

# Gender parity: power-sharing, from politics to economy

## Overview of gender equal sharing of political, professional and social responsibilities

At the political level, local and regional authorities put into practice gender parity. But in spite of that, the male character of authority still stands, in particular as regards Heads of executive Councils and Members of Parliament; as a matter of fact, the law applicable to these specific positions is not constraining, or only weakly so.

Proportion of men in local and national political Assemblies and in executive Councils, prior to and after the adoption of gender parity laws.

	Before 1999 and the adoption of gender parity laws	Last elections and/or nomination	Date of latest elections and/or nomination
<b>No legal constraint</b>			
French Government (except the Prime Minister)	66 %	50 %	2017
Presidents of regional councils	88.5 %	83.3 %	2015
Presidents of departmental councils	99.0 %	90.1 %	2015
Presidents of intermunicipal councils	94.8 %	92.3 %*	2014
Deputy presidents of intermunicipal councils	-	80.0 %*	
Mayors (undifferentiated in terms of size)	92.5 %	84.0 %	2014
Municipal councillors in towns > 3.500 inhbt (1995) and > 1.000 (2014)	79.0 %	61.5 %	
<b>Partial legal constraint or incentives</b>			
Senators	94.7 %	68.4%	2017
Members of Parliament (Lower House)	89.1 %	61.3 %	2017
<b>Strict legal constraint</b>			
French Members of the European Parliament	59.8 %	56.8 %	2014
Regional councillors	72.5 %	52.1 %	2015
Vice-Presidents of regional councils	84.9 %	51.6 %	
Departmental councillors	90.8 %	49.9 %	2015
Vice Presidents of Departemental councils	-	51.7 %	
Deputy majors of in towns > 3.500 inhbt (1995) and > 1.000 (2014)	78.2 %	52.5 %	2014
Municipal councillors > 3.500 inhbt (1995) and > 1.000 (2014)	78.3 %	51.8 %	

Sources: Ministry of Home Affairs, High Council for Gender Equality (September 2018).  
\*Incomplete set of data (5% of intercommunal Councils were not covered then).

The 2008 Constitutional reform broadened the scope of gender parity beyond the field of politics, opening the door to new laws on gender equal access to professional and social responsibilities.

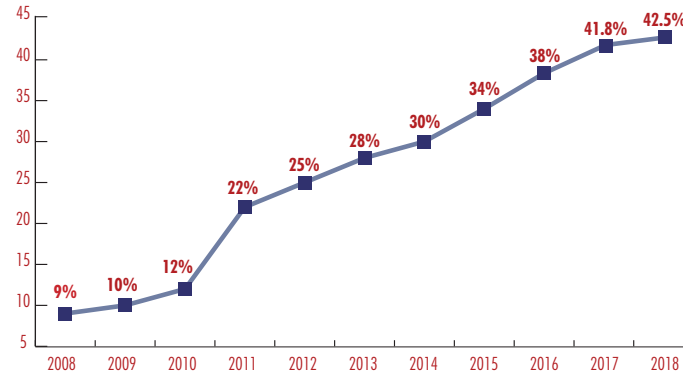
First designations to positions of responsibility in the public service: the law has set a target of 20% women designated to such positions by 2013, and 40% by 2017.

	2012			2013			2014			2015		
	Total	F	% F	Total	F	% F	Total	F	% F	Total	F	% F
Cadres dirigeant.e.s	144	34	24 %	132	38	29 %	120	35	29 %	89	28	31 %
Emplois de direction	121	37	31 %	267	91	34 %	183	61	33 %	167	57	34 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>27 %</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>32 %</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>32 %</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>33 %</b>

Source: Annual report for 2015 on « gender-balanced nominations » for seniors managers and managing executives in the Public administration, Ministry of State Administration, 2016 ; Presentation of public policy for State executive management, General Secretariat of the Government, 2017.

Women's participation to **Boards of Directors in large companies**: the law has set an objective of 40% by 2017

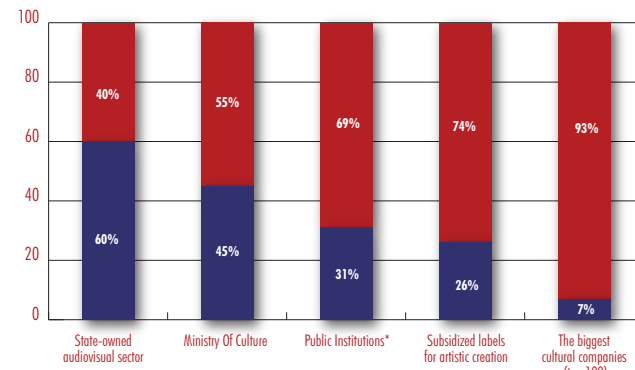
Proportion of women as members of Boards of Directors or Supervisory Boards of French major listed companies (%)



Source: Ethics & Board, Barometer IFA – on the composition of Boards, June 2018. You may find additional information on gender parity in the business world in the HCE-CSEP report « Vers un égal accès des femmes et des hommes aux responsabilités professionnelles : la part des femmes dans les conseils d'administration et de surveillance » (February 2016). You may download the report at the following address: <http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/parite/actualites/article/remise-du-rapport-parite-en>

In the **field of culture** : even though women represent 60% of the students in the art schools supervised by the Ministry of Culture, few of them hold a position of power. For instance, in live performing arts, women represent only 8% of the presidents or managing directors of public institutions.

