

Step 1: How did women gain the right to vote?

‘Suffragette’, Sarah Gavron, Movie, 2015

The story takes place in London in 1912.

In 1912, men and women did not have the same rights. Fathers and husbands controlled women’s lives. Women couldn’t vote and they couldn’t become Members of Parliament (MPs). They worked and they looked after Britain’s homes and children, but they couldn’t help to make the law of the land. Politics was a man’s world.

The campaign to win the vote for women had grown during the nineteenth century, and by 1900, many MPs believed that women should have the vote. But change was slow. The campaign was too polite, and not enough people were listening.

Suffragette, The fight for women’s right to vote, Level 3, Scholastic, 2015 Pathé production Ltd.

Part one: Emmeline Pankhurst’s speech.**Before watching the movie sequence**

- Who is a ‘suffragette’?

The word ‘suffragette’ comes from the noun ‘suffrage’, which means ‘the right to’. Most British newspapers did not like Mrs. Pankhurst and her new ideas. In 1906, one newspaper called these militant ‘Suffragettes’. It was meant to be a joke, but women liked the word and used it proudly. militant: favouring confrontational or violent methods in support of a political or social cause.

- What movement is Emmeline Pankhurst the leader of?

She started the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903, and called for action not words.



....., and were the Suffragettes colors used for the women’s movement.

Chapter 8: from 40 to 45 minutes

1. Why does EP reject peaceful and legal means in the fight for women suffrage?

Peaceful and legal means to achieve enfranchisement for women in the previous actions

She said: ‘We have been, for years.

Then, we have to distinguish two different movements for women’s suffrage.

2. Underline in the text below the main differences between Suffragists and suffragettes

The Suffragists and the Suffragettes two very different, and often very divided movements.

The suffragists were the broader term referring to the supporters of suffrage for women, more specifically the members of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), formed in 1897 and led for the majority by Millicent **Garrett Fawcett**. NUWSS aimed to achieve enfranchisement for women by **peaceful and legal means, such as bringing petitions and Bills** to parliament, and distributing literature for their Cause.

NUWSS was growing constantly, bringing in large membership figures, but in 1903 **Emmeline Pankhurst**, frustrated at the lack of progress made in getting women the vote, along with her daughters Sylvia, Christabel and Adela, established the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), the members of which became known as the **suffragettes** (around 1906, after a Daily Mail article coined the phrase). (...) the WSPU "revolted against the inertia and conventionalism which seemed to have fastened upon... the NUWSS", and certainly its aims were **to employ more militant, public, and illegal tactics** (...)

General History of Women's Suffrage in Britain, Rebecca Myers | Tuesday 28 May 2013

www.independant.co.uk/news/uk/

1. Give examples of 'militant, public and illegal tactics'.

.....

2. Quote the famous slogan of the suffragettes' strategy.

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3. Explain E.P.'s statement: 'We don't want to be law breakers we want to be law makers'.

Through this statement EP claims that now women must be considered as full They don't wish to delete any rules which are necessary in society. However, women as well as men must have the capacity to make the laws in a country. As a result, women demand rights, and firstly the right to vote.

Part two: Emilie Davison 's action.

Chapter 14- 15: from 1.17 to 1.36

1. Describe Emilie Davison's action at the derby Race.

Show that this action illustrates Pankhurst 's order: 'deeds and sacrifices'.

Suffragettes decided to go to the in order to unfurl their in front of the who participated to the race. One of them, Emilie Davison, a militant suffragette, who had been in prison many times, went under the fence and onto the racetrack. As the king's horse came towards her, she ran to it with the suffragette flag. But the horse ran over Emily and then it too, throwing the jockey to the ground. The suffragette flag lay on the grass, next to Emily's body.

Emily's action illustrates a **deed** when she tried to the suffragette flag. She risked her life by this action and finally her was a **sacrifice** for the women's cause.

2. What can explain the great impact of Emily Davison's action for the women's movement?

.....

3. The final sequence shows when women won the vote around the world.

What does it inspire about the women's vote?

It took to achieve the women's right to vote in all the countries around the world.

It was in place earlier in the countries (the first one was New Zealand in 1893) than in the

..... ones (Nigeria in 1976, Qatar in 2003, Saudi Arabia in 2015).

