender equality work and amplifying women’s voices in the Organization. The IPU’s statutes and rules allow the Forum to put forward amendments to draft resolutions, ensuring a stronger gender perspective.
- The work of the Forum is organized by an elected Bureau, whose representatives sit ex officio on key IPU bodies, including the Executive Committee and Standing Committee bureaux.

Figure 16

Women delegates at IPU Assemblies 1995-2024 (in%)*



*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no Assembly was held in 2020 and in May 2021 the Assembly was held virtually.

Quotas & electoral systems

Year after year, the IPU’s analyses have revealed that two factors make a clear difference in the share of women elected to parliaments: electoral systems and the use of gender quotas in any form. The 2024 trends are no different.

Chambers with proportional representation or mixed electoral systems elected or appointed the highest share of women, on average, in 2024 polls (30.1%). Lower chambers with these forms of electoral systems elected or appointed 30% women, on average, while in upper chambers with a proportional representation/mixed electoral system, 32% women were elected or appointed. In appointed systems, 24.6% women MPs were appointed on average,

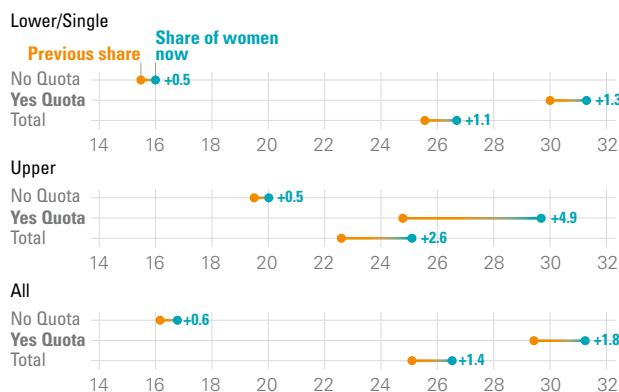
while the share of women MPs in chambers using plurality/majority systems was only 22.4%, with no variation by chamber. Chambers using proportional representation/mixed systems also recorded higher progress (+1.7 percentage points), while those with plurality/majority recorded the least (only 0.2 percentage points).

Like in previous years, electoral quotas made a critical difference in 2024 in the share of women elected to parliament. Only 16.8% of women MPs were elected or appointed across all chambers that did not have any quotas in place. In contrast, where quotas existed in some form, 31.2% women were elected or appointed.

These shares varied by type of chamber. Overall, more women were elected to lower chambers than to upper chambers in the parliamentary polls of 2024: in upper chambers with no quotas, 20% of elected or appointed MPs were women, and where quotas existed, this share was 29.7%. With regard to lower or single chambers, only 16% women were elected in lower or single chambers without quotas, and the share where quotas existed was nearly double (31.3%).

Figure 17

Share of women in parliaments (%), by chambers and use of quotas



Chambers with some form of gender quota in place also recorded greater progress in women’s representation in the 2024 election compared to their previous polls. Among lower or single chambers, representation increased by 1.4 percentage points where quotas existed, compared to just 0.5 percentage points in chambers without quotas. Among upper chambers with no quotas, the improvement was again only 0.5 percentage points, but where quotas existed, women’s parliamentary representation improved by 4.9 percentage points on average in 2024 versus their previous renewals.

The year saw some parliaments enhance or adopt new laws and policies to improve women’s political participation. **Mongolia**, for instance, improved electoral quotas and saw women’s representation improve. In **Jordan** too, an increase in the number of reserved seats from 15 to 18, as well as a new law requiring that every third candidate on party lists must be a woman, led to high shares of women MPs. **Ireland** increased

its quota requirement from 30% to 40%,³⁵ resulting in a higher share of women candidates and a 2.8 percentage point improvement in the share of women MPs. **Uzbekistan** also increased its quota requirement from 30% to 40%,³⁶ and recorded a six percentage point improvement in the share of women elected to its lower chamber. **Ghana's** parliament passed the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Act 2024, which introduced a 30% quota for women in parliament and other decision-making bodies,³⁷ and requires political parties to adopt gender equality and equity in their electoral and appointive processes, although it has yet to be implemented.³⁸

In a discouraging setback, **Georgia's** parliament approved a bill to abolish the gender quota. Until 2024, political parties were required to ensure that at least one fourth of candidates on party lists were women, but this is no longer the case,³⁹ and has resulted in a smaller share of women candidates (only 29% versus 44% previously).⁴⁰ Women's representation nevertheless recorded an improvement of two percentage points, but this was likely because some political parties and coalitions voluntarily put forth a higher share of women candidates (such as For Georgia with 45% and the Strong Georgia Coalition with 30%). With mandatory quotas no longer in place, there is a real risk that women's representation will decline in the future, despite the modest improvement in 2024. Notably, in 2024, women headed only 3 of the 18 party lists, and comprised just 22% of candidates in the top 10 positions.

