

**Quotas for Women in Elected Politics:
Measures to Increase Women's Political Representation Worldwide**

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Women form more than half the population, but constitute only a small minority of elected representatives. According to the most recent figures, they occupy slightly more than 17% of all seats in national parliaments around the world (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007b). However, attention to global averages masks important variations. Countries like Rwanda, Sweden, and Costa Rica have nearly equal numbers of male and female parliamentarians, while states like Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have no women in their parliaments at all. Further, a focus on aggregate numbers does not acknowledge the important increases made over the last several years in a number of countries around the world. In Asia, two of the most notable cases are East Timor, where women now constitute 28% of all representatives, and Afghanistan, where they make up slightly more than 27% (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007a). In this and other regions of the world, a crucial impetus for change has been the adoption of quota policies to facilitate the selection and election of female candidates to political office. Yet, not all quotas are equally successful in increasing women's political representation: some countries experience dramatic increases following the adoption of new quota regulations, while others see more modest changes or even setbacks in the proportion of women elected to national assemblies. To explore the role that quotas may play in promoting women in political decision-making, this paper will review the various forms quotas take around the world, patterns in their adoption, and reasons why some policies are more successful than others in bringing more women into elected office. It will conclude with recommendations for promoting women's political representation in Malaysia, based on experiences with quotas worldwide.

Gender Quota Policies

Gender quota policies take three main forms: reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas. They vary in terms of their basic characteristics, the countries in which they appear, and the timing of their adoption (see Table 1). Nonetheless, they do share striking similarities in terms of their diffusion across the globe. In the fifty years between 1930 and 1980, only ten states established quotas, followed by twelve additional countries in the 1980s. In the 1990s, however, quotas appeared in more than fifty states, which have been joined by nearly forty more countries since the year 2000 (Krook 2006b, 312-313). As a result, more than one hundred countries now have some sort of quota policy, with more than seventy-five percent of these measures being passed during the last fifteen years. These policies stem in part from changes in domestic circumstances, including partisan and electoral realignment, regime change, and war. However, they also reflect – and in some cases are motivated by – growing international norms regarding the need to promote women's political representation (Krook 2006b; Towns 2004).

The major international actor in this regard has been the United Nations (UN), which has since its founding played a major role in promoting women's right to run for elected office. As early as 1946, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 56 (1) recommending that all member states adopt measures to grant women the same political rights as men. As a consequence, the first meetings convened to support the work of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women were seminars to increase the participation of women in public life in 1957, 1959, and 1960. In 1979, the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) included a commitment by governments to foster women's full and equal participation in political and public life. This pledge was extended in the Platform for Action signed at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, which called on governments to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making. In 2000, the special

needs of women in conflict zones were recognized through the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which appealed to member states to take steps to ensure women's participation in post-conflict regimes. Similar efforts have been made by other international organizations, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Socialist International, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the Organization of American States.

Although these measures have spread rapidly around the world in recent years, there are important variations among individual quota policies. *Reserved seats* are measures that literally set aside places for women in political assemblies. They are often established through constitutional reforms that establish separate electoral rolls for women, designate separate districts for female candidates, or distribute seats for women to parties based on their proportion of the popular vote. In this way, they guarantee women's presence in politics by revising mechanisms of election to mandate a minimum number of female representatives. However, this proportion is often very low, usually less than ten percent of all seats, although there are important exceptions, like the thirty percent policy that was adopted in Tanzania. Reserved seats first appeared in the 1930s, but have emerged as recently as 2005, as they have become an increasingly prominent solution in countries with very low levels of female parliamentary representation. They are concentrated geographically in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. In some states, there are no quotas at the national level, but quotas are used very effectively at the local level, as in India and Namibia.

Party quotas are measures adopted voluntarily by political parties to require a certain proportion of women among their parties' candidates. They are generally established through reforms to individual party statutes. Given their origins with political parties, they differ from reserved seats in that they apply to slates of candidates for a single party, rather than the final proportion of women elected overall. Further, they generally mandate a much higher proportion of women, usually between twenty-five and fifty percent. Party quotas were first adopted in the early 1970s by various left-wing parties in Western Europe. Today they are the most common type of quota, as they have now appeared in parties across the political spectrum and in all regions of the world. They continue to be the most prevalent measure employed in Western Europe. However, they also frequently coexist with legislative quotas in Africa and Latin America, where party quotas predate or accompany the adoption of more encompassing quota laws.

Legislative quotas, finally, are measures passed by national parliaments that require all parties to nominate a certain proportion of female candidates. They are typically enacted through reforms to the electoral law, but in some cases they also involve constitutional reform. Similar to party quotas, they address candidate selection processes, rather than the number of women elected. Unlike party quotas, however, they are mandatory provisions that apply to all political groupings, rather than simply those who choose to adopt quotas. In most countries, they call for women to constitute between twenty-five and fifty percent of all candidates. Legislative quotas are the newest type of quota, appearing first in the early 1990s, but have become increasingly common as more and more countries adopt quota policies. With some notable exceptions, these measures tend to be found in developing countries, particularly in Latin America, and/or in post-conflict societies, primarily in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeastern Europe. In many countries, they coexist with – or supersede – provisions for party quotas.

