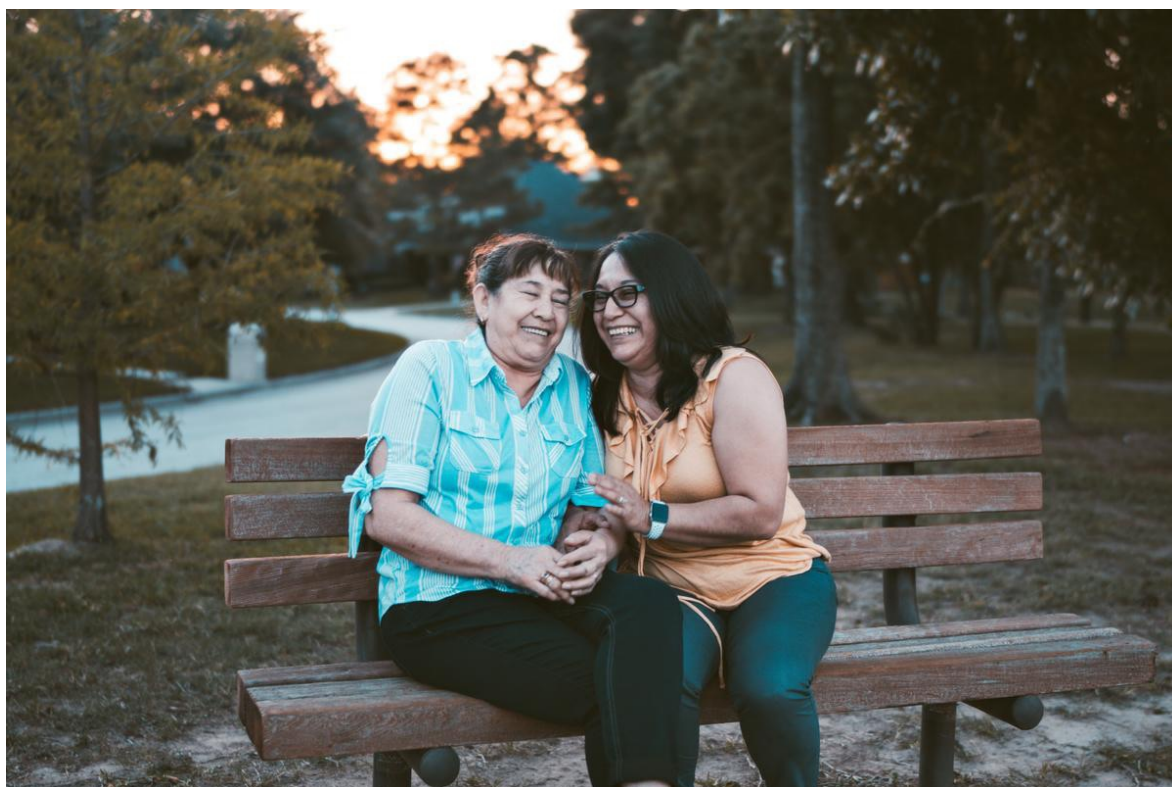


## Mexico: women in the national parliament and in local government



## Key points

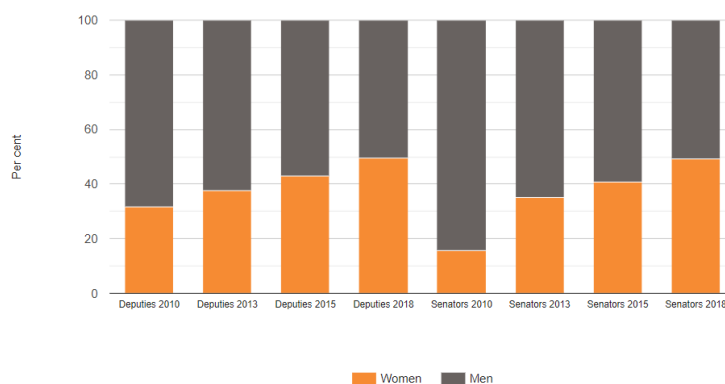
- Achieving the equal political integration of women enables their full and effective participation in decision-making.
- In 2014, the Mexican federal constitution and electoral laws were amended to ensure gender parity in all nominations for federal and local legislative seats; these same requirements have been extended to include nominations to municipal councils.
- By September 2018, gender equality in the national legislation was achieved, with 49.4% of women in the Lower Chamber of Deputies and 49.2% in the Upper Chamber of Senators.
- The current Federal Congress has been named the "Gender-Parity Legislature" because of this important achievement.
- By 2010, women's participation in municipal councils reached 25.5%; by 2018, women's representation was 44.9%.
- At the municipal level, however, the achievement of gender parity has not yet proven possible in some municipalities and municipal councils.<sup>1</sup>
- As of 2018, only 20.9% of municipal governments were led by women.