To conclude

More than just the vote

The suffragettes were not just interested in voting:

- They wanted equal pay for women.
- They wanted protection for women.
- They wanted university education to be open to everyone.

Suffragette, The fight for women's right to vote, Level 3, Scholastic, 2015 Pathé production Ltd.

1. What does 'protection for women' refer to?

.....
.....

2. Apart from politics quote the 3 areas in which women were interested.

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.....

Women in Britain today of course, women in Britain have the vote today.

But they are still not equal.

- In 2015, 25 % of women live with violence at home.
- On average, women earn 20% less than men.
- Education is open to all, but usually boys who take subjects like physics.
- Although women are 51% of the British people, only 29% of Members of Parliament, 25% of judges and 24% of top business people are women.

Suffragette, The fight for women's right to vote, Level 3, Scholastic, 2015 Pathé production Ltd.

1. How can you explain that usually boys take subjects like physics? Use a sociological explanation.

.....

2. Why is the equal right for women unfinished?

Despite the right to vote gender inequalities still in education, in labour and in politics ... especially the underrepresentation of women in the office; which is what we are going to explore now ...

Step 2: Did women gain in political office?

Four issues:

1. Overview: figures on women involved in politics
2. Sources of the women's underrepresentation in politics.
3. The controversial gender quotas method to increase the number of women in politics
4. Outcomes of gender quotas.

Four teams:

- **Team one (3): Alya / Léia / Chiara**

An **interview** between a **journalist** and a **political scientist** and a **statistician**

Topic: *Figures on women involved in politics.*

- **Team two (3): Laetitia / Noa / Ester**

An **interview** between a **journalist** and a **sociologist** and a **political scientist**

Topic: *Sources of the women under-representation in politics.*

- **Team three (6): Carla / Naomi / Lilian (A)/ Margaux / Gatien / Anaïs (B)**

A **debate** between 3 students who are a **politician** / a **feminist** / a **sociologist** in favour of gender quotas in politics and 3 other ones who are a **politician** / a **feminist** / a **sociologist** against gender quotas

Topic: *The controversial gender quotas method to increase the number of women in politics.*

- **Team four (4): Aïda / Lila / Indy / Anna**

An **interview** between a **journalist** and a **feminist** and **two politicians**

Topic: *Outcomes of the gender quotas applying in politics.*

Tasks:

First step: 25.11-2.12.24

1. Read the eight documents in the folder below.
2. Match each underlined expression with its definition given in the list after the documents. Some were studied last year!
3. Depending on your topic, pick out the appropriate information from each document and rephrase it on a sheet of paper.
4. Prepare the oral presentation from the information selected previously: depending on your task write either the interview: questions + answers, or the debate: ideas pros and cons.

Second step: 9.12.24

5. Each team will present its task orally:
 - Students will only be allowed to use their paper prep.
 - Each student should speak roughly 2-3 minutes.
 - The others must take notes from the oral presentation.

NB: you can use an English – French dictionary.

Sum up + vocabulary game: 16.12.24

DOCUMENT 1

In many OECD countries, increasing the number of women in parliament and the number of women appointed (**nommées**) to ministerial positions is an important objective. Greater gender balance amongst politicians can improve the quality and responsiveness of public policy by focusing attention on issues such as equal pay, work-life balance and gender violence. (...) Yet women still face a “**glass ceiling**” blocking their full participation in political life in the legislature and political executive, and remain generally under-represented in politics (OECD, 2014).

(...) Some of the barriers to greater participation of women in parliaments include, for instance, few female candidates and uneven (**inequal**) access to financing, lack of work-life balance, limited political encouragement, lack of commitment to gender balance within parties and **gender stereotypes**. Many OECD countries have introduced **gender quotas** as a mean (often temporary) for increasing women’s political representation to close (**comblent**) historical imbalances, as well as correct for or prevent rollbacks (**revers**) in gender equality. Across OECD countries, quotas are applied mainly during the nomination process (e.g. rules for placing women on party lists or to be nominated in an electoral district). These quotas can be legislated gender quotas (established by the constitution or electoral laws, they reserve a number of places on electoral lists for female candidates) or voluntary party quotas (targets set by political parties to include a certain percentage of women as election candidates).

