

Indicator name
% of women nominated to senior level positions in public sector (e.g. ministries of finance, economic planning, business development)
Aggregable indicator
No
Indicator type (quantitative/qualitative)
Quantitative
GAP III thematic area of engagement
Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women
Related objectives in the Gender Action Plan III
Overall thematic objective: Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights. Specific thematic objective 5: Improved access for women in all their diversity to managerial and leadership roles in social and economic sectors and fora
Technical Definition
This indicator intends to measure the percentage of women that have been nominated to senior level positions in the public sector, in particular in the ministries of finance, economic planning, and business development. The following definitions apply: - Public sector refers to ministries in the executive branch of the central, state, or local government, and in public departments, agencies, commissions, and/or boards. The degree of centralisation affects the relative share of employees working across national/central, state/provincial, and local/municipal levels. It is therefore important to assess carefully public sector levels, especially those involving different sectors because the inclusion or exclusion of particular sectors can determine gender gaps. Depending on the context, definitions of public administration can vary in the branches of government, levels of government, and types of institutions that are included. The “public sector” often includes a wide array of institutions, such as public utilities, that are sometimes but not always counted as public administration. - Senior level positions in public sector refer to different public administration grades and positions having leadership and/ or decision-making power. There is no common methodology on how to measure women’s share in the public sector. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) focuses on the top two levels of administrators in each national ministry, e.g.: (1) the top level of administrators that includes positions such as deputy minister, secretary general, head of division, permanent secretary, and state secretary, and (2) the next rung down that includes positions such as director and head of department. Also, grades or levels can be used to measure decision-making as, in many public administrations, a level in the hierarchy is signified by a grade, and those at the top of the hierarchy often have the highest grades. Another way of assessing leadership and decision-making power is by looking at job functions, and the extent to which a civil servant

performs leadership tasks – managing others, making decisions over budgets, and setting agendas.¹

Rationale

According to the [Global Report on Gender Equality in Public Administration](#)², persistent gender gaps remain in women's share of senior level positions in the public sector as women continue to hit glass ceilings³ and walls⁴ that stop them from advancing to positions at the highest levels of power and influence. In the vast majority of countries, women's share of decision-making positions is less than their share of positions in public administration overall. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that when top levels of the civil service are overwhelmingly comprised of men, the system's openness and transparency can be called into question.⁵ The presence of women public managers can also signal to workers that institutions are committed to gender equality, increasing the likelihood that civil servants take advantage of programmes designed to promote work-life balance. In addition, the lack of women in public sector decision-making positions leaves Governments ill-equipped to respond to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶

Data source and calculation

Reporting covers cooperation, development and humanitarian (if applicable) initiatives and investment frameworks funded by the EC (INTPA, NEAR, FPI, ECHO) and EEAS.

EUMS may provide information related to their interventions through their contributions to GAP III reports or through the EUDs, e.g., in cases of joint dialogue (i.e., as part of joint programming or TEI).

Data sources:

The intervention's monitoring and reporting systems, e.g., inception, interim and final reports from implementing organisations (including governments, international organisations, national and international civil society organisations, private sector, etc.), ROM reviews and evaluations.

An important concern for the quality of public administration statistics is that the comprehensiveness of data sources often varies for different parts of and positions in the government. Civil service censuses⁷, labour force surveys and administrative records from national statistical offices, civil service commissions or Gender Equality Observatories are the most common sources for this kind of data collection. In particular, most reports on women in

¹ Based on [UN Women \(2020\): Report of the Expert Groups Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls](#)

² UNDP, 2021.

³ Glass ceilings are the actual or perceived barriers that block women from moving up the ranks of an organization, depressing their representation in senior management and top executive roles (UNDP, 2021)

⁴ Glass walls are invisible, artificial barriers that keep men and women separated into different sectors, departments and occupations; and that keep women concentrated in less powerful and prestigious areas within an institution (UNDP).

⁵ On average women are 46 percent of public administrators, but hold only 31 percent of top leadership positions and comprise only 30 percent of senior managers (UNDP 2021)

⁶ [UN Women \(2020\): Report of the Expert Groups Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls](#)

⁷ Civil service censuses are used in countries without a centralized personnel information management system but they are difficult to run, expensive and are not conducted regularly.

public administration come from centralised personnel information management systems. Labour force surveys⁸ can be another tool to collect statistics on workforces.

Baseline and endline studies conducted and budgeted within the EU intervention using the same data collection methodology. The studies can be conducted as part of the gender country profile and / or gender sector analysis, or be based on existing official reports and published data.

Calculation:

- Numerator: Number of women nominated to senior level positions in public sector.
- Denominator: Total number of women working in the public sector.

Result:

Percentage of women = (Number of women nominated to senior level positions in public sector / Total number of women working in the public sector) × 100

Each woman (disaggregated as below) benefiting from different services thanks to the EU supported intervention should be counted separately and only once if they benefit from more than one intervention of the same type (e.g. different phases of the same programme).⁹

In particular, to avoid double counting, where support is provided continuously, i.e. individuals are supported across years, a peak year result should be taken, i.e., by reporting the highest number of people who benefited from the EU intervention on a yearly basis. Results on a multi-year basis will be calculated by adding the number of new individuals reached in years 2, 3, etc. to the total reached in year 1. The percentage should be updated accordingly.