Gender Quota Adoption

The rapid diffusion of gender quota policies raises the question: how and why these measures have been adopted in diverse countries around the world? Cases around the world suggest four possible explanations (Krook 2006b; Krook 2007). The first is that *women mobilize for quotas to*

increase women's representation. This usually occurs when women's groups realize that quotas are an effective – and maybe the only – means for increasing women's political representation. These women may include women's organizations inside political parties, women's movements in civil society, women's groups in other countries, and even individual women close to powerful men. In all of these instances, women's groups pursue quotas for both normative and pragmatic reasons. They believe that there should be more women in politics in order to promote justice, further women's interests, and tap women's resources for the benefit of the broader society (Phillips 1995). In the absence any 'natural' trend towards change, however, these women recognize that this is likely to be achieved only through specific, targeted actions to promote female candidates.

The second explanation is that *political elites adopt quotas for strategic reasons*, generally related to competition with other parties. Various case studies suggest, for example, that party elites often adopt quotas when one of their rivals adopts them (Caul 2001; Meier 2004). This concern may be heightened if the party seeks to overcome a long period in opposition or a dramatic decrease in popularity. In other contexts, elites view quotas as a way to demonstrate some sort of commitment to women without really intending to alter existing patterns of inequality, or alternatively, as a means to promote other political ends, like maintaining control over political rivals within or outside the party. If these motives are correct, the adoption of quotas may be less about empowering women in politics and more about how quotas fit in – perhaps serendipitously – with various other struggles among political elites.

The third is that *quotas are adopted when they mesh with existing or emerging notions of equality and representation.* Evidence indicates that gender quotas are compatible in distinct ways with a number of normative frameworks. Some scholars view quota adoption as consistent with ideas about equality and fair access. They point out that left-wing parties are generally more open to measures such as quotas because these match with their more general goals of social equality. Others interpret quotas as a method to recognize difference and the need for proportional representation. Quotas for women are thus a logical extension of guarantees given to other groups based on linguistic, religious, racial, and other cleavages. A final observation is that quotas tend to emerge during periods of democratic innovation. In these countries, quotas may be seen as a way to establish the legitimacy of the new political system during democratic transition or the creation of new democratic institutions. Taken together, these arguments analyze quotas in relation to their 'fit' with features of the political context: they do not reflect principled concerns to empower women or pragmatic strategies to win or maintain power.

The fourth explanation is that *quotas are supported by international norms and spread through transnational sharing.* Over the last ten years, a variety of international organizations – including the United Nations, the Socialist International, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the Organization of American States – have issued declarations recommending that all member-states aim for thirty percent women in all political bodies. These norms shape national quota debates in at least four ways (Krook 2006b). International imposition occurs in cases where international actors are directly involved in quota adoption by deciding to apply quotas themselves or by compelling national leaders to do so themselves. Transnational emulation takes place in cases where local women's movements and transnational non-governmental organizations share information on quota strategies across national borders. International tipping appears in cases where international events provide new sources of leverage in national debates, shifting the balance in favor of local and transnational actors pressing for quota adoption. International blockage, finally, happens in cases where international actors seek to prevent the adoption of gender quotas, despite mobilization by local women's groups and transnational NGOs in favor of these policies.

Gender Quota Implementation

Quota measures are diverse, and thus differences in their impact are to be expected (see Table 2). However, pinpointing why some quotas are more effective than others is a complicated task: in addition to features of specific quota policies, which affect their likelihood of being implemented, quotas are introduced when variations already exist in the percentage of women in national parliaments. Cross-national variations are thus the combined result of quotas – where they are present – and other political, social, and economic factors that were often at work before quotas were established. As a result, quotas do not simply lead to gains proportional to the quota policy, but also interact, both positively and negatively, with various features of the broader political context.

Three broad explanations have been offered to untangle these effects. The first links variations in quota implementation to *details of quota measures themselves*. Some scholars connect quota impact to the type of measure involved. Although most studies agree that reserved seats generally produce small changes in women's representation (Chowdhury 2002; but see Norris 2006), some claim that party quotas are more effective than other types of quotas because they are voluntary measures, adopted from concerns about electoral advantage (Leijenaar 1997). Others insist that legislative quotas are more effective because they bind all political parties, rather than merely those who choose to adopt quotas, and are enforced by state bureaucracies and the courts, rather than only party leaders (Jones 1998).

More recent work delves deeper into variations within and across types. These scholars argue that the impact of gender quotas stems from the wording of the quota, whether the language used in the policy strengthens the quota requirement or reduces ambiguity or vagueness regarding the process of implementation; the requirements of the quota, whether the policy specifies where female candidates should be placed and to which elections the policy applies; the sanctions of the quota, whether the policy establishes organs for reviewing and enforcing quota requirements and procedures for punishing or rectifying non-compliance; and the perceived legitimacy of the quota, whether the policy is viewed as legal or constitutional from the point of view of national and international law.

A second explanation relates the impact of quotas to *the 'fit' between quota measures and existing institutional frameworks*. Most studies in this vein focus on characteristics of the electoral system, examining how electoral rules facilitate or hinder the potentially positive effect of quotas on women's representation. They observe that quotas have the greatest impact in proportional representation electoral systems with closed lists and high district magnitudes (Caul 1999; Htun and Jones 2002), although they also identify idiosyncratic features of particular electoral systems that negatively affect quota implementation, including the possibility for parties to run more than one list in each district (Costa Benavides 2003), the existence of distinct electoral systems for different types of elections (Jones 1998), and the chance for parties to nominate more candidates than the number of seats available (Htun 2002).