OECD (2015), “Women in politics”, in *Government at a Glance 2015*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOCUMENT 2

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures>

DOCUMENT 3

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Poster-Women-political-leaders-2024-en.pdf>

DOCUMENT 4

Achieving gender equality in politics is not just about counting the numbers of women in parliament and ministerial positions, but also making sure that women, in diverse situations and conditions, have the opportunity to influence policies in a positive way (OECD, forthcoming). However, although gender-balanced representation is not just a matter of numbers, collecting and publishing gender-disaggregated data is a crucial step towards recognising gender imbalances and disparities, and creating policies that actively foster inclusivity.

Over the past decade, the share of women parliamentarians, increased by 7.5 percentage points on average across OECD countries. As of 2023, the share of women sitting in lower or single house parliaments across the OECD area stood at an average of 33.8%, indicating that gender-balanced representation in parliaments is far from being reached. Only two OECD countries, Mexico and New Zealand, had gender parity in their parliaments as of 2023. Over the past decade, Chile has seen the greatest increase (21.3 p.p.) in the share of female parliamentarians, followed by New Zealand (17.8 p.p.), Colombia (16.8 p.p.), and Australia (13.7 p.p.). In order to improve women's representation in parliaments, OECD countries report taking measures such as introducing mandatory quotas and voluntary targets, mentorships (**mentorat**), networking and capacity-building actions (**actions de réseau et de renforcement de capacité**) for women, and measures to make parliaments more female-friendly workplace (OECD, 2022). Most OECD countries have introduced electoral quotas, which remains a widely used measure for promoting gender equality in parliaments. However, it is important to combine **electoral quotas** with other mechanisms to support gender equality more broadly in case of countries where electoral quotas are introduced.

A gender-balanced cabinet is a strong indicator of a government's commitment to gender equality and ensuring a gender lens is applied in crucial government decisions. As of 2023, on average, women occupied 35.7% of cabinet positions across OECD countries, albeit (**bien que**) with considerable variations across countries. In 2023, 8 out of 38 OECD countries have 50% or more women in their political executive: Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain. In contrast, less than 10% of cabinet ministers in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Japan, and Türkiye are women. Women continue to primarily hold portfolios related to social and cultural policy – most commonly those on women and gender equality, family and children's affairs, social inclusion and development, social protection and social security, and indigenous (**autochtones**) and minority affairs – rather than to those related to energy, defence and home affairs, which are dominated by men (IPU/UN WOMEN, 2023). Achieving gender equality in cabinets, therefore, also pertains (**concerne**) to the allocation of portfolios.

‘Gender equality in politics’, in *Government at a glance*, © OECD 2023

DOCUMENT 5

Unlike their male counterparts, female candidates are exposed to several barriers that may impact their desire to run for elected office. These barriers, which hinder mirror representation, include: sex stereotyping, political socialization, lack of preparation for political activity, and balancing work and family. (...)

Sex stereotyping.

Sex stereotyping assumes that masculine and feminine traits are intertwined (**entremêlés**) with leadership. Hence, the bias leveled against (**parti pris contre**) women stems from (**comes from**) the perception that femininity inherently produces weak leadership. Due to the aggressive and competitive nature of politics, many insist that participation in elected office requires masculine traits. Sex stereotyping is far from being a historical narrative. To be sure, the pressure is on women candidates (not men) to enhance (**strengthen**) their masculine traits in electoral campaigns for the purpose (**goal**) of wooing (**attracting**) support from voters who identify with socially constructed **gender roles**.

Political socialization.

Political socialization is the idea that, during childhood, people are indoctrinated into socially constructed norms of politics. In the case of women's representation in government, it says that sex stereotyping begins at an early age and affects the public's disposition on which genders are fit for public office. **Socialization** agents can include family, school, higher education, mass media, and religion. Each of these agents plays a pivotal role in either fostering (**encouraging**) a desire to enter politics, or dissuading one to do so.

Generally, girls tend to see politics as a "male domain". Newman and White suggest that women who run for political office have been "socialized toward an interest in and life in politics" and that "many female politicians report being born into political families with weak gender-role norms."