Gender issues in the elections

Voter surveys around the world reveal a growing chasm between the ideological and political preferences of men and women, especially among younger voters.⁴¹ At the same time, in several countries, more women are turning out to vote than men. Both of these disparate trends have meant that the "woman vote" has become salient in different ways. Furthermore, in some societies, gender issues, particularly abortion rights, issues of gender identity, the rights of people of the LGBTQIA+ community, or the #MeToo conversations demanding safe spaces for women have become politically contentious, even polarising, and spurred anti-feminist backlash. Against this background, gender issues often become entangled with politics, particularly around

elections, when the choice of leaders can often hold the potential of critical shifts on policy matters. In 2024, gender considerations intersected with electoral politics in various ways around the world.

In **Indonesia**, political parties made attempts to attract the votes of women by announcing special policies that would benefit them.⁴² In the **United Kingdom**, the Labour party, which ultimately won the election, put forward several policies that benefit women⁴³ in its manifesto.⁴⁴ In **India**, which has seen women's turnout increase from 46.6% in 1962 to 65.8% in 2024 (when it marginally exceeded that of men), women were central to several poll promises made by major political parties.^{45,46} With a plurality/majority electoral system, these growing numbers have meant that women have become important targets or "vote banks" for political parties, who are increasingly trying to attract their vote with important promises of welfare services and benefits.⁴⁷

In the **Republic of Korea** too, more women turned out to vote than men in the 2024 election.⁴⁸ However, unlike in India, political leaders and parties increasingly courted the anti-women vote,⁴⁹ a trend that became particularly evident in the 2022 presidential elections.⁵⁰ In fact, the Republic of Korea's politics has been witnessing a growing gender divide in recent years. Voter surveys have revealed a widening gap in political and ideological preferences between men and women, especially among younger voters, with South Korea estimated to have one of the largest such gaps globally.⁵¹

Gender emerged as a critical axis of discourse, mobilization and analysis in one of the most anticipated elections of 2024 – the **United States of America** presidential race. Since the previous election, the country had witnessed a landmark Supreme Court ruling that significantly restricted women's access to abortion services. Additionally, one of the main contenders in the presidential election was Kamala Harris, who, after becoming the country's first female Vice President in 2020, was now vying to become the first woman elected to the nation's highest office. The result was a gendered election campaign marked by misogynistic rhetoric. The Republican campaign also pushed back against transgender rights,⁵² with Donald Trump, who was ultimately elected President, announcing an official policy recognising only

35 Women for Election, "Historic Milestone As Record Number of Women Candidates Set to Run in 2024 General Election," 18 October 2024.

36 OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, "Voters lacked a genuine choice in Uzbekistan's technically well-prepared parliamentary elections," 28 October 2024.

37 Parliament of Ghana, Bills.

38 The Conversation, "Victory for women's rights in Ghana as affirmative action law is passed – what must happen next," 3 September 2024.

39 Civil Georgia, "Parliament Abolishes Quotas for Women MPs," 4 April 2024.

40 As per the preliminary findings and conclusions of the International election observation mission to Georgia – Parliamentary elections.

41 Financial Times, "A new global gender divide is emerging," 25 January 2024.

42 The Jakarta Post, "Prabowo, Gibran to woo female voters with targeted policies," 26 December 2023.

43 The Conversation, "What Labour's election means for women: the good and the bad," 5 July 2024.

44 The Labour Party, "Break down barriers to opportunity."

45 Hindustan Times, "Lok Sabha election manifestos," 16 April 2024.

46 The Economic Times, "How women formed a vote bank that parties can ignore at own risk," 8 March 2024.

47 Mint, "The emerging vote bank that every political party wants to tap," 26 October 2021.

48 National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea, "Analysis of Voter Turnout for the 22nd National Assembly Elections," 28 October 2024.