Other scholars consider features of the political party system, as well as the characteristics of parties themselves, to discern partisan dynamics that aid or subvert quota implementation. They argue that quotas are more likely to have an impact in party systems where several parties co-exist and larger parties respond to policy innovations initiated by smaller parties (Kolinsky 1991; Stykárzdóttir 1986), as well as in parties with left-wing ideologies where the party leadership is able to enforce party or national regulations (Caul 1999; Davidson-Schmich 2006). Still others observe higher rates of implementation across all parties in countries where the political culture emphasizes sexual difference and group representation (Meier 2004), and lower rates of compliance in countries where the political culture stresses sexual equality and individual representation (Inheteven 1999).

A third explanation outlines the *actors who support and oppose quotas and their respective roles in guaranteeing or undermining quota implementation*. Much of this literature focuses on political party elites as the group most directly responsible for variations in the impact of quotas, since the effective application of quotas largely hinges around elites' willingness to recruit female candidates. Most accounts expose the ways that elites seek to mitigate quota impact through passive refusal to enforce quotas to more active measures to subvert their intended effect (Araújo 2003; Costa Benavides 2003), to the point of even committing large-scale electoral fraud and widespread intimidation of female candidates (Delgadillo 2000; Human Rights Watch 2004).

Many also mention other actors who play a direct or indirect role in enforcing quota provisions, including women's organizations both inside and outside the political parties who pressure elites to comply with quota provisions, distribute information on quota regulations both to elites and the general public, and train female candidates to negotiate better positions on their respective party lists (Camacho Granados et al 1997; Durrieu 1999); national and international courts who provide an arena to challenge non-compliance and require parties to redo lists that do not comply with the law (Jones 2004; Villanueva Flores 2003); and ordinary citizens who engage in public scrutiny of parties' selection practices through reports and reprimands that lead elites to honor and even exceed quota commitments (Baldez 2004; Kolinsky 1991).

Quota Experiences and Recommendations for Malaysia

Diverse experiences with quotas around the world offer a number of insights for promoting women's political representation in Malaysia. An overview of these policies reveals that the issue of women's representation has now reached the political agenda in countries around the world, leading a wide range of actors to engage in quota campaigns over the last several years. Viewing these cases together, it is clear that political action plays a crucial role in shaping women's access to political office. Most obviously, patterns in quota adoption and implementation challenge the idea that increases in the number of women in politics may occur 'naturally,' as the simple result of time and changing social and economic conditions. However, while quota adoption appears to be a major reason for these recent shifts in representation in recent years, it is important to recognize that not all quotas have their intended effects. Many produce increases, but others result in stagnation and even decreases, in the numbers of women elected to political office. These variations suggest that quotas are not a panacea, but constitute a crucial step forward for women's political empowerment.

They also indicate that designing more effective gender quotas requires attention to three features: the design of quota policies, the 'fit' between quotas and broader political structures, and the relative balance between actors who support and oppose quota policies. Although these features may fit together in a number of different ways, it is possible to pinpoint some general characteristics of successful quota policies. Because reserved seats have guaranteed effects, they tend to bring more women into political office when (1) they set aside higher numbers of seats for women, and (2) they serve as a springboard rather than a ceiling on the election of women to non-reserved seats. Party quotas, in comparison, usually have a greater impact on the numbers of women elected to political office when (1) many parties, especially several larger parties, adopt these policies; (2) the quotas adopted call for a relatively high proportion of women to be nominated as party candidates; and (3) quotas are framed in ways that link them to well-understood and widely accepted cultural practices and traditions. Legislative quotas, finally, tend to result in increases in women's representation when (1) these laws require a relatively high proportion of female candidates to be nominated by political parties; (2) these laws strictly bind the behavior of parties or, alternatively, create positive incentives for parties to nominate more women; and (3) women's groups continue to monitor compliance with

these policies, through legal and political means if necessary, to ensure that parties implement quotas to their fullest degree.

This evidence suggests two possible ways forward for achieving the goal of thirty percent female representation in Malaysia. The parliament consists of two chambers: a House of Commons, whose members are elected through a first-past-the-post electoral system, and a Senate, whose members are appointed by a combination of state legislative assemblies and the king. At the moment, women currently make up 9.1% of the House of Commons (20 of 219 members) and 25.7% of the Senate (18 of 70 members).

One way to increase the numbers of women in both houses would be to establish a system of *reserved seats*. In the House of Commons, one-third of all seats (that is, 73 seats) could be set aside for women. Alternatively, the total number of seats in the chamber could be increased to avoid displacing male incumbents, while also reserving thirty percent of all spaces for women, although this would bring to the total number of seats close to 300. The first type of proposal was adopted in 2005 in Tanzania, where women currently constitute 30.4% of all parliamentarians. However, similar proposals have met with strong opposition in India, where bills to reserve one-third of all seats for women have been repeatedly blocked by male incumbents, despite being introduced in all sessions of parliament since 1996. As a result, the percentage of women in the lower house of parliament remains far below the world average at 8.3%. The second type of proposal has been implemented in Bangladesh, where legislators simply added 45 new seats to the existing 300 seats in 2004 in order to include women but not exclude the men who were already sitting in parliament. This policy led to an increase in women's representation from 2.0% in 2001 to 15.1% by 2005.

