

WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN VIET NAM



Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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WHY SHOULD WOMEN BE IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS?

Justice - Women make up half of the population and therefore it is their right to have half of all decision-making positions.

Experience - Women have different experiences than men due to social as well as biological reasons. Women need to be in positions of influence to bring these experiences and perspectives forward.

Interests - Women and men have different interests and it is more effective and legitimate if each group represents their own interests.

Sustainable development – In parliaments where women have a strong voice, more policies and legislation are developed that protect people and the environment than in parliaments with poor women's representation.ⁱ

Economic growth – As leaders, women provide innovative guidance in competitive environments leading to stability and economic growth.ⁱⁱ

FACTS & FIGURES

How well are women represented in elected positions?

- Women's representation in the National Assembly is currently at 24.4% which is the lowest percentage over the last 4 terms.
- At sub-national level, women represent 26% of elected officials in People's Councils. At this time, 3% of People's Council Chairs are women.

What are Viet Nam's targets for women's political representation?

- Minimum of 25% of positions in Party Committees to be held by womenⁱⁱⁱ
- 80% of Ministries, Government agencies and People's Committees have female leaders by 2015^{iv}
- Minimum of 30% representation for the 2011 elections and 35% - 40% for the 2016 election^v

WAYS FORWARD

What can be done to meet the government's targets on women's representation?

- Put more women on the ballot
- Ensure the women candidates are highly qualified and capable to voice women's concerns
- Encourage more women to be political leaders and provide support to them
- Vote for women
- Accept and nominate more women into the Communist Party
- Showcase strong, capable women and men who actively voice the concerns of those most marginalized
- Raise awareness of the low representation of women in the political arena
- Bring men on board – this is not a woman's issue – women and men need to work together to increase women's representation





How well are women's represented in the Communist Party?

- In 2012, 18 women are part of the 200 member Executive Committee – 9%.^{vi}
- Women make up 32% of the Party membership.^{vii} This is a significant increase. In 2005, women held 20% of Party membership.

How many women were candidates in the 2011 election?

- 31% of the candidates were women.
- 67% of male candidates were elected compared to 47% of female candidates.^{viii}

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

In the area of women's representation, how does Viet Nam compare to other countries?

- Viet Nam is slipping compared to other countries. At the end of 2011, Vietnam was ranked 43rd internationally in terms of women's political representation, a drop from its position of 36th in 2010 and 2009, 33rd in 2008, 31st in 2007, 25th in 2006 and 23rd in 2005. Vietnam is one of 21 states that saw a reduction in women's political representation at the national level in 2011.^{ix}
- Among other single-party states, Viet Nam is 3rd out of 7 states in women's representation at National level. Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cuba have 25% and 45% women's representation respectively.^x China has a high rate of 43% women's political representation at the sub-national level.^{xi}

ⁱ Tuminez, Astrid. 2012. *Rising to the Top? A Report on Women's Leadership in Asia*

ⁱⁱ McKinsey and Company, *Women Matter 2010 Women at the Top of Corporations: Making it Happen, 2010*

ⁱⁱⁱ Goal 1, Indicator 1, *National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020*

^{iv} Goal 1, Indicator 2, *National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020*

^v Resolution No. 11-NQ/TW of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party dated 27/4/2007 on the work of women in the period of industrialization and modernisation of the country

^v Women online newspaper: <http://www.phunuonline.com.vn/2011/Pages/nhung-quong-mat-nu-la-uy-vien-bch-trung-uong-dang-khoa-xi.aspx>

^{vi} GSO, 2012. *Gender Statistics in Viet Nam*.

^{vii} Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2012. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

^{viii} *ibid*

^{ix} *ibid*

^x UNDP, 2010. *Women's Representation in Local Government in Asia-Pacific: Status Report 2010*