49 The Korea Times, "Women's rights take back seat in parliamentary elections," 5 April 2024.

50 BBC, "Why misogyny is at the heart of South Korea's presidential elections," 8 March 2022.

51 Financial Times, "A new global gender divide is emerging," 25 January 2024.

52 AP News, "Trump and Vance make anti-transgender attacks central to their campaign's closing argument," 1 November 2024.

two genders: male and female.⁵³ Voter surveys indicated a clear difference in the way men and women voted, and revealed that women, especially those from Black and Latina communities, as well as younger women, were more likely to have voted for the Democratic candidate.⁵⁴

In **Iran**, the election unfolded differently. It was the first held since the tragic death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in September 2022, after she died in police custody following her arrest for improperly wearing a hijab. Amini's death sparked widespread protests led by women and the young, with "Women, Life, Freedom" (Zan – Zendegi – Azadi) as the rallying cry. Despite an increase in the number of women candidates in the 2024 elections, voter turnout was among the lowest in the country's history – widely speculated⁵⁵ to have been as a way for people to show their resistance.⁵⁶

Violence against women in parliaments

Parliaments, as well as the larger political arena, have often proven to be unsafe and hostile spaces for women MPs and staff members around the world. Encouragingly, there is growing recognition of this, and several parliaments have been taking steps to become safer and more inclusive.

In several countries, 2024 elections were particularly violent, including for women MPs

Mexico's historic 2024 election was also one of its most violent.⁵⁷ Between September 2023 and June 2024, in the run-up to the elections, an estimated 130 aspiring candidates, pre-candidates, and confirmed candidates were allegedly attacked by organized crime groups, according to Data Cívica.⁵⁸ These included 30 women, of which 4 were murdered. Three others faced armed attacks, another 12 were assaulted and 11 received threats. Samanta Fonseca, a pre-candidate for the Senate and a trans activist, was killed when armed assailants shot her at point-blank range at least nine times. Alda Pacheco Juarez, a candidate for federal deputy, was threatened when armed subjects stopped her van and fired in the air. Selina Trujillo Arizmendi, a candidate for local deputy, was threatened by armed men. Lucy Meza, a senator and candidate for governor of the state of Morelos, was threatened by means of a public banner. Yolanda Sanchez Figueroa, Mayor of Cotija, was shot dead on a public road on the same day when Claudia Sheinbaum was elected

President.⁵⁹ A few days later, Esmeralda Garzon, a local councillor who led the equity and gender commission on the municipal council of Tixtla in Guerrero, was killed by gunmen as she was leaving her house on 7 June 2024.⁶⁰ While not all of these victims were running in the parliamentary election, such violence often has a chilling effect on political participation as a whole.

It is worthwhile to mention that Mexico has an advanced legal and electoral framework on violence against women in politics.⁶¹ On 14 April 2020, a reform addressing political violence against women on the grounds of gender was approved, granting the body responsible for organizing the elections, the National Electoral Institute (INE), the authority to address cases of political violence against women, provided they are directly related to or have an impact on the electoral sphere. Since then, 511 complaints have been filed with the INE. Of these, 42% were submitted during the 2023-2024 federal electoral process.

During the 2023-2024 electoral process, 215 complaints and reports were received, 55% of which fell under the jurisdiction of the INE. The INE identified a total of 157 victims. Female candidates for federal deputy positions represented the largest proportion of victims, accounting for 13.3% of the total (21 cases), followed by candidates for the Senate with 10.1% (16 cases). Current federal deputies were identified as the fourth most affected group, comprising 7.6% (12 cases). Among the 157 identified victims, five were Indigenous women, two were female migrants, two were women who belonged to the LGBTQIA+ community, and one was an Afro-Mexican woman.

Ahead of elections in the **Republic of Korea**, MP Bae Hyun-jin was attacked with a rock by a 14-year-old boy. Security camera footage showed the boy meeting Bae inside the hallway of a building, striking up a conversation with her, and then repeatedly hitting her on the head with a small rock as she tried to protect herself. While she was lucky to escape serious injury, the attack left her wounded. In the **United Kingdom**, the 2024 general election saw an "alarming rise" in candidate abuse, according to a report by the country's Election Commission. The Commission estimated that more than half of the candidates who contested the election faced abuse, with a third reporting that they were intimidated at least once, and 13% reporting that they faced serious threats, abuse or intimidation. Women were more likely to face serious abuse: while 11% of men reported experiencing serious abuse, among women this share was 20%. Those from ethnic minority communities were also more likely to report facing serious abuse.