For appointments to the Senate, state legislatures could be required to nominate one woman among the two representatives they send to the upper house. This proposal would guarantee that women at least constitute 18.6% of all Senators. Similar policies have been adopted in Afghanistan and Uganda, although in both cases, these arrangements apply to elected rather than nominated positions. In Afghanistan, the two women who win the most votes in each province are elected, regardless of how their percentage of votes compares to those garnered by male candidates. As a result, women's representation reached 27.3% in the lower house and 22.5% in the upper house in the first post-Taliban elections in 2005. In Uganda, one seat has been reserved for a woman in each electoral district since 1986. Combined with a policy stating that women may run for the reserved seats only once – after which they are expected to have gained the requisite political experience to run for a non-reserved seat – the number of women in parliament in this country has now risen to 29.8%. Reforms along these lines may be easier to implement than changes in the mode of election to the House of Commons, as the relatively high proportion of women who are already serving in the Senate suggests that there may already be some informal policies in place to ensure women's representation. To guarantee and even increase these numbers, it is crucial that such policies – if they exist – are made formal, to avoid a future drop in the proportion of women.

A second way to increase the numbers of women in both houses would be to establish a system of *legislative quotas*. In the House of Commons, parties could be required – either through reform of the constitution and/or the electoral law – to nominate at least 30% female candidates. However, legislators should take great care to stipulate how this quota should be implemented by the parties, as well as how this implementation would be monitored and enforced. Most legislative quota policies around the world establish that political parties should select 30% women. However, this same requirement has produced enormous variations in the actual numbers of women elected (see Table 2). Two success stories in this regard are Argentina and Costa Rica. In Argentina, a law was passed in 1991 that specified that parties were to nominate at least 30% women in list positions where they were likely to be elected. Initially, most parties selected 30% women but ignored the second requirement to place female candidates in 'electable' positions. Over the course of the 1990s,

this sparked a series of constitutional and legal debates – and led to a number of presidential decrees – that clarified the precise requirements of the quota law, including the placement of women and the procedures for rectifying non-compliance. With these stricter interpretations, the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament increased overall from 6% in 1991 to 35% in 2005. When these provisions applied to the Senate for the first time, women’s representation jumped directly from 3% in 1999 to 35% in 2001, increasing to 43% in 2005. Similarly, in Costa Rica, a 40% quota law was passed in 1996. After women’s representation increased only slightly from 14% in 1994 to 19% in 1998, quota advocates appealed to the highest electoral court, which argued that in order to conform to the law parties must include 40% women in ‘electable positions,’ defined as the number of seats won in the previous election. This change led women’s representation to jump to 35% in 2002 and 39% in 2006.

In the Senate, the formula for achieving thirty percent female representation would be more complicated, given that 26 members are nominated by state legislative assemblies and 44 members are appointed by the king. Further, the 13 state assemblies have the right to nominate two members each. However, countries like Argentina and Rwanda have resolved these challenges in creative ways. In Argentina, Senators were directly elected for the first time in 2001 (before this year, they were indirectly elected by members of the provincial governments). Each province now elects three Senators, two from the party winning the highest number of votes and one from the party winning the second highest number of votes. To achieve thirty percent female representation, a presidential decree required parties to nominate one man and one woman, in either order, for Senate elections. This formula thus guaranteed the election of at least one woman per province, viewed overall. In Rwanda, the Senate is composed of twenty-six indirectly elected members: twelve nominated by the each of the twelve provinces, four chosen by the parliamentary Forum of Political Parties, eight nominated by the president to represent marginalized groups, and two put forward by institutions of higher learning. Although the constitution does not reserve any seats for women in the Senate – although 30% of all seats are reserved for women in the lower house – the constitution mandates that at least 30% of the twenty-six representatives be female. As a result of this policy, women now occupy 34.6% of all seats in the Senate – and as a result of reserved seats, a striking 48.8% of all seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

These various experiences indicate that many different kinds of quota policies may work effectively in Malaysia. The key to success will involve (1) developing strong political will for quota reform, and (2) designing policies in ways that work with – or revise – existing political arrangements in ways that permit effective quota implementation. Neither of these elements is guaranteed, and indeed, may spark strong opposition. However, evidence from around the world suggests that such work is well-worth the effort, as most quota policies have succeeded in improving women’s access to political office. Further, the diversity of quota experiments around the world is encouraging, as it reveals that many different solutions are possible, despite important variations in political contexts.