Lack of preparation for political activity.

An aftereffect of political socialization is that it determines how inclined women are to pursue careers that may be compatible with formal politics. Careers in law, business, education, and government, professions in which women happen to be minorities, are common occupations for those that later decide to enter public office.

Balancing work and family.

The work life balance is invariably more difficult for women, because they are generally expected by society to act as the primary caregivers for children and maintainers of the home. Due to these demands, it is assumed that women would choose to delay political aspirations until their children are older. Research has shown that new female politicians in Canada and the U.S. are older than their male counterparts. Conversely, a woman may be pushed remain childless in order to seek political office.

DOCUMENT 6

Even though most countries allow women to run for office, women are vastly underrepresented in local and national politics around the world.

As a result, some countries have started affirmative action programs to help women get elected — for example, by reserving a certain number of elected positions for them. These policies are intended to encourage more women to run for office, and to acclimate skeptical voters to the idea that women can make good political leaders.

Since economists like to stick their noses into other disciplines (like politics and sociology), some developmental economists have looked into one such program in India. In a recent post on Vox EU, Lori Beaman, Raghab Chattopadhyay, Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova discuss their own research into the effectiveness of the Indian program. They argue that “reservation policies, by giving voters the ability to observe the effectiveness of women leaders, can pave the way for improving women’s access to political office and reducing statistical discrimination”:

There is strong evidence of gender bias against female leaders in India. Villagers who have never been exposed to a female leader due to the reservation policy evaluate the hypothetical leader significantly worse when the leader is randomly described as a woman. However, villagers, particularly men, who had observed at least one female leader as a result of the quota system showed no evidence of bias against female leaders. If anything, male villagers in these areas rated (évalué) the hypothetical female leader higher than the identical male leader. Thus, mandated (**obligatoire**) exposure to female leaders does help villagers understand that women can be competent leaders. The authors say there is at least initially some resistance to these quotas, but, in the end, prejudice against women candidates seems to subside (**become less intense**). (...)

Political Affirmative Action: Quotas for Women, **Catherine Rampell**, January 12, 2009

economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/12/political-affirmative-action-quotas-for-women/

DOCUMENT 7

(...) For the first time since its adoption last year, the law on political parity (in France), ensuring equal access to political representation for both men and women, has been implemented.

Women have long been underrepresented in French politics. French women have only been able to vote and eligible to serve in office since 1944, significantly later than in countries such as the United States (1920, although they could stand for elections beginning in 1788), Britain (1918), Germany (1918), or even in Sri Lanka (1931). The number of French women in office remained low for 50 years. In 1945, women represented 5% of National Assembly “députés. In 1996, they still made up only 6% of “députés”, although they constituted 53% of the electorate. Following the 1997 legislative elections, women now make up close to 11% of “députés”, but still only 5.9% of senators. (...)

At the local level, women’s representation is even lower. (...)

Electoral Parity

The 1999 law has introduced a de facto quota system for women in French politics (1). Political parties now have to endorse (**accepter**) an equal number of men and women candidates in municipal, legislative and European elections (with the exception of towns of fewer than 3,500 people). Parties failing to meet this requirement either have their lists declared ineligible or, for legislative elections, face financial sanctions. (...) The March municipal elections have shown that applying the law has not always been easy. In some areas of France, meeting the 50% requirement posed a challenge because of a lack of women volunteers. Aspiring mayors of all political shades (**tendances**) have therefore been seeking new women candidates to meet their quotas, and several extreme right lists have had to withdraw for lack of female participation. (...)

The Limits to Parity

The idea of pursuing political parity through strict quotas has not received unanimous support in France. The US experience with **affirmative action**, for example, suggested that forced integration had serious limitations. While few contested the fact that women needed to play a more important role in politics, many were sceptical of the method. The debate has divided both the political world and the feminist movement. In February 1999, 14 prominent women, including philosopher Elisabeth Badinter, lawyer Evelyne Pisier and writer Danièle Sallenave, publicly voiced their opposition to forced parity.

They argued that the reform would undermine (**saper**) the concept of universalism in political representation and therefore open the door to demands from other specific groups based on race, religion, or sexual preference. (...)