53 France 24, "Trump vows to stop 'transgender lunacy' and make two genders official US policy," 23 December 2024.

54 CAWP, Center for American Women and Politics, [Gender Gap: Voting Choices in Presidential Elections](#).

55 Al Jazeera, "Low turnout as conservatives dominate Iran parliamentary election," 4 March 2024.

56 International Crisis Group, "Closing Circles: Iran's Exclusionary 2024 Elections," 12 March 2024.

57 Reuters, "Mexican candidate assassinations hit grim record ahead of Sunday's election," 1 June 2024.

58 ACLED, "Violence during the 2024 elections exceeded the levels recorded during the 2018 and 2021 elections," 3 July 2024.

59 CBS News, "Woman mayor shot dead in Mexico day after Claudia Sheinbaum's historic presidential win," 4 June 2024.

60 Reuters, "Mexico councilwoman killed after bloodiest-ever elections," 8 June 2024.

61 INE, [Violencia política contra las mujeres](#).

Risks associated with digital technologies

Recent years have shown that while social media platforms and digital spaces hold great potential for enabling political engagement and dialogues, these sites have also frequently emerged as violent spaces for women and marginalized groups around the world. Various studies focussed on different countries and social media platforms have provided evidence that women politicians routinely face toxic and abusive comments and posts, and that platforms have often been found wanting in their response to such posts.⁶² Not only does this abuse take a severe toll on women politicians, it also often spills over to the larger social sphere, impacting women from all walks of life. For example, in the **United States of America**, the digital hate targeted at women and women's rights continued to increase even after the election result, according to a study by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue. The spread of such hate demonstrates "the influence of an increasingly vindictive set of online actors, who appear to be using the election results as a permission structure to more overtly and aggressively espouse narratives about curbing women's rights."⁶³

As digital technology advances further, newer challenges are emerging for democratic dialogue and participation, especially for women and minority groups. Many women find themselves victims of deepfake images and videos – i.e. synthetic media where a person in an image or video is manipulated to look extremely similar to another person. An AFP report⁶⁴ highlighted various instances of artificial intelligence (AI) generated deep-fake pornography being used to target women politicians, from the United States, the United Kingdom and Pakistan. **Italian** Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni sought 100,000 euros in damages⁶⁵ from two men accused of uploading deepfake videos on an American porn site. While the incident came to light in 2020, Meloni pursued legal action in 2024 as a symbolic act.

At the 149th IPU Assembly in Geneva in October 2024, a resolution on the impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law was adopted unanimously. Among its many provisions, the resolution notes that advances in AI have an impact on democracy and recognizes the risks it poses, especially for women and girls. Among its key provisions related to women's political participation, the resolution:

- Stresses that, in the absence of gender-balanced perspectives, AI technologies can create, perpetuate and amplify gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination and violence
- Notes that AI-generated deepfake material can negatively impact all women, and that for women in politics, these impacts often have the effect of silencing and excluding them from public and political life
- Urges parliaments to prioritize the prevention and elimination of, and response to, all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination generated or facilitated by AI, including better content moderation, accessible and effective reporting mechanisms and the establishment of procedures to remove illegal content
- Urges legislative action to prevent the creation and distribution of deepfake intimate images, recognizing that most of such content is pornographic in nature and disproportionately targets women and girls, as well as to prevent the distribution of other AI-generated content that propagates hate speech or incites violence, including gender-based violence

Some noteworthy initiatives by parliaments to address violence against women in political life

In the **United Republic of Tanzania**, amendments to the electoral law in February 2024 have led to violence against women in elections (VAW-E) being recognized and listed as an electoral offense with codified consequences. Additionally, political parties in the African nation are now required to have gender desks to process complaints on violence against women in politics.⁶⁶ With the passage of this law, the United Republic of Tanzania has become the first African nation to adopt such a measure to address violence against women politicians.

62 For examples, see Center for Countering Digital Hate, "Abusing Women in Politics," 14 August 2024; and ISD, *Online Gendered Abuse and Disinformation During the 2024 South African Elections*.

63 Institute for Strategic Dialogue, "Your body, my choice: Hate and harassment towards women spreads online," 8 November 2024.