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Table 1: The Diffusion of Gender Quota Policies

| <i>Decade</i> | <i>Region</i> | <i>Reserved Seats</i> | <i>Party Quotas</i> | <i>Legislative Quotas</i> |
|---------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1930s | Asia | India | | |
| 1940s | Asia | Taiwan | | |
| 1950s | Asia | Pakistan | China | |
| 1960s | Africa | Ghana | | |
| 1970s | Asia Africa Middle East Western Europe | Bangladesh Tanzania*** Egypt* Sudan*** | Israel Netherlands Norway | |
| 1980s | Africa Latin America North America Western Europe | Uganda | Senegal Brazil Chile Uruguay Canada Austria Belgium Denmark* Germany Iceland Sweden United Kingdom | |
| 1990s | Africa Asia Eastern Europe Latin America | Kenya Sudan*** Tanzania*** Nepal Philippines** | Cape Verde Cameroon Mozambique Namibia** Senegal South Africa India*** North Korea Philippines** South Korea*** Taiwan*** Armenia** Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Kyrgyzstan Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia Bolivia** | Namibia** Armenia** Argentina |

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|-------|--|--|---|---|
| | Middle East Pacific Western Europe | | Dominican Republic** El Salvador Haiti Mexico*** Nicaragua Venezuela** Turkey Australia Fiji Cyprus France** Greece Ireland Italy** Luxembourg Portugal | Bolivia** Brazil Colombia* Costa Rica Dominican Republic** Ecuador Guyana Mexico*** Panama Peru Venezuela*, ** Belgium France** Italy*, ** |
| 2000s | Africa Asia Eastern Europe Latin America Middle East | Burkina Faso Djibouti Eritrea Rwanda** Somalia Tanzania*** Bahrain | Angola Botswana Cameroon Equatorial Guinea Ethiopia Ivory Coast Kenya Malawi Mali Sierra Leone Zimbabwe Thailand Bosnia-Herzegovina** Croatia Macedonia** Moldova Algeria | Burundi Djibouti Liberia Mauritania Niger Rwanda** Indonesia South Korea*** Bosnia-Herzegovina** Macedonia** Romania Serbia and Montenegro Uzbekistan Honduras Mexico*** Afghanistan |

| | | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------------|--|---|
| | Western Europe | Jordan Morocco** | Morocco** Tunisia Yemen Malta Portugal** | Iraq Palestinian Territory, Occupied Spain Portugal** |
|--|----------------|---------------------|--|---|

Source: Krook 2006b, 312-313, updated.

*Measure later repealed. **Two quota measures adopted in the same decade. ***Two quota measures adopted in different decades.

Table 2: Gender Quota Adoption and Implementation Worldwide¹

Reserved Seats in Single or Lower Houses of Parliament

| Region/Country | Percentage of Seats | Year Adopted | % Women Elected |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Africa</i> | | | |
| Burkina Faso | 6% in lower house | Unknown | 15% (2007) |
| Djibouti | 10% in single house | 2002 | 11% (2003) |
| Eritrea ² | 30% in single house | Unknown | 22% (1994) |
| Kenya | 3% in single house | 1997 | 7% (2002) |
| Rwanda | 30% in lower house | 2003 | 49% (2003) |
| Somalia | 12% in single house | 2004 | 8% (2004) |
| Sudan | 13% in single house | 2005 | 18% (2005) |
| Tanzania ³ | 30% in single house | 2005 | 30% (2005) |
| Uganda ⁴ | 18% in single house | 2001 | 30% (2006) |
| <i>Asia</i> | | | |
| Bangladesh ⁵ | 13% in single house | 2004 | 15% (2001) |
| India (<i>previously</i>) | 4% in lower house | 1935 | 8% (2004) |
| Pakistan ⁶ | 18% in lower house | 2002 | 21% (2002) |
| Philippines (<i>previously</i>) | 10% in lower house | 1986 | 23% (2007) |
| Taiwan | 10-25% in lower house | 1947 | 22% (2001) |
| <i>Middle East⁷</i> | | | |
| Afghanistan | 27% in lower house | 2004 | 27% (2005) |
| Egypt (<i>previously</i>) | 8% in single house | 1979 | 2% (2005) |
| Jordan | 5% in single house | 2003 | 6% (2003) |
| Morocco | 9% in single house | 2002 | 11% (2002) |

¹ Quota percentages refer to the minimum percentage of female candidates that must or ought to appear on party lists for elections to the national parliament. When quotas are framed in gender-neutral terms (i.e., “no more than 80% of candidates of the same sex”), the quota regulation is translated into the terms of a female quota (i.e., “20% women”). When provisions are framed as proportions (i.e., “one-third”), the regulation is translated into percentage terms (i.e., “33%”). Only the most recent provisions are recorded in the chart; earlier policies are signaled in footnotes.

² An earlier reserved seats policy set aside 10% of seats for women in Eritrea.

³ Earlier reserved seats adopted in Tanzania include a 6% policy in 1961, 15% policies in 1975 and 1995, a 20% policy in 1996, and a 20-30% policy in 1999.

⁴ Earlier reserved seats adopted in Uganda include a 13% policy in 1989 and a 14% policy in 1995.

⁵ Earlier reserved seats adopted in Bangladesh include a 5% policy in 1972 (for 10 years), a 10% policy in 1978 (for 15 years), and a 10% in 1990 (for 10 years). Although separate elections were not organized, the 2004 provision was allocated to parties in 2004 and 2005 based on the proportion of the vote they won in 2001.

⁶ Earlier reserved seats adopted in Pakistan include 3% policies in 1954 and 1956; 4% policies in 1962, 1970, and 1973; a 7% policy in 1981; and a 9% policy in 1984.