Proportion of men and women at the head of a board in France's communication and cultural institutions in 2016



\*Museums, theaters, orchestras, Research Institutes, properties and castles, etc. having some sort of administrative and financial autonomy from the central government to fulfill their general interest mission : Universcience, MuCem, Louvre Museum, the French Comedy... You may find the entire list of the public institutions concerned on the public service directory website.  
Source: Department of Studies, Prospective and Statistics of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, Observatory of Gender equality, Paris, 2016.

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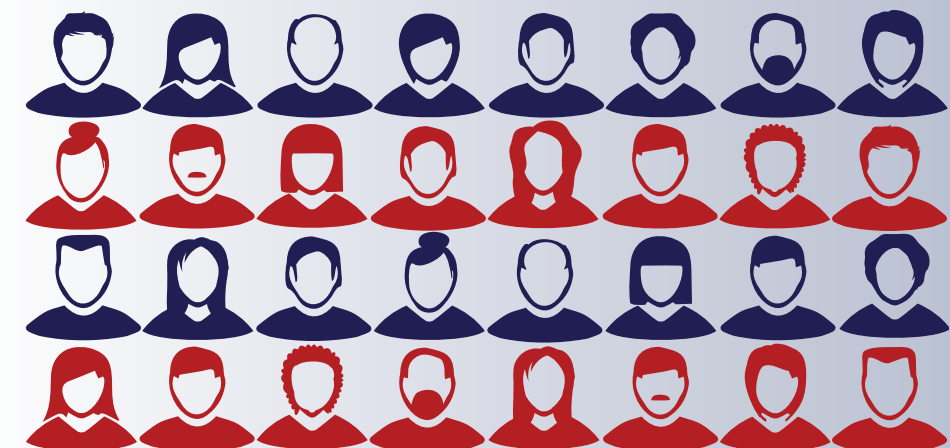
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# GUIDE to gender parity

LAWS AIMING AT A GENDER EQUAL SHARING OF POLITICAL, PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES



Conception and printing : Pôle graphique, fabrication, déplacements, image – DSAF/DPL – September 2018.

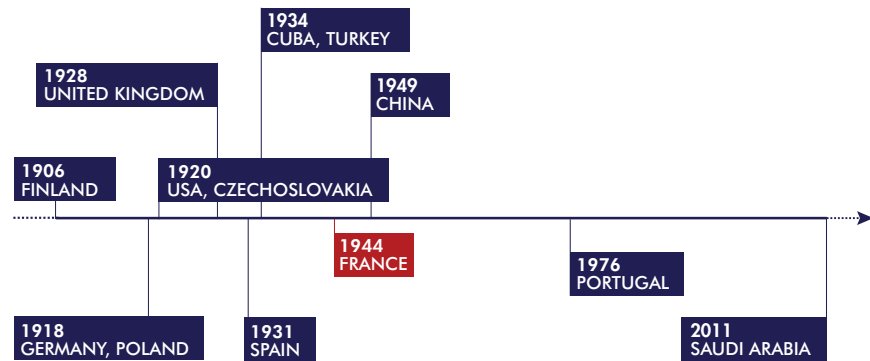
# Parity: A democratic horizon yet to be reached, in the political, professional and social spheres

## Parity democracy: from the international to the national level, from the political to the economic stage

The word “parity” is used as meaning both the international and european claim for a **gender equal power sharing**, along with its national regulations enforcing or encouraging a gender equal distribution of candidatures or seats in any decision-making Assembly, be it **political, economic or social**.

In France, women only won the right to vote in 1944 (Decree, 21 April 1944) and the proportion of male Members of Parliament still stood at 73% in 2016. Yet, France has been the first country which adopted a legislation aiming at electoral gender parity, in 2000. Since 2008, gender parity has extended beyond politics, and is now enforced in the professional and social fields, where power issues are also significant.

Chronology of Women’s Right to vote and stand for election: the French delay



In 2017, France ranks 15<sup>th</sup> out of 191 countries, in terms of gender parity in the Lower (or Unique) Assembly, in a decreasing order

1	Rwanda	61.3%
2	Bolivia	53.1%
3	Cuba	48.9%
6	Sweden	43.6%
7	Mexico	42.6%
8	Finland	42%
9	South Africa	42%
10	Senegal	41.8%
13	Norway	39.6%
14	Spain	39.1%
15	France	39%
17	Ethiopia	38.8%
56	Peru	27.7%
99	Saudi Arabia	19.9%
101	United States of America	19.4%

Source : Inter-Parliamentary Union, on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

## Key Acts on gender parity

**Constitutional amendment 1999 (8/7/1999):** Articles 3 and 4 of the French Constitution were modified: the Article 3 was complemented with “the Law encourages equal access by men and women to electoral mandates and elected positions”; Article 4 specified that “political parties and groupings contribute to the implementation of this principle”.

