

SHAKING THE TREE

Strategic Objective 4

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Strategic Objective 4

Balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making is essential for a well-functioning democracy.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY
2018-2023



Addressing the democratic deficit



<https://www.djjs.org>

- ▶ Women's under-representation in public and political life remains a critical issue.
- ▶ It undermines the full functioning of democratic institutions and processes, it is an obstacle to women's empowerment and a barrier for economic growth and sustainable development.

Council of Europe seeks to:

- ▶ Support member States in achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making including through the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies and policies;
- ▶ Monitor the implementation by members and ensure the visibility and dissemination of data and good practices;
- ▶ Encourage actions to facilitate women's participation in elections at the national, regional and local levels, as well as actions to empower both women candidates and elected officials - including women from marginalised groups - in co-operation with relevant bodies of the Council of Europe;
- ▶ Identify and support measures and good practices that promote gender equality in relation to: electoral systems, training of decision-makers in both public institutions and political parties, gender-sensitive functioning of decision-making bodies, setting parity thresholds, adoption of effective quota laws and voluntary party quotas, and the regulation of political parties including public funding.

The situation in Malta: Pessimistic ... but encouraging



- ▶ Female representation in the Maltese Parliament remained stuck between 10%-13% since 1950.
- ▶ Women at the helm of decision-making bodies and political organisations are very few (hence no critical mass).
- ▶ Malta achieved a gender-balance in the European Parliament representation in 2014.

Some turning points:

- ▶ 1947: Women's suffrage; first female MP Agatha Barbara.
- ▶ 1950: First female Minister, appointed.
- ▶ 1976: First female Nationalist MP (Anne Agius Ferrante).
- ▶ 1982: Barbara became 1st female President of the Republic
- ▶ Late 1990s: First time parties introduced quotas within their structures.
- ▶ 2014: 1/3 of the Maltese MEPs were female
- ▶ 2014: Marie Louise Coleiro Preca became the 2nd female President of the Republic.
- ▶ 2017: Gender quotas reforms pledged in the electoral manifesto of winning party.
- ▶ 2017: Dr Marlene Farrugia became the first party leader elected to parliament on behalf of PD (which contested on PN ticket).



**SINCE 1950 FEMALE REPRESENTATION STUCK @
10-13% (approx.)**

Rank	Country	Date	W	A	IPU	W	A	IPU
"	Georgia	08.10.2016	150	24	16.0%	—	—	—
"	Latvia	04.10.2014	100	16	16.0%	—	—	—
"	Libya	25.06.2014	188	30	16.0%	—	—	—
"	Uzbekistan	21.12.2014	150	24	16.0%	13.01.2015	100	17
131	Russian Federation	18.09.2016	450	71	15.8%	N.A.	170	29
132	Jordan	20.09.2016	130	20	15.4%	27.09.2016	65	10
133	Chad	13.02.2011	177	27	15.3%	—	—	—
134	Cambodia	29.07.2018	125	19	15.2%	25.02.2018	62	11
135	Paraguay	22.04.2018	80	12	15.0%	22.04.2018	45	8
136	Egypt	17.10.2015	596	89	14.9%	—	—	—
137	Malaysia	09.05.2018	223	31	13.9%	N.A.	68	15
138	Guinea-Bissau	13.04.2014	102	14	13.7%	—	—	—
139	Saint Kitts and Nevis	16.02.2015	15	2	13.3%	—	—	—
140	Syrian Arab Republic	13.04.2016	250	33	13.2%	—	—	—
141	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	09.12.2015	23	3	13.0%	—	—	—
142	Bahamas	24.05.2017	39	5	12.8%	24.05.2017	16	7
143	Ghana	07.12.2016	275	35	12.7%	—	—	—
"	Guatemala	06.09.2015	158	20	12.7%	—	—	—
145	Hungary	08.04.2018	199	25	12.6%	—	—	—
146	Palau	01.11.2016	16	2	12.5%	01.11.2016	13	2
147	Sierra Leone	07.03.2018	146	18	12.3%	—	—	—
"	Ukraine	26.10.2014	423	52	12.3%	—	—	—
149	Liechtenstein	05.02.2017	25	3	12.0%	—	—	—
150	Malta	03.06.2017	67	8	11.9%	—	—	—
151	India	07.04.2014	542	64	11.8%	16.01.2018	237	27
152	Mauritius	10.12.2014	69	8	11.6%	—	—	—
153	Congo	16.07.2017	151	17	11.3%	31.08.2017	71	14
154	Antigua and Barbuda	21.03.2018	18	2	11.1%	26.03.2018	17	9
155	Burkina Faso	29.11.2015	127	14	11.0%	—	—	—
156	Brazil	05.10.2014	513	55	10.7%	05.10.2014	81	12
157	Cote d'Ivoire	18.12.2016	255	27	10.6%	25.03.2018	66	8
158	Nauru	09.07.2016	19	2	10.5%	—	—	—
159	Gambia	06.04.2017	58	6	10.3%	—	—	—
160	Myanmar	08.11.2015	433	44	10.2%	08.11.2015	221	23