⁷ In Bahrain, 15% of seats in the upper house were reserved for women in 2002. The current level of female representation in this chamber is 25%; it is only 2.5% in the lower house (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007a).

Party Quotas in Single or Lower Houses of Parliament

| Country/Region | Percentage of Candidates/Party | Year Adopted | % Women Elected |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Western Europe</i> | | | |
| Austria | 50% Greens-Green Alternative | 1986 | 32% (2006) |
| | 40% Social Democratic Party ¹⁰ | 1993 | |
| | 33% Austrian People's Party | 1995 | |
| Belgium | 20% Flemish Liberal Party | 1985 | 35% (2007) |
| | 33% French Christian Democrats | 1986 | |
| | 50% Flemish Green Party | 1991 | |
| | 25% Flemish Social Democrats | 1992 | |
| | 50% French Green Party | 2000 | |
| | 50% French Social Democrats | 2000 | |
| Denmark (<i>previously</i>) | 50% Left Socialist Party | 1985 | 37% (2005) |
| | 40% Socialist People's Party | 1988 | |
| | 40% Social Democratic Party | 1988 | |
| France | 30% Socialist Party | 1996 | 19% (2007) |
| | 50% Alliance 90-Greens | 1986 | |
| Germany | 40% Social Democratic Party ¹¹ | 1998 | 32% (2005) |
| | 50% Party of Democratic Socialism | 1990 | |
| Greece | 33% Christian Democratic Union | 1996 | 13% (2004) |
| | 40% Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement | Unknown | |
| Iceland ⁸ | 50% Left-Green Movement | 1996 | 32% (2007) |
| | 40% Progressive Party | 1996 | |
| | 40% United Front | 2002 | |
| Ireland | 40% Social Democratic Alliance | 2007 | 13% (2007) |
| | 40% Workers Party | 1991 | |
| | 25% Labour Party | 1991 | |
| Italy ⁹ | 40% Green Party | 1992 | 17% (2006) |
| | 40% Democrats of the Left | 1989 | |
| | 50% Green Federation | 1991 | |
| | 30% Democracy is Freedom | 2001 | |
| | 40% Communist Refoundation | Unknown | |

⁸ The People's Alliance and the Social Democratic Party adopted 40% quotas, but were subsumed as parties into the Social Democratic Alliance and, to a lesser degree, the Left-Green Movement in 1996.

⁹ The Communist Party and Italian Republican Party adopted quotas, proportion unknown, in 1987, while the Christian Democrats adopted a quota, proportion unknown, in 1989. These parties no longer exist.

¹⁰ The party adopted a 25% quota policy in 1985.

¹¹ The party adopted a 25% quota policy in 1988 and a 33% quota policy in 1994.

¹² The party adopted a 25% quota policy in 1988.

¹³ The party adopted a 20% quota policy in 1996.

¹⁴ The party is one of the few to reduce the quota proportion over time: initially the provision was 30% in 1990.

¹⁵ The party adopted a 33% quota policy in 1992.

¹⁶ The party adopted a 20% quota policy in 1988.

¹⁷ The party adopted a 20% quota policy, date unknown, and then a 30% quota policy in 1996.

¹⁸ The party requires that 2 of the first 5 names on the list in each province must be women (48 provinces total).