**Act 2000 (6/6/2000):** established the legal obligation of submitting gender equal lists of candidates for **plurinominal polls**; set up a financial penalty (withholding part of the public financial support) for political parties whose list of **parliamentary candidates** does not comply with the parity obligation (the differential among both sexes shall not exceed more than 2%).

**Act 2007 (31/1/2007):**

- It established a rule of strict alternation by sex in the order of presentation for the lists candidates to local elections (> 3 500 inhabitants) and introduced the legal obligation of gender parity in local and regional executive Councils.
- It also increased the financial withholding for those political parties escaping the obligation of designating a gender equal number of candidates to the Parliamentary elections of 2012.

**Constitutional Amendment 2008 (23/7/2008):** Includes in the First article of the Constitution “the Law encourages equal access by men and women to electoral mandates and elected positions, as well as to positions of responsibility in the professional and social areas”

**Copé-Zimmermann Act 2011 (27/1/2011):** Set an objective of reaching by 2017 a minimum membership of 40% representatives of one sex to the **Board of Directors and supervisory Board** of listed companies, or companies employing more than 500 persons and whose turnover is over 50M€.

**Sauvadet Act 2012 (12/3/2012):** Sets a double target for the public service due to be reached by 2018<sup>1</sup>:

- 40% of women among civil servants designated for the first time to positions of responsibility/management, based on an initial target of 20% in 2013.
- 40% in all Boards of Directors/Supervisory Board or equivalent organs in public corporations, selection panels, industrial relations bodies.

**Fioraso Act 2013 (22/7/2013):** enlarged the objective of gender parity to the lists of candidacies and designation to **decision-making bodies in the field of higher education and research**.

**Electoral Act 2013 (17/5/2013):**

- Set up a binominal list system (one woman and one man as paired candidates) for **Departmental elections**
- Expanded the rule of strict alternation by sex to local and intercommunal elections in order to reinforce parity: it shall apply on lists of candidates to local polls in cities above 1.000 inhabitants, as well as to intercommunal council elections.

**Vallaud-Belkacem Act 2014 (4/8/2014):**

- Doubled the financial penalty for political parties escaping parity rules (Legislative polls)
- Enlarging or accelerating the enforcement of the rule for a gender balanced representation in a number of public corporations, private companies or sports federations:
  - Board of Directors and Supervisory Board of public corporations and companies
  - Chambers of Commerce and Industry ; Economic, social and environmental regional Councils ; consultative bodies...
  - Board of Directors of companies whose workforce ranges above 250 employees
  - Sports federations
  - Public institutions in the field of cultural cooperation.

<sup>1</sup> - The Prime Minister, by a circular dated 23/8/2012, moved the deadline as relates to first designations to positions of responsibility to 2017.

## Challenges and prospects

More than a decade after the enforcement of the first gender parity Acts, major issues remain at stake today:

- Encourage and obtain the enforcement of gender parity in those decision-making bodies where it is not yet rooted** (professional, economic and social bodies)
- Achieve a genuine power-sharing articulating both “quantitative” and “qualitative” parity.** Beyond the 50/50 representative power-sharing among women and men, one must assess the effective roles and positions shared among women and men. Who is the President or the Secretary of an Association ? Who holds the portfolio of Finance of Family Affairs in a Town council ?...

**in the context of the law on real equality between women and men of 4 August 2014, the High Council for Gender Equality provided recommendations to the Government in order to achieve quickly the parity requirement.**

Implementing provisions for parity rules by election and voting system

	Elections	Candidacies	Executive Councils
List system	Local and intermunicipal (less than 1.000 inhbt)	No legal constraint	No legal constraint
	Local and intermunicipal (above 1.000 inhbt)	Zipper system (one man/one woman)*	Mayor : no legal constraint Deputy mayors : equal number of women and men Intermunicipal president and deputy presidents : No legal constraint
	Regional	Zipper system (one man/one woman)*	Presidency : No legal constraint Standing Committee : Strict alternation by gender* Vice-Presidencies : women-men equality
	European	Zipper system (one man/one woman)*	-
	Senate – Departments returning 3 or more Senators (73% of the number of Senators)	Zipper system (one man/one woman)*	-
Voting for a single candidate	Senate – Departments returning one or two Senators (27%)	No legal constraint	-
	Legislative	Financial penalties i.e. withholding public support to non-compliant parties (number of candidacies by sex exceeding a 48/52% range)	-
Binominal system	Cantonal/Departmental	Paired candidates (woman and man) per canton.	Presidency : No legal constraint Standing Committee : Strict alternation by gender* Vice-Presidencies : women-men equality

Source : “High Council for Gender Equality – 2014.

\*Introduction of a strict alternation by gender by the laws of 11 April 2003 and of 31 January 2007.