

Topic Women's Representation in Politics

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Key Takeaways Background

Women's participation in politics is a fundamental human right and a core component of democratic principles. It is crucial for sustainable development and serves both as a driver and an outcome of gender equality and women's empowerment. However, women's voices remain underrepresented in decision-making spaces.

#### Barriers to Women's Political Participation:

- Structural barriers: Political parties act as gatekeepers, and women face a lack of financial resources for campaigning.
- Lack of political will: Politics has been historically male-dominated, leading to resistance to change.
- Social norms and violence: Gender-based violence against women politicians and harmful stereotypes persist.

#### Global Snapshot

- Heads of State and Government: 27 countries led by women (12.6% of Heads of State, 8.8% of Heads of Government)
- Cabinet Ministers: 23.3% of ministers are women. Fifteen countries have over 50% women ministers
- National Parliaments: 26.8% of parliamentarians are women. At the current pace, gender parity is expected by 2063
- Local Deliberatives Bodies: 35.5% of members are women globally. Iceland and Bolivia have achieved gender parity.

#### Strategies to Advance Women's Political Participation:

- Policy reforms: Implement gender quotas with strict enforcement and sanctions for non-compliance
- Capacity building: leadership training, mentorship programs and financial support for women candidates

- Narrative change: Promote positive portrayal of women leaders in media and public discourse

## Highlighted Initiatives

### Available Resources :

- UN Gender quota portal: Provides information on types of quotas, electoral systems, and legal provisions ( <https://genderquota.org> )
- Women in Local Government website: A data hub for global analysis on women's participation in local government (<https://localgov.unwomen.org>)

### Global Impact:

- Countries with legislated gender quotas have seen, on average, 5 points higher women representation in parliaments.
- Countries with strict enforcement and sanctions for non-compliance are more successful in meeting gender balance targets.
- Countries adopt various methods like ranking rules, placement mandates, and result-based quotas to improve women's representation.

## Other resources