¹⁹ The party adopted a 35% quota policy in 1994.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------|------------|
| | 20% Italian People's Party | Unknown | |
| | 33% Italian Democratic Socialists | Unknown | |
| | 33% Christian Socialist Party | 2002 | |
| Luxembourg | 50% Green Party | Unknown | 23% (2004) |
| | 50% The Left | Unknown | |
| | 50% Labour Party | 1987 | |
| Netherlands | 40% Socialist Left Party | 1975 | 37% (2006) |
| Norway | 40% Labour Party | 1983 | 38% (2005) |
| | 40% Centre Party | 1988 | |
| | 40% Christian People's Party | 1993 | |
| | 40% Liberal Party | Unknown | |
| | 33% Socialist Party | 2004 | |
| Portugal | 40% Socialist Workers Party ¹² | 1996 | 21% (2005) |
| Spain | 40% United Left | 1997 | 36% (2004) |
| | 40% Liberal Party | 1972 | |
| Sweden | 50% Green Party | 1981 | 47% (2006) |
| | 50% Left Party | 1987 | |
| | 40% Christian Democrats | 1987 | |
| | 50% Social Democrats | 1993 | |
| Switzerland | 40% Social Democratic Party | Unknown | 25% (2003) |
| United Kingdom | 50% Labour Party | 1996 | 20% (2005) |
| <i>Eastern Europe</i> | | | |
| Albania | 30% Social Democratic Party | 2001 | 7% (2005) |
| | 25% Democratic Party | 2003 | |
| Armenia | 20% in Union for National Self-Determination | Unknown | 9% (2007) |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 30% Social Democratic Party | 2001 | 14% (2006) |
| Croatia | 40% Social Democratic Party | 2000 | 22% (2003) |
| Cyprus | 30% Social Democrats | Unknown | 14% (2006) |
| Czech Republic | 25% Social Democratic Party | 1996 | 16% (2006) |
| Estonia | ?% Pro Patria | Unknown | 22% (2007) |
| Georgia | 30% Citizens Union | 2003 | 9% (2004) |
| Hungary | ?% Social Democratic Party | 1999 | 10% (2006) |
| | 20% Hungarian Socialist Party | Unknown | |
| Lithuania | 30% Social Democratic Party ¹³ | Unknown | 25% (2004) |
| Macedonia | 30% Social Democratic Union | Unknown | 28% (2006) |
| Malta | 20% Labour Party | Unknown | 9% (2003) |
| Moldova | 50% Christian Democratic Party | Unknown | 22% (2005) |
| Montenegro | ?% Social Democratic Party | 1999 | 9% (2006) |
| Poland | 30% Labour Union | 1997 | 20% (2005) |
| | 30% Democratic Left Alliance | 1999 | |
| | 30% Freedom Union | Unknown | |
| | 50% Zieloni 2004 | 2003 | |
| Romania | 30% Democratic Party | Unknown | 11% (2004) |
| | 30% Social Democratic Party | 2001 | |
| Serbia | 30% Social Democratic Party | 2000 | 20% (2007) |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|
| Slovakia (<i>previously</i>) | 20% Party of the Democratic Left 25% Liberal Democracy Party ¹⁴ | Unknown 1998 | 19% (2006) |
| Slovenia | 40% Social Democrats ¹⁵ | 1997 | 12% (2004) |
| Ukraine | 33% Social Democratic Party | Unknown | 9% (2006) |
| <i>Africa</i> | | | |
| Botswana | 30% Botswana National Front 30% Botswana National Congress | 1994 1999 | 11% (2004) |
| Burkina Faso | 25% Alliance for Democracy 25% Congress for Democracy | 2002 | 15% (2007) |
| Cameroon | 25% Cameroon People's Free Movement 25% Social Democratic Front 2% Movement for Democracy | 2002 1996 1996 | 9% (2002)* |
| Cape Verde | 2% Social Democratic | Unknown | 15% (2006) |
| Equatorial Guinea | Convergence 30% People's Revolutionary Democratic Front | Unknown Unknown | 18% (2004) |
| Ethiopia | 40% National Democratic Congress | Unknown | 22% (2005) |
| Ghana | 30% Great Consolidated People's Party 30% Ivorian Public Front | 2000 Unknown | 11% (2004) |
| Ivory Coast | 33% Democratic Party | 2002 | 9% (2000) |
| Kenya | 30% Malawi Congress Party | Unknown | 7% (2002) |
| Malawi | 25% United Democratic Front | Unknown | 14% (2004) |
| Mali | 30% Alliance for Democracy | Unknown | 10% (2007) |
| Mozambique | 30% Front for the Liberation of Mozambique | Unknown 1999 | 35% (2004) |
| Namibia | 50% South West Africa People's Organization 50% Congress of Democrats | 1997 1999 | 27% (2004) |
| Senegal | 25% Senegal Socialist Party 33% Senegalese Liberal Party | 1996 Unknown | 22% (2007) |
| South Africa | 30% African National Congress | 1994 | 33% (2004) |
| <i>Latin America</i> | | | |
| Bolivia | 50% Movement without Fear | 1999 | 17% (2005) |
| Brazil | 30% Brazilian Workers Party | 1986 | 9% (2006) |
| Chile | 40% Party for Democracy ¹⁶ 40% Socialist Party ¹⁷ | 1999 1996 | 15% (2005) |
| Costa Rica | 20% Christian Democratic Party 40% National Liberation Party 50% Christian-Social Unity Party | 1996 1996 2002 | 39% (2006) |
| Dominican Republic | 50% Citizen Action Party 25% Dominican Revolutionary Party | 2002 1994 | 20% (2006) |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------|
| Ecuador | 25% Ecuador Roldosista Party 25% Party of Democratic Left 25% People's Democracy | Unknown Unknown Unknown | 25% (2006) |
| El Salvador | 35% National Liberation Front | Unknown | 17% (2006) |
| Haiti | 25% Socialist Party | Unknown | 4% (2006) |
| Mexico | 20% Party of Democratic Revolution 30% Institutional Revolutionary Party | 1993 1996 | 23% (2006) |
| Nicaragua | 30% Sandinista National Liberation | Unknown | 19% (2006) |
| Paraguay | 20% Colorado Party 30% Revolutionary Febrerista Party | Unknown Unknown | 10% (2003) |
| Uruguay | 25% Socialist Party 25% Christian Democrat Party 33% New Space | 1984 1993 1998 | 11% (2004) |
| <i>Asia</i> | | | |
| Fiji | 20% Fiji Labour Party | Unknown | Unknown |
| India | 15% Indian National Congress | Unknown | 8% (2004) |
| South Korea | 20% Democratic Party 30% Grand National Party | Unknown Unknown | 13% (2004) |
| Philippines | 25% Philippines Democratic Socialist Party | Unknown | 23% (2007) |
| Taiwan | 25% Democratic Progressive Party 25% Chinese Nationalist Party | 1996 2000 | Unknown |
| Thailand | 30% Democrat Party | Unknown | 9% (2006) |
| <i>Middle East</i> | | | |
| Algeria | 40% National Liberation Front ¹⁸ | 2002 | 7% (2007) |
| Israel | 25% Israel Labour Party 40% Meretz-Yashad | 1997 Unknown | 14% (2006) |
| Morocco | 20% National Religious Party 20% Socialist Union for Popular Forces | Unknown Unknown | 11% (2002) |
| Tunisia | 25% Democratic Constitutional Rally | 2004 | 23% (2004) |
| Yemen | 10% General People's Congres | 2006 | 0% (2003) |
| <i>North America</i> | | | |
| Canada | 50% National Democratic Party | 1992 | 21% (2006) |
| <i>Australia</i> | | | |
| Australia | 40% Australian Labor Party ¹⁹ | 2002 | 25% (2004) |