64 France 24, "'Form of violence': Across globe, deepfake porn targets women politicians," 6 January 2025.

65 AP News, "Italy's Meloni seeks symbolic compensation from suspects over deepfake porn images," 22 March 2024.

66 NDI, "Empowering women's political participation in Tanzania," 2 April 2024.



In October 2024, IPU Member Parliaments adopted a resolution highlighting the impact of artificial intelligence on democracy and human rights, including key provisions on AI-facilitated political violence against women. Pictured here are the resolution's co-Rapporteurs, Neema Lugangira of the United Republic of Tanzania (left) and Michelle Rempel Garner of Canada (right). © IPU/Antoine Tardy

In **Australia**, the “Set the Standard” report (independent review of the culture of parliamentary work conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission and led by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner) has led to a series of reforms in recent years. The Australian Parliament has continued to undertake more steps to improve its parliamentary work culture in 2024. The Independent Parliamentary Standards Commission (IPSC) was established in September 2024 under the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service Act 2023. The IPSC is an independent workplace investigation framework that receives complaints about breaches of the

three new codes of conduct adopted in 2023 – one for parliamentarians, one for staff and one for all who enter the parliament space. The codes apply to both Houses of Parliament and make it clear that “bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or assault, or discrimination in any form, including on grounds of race, age, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability or religion, will not be tolerated, condoned or ignored”. The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service also provides trauma-informed support, including counselling, referral to specialist services and assistance in making a complaint to the police.

Violence against women in parliaments remains a very serious concern. In the past three decades, several parliaments around the world have taken steps to address this. Among them, **Bolivia** stands out as a trailblazer. In May 2012, the South American nation passed landmark legislation to protect women against political violence.⁶⁷ The law came on the heels of the gruesome murder of Juana Quispe, an indigenous leader and councilwoman who was killed by two male politicians. Law 243 on political violence and harassment against women was the first law in the world that specifically addressed and criminalized political violence against women. It lays down clear and detailed definitions of what constitutes such violence, and prescribes remedial measures. Along with enabling more equitable participation for women in the country,⁶⁸ the law has also had an influential impact internationally on other nations’ attempts to address this very consequential concern.⁶⁹ Further, in 2016, the Gender Unit of the Plurinational Electoral Body created the Gender Equality Observatory,⁷⁰ which provides data on women’s political representation, as well as on incidents of political violence and harassment. In 2024, after 12 years, the murder trial of Juana Quispe finally concluded and both men were convicted and sentenced to 30 years in prison.⁷¹

67 UN Women, “Bolivia Approves a Landmark Law against Harassment of Women Political Leaders”, 11 June 2012.

68 International IDEA, “Criminalising political violence and harassment in Bolivia”, 8 March 2019.

69 Pablo Castaño, “Legislation on violence against women in politics, a pioneer policy on gender equality”, *Left-Wing Populism and Feminist Politics*, 2022.

70 Órgano Electoral Plurinacional (OEP) Bolivia, *Observatorio de Paridad Democrática*.

71 France 24, “Bolivia sentencia a los asesinos de la lideresa indígena Juana Quispe”, 12 January 2024.

Conclusion

The last three decades have seen significant strides in women's representation in parliament. Several countries have made laudable progress, and many others have taken noteworthy steps towards ensuring more gender-balanced and equal parliaments. These efforts include adopting and implementing well-designed quotas, initiatives to make parliaments more gender-sensitive and inclusive, and acknowledging and addressing violence against women parliamentarians. Such measures have been successful when intentionally designed and backed by strong political will and commitment to the vision of a more equitable politics.

And yet, the agenda and vision set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years ago remain unfulfilled. While some regions, most notably the Americas, Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, have driven progress, others, including Asia, the Pacific and MENA, still have considerable work ahead of them. Much of the progress in the Americas, Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa has been driven by robust efforts on the part of individual countries in those regions, whereas efforts to enable equal representation have been relatively limited in Asia, the Pacific and MENA.

Beyond electoral systems and quotas, women's political representation is also impacted by the broader political culture, shifts in technologies and political platforms, and the overall progress on women's rights. The phenomenal expansion of digital technologies, the internet and social media in recent years has widened the political arena, creating new spaces for political engagement and movements. These advancements have also come with their costs and challenges, often disproportionately affecting women and those from marginalized groups. While this period has seen remarkable progress on women's access to opportunities, healthcare, education and civic participation, it has also been accompanied by significant backlash in many parts of the world, with women's rights facing severe setbacks. It is important for the global community to stem this tide in order to ensure that women and men across the world enjoy equal rights and contribute effectively to the governance of their societies.