In case of interest, and if possible, the number of beneficiaries can be calculated by public institution, e.g., ministries of finance, economic planning, business development, etc.

Worked examples

In country A, in the framework of a G2 programme to increase women's leadership and decision-making, the EU supports the government to establish gender quota in the public sector. Three ministries were selected to pilot the action. The number of women nominated to senior level positions progressed over the project timespan in all the pilot ministries:

% women in senior level position (in target public sector institutions)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Total	20%	25%	34%
In Ministry of Finance	5%	6%	11%
In Ministry of Economic Planning	8%	9%	10%
In Ministry of Foreign Affairs	7%	10%	13%

Baseline

Data from official counterparts (i.e., national women's machinery, national gender

⁸ These surveys are typically not designed with a focus on gender, therefore they are not able to capturing or estimating the numbers of women working in leadership in the civil service, especially across sectors or levels.

⁹ Avoiding double counting is especially relevant when aggregating values of different indicators. As a general rule, it is acceptable to record the same individuals under different indicators and between different interventions if the EU funds different services (i.e., a child under one receives nutrition in the framework of one intervention and is also immunised in the framework of another intervention). Where an individual receives the same service in the framework of the same EU supported intervention (e.g., different phases of a nutrition programme), this cannot be matched to different indicators and between different interventions.

observatories, line ministries/authorities, statistical institutes, etc.). Data from international and national organisations working on women's leadership and participation in decision-making or other independent non-state actors.

If baseline data are lacking, a mapping can be done at the start of the intervention using surveys/ interviews.

The baseline can be 0 when the indicator is achieved with the EU funded intervention.

Disaggregation

Data need to be disaggregated by age¹⁰ as a minimum, and by gender¹¹ and disability status, whenever possible.

As a person's gender identity does not necessarily equal nor can it be deduced from their sex, for international and national reporting it is recommended, whenever possible, to collect data disaggregated by gender.

Data should be also disaggregated by public sector institution, e.g., ministries of finance, economic planning, business development, whenever possible.

Taking into due account the "do no harm" principle, it is also recommended to collect data on other intersecting grounds of potential discrimination (e.g., geographical location, population group - ethnic minority, linguistic or religious group member- socio-economic situation, migration status, etc.) based on relevance to the intervention and availability of data.

Data disaggregation to capture the intersecting dimensions concerning rights holders is necessary to increase the quality and effectiveness of programmes, projects, and dialogue, and make visible the experience of different individuals.

The collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data is a priority, regardless of previous practice. Due consideration should be paid to national data collection capacity. Furthermore, those in charge of data collection need to assess carefully if and how to collect sensitive data, for example, concerning sexual identity and the legal situation in the national context to avoid harm to individuals or groups by revealing characteristics they carry.

Availability and Timeliness

Information should become available annually, depending on the duration of the intervention.

Related DAC CRS code

250 - Business & Other Services/ 25010 - Business policy and administration

Associated SDGs

SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Target 5.1, Indicator 5.1.1 (see [Metadata](#))

Target 5.5, Indicator 5.5.2 (see [Metadata](#))

Target 5.c, Indicators 5.c.1 (see [Metadata](#))

Other issues

The UN Women report¹² highlights some recommendations that could inspire the EU action/intervention in order to increase women's representation in public sector:

¹⁰ Age groups: 0-15; 16-24; 25-54; 55+

¹¹ Gender encompasses a person's identities, expressions, and societal roles (man, woman, non-binary, other options)

- Strengthen and push for new laws, frameworks and policies such as quotas and temporary special measures and creating a national gender budget.
- Create institutional change, including through workplace reform (i.e., gender-responsive senior management culture), inclusive human resources policies (i.e., gender-balance recruitment and promotion panels) and penalising sexism and harassment at work.
- Invest in leadership training and professional development of women public administration employees to address the gender gap in senior management levels.
- Break down glass walls to ensure women's participation at all levels of decision-making across different line ministries. This is particularly important where complex policy challenges such as the nature-climate crisis require a diverse set of decision-making bodies.
- Invest in capacity-building and technical assistance for gender mainstreaming specifically in sectors dominated by men, such as energy, mining, environment and climate change.
- Improve the availability of quality data on gender equality and women in public administration (including in senior positions).
- Leverage and build new partnerships, such as those with non-governmental organisations, women's movements, and business.
- Promote synergies across the gender equality agenda, including through awareness raising and supporting women's education and preparedness for civil service careers.

The gender country profile and/ or gender sector analysis can be relevant sources of information for establishing baselines.

If there is no gender analysis available at the EUD, it is recommended to look at the analysis undertaken by EU Member States or other trusted partners (UN, World Bank, human rights national and regional mechanisms, etc.) as well as the [national-level reviews](#) carried out in 2019 by UN Women and the partner countries to assess progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Special attention should be paid to following up on partner country institutions reached with EU support.

¹² [UN Women \(2020\): Report of the Expert Groups Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls](#)