Legislative Quotas in Single or Lower Houses of Parliament

| Region/Country | Percentage of Candidates | Year Adopted | % Women Elected |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Latin America</i> | | | |
| Argentina | 30% in lower house | 1991 | 35% (2005) |
| Bolivia | 30% in lower house | 1997 | 17% (2005) |
| Brazil | 25% in single house | 1997 | 9% (2006) |
| Colombia (<i>previously</i>) | 30% in lower house | 1999 | 8% (2006) |
| Costa Rica | 40% in single house | 1996 | 39% (2006) |
| Dominican Republic ²⁰ | 33% in lower house | 2000 | 20% (2006) |
| Ecuador ²¹ | 30% in lower house | 2000 | 25% (2006) |
| Guyana | 33% in single house | Unknown | 29% (2006) |
| Honduras ²² | 30% in single house | 2004 | 23% (2005) |
| Mexico | 30% in lower house ³⁰ | 2002 | 23% (2006) |
| Panama | 30% in lower house | 1996 | 17% (2004) |
| Paraguay | 20% in lower house | 1996 | 10% (2003) |
| Peru ²³ | 30% in single house | 2000 | 29% (2006) |
| Venezuela | 30% in single house | 1998 | 19% (2005) |
| <i>Eastern Europe</i> | | | |
| Armenia ²⁴ | 15% in single house ³¹ | 2007 | 9% (2007) |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 30% in single house | 2001 | 14% (2006) |
| Croatia | 30% in single house | 2000 | 22% (2003) |
| Kosovo ²⁵ | 40% in single house | 2000 | Unknown |
| Macedonia | 30% in single house | 2002 | 28% (2006) |
| Serbia | 30% in single house | 2004 | 20% (2007) |
| Uzbekistan | 30% in single house | 2004 | 18% (2004) |
| <i>Asia</i> | | | |
| China ²⁶ | | 2007 | 20% (2003) |
| Indonesia | 22% in single house | 2003 | 11% (2004) |
| North Korea | 30% in lower house | 1998 | 20% (2003) |
| South Korea | 20% in single house | 2004 | 13% (2004) |
| Nepal | 50% in single house | 1990 | 17% (2007) |
| Philippines ²⁷ | house ³² | 1995 | 23% (2007) |

²⁰ An earlier law passed in 1997 required parties to include 25% women.

²¹ An earlier law passed in 1997 required parties to include 20% women.

²² An earlier law was included as part of a new equality law passed in 2000.

²³ An earlier law passed in 1997 required parties to include 25% women.

²⁴ An earlier law passed in 1999 required parties to include at least 5% women, but only in the proportional representation list-component of the mixed electoral system.

²⁵ Non-independent state.

²⁶ An earlier regulation passed in 1955 stated that an 'appropriate' and increasing proportion of women should be elected; this commitment was emphasized again in 1992 to read that the proportion of female deputies should not be lower in current than in earlier congresses.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|------------|
| <i>Africa</i> | 5% in lower house Must include women | | |
| Burundi | | 2005 | 31% (2005) |
| Liberia | | 2005 | 13% (2005) |
| Mauritania | 30% in single house | 2006 | 18% (2006) |
| Niger | 30% in single house 30-50% in single house ³³ | 2004 | 12% (2004) |
| <i>Western Europe</i> | 10% in single house | | |
| Belgium ²⁸ | | 2002 | 35% (2007) |
| France | | 1999/2000 | 19% (2007) |
| Portugal | 50% in lower house | 2006 | 21% (2005) |
| Spain | 50% in lower house 33% in single house | 2007 | 36% (2004) |
| <i>Middle East</i> | 40% in lower house | | |
| Iraq | | 2004 | 26% (2005) |
| Palestinian Territory ²⁹ | 25% in lower house 20% in single house | 2005 | Unknown |

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007a; Krook 2005, 493-503, updated.

²⁷ The Constitution of 1986 provided that half of all seats elected by proportion representation lists must be filled by labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, and youth.

²⁸ An earlier law passed in 1994 required parties to include 33% women.

²⁹ Non-independent state.

³⁰ An earlier law passed in 1996 'recommended' that parties include 30% women.

³¹ This regulation applies only to elections by proportional representation in the mixed electoral system.

³² This regulation applies only to elections by proportional representation in the mixed electoral system. In addition, the law recommends that parties include 30% women among their candidates in single member districts.

³³ The regulation varies according to the magnitude of each district: in constituencies with two members, all party lists must include one candidate of each sex; when there are three members, lists must include at least one woman; when there are more than three members, each group of four candidates must include equal numbers of women and men.