But with public opinion behind the reform, and with support from both Socialist Prime Minister Jospin and RPR President Chirac, these critics have had little impact. The constitutional reform was approved by 745 votes to 43, with 48 abstaining.

Achieving political parity, whether through legal means or through a gradual change in attitudes, represents only one facet of a broader social change that will be necessary in France. French women still face open **discrimination** in their professional lives, both in advancement and in salary levels. Although over 56% of women have received higher education, they make up less than 5% of senior managers in the largest 200 French companies and earn on average 20% less than men.

Responding to this problem, the Government has written a law, adopted on 24 April 2000, mandating negotiations on professional parity within companies and sectors. The discussion of gender inequalities in politics and business also masks the more fundamental issue of the unequal **division of tasks at home**. A government study conducted in 1999 has confirmed that women still bear 80% of domestic tasks.

Working women still spent over three hours on domestic tasks every day. This is only four minutes less than in 1986, and still a staggering (**étonnant**) two hours more than their male counterparts. This heavy burden of work at home remains a practical obstacle for women wishing to take on political and corporate responsibilities. "Responsibilities for day-to-day life still rest on women," said Elisabeth Guigou, now Minister of Labor. "Day-to-day life is particularly difficult for a woman politician since politics is one of the activities that least respects the rhythms of private time."

Only the Communist Party so far has addressed this issue—it now provides domestic support to its female candidates with children during electoral campaigns. At work as in politics, parity will have to start at home.

French Women in Politics: The Long Road to Parity

Caroline Lambert Tuesday, May 1, 2001, *Caroline Lambert is a freelance writer based in London*

(1) On June 28, 1999, articles 3 and 4 of the French Constitution were amended. The law promoting equal access for men and women to elected positions was adopted on June 6, 2000.

DOCUMENT 8

Many Americans might be surprised to learn that Afghanistan has a larger percentage of women in its national legislative body than the United States does, according to an analysis from the World Bank. In 2015, 19.4 percent of our members of Congress were female compared to 28 percent of Afghanistan's national legislators. A 2015 report from the Pew Research Center shows that the U.S. ranked 83rd of 137 countries for its share of women holding office in a national legislature in 2014.

Some scholars credit gender quotas for helping improve the representation of women in politics in various countries, including Afghanistan. Since Argentina passed a law in the 1990s aimed at advancing women's representation, dozens of countries have taken the controversial step of adopting gender quotas — policies requiring that a certain portion of political candidates or legislators be female, according to a 2015 study published in *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. That study shows that the number of nations with gender quotas increased from nine in 1995 to 43 in 2010. Drude Dahlerup, a political science professor at Stockholm University in Sweden, has written about the pros and cons of electoral quotas, an affirmative action strategy that is not used in the U.S.

While quotas have been successful in ensuring more women enter their country's legislatures, little research has been done to determine whether this type of reform helps women become elected to leadership posts within their political parties at a higher rate. On one hand, some scholars hypothesize that quotas increase the number of women in political party leadership by expanding the number of female candidates who are eligible for such posts, and also by mobilizing support for a female leader. In contrast, other scholars have hypothesized that having "quota women" could lead to "**stigmatization** and **backlash** (**negatif**) effects" that could undermine attempts to place more women in leadership roles.

A 2016 study published in the *American Political Science Review* examines this issue. For the study, "Gender Quotas and Women's Political Leadership," Diana Z. O'Brien of Indiana University and Johanna Rickne of the Research Institute for Industrial Economics looked at 15 years of data on local leadership appointments in Sweden's largest political party. They focused on political leadership before and after the Swedish Social Democratic Party imposed a gender quota on 290 municipal branches of the party in 1994.

The study's key findings include:

Having a gender quota helped women obtain party leadership positions. The quota "both immediately and permanently improved women's access to leadership positions in municipalities where fewer women had previously held elected office."

Having a quota did not seem to influence women's chances of maintaining a leadership post once they acquired it.

Having a gender quota strengthened the pool of qualified women eligible for party leadership roles. More qualified, better educated women entered politics after the quota was implemented relative to the number of qualified men.

The quota did not increase the diversity of women in leadership roles with respect to age, education or income. Overall, the generational, educational and income levels of women in power remained unchanged before and after the quota.

