

# INDICATOR ANALYSIS

## PROPORTION OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

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<p>How is the indicator calculated?</p>	<p>This indicator is currently measured as “the number of seats held by women members in single or lower chambers of national parliaments, expressed as a proportion of all occupied seats in national parliaments” (1). Thus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>P</math> = the proportion</li> <li>• <math>x</math> = the number of seats held by women members in single or lower chambers of national parliaments</li> <li>• <math>n</math> = all occupied seats in national parliaments</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Indicator Formula: <math>P = x/n</math></i></p>
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<b>GLOBAL TRENDS</b>	
<p>What are the global patterns for this indicator?</p>	<p>Global trends indicate that women’s participation in government remains low overall, though it is slowly increasing. According to World Bank data on the indicator, the percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments follows a gradually positive trend: currently, women hold approximately 25% of parliamentary seats, up from approximately 12% in 1997 (2)</p>

<b>UTILITY</b>	
<p>What does the indicator measure?</p>	<p>This indicator measures the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. As such, it may also serve as a measure of the degree to which women have equal access to parliamentary decision-making. This, in turn, may also serve as an indicator of gender equality in a country.</p>
<p>What does it NOT measure – what does it miss?</p>	<p>This indicator does not measure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The extent to which women’s election to parliamentary positions translates into meaningful and full participation in decision-making</li> <li>b) What the barriers to women’s participation in government may be</li> <li>c) The proportion of women who hold seats in upper chambers of parliament</li> </ol>
<p>If and how does the indicator relate to interface/relationship among health, gender and fragility/stability;</p>	<p>Women’s ability to participate in political decision-making is vital to ensuring women’s increased opportunities in both public and private life, and is thus a strong determinant of women’s empowerment (1). Furthermore, women’s participation in parliament can help prioritize gender-specific concerns in political agendas. This, in turn, could help promote gender-inclusive healthcare and welfare policies. The inclusion of women’s perspectives in political decision-making is a crucial component of representation, democracy, and gender equality, and can in this way contribute to greater political stability and more peaceful societies.</p>

<b>AVAILABILITY</b>
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Sources for indicator (CRVS, DHS etc. – include links);	Data is available at the country level from the following sources:  The Sustainable Development Goals website: <a href="https://www.sdg.org/datasets/f6c3182a119748dcb8db841cfce94e95_0/data">https://www.sdg.org/datasets/f6c3182a119748dcb8db841cfce94e95_0/data</a>  Full data available on the WHO website: <a href="http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.INDEXOFESSENTIALSERVICECOVERAGEv">http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.INDEXOFESSENTIALSERVICECOVERAGEv</a>
Dates available;	Depending on the country, data as early as 2000 and as recent as 2017 is available.
Availability across geographic areas;	The data covers at least 183 countries (1).
Availability in conflict affected settings;	Data is available for 2015 and 2017 in Yemen, South Sudan, Libya, Somalia, the DRC and Afghanistan.

<b>GRANULARITY</b>	
<i>Disaggregation at national level</i>	
Data disaggregated by sex;	While some constituent tracer indicators are disaggregated by sex, data of the final output of the coverage index is not disaggregated by sex (2).
Data disaggregated by identity group (race, ethnicity);	No
Data disaggregated by income	No
Data disaggregated by citizenship;	No
Data disaggregated by migration background;	No
<i>Disaggregation at sub-national level</i>	

Data disaggregated by identity group (race, ethnicity);	No.
Data disaggregated by income.	No.

<b>SOURCES OF BIAS</b>	
What bias can exist with this data?	<p><i>Selection bias:</i> the indicator may not be an accurate representation of the entire population, as it does not measure the proportion of seats held by women in higher chambers of parliament.</p> <p><i>Social Desirability Bias:</i> sometimes, respondents seek to gain the approval of the person/institution conducting the survey. For this reason, some countries may over-report the number of women who occupy seats in their single and lower chambers of parliament. This is especially relevant as data for this indicator is based on official statistics received from a country's own parliament.</p>

<b>VALIDITY</b>	
Clear and accepted international standards for indicator;	This SDG indicator has been classified as a tier 1 indicator by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators. A tier 1 indicator is described as being conceptually clear with an internationally established methodology (3).
Validity of measurement of indicator generally accepted;	Issues with bias in survey response may undermine the validity of the measurement in a particular setting.

<b>RELIABILITY</b>	
Reliability of indicator generally accepted;	Findings are regularly crosschecked with national parliaments to ensure accuracy. Furthermore, results are updated each month with any necessary adjustments to ensure consistency and overall data quality (4).

<b>COMPLEXITY</b>	
Enables analysis across time and location.	Because this indicator is consistently measured annually in each country, it can provide an opportunity for analysis across time and location.

<b>OTHER REFLECTIONS</b>	
Are indicator values imputed/modelled?	No.
Other reflections on debates, accuracy, etc.	Because this indicator only measures seats held by women in single and lower chambers of government, it may miss any positions occupied by women in other chambers of government as well. This indicator also makes no adjustments for Indigenous forms of government in which women may hold prominent positions. Furthermore, data on by-elections and replacements due to death, resignation, or retirement of women seat-holders may be difficult to obtain (1). These changes are often unexpected and unplanned events, which are more difficult for organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union to track.

## References

1. United Nations Statistics Division. Indicator 5.5.1(a)- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments [Internet]. United Nations Statistics Division; 2020. Available from: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-05-05-01a.pdf>
2. World Bank. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%) | Data [Internet]. The World Bank: DataBank. [cited 2021 Sep 29]. Available from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS>
3. United Nations Statistics Division. Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators [Internet]. United Nations Statistics Division; 2020. Available from: [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators\\_17%20July%202020\\_web.v2.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_17%20July%202020_web.v2.pdf)
4. Sonia Palmieri. Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice [Internet]. Inter-Parliamentary Union; 2011. Available from: <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2016-07/gender-sensitive-parliaments>