In Mexico, the political participation of women and men under conditions of equality and equity, without restrictions, is recognized as a human right. Equal political participation promotes democracy and political pluralism, and enables the full and effective participation of women, who have historically faced discrimination in the area of political and policy decision-making.<sup>2</sup>

Mexico has come a long way in breaking down the obstacles that prevented political-electoral equity between women and men. While electoral reforms, aimed at changing the regulation on access to electoral posts were promoted in 2011, it was not until 2014 that constitutional and legal reforms were carried out to guarantee gender parity in electoral nominations for federal and local legislatures.<sup>3</sup> These reforms also included electoral processes for municipal councils.

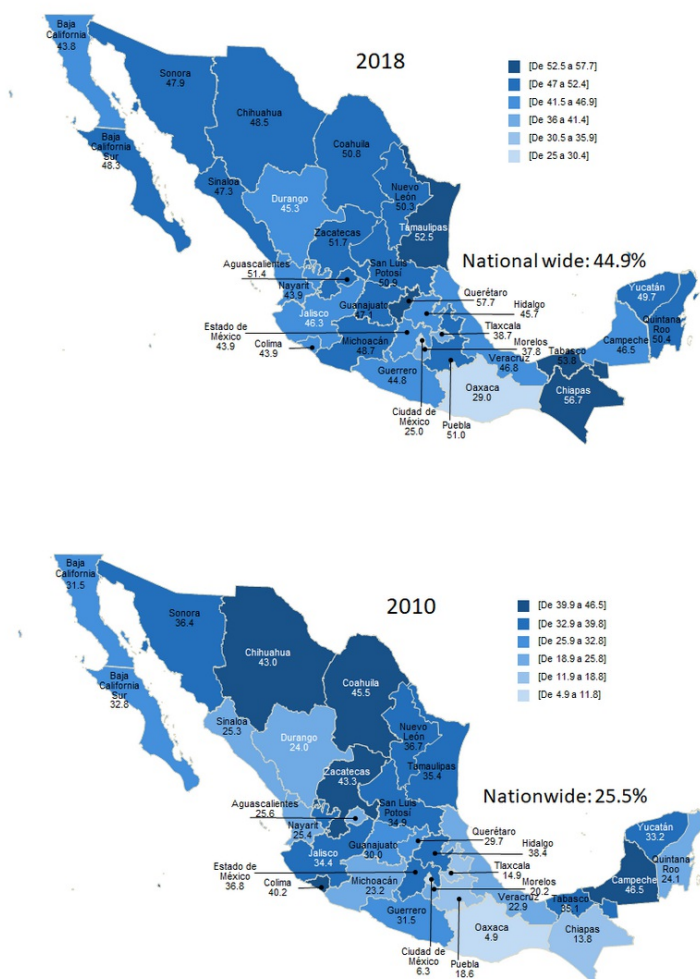
Despite progressive change in electoral legislation and the fact that by September 2015 a trend toward gender parity was already observed, the composition of the Federal Congress was unbalanced: women held 42.8% of seats in the Lower Chamber of Deputies and 40.6% in the Upper Chamber of Senators. Gender equality was achieved in September 2018, with 49.4% of women elected in the Lower Chamber and 49.2% of women in the Upper Chamber (see figure I). As a result of this important achievement, the current Federal Congress has been named the "Gender-Parity Legislature".