This research helps dispel (**dissiper**) the myth that legislative gender quotas have a backlash effect on women obtaining higher positions of power in their political parties, at least in Sweden. There, quotas not only increased the number of women in legislatures, but also seemed to further promote women into leadership roles in the broader political system. The authors of the study suggest that future research should build upon this study by determining whether other countries and political systems have experienced similar outcomes.

Gender quotas: Do they increase the number of women in politics, party leadership positions?

Definitions

.....

Men and women do different types of domestic tasks/ chores in a family. For instance, women dominate in washing clothes and ironing while men spend more time in gardening than women.

.....

It means the process by which we learn acceptable cultural beliefs and behaviour or we learn the cultural values, norms and social practices.

.....

Quotas in politics may be defined as an affirmative measure which establishes a fixed percentage for the nomination or representation of a specific group. They are generally used to increase the participation of this group in decision-making positions and most often take the form of a “critical minimum”, such as 20, 30 or 40 per cent.

Quotas can be designed as either gender-specific or gender-neutral. Whereas quotas for women normally require a minimum number or percentage of women among candidates for a political office, gender-neutral quota systems set both a minimum and maximum for both genders (typically no more than 60 per cent and no less than 40 per cent of positions for either gender). It is interesting to note that in some countries, gender-neutral quotas have actually led to men moving up on lists so that the quota could be fulfilled.

The term “parity” (“parité” in French) is often used in the context of gender quotas. French authors tend to distinguish parity reforms calling for 50% of candidacies reserved for women from quota reforms which require a certain minimum percentage. For some, parity is not only a practical measure, but also a general principle of democracy. However, in many European countries parity and quota measures are seen as complementary or even as equivalent.

[European Parliamentary Research Service Blog](#), Posted by [EPRSLibrary](#) · October 4, 2012 ·

.....

The process by which people learn how to act in feminine or masculine way.

.....

These are one-sided and exaggerated images of men and women which are deployed repeatedly in everyday life.

.....

It refers to the guidance, support, and encouragement provided by women to other women,

.....

Affirmative action or positive discrimination (known as employment equity in Canada, reservation in India and Nepal, and positive action in the UK) is the policy of favoring members of a disadvantaged group who are perceived to suffer from discrimination within a culture.

The nature of positive discrimination policies varies from region to region. Some countries, such as India, use a quota system, whereby a certain percentage of jobs or school vacancies must be set aside (**reservés**) for members of a certain group. In some other regions, specific quotas do not exist; instead, members of minorities are given preference in selection processes.

Origins

The term “affirmative action” was first used in the United States in Executive Order 10925 and was signed by President John F. Kennedy on 6 March 1961. It was used to promote actions that achieve non-discrimination. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued Executive Order 11246 which required government employers to take “affirmative action” to “hire without regard to race, religion and national origin”. In 1967, sex was added to the anti-discrimination list.

<http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/sharamkohan1/affirmative-action/>

.....

Treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.

.....

The expression “the glass ceiling” first appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1986 and was then used in the title of an academic article by A.M. Morrison and others published in 1987. Entitled “Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations?”, it looked at the persistent failure of women to climb as far up the corporate ladder as might be expected from their representation in the working population as a whole. The idea behind the expression was that a transparent barrier, a glass ceiling, blocked them. Invisible from the bottom, when women started their careers, it was steely strong in stopping them attaining equality with men later on. It helped explain the fact that in large corporations in Europe and North America women rarely came to account for more than 10% of senior executives and 4% of CEOs and chairmen.

The economist, May 5th 2009 | Online extra

Step 2: Did women gain in political office?

Sum up

Fill in the sentences

1. Figures on women involved in politics.

Women's equal participation and leadership in political and public life are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. However, data show that women arerepresented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender parity in political life is far off.

Women in executive government positions

As of 1 June 2024, **there are 27 countries where 28 women serve as Heads of State and/or Government.** At the current rate, gender equality in the highest positions of power will not be reached for another 130 years. (...)

Data compiled data by UN Women show that **women represent 23.3 per cent of Cabinet members heading Ministries**, leading a policy area as of 1 January 2024. (...)