- ▶ Lack of progress resulted in Malta slipping down on the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) rankings**, where it is now in the 150th place out of 193 nations (2018).
- ▶ In the *Global Gender Gap Report 2017*, in relation to ‘political empowerment’ of women, Malta ranked 85th out of 144 countries.

Source: <https://www.ipu.org/>

The Promise & The Plan:

- ▶ 2017: Commitment to introduce measures that will help achieve a gender-balanced Parliament.
- ▶ 2018: Appointment of a Technical Committee to prepare a consultation document (Green Paper).
- ▶ Autumn 2018: Publication of Green Paper.
- ▶ Late 2018- early 2019: Public discussion of Green Paper with the participation of all stakeholders
- ▶ Spring 2019: Revised document presented to Cabinet.



Aiming towards a Gender-balanced Parliament: Proposals to address the gender imbalance

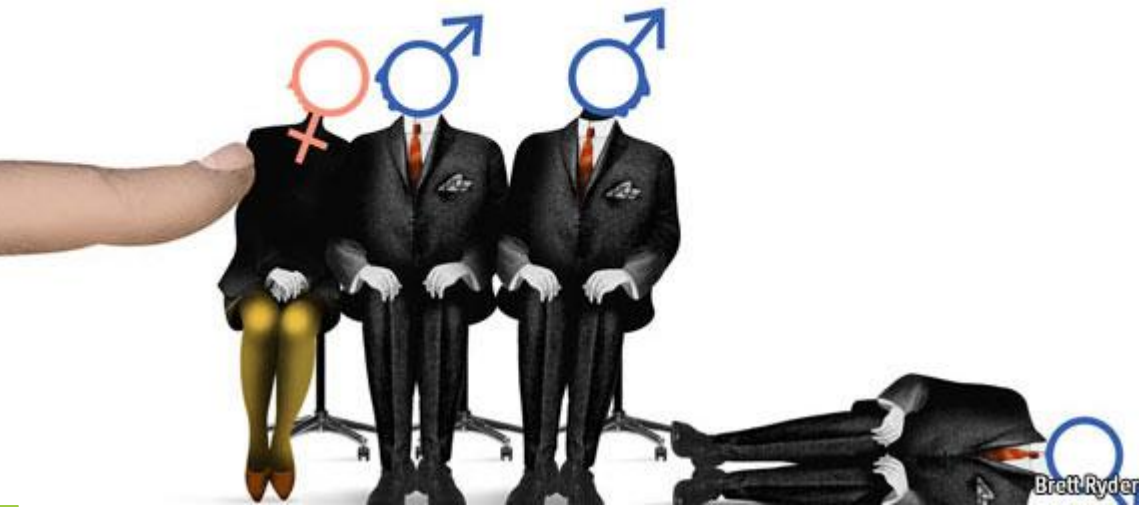


Source: www.electoral.gov.mt

- ▶ Political party to be incentivised to increase participation at the recruitment and campaign stages.
- ▶ Gender auditing as a new remit of the Electoral Commission, that must become itself gender-balanced.
- ▶ A gender balanced way of presenting the ballot list (Zipper).
- ▶ A set of legal (and Constitutional) amendments to address the gender imbalance in parliament
- ▶ Measures will ensure a long-term impact.

The Proposals will refer to the UNDER-REPRESENTED SEX

Challenges



<http://www.jenniferwittwer.com>

- ▶ Fear that positive measures undermine male incumbents;
- ▶ Lack of sensitization and openness;
- ▶ The fragmentation of civil society;
- ▶ Lack of strategic collaboration;
- ▶ Polarized divisions;
- ▶ Populist perspectives that tend to trivialise women's rights;
- ▶ If we do not take the opportunity to 'seize the day'.

Our Hope: Shaking the Tree



We should suspect a system of representation that routinely restricts power to a particular group, usually middle-aged and older men

Rian Voet, author

Female representation is vital for the consolidation and strengthening of democratic practice.



Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step It Up for Gender Equality