**Figure I:** Percentage of seats held by women and men in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Senate: 2010, 2013, 2015, 2018



**Source:** Senate of the Republic of Mexico (Spanish original website) (<https://www.senado.gob.mx/64/>, <https://www.senado.gob.mx/63/>, [http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sistema\\_legislativo\\_LXII.html](http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sistema_legislativo_LXII.html)); Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Mexico (Spanish original website) ([http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sistema\\_legislativo\\_LXI.html](http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sistema_legislativo_LXI.html)).

The Government of Mexico is organized at three levels: the Federal Government; state governments; and local municipal governments. The main governing body at the local level is the municipal council, a collegiate body directly elected by the people, comprising councillors and controllers, and headed by a municipal president. In 2010, women's participation in municipal councils was 25.5% (see figure II); by 2018, women's representation was 44.9%. In spite of the fact that women's political participation at the local level has advanced in most of the 32 Mexican states, there are some areas where the share of women's representation in municipal councils has barely reached 29.0%, for example, in the state of Oaxaca, which has the highest indigenous population in the country.

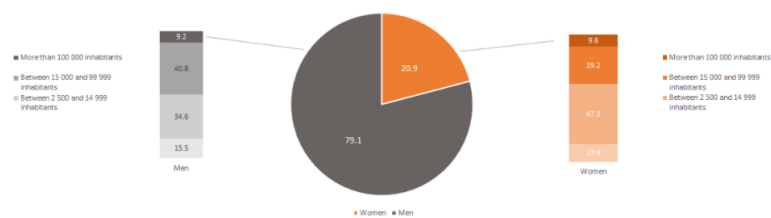
**Figure II:** Percentage of women's representation in municipal councils: 2010 and 2018

**Source:** National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) National Census on Municipal and Borough Governments, 2011, and National Census on Municipal Governments and Territorial Demarcations of Mexico City, 2019.

As of 2018, 45% of members of municipal councils were women, including mayors, aldermen and councilors, although only 21% of mayors were women, and 86.1% of female mayors were in elected in urban areas. Among the proportion of urban municipalities, women were more likely than men to be mayors of communities with 2,500 to 14,999 inhabitants (47.3% compared to 34.6%, respectively) and less likely than men to be mayors of communities with 15,000 to 99,999 inhabitants (29.2% and 40.8%, respectively).

Women and men were equally represented as mayors of municipalities with 100,000 and more inhabitants (9.6% and 9.2%, respectively), while men had a slightly greater chance of being mayors of rural municipalities with less than 2,500 inhabitants (15.5% compared to 13.9%, respectively) (see figure III).

**Figure III:** Percentage of municipalities led by women and men by population of municipalities: 2018



**Source:** INEGI, National Census on Municipal Governments and Territorial Demarcations of Mexico City, 2019, and National Population Council (CONAPO), Population Projections of Mexico, 2015-2020.

## Further reading and related stories

- [Women in national parliaments](#)
- [Women in local government positions](#)
- [Women in politics and decision-making positions in Africa](#)

## About the data

## Definitions

- **Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament and local governments:** Total number of seats occupied by women divided by the total number of seats

## Coverage

Women and men who hold elected seats in federal legislative chambers and local deliberative bodies (municipalities) at national and state levels in Mexico.

## Availability

Data on the political participation of women at the local level have been obtained through the national census on local governments,<sup>4</sup> which has been conducted biennially by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) since 2011.

## Footnotes

1. Colección: Equidad de género y democracia (Collection: Gender Equality and Democracy) (Spanish original).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. National Census on Municipal Governments and Territorial Demarcations of Mexico City, 2019, previously called the National Census on Municipal and Borough Governments.