These uneven shifts have kept women's global representation in parliament below one third as of early 2025, with parity still a distant dream. Progress has also been slowing, with 2024 recording one of the smallest improvements in recent years. While further progress is possible, disrupting this trend will require parliaments and countries around the world to step up their commitments and accelerate efforts.



2025 marks the 40-year anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Members of Parliament which has been paving the way for more women in politics. Its Bureau, currently chaired by Mexico's Cynthia López Castro (centre), can be seen here at the 146th IPU Assembly in 2023. © IPU

Annex

Women in single and lower houses of parliament, 1995 vs. 2025

| Rank | Country | % of women in 1995 | % of women in 2025 | % point change |
|------|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Rwanda | 4.3 | 63.8 | 59.5 |
| 2 | United Arab Emirates | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| 3 | Andorra | 3.6 | 50.0 | 46.4 |
| 4 | Monaco | 5.6 | 45.8 | 40.2 |
| 5 | Ethiopia | 2.0 | 41.9 | 39.9 |
| 6 | Nicaragua | 16.3 | 55.0 | 38.7 |
| 7 | Ecuador | 4.5 | 43.1 | 38.6 |
| 8 | Mexico | 14.2 | 50.2 | 36.0 |
| 9 | North Macedonia | 3.3 | 39.2 | 35.9 |
| 10 | Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | 10.8 | 46.2 | 35.4 |
| 11 | Republic of Moldova | 4.8 | 40.0 | 35.2 |
| 12 | Costa Rica | 14.0 | 49.1 | 35.1 |
| 13 | Cabo Verde | 11.1 | 44.4 | 33.3 |
| 14 | Cuba | 22.8 | 55.7 | 32.9 |
| 15 | Uzbekistan | 6.0 | 38.0 | 32.0 |
| " | Armenia | 6.3 | 38.3 | 32.0 |
| 17 | Peru | 10.0 | 41.5 | 31.5 |
| 18 | United Kingdom | 9.2 | 40.5 | 31.3 |
| 19 | Dominica | 9.4 | 40.6 | 31.2 |
| 20 | Australia | 8.8 | 39.1 | 30.3 |
| 21 | Belarus | 3.8 | 33.9 | 30.1 |
| 22 | Albania | 5.7 | 35.7 | 30.0 |
| 23 | France | 6.4 | 36.2 | 29.8 |
| 24 | Angola | 9.5 | 39.1 | 29.6 |
| 25 | Senegal | 11.7 | 41.2 | 29.5 |
| 26 | Spain | 16.0 | 44.3 | 28.3 |
| 27 | Mali | 2.3 | 30.4 | 28.1 |
| 28 | Chile | 7.5 | 35.1 | 27.6 |
| 29 | Belgium | 12.0 | 39.3 | 27.3 |
| 30 | United Republic of Tanzania | 11.2 | 37.8 | 26.6 |
| 31 | Malta | 1.5 | 27.9 | 26.4 |
| 32 | Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | 5.9 | 32.1 | 26.2 |
| " | Djibouti | 0.0 | 26.2 | 26.2 |
| 34 | Burundi | 12.3 | 38.2 | 25.9 |
| " | Singapore | 3.7 | 29.6 | 25.9 |
| 36 | Suriname | 5.9 | 31.4 | 25.5 |
| 37 | Croatia | 7.9 | 33.1 | 25.2 |
| 38 | Dominican Republic | 11.7 | 36.8 | 25.1 |
| 39 | Palau | 0.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |

| Rank | Country | % of women in 1995 | % of women in 2025 | % point change |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 40 | New Zealand | 21.2 | 45.5 | 24.3 |
| 41 | Tajikistan | 2.8 | 27.0 | 24.2 |
| 42 | Morocco | 0.6 | 24.3 | 23.7 |
| 43 | Equatorial Guinea | 7.5 | 31.0 | 23.5 |
| 44 | San Marino | 11.7 | 35.0 | 23.3 |
| " | Mauritania | 0.0 | 23.3 | 23.3 |
| 46 | Guinea | 7.0 | 29.6 | 22.6 |
| 47 | Namibia | 18.1 | 40.6 | 22.5 |
| 48 | Portugal | 13.0 | 34.8 | 21.8 |
| 49 | Cameroon | 12.2 | 33.9 | 21.7 |
| 50 | Mongolia | 3.9 | 25.4 | 21.5 |
| 51 | Micronesia (Federated States of) | 0.0 | 21.4 | 21.4 |
| 52 | Paraguay | 2.5 | 23.8 | 21.3 |
| " | Lithuania | 7.1 | 28.4 | 21.3 |
| 54 | Slovenia | 14.4 | 35.6 | 21.2 |
| " | Uruguay | 7.1 | 28.3 | 21.2 |
| 56 | El Salvador | 10.7 | 31.7 | 21.0 |
| 57 | Iceland | 25.4 | 46.0 | 20.6 |
| " | Benin | 6.0 | 26.6 | 20.6 |
| 59 | Lesotho | 4.6 | 25.0 | 20.4 |
| 60 | Honduras | 7.0 | 27.3 | 20.3 |
| " | Kenya | 3.0 | 23.3 | 20.3 |
| 62 | Liechtenstein | 8.0 | 28.0 | 20.0 |
| 63 | South Africa | 25.0 | 44.6 | 19.6 |
| " | Gabon | 5.9 | 25.5 | 19.6 |
| 65 | Guyana | 20.0 | 39.4 | 19.4 |
| 66 | Philippines | 8.8 | 28.0 | 19.2 |
| 67 | Colombia | 10.8 | 29.4 | 18.6 |
| 68 | Eswatini | 3.1 | 21.6 | 18.5 |
| 69 | Poland | 13.0 | 31.3 | 18.3 |
| " | Republic of Korea | 2.0 | 20.3 | 18.3 |
| " | Jordan | 1.3 | 19.6 | 18.3 |
| " | Romania | 4.1 | 22.4 | 18.3 |
| 73 | Iraq | 10.8 | 28.9 | 18.1 |
| 74 | Saint Kitts and Nevis | 13.3 | 31.3 | 18.0 |
| 75 | United States of America | 10.9 | 28.7 | 17.8 |
| 76 | Italy | 15.1 | 32.8 | 17.7 |
| 77 | Chad | 16.4 | 34.0 | 17.6 |
| 78 | Switzerland | 21.0 | 38.5 | 17.5 |
| " | Türkiye | 2.4 | 19.9 | 17.5 |
| 80 | Kyrgyzstan | 4.8 | 22.2 | 17.4 |
| " | Ukraine | 3.8 | 21.2 | 17.4 |
| 82 | Greece | 6.0 | 23.3 | 17.3 |
| 83 | Argentina | 25.3 | 42.4 | 17.1 |

| Rank | Country | % of women in 1995 | % of women in 2025 | % point change |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 84 | Jamaica | 11.7 | 28.6 | 16.9 |
| 85 | Latvia | 15.0 | 31.0 | 16.0 |
| " | Barbados | 10.7 | 26.7 | 16.0 |
| 87 | Estonia | 12.9 | 28.7 | 15.8 |
| 88 | Trinidad and Tobago | 11.1 | 26.8 | 15.7 |
| 89 | Czechia | 10.0 | 25.5 | 15.5 |
| 90 | Zimbabwe | 14.7 | 30.1 | 15.4 |
| 91 | Pakistan | 1.8 | 17.0 | 15.2 |
| 92 | Georgia | 6.9 | 22.0 | 15.1 |
| " | Malawi | 5.6 | 20.7 | 15.1 |
| 94 | Luxembourg | 20.0 | 35.0 | 15.0 |
| " | Israel | 9.2 | 24.2 | 15.0 |
| 96 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 4.5 | 19.1 | 14.6 |
| 97 | Comoros | 2.4 | 16.7 | 14.3 |
| 98 | Mozambique | 25.2 | 39.2 | 14.0 |
| 99 | Togo | 1.2 | 15.0 | 13.8 |
| 100 | Thailand | 6.1 | 19.6 | 13.5 |
| 101 | Panama | 8.3 | 21.7 | 13.4 |
| 102 | Ireland | 12.0 | 25.3 | 13.3 |
| 103 | Japan | 2.7 | 15.7 | 13.0 |
| " | Congo | 1.6 | 14.6 | 13.0 |
| 105 | Viet Nam | 18.5 | 31.4 | 12.9 |
| " | Canada | 18.0 | 30.9 | 12.9 |
| 107 | Burkina Faso | 5.6 | 18.3 | 12.7 |
| 108 | Lao People's Democratic Republic | 9.4 | 22.0 | 12.6 |
| 109 | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | 9.5 | 21.7 | 12.2 |
| " | Belize | 3.4 | 15.6 | 12.2 |
| 111 | Finland | 33.5 | 45.5 | 12.0 |
| 112 | Grenada | 20.0 | 31.3 | 11.3 |
| 113 | Brazil | 7.0 | 18.1 | 11.1 |
| " | Kiribati | 0.0 | 11.1 | 11.1 |
| 115 | Madagascar | 3.6 | 14.1 | 10.5 |
| " | Saint Lucia | 0.0 | 10.5 | 10.5 |
| 117 | Mauritius | 7.6 | 17.9 | 10.3 |
| 118 | Denmark | 33.5 | 43.6 | 10.1 |
| 119 | Bahamas | 8.2 | 18.0 | 9.8 |
| 120 | Indonesia | 12.2 | 21.9 | 9.7 |
| 121 | Germany | 26.3 | 35.7 | 9.4 |
| 122 | Austria | 26.8 | 36.1 | 9.3 |
| 123 | Tunisia | 6.7 | 15.8 | 9.1 |
| " | Marshall Islands | 3.0 | 12.1 | 9.1 |
| 125 | Cyprus | 5.4 | 14.3 | 8.9 |
| 126 | Azerbaijan | 12.1 | 20.8 | 8.7 |
| " | Samoa | 4.3 | 13.0 | 8.7 |

