



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Women in Politics in the Eastern Mediterranean

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EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ Jordan has a bicameral parliament. There are a total of 150 seats; 18 are held by women. Jordan reserves 15 seats for women elected from 12 government districts and 3 Bedouin districts. Jordan utilizes the proportional representation system which ensures that the number of seats won or the number of candidates vying for a position is proportionate to the number of votes received. The 15 female candidates to acquire the highest percentage of votes nationwide are sworn with the understanding that no district obtains more than the allotted seat.¹
- ❖ Turkey has volunteer quotas for women. Currently of the 550 seats in Turkey's 14% are held by women. The Republican People's Party (CHP) adopted a 25% quota for their candidate list in 1999; this number was increased to 33% in 2012. The Peace and Democracy Party has a 40% gender quota for its candidate list for both national and local elections.²
- ❖ The Syrian constitution guarantees gender equality. Women in Syria hold 12% of seats in the parliament-this number remained consistent from 2009-2013.³
- ❖ The Palestinian Legislative Council requires that 20% of seats be held by women. Political parties in Palestine must have at least one woman among the first three candidates on the list, at least two women among the next four and three women among the next five for the rest of the list. After the election, the list is closed. Political parties that fail to meet this requirement are rejected by the Central Election Commission. If for some reason a woman absents her elected position, she is replaced by the next woman below her on the electoral list.⁴
- ❖ Lebanon does not have quotas in place for women in parliament; however, it does have religious quotas. Lebanon's political system stipulates that the president always be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of Parliament a Shiite.⁵ There are 128 seats in the house, 4 of which are held by women. Legislation has been introduced that would promote female participation in the municipal councils.⁶
- ❖ Cyprus has not instituted gender quotas and currently ranks low (107th) when it comes to female participation in parliament.⁷ As of 2013 there was only one woman minister. The proportion of seats held by women has decreased since 2009 from 13% to 11%.⁸
- ❖ Israel does not have parliamentary mandatory quotas in place but they do have voluntary quotas. Currently, 27 of the 120 seats in the Knesset are held by women.⁹

¹ <http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=JO#additional>

² <http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?country=223#additional>

³ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS>

⁴ http://www.idea.int/gender/quotas_special_areas.cfm?country=183

⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/21/world/middleeast/lebanon-voting-plan-stirs-sectarian-fervor.html?pagewanted=all>

⁶ <http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?country=128#additional>

⁷ <http://cyprus-mail.com/2013/09/21/female-representation-among-lowest-in-the-world/>

⁸ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS>

⁹ <http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?country=103>