The five most commonly held portfolios by women Cabinet Ministers are Women and gender equality, followed by Family and children affairs, Social inclusion and development, Social protection and social security, and Indigenous and minority affairs.

Women in national parliaments

(...) **Only 26.9 per cent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses are women, up from 11 per cent in 1995.**

Women in local government

Data from 141 countries show that women constitute more than 3 million **(35.5 per cent) of elected members in local deliberative bodies**. Only three countries have reached 50 per cent. (...)

Expanding participation

While most countries in the world have not achieved gender parity, gender have substantially contributed to progress over the years. In countries with legislated candidate quotas, women's representation is five percentage points and seven percentage points higher in parliaments and local government, respectively, compared to countries without such legislation. There is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes them.

For example, research on *panchayats* (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 per cent higher than in those with men-led councils.



A village council head from a village in Alwar district of Rajasthan in India attends a meeting organized by UN Women's partner The Hunger Project, to develop her leadership skills. Women get together to discuss priority issues and find solutions to problems such as alcoholism, lack of roads or drinking water.

Photo: UN Women/Ashutosh Negi

In Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures>

2. Sources of the women's underrepresentation in politics.

Invisible barriers – the so-called- prevent women from reaching political office. Sources of their underrepresentation are:

- **Political**: during the primaryeach agent of this process plays a pivotal role in either children to enter politics, or one to do so. Generally, girls tend to see politics as a "..... domain" because of the process by which they have learnt how to act in a feminine way.
- Entering politics requires the ability to and to be, traits which are broadly assigned to Conversely, women are perceived to not possess these talents which are necessary in the political power field. **These gender** may derive from the process by which people learn how to act in a feminine or masculine way.
- **Lack of work-life balance**: it is established that **unequal** at home is unequal at home. Women bear domestic chores than men. Hence, this heavy burden of work at home remains a practical for women wishing to take on political responsibilities.

3. The controversial gender quotas method to increase the number of women in politics.

Cons

- Gender quotas undermine the concept of in political representation. In other words, they are against the principle of equal opportunity for all, since women are given preference over men.
- Quotas imply that politicians are elected because of their gender, not because of their and that more qualified candidates are pushed
- Many women do not want to get elected just because they are women. Because “quota women” could lead to ‘.....’ of the women groups and therefore generate effects that could undermine attempts to place more women in leadership roles.
- Quotas may reduce the..... of political offer. For instance In France in 2001, aspiring mayors of all political shades have had to seek women candidates to meet their quotas, and several lists have had to for lack of female participation. In this case gender quotas are

Pros

- Quotas for women do not discriminate, but for actual barriers that prevent women from their fair share of the political seats.
- Women's experiences are in political life.
- Election is about representation, not educational
- Women are just as qualified as men, but women's qualifications are downgraded and minimized in a-dominated political system.
- The Swedish study shows that legislative gender quotas don't have a effect on women obtaining higher positions of power in their political parties, at least in Sweden.
- Through reservation policies in India, the gender quotas help to fight a stronger gender against women. It has been proven that the mandated exposure to female leaders does help voters understand that women can be competent leaders.

4. Outcomes of gender quotas

- During the municipal elections in France in 2001 meeting the 50% requirement posed a challenge because of a of women volunteers. Aspiring mayors of all political shades have therefore been seeking new women candidates to meet their quotas, and several extreme right lists have had to withdraw for lack of female participation.
- India's reservation policies, by giving voters the ability to observe the effectiveness of women leaders, can pave the way for improving women's access to political office and reducing statistical For instance, villagers, particularly men, who had observed at least one female leader as a result of the quota system showed no evidence of bias against female leaders.
- The Swedish study's key findings include:
 - Having a gender quota helped women party leadership positions. Having a quota did not seem to influence women's chances of maintaining a leadership post once they acquired it.
 - Having a gender quota strengthened the pool of qualified women eligible for party leadership roles. More qualified, better educated women entered politics after the quota was implemented relative to the number of qualified men. The quota did not increase the diversity of women in leadership roles with respect to age, education or income.
 - Quotas not only increased the number of women in legislatures, but also seemed to further women into leadership roles in the broader political system.