| Rank | Country | % of women in 1995 | % of women in 2025 | % point change |
|------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 128 | Slovakia | 14.7 | 23.3 | 8.6 |
| 129 | Zambia | 6.7 | 15.0 | 8.3 |
| 130 | Bulgaria | 13.3 | 21.3 | 8.0 |
| " | Democratic Republic of the Congo | 5.0 | 13.0 | 8.0 |
| 132 | Cambodia | 5.8 | 13.6 | 7.8 |
| 133 | Turkmenistan | 18.0 | 25.6 | 7.6 |
| 134 | Guatemala | 12.5 | 20.0 | 7.5 |
| 135 | Sao Tome and Principe | 7.3 | 14.6 | 7.3 |
| 136 | India | 7.2 | 13.8 | 6.6 |
| " | Ghana | 8.0 | 14.6 | 6.6 |
| " | Netherlands | 32.7 | 39.3 | 6.6 |
| 139 | Malaysia | 7.8 | 13.5 | 5.7 |
| 140 | China | 21.0 | 26.5 | 5.5 |
| 141 | Côte d'Ivoire | 8.0 | 13.4 | 5.4 |
| 142 | Liberia | 5.7 | 11.0 | 5.3 |
| 143 | Norway | 39.4 | 44.4 | 5.0 |
| " | Kazakhstan | 13.4 | 18.4 | 5.0 |
| 145 | Nauru | 5.6 | 10.5 | 4.9 |
| 146 | Fiji | 4.3 | 9.1 | 4.8 |
| 147 | Sweden | 40.4 | 45.0 | 4.6 |
| 148 | Sri Lanka | 5.3 | 9.8 | 4.5 |
| 149 | Bhutan | 0.0 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 150 | Lebanon | 2.3 | 6.3 | 4.0 |
| 151 | Solomon Islands | 2.1 | 6.0 | 3.9 |
| 152 | Tonga | 3.3 | 7.1 | 3.8 |
| " | Hungary | 11.4 | 15.2 | 3.8 |
| 154 | Russian Federation | 13.4 | 16.4 | 3.0 |
| 155 | Papua New Guinea | 0.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| 156 | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 3.4 | 4.9 | 1.5 |
| 157 | Seychelles | 27.3 | 28.6 | 1.3 |
| 158 | Algeria | 6.7 | 7.9 | 1.2 |
| 159 | Gambia (The) | 7.8 | 8.6 | 0.8 |
| 160 | Antigua and Barbuda | 5.3 | 5.6 | 0.3 |
| 161 | Syrian Arab Republic | 9.6 | 9.6 | 0.0 |
| 162 | Guinea-Bissau | 10.0 | 9.8 | -0.2 |
| " | Vanuatu | 2.2 | 2.0 | -0.2 |
| 164 | Yemen | 0.7 | 0.0 | -0.7 |
| 165 | Botswana | 10.0 | 8.7 | -1.3 |
| 166 | Democratic People's Republic of Korea | 20.1 | 17.6 | -2.5 |
| 167 | Maldives | 6.3 | 3.2 | -3.1 |

*Countries for which data for both 1995 and 2025 are available.



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