



PROMOTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

The EU Election Observation Mission deployed in 2022 encouraged **action** to ensure full and effective **participation of women** in public life and promote **gender equality**.

Full story below 

An European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) deployed in 2022 to observe the 25 September general elections in São Tomé e Príncipe called attention to the limited **participation of women** in the political life.

The 2021 electoral reform in São Tomé e Príncipe introduced a mandatory 30 per cent gender quota. But there were no provisions to place women in **eligible positions** at all electoral levels.

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«Aside from the President, only eight out of 55 deputies in the Assembly are women»

said *Vera Cravid*, the former president of the Association of Women Jurists of São Tomé e Príncipe and, since early 2025, the Minister of Justice, Parliamentary Affairs and Women's Rights.

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In 2022, the EU EOM recommended:

*“Increase **affirmative measures** to ensure that at least **40 per cent women** representation in all **elected positions** can be fully implemented. Complement the application of the zipper rule for the next legislative elections with a horizontal alternation placement rule, should a plurality-majority system be chosen at any electoral level.”*

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The **new Parity Law**, including a **40 PER CENT GENDER QUOTA** for all elected and appointed positions, and comprising the zipper system, was introduced in November 2022 and will apply to **future elections**.

The law foresees that candidate lists should present a **gender balance** of at least 40 per cent, with alternation in the first two names in the candidate list.

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«Our association [Women Jurists of São Tomé e Príncipe] was directly involved, because some of our members worked closely with the European Union to this end.

We played a major role in the approval and implementation of the parity law, which was backed by one of the EU EOM's recommendations, aiming to promote women's participation in the entire electoral process», said Ms Cravid.

An EU Election Follow-up Mission deployed in 2024 to São Tomé e Príncipe considered that the recommendation has been fully implemented as it was translated into law.

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