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ANWAR GARGASH DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

Women in Diplomacy

AGDA Insight

2026 Women in Diplomacy Index



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Executive Summary:

- The 2026 Women in Diplomacy Index maps the percentage of women ambassadors and permanent representatives to the United Nations (UN) globally. For the third time since its launch in 2018, this year's Index also tracks the countries of the world that host the largest percentage shares of women ambassadors. The report is based on a unique dataset of more than 12,000 ambassadorial appointments. It is the only one in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and one of the very few worldwide tracking gender-related diplomacy.

- Results show that in 2026, the percentage share of women ambassadors and permanent representatives globally **increased by 0.5 percentage points to 23.0%** in the 167 states that we were able to track. While this indicates continued progress, the result shows that women remain underrepresented in top diplomatic posts worldwide.

- In 2026, our data found that the share of women ambassadors increased in the Americas and Africa, held steady in Asia and the MENA region, and declined slightly in Europe. Regionally, the **Americas** have the highest average of women ambassadors and permanent representatives among the major world regions, at **31%**, up from 29% in 2025, while Europe's share declined to **28%**, down from 29% in 2025. Africa's percentage share of women ambassadors increased to **23%** in 2026, up from 22% in 2025. Asia's share of women ambassadors remained at **13%**, while in the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** region, the percentage share of women ambassadors remained at 11% in 2026. In **Oceania**, where we track five states, the average stands at **36%**.

- Country specific results indicate that **Finland** and **New Zealand** have surpassed gender parity in their top diplomatic posts, with **52%** of their ambassadors being women, while **the Bahamas, Belize** and **Liechtenstein** have reached parity at **50%**. Other countries with high percentage shares of women ambassadors in 2026 include **Canada** (49%), **Costa Rica** and **Norway** (46%), the **Netherlands** (45%), **Ireland**, **Samoa** and **Sweden** (44%), **Lesotho** (43%), **Estonia** and **Latvia** (42%), **Australia, Liberia** and **South Africa** (41%), and **Ghana, Jamaica** and the **United States** (40%).[1]

- Four countries – **Canada, Finland, New Zealand** and **Sweden** – have remained among the strongest performers since 2023, maintaining a share of women ambassadors of at least 40% in every edition of the Index from 2023 to 2026. Finland and New Zealand now share the top position, while Sweden's share has edged down since its 2024 peak.

- Between 2025 and 2026, the largest gains were recorded by **Gabon** and **Nicaragua** (+14 percentage points each), **Guatemala** (+13), the **Bahamas** (+12.5), **Congo** and **Estonia** (+12), **Luxembourg** (+11.5) and **Lesotho** (+10). The sharpest declines were in **Timor-Leste** (–11 percentage points) and Panama (–8), followed by Cyprus, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar and the Philippines (–7 each).

- Progress in multilateral spaces is modest but positive in 2026. For the states encompassing the **G20**, an increase of 0.8 percentage points occurred in 2026 when compared to 2025, with **22.1%** of G20 states' ambassadors being women. The share of women ambassadors in the countries of the **European Union (EU)** rose to 30% in 2026, up from 29% in 2025. Countries comprising the expanded **BRICS** group have yet to catch up, with a percentage share of **14%** women ambassadors in 2026, a score they have maintained since 2024.

- Our data found that in 2026, **Antigua** and **Barbuda, Barbados** and **Malawi** hosted the largest percentage of women ambassadors. In Antigua and Barbuda, 75% of resident ambassadors are women, compared to 56% in Barbados and 50% in Malawi. Luxembourg, Iceland, Ireland, Belize, the Seychelles, Chile, Sweden, Malta, Lithuania, Timor-Leste and Cabo Verde also host a large percentage of women ambassadors, ranging from 40% in Timor-Leste and Cabo Verde to 47% in Luxembourg.

- As progress towards gender parity in ambassadorial posts remains incremental, it is imperative that women's representation and inclusion in senior roles in diplomacy and foreign policy happen at a faster pace. Concrete steps must be taken to increase women's representation in senior diplomatic posts.

Introduction

The importance of gender balance in the workforce has long been on the agenda of organisations in most countries around the world. The results have varied greatly, between different geographies and different sectors.

Diplomacy has traditionally lagged behind many other sectors when it comes to gender balance, especially in leading positions. This is despite most foreign services recruiting an ever-larger number of female candidates at entry level positions.

The 2026 Women in Diplomacy Index maps the percentage of women ambassadors representing the 193 United Nations (UN) member states. It focuses on ambassadorships and permanent representatives to the UN to gauge the degree to which women assume some of the most prominent leadership positions in the world of diplomacy.

This year's report constitutes the seventh edition of the Index and is the third time that host states are ranked. It is based on a dataset that includes more than 12,000 ambassadorial appointments worldwide and is the fourth time that all global ambassadorial appointments were covered. New additions to the 2026 edition include Eritrea, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. The first edition of the Index, which was published in 2018, contained an overview of the ambassadorial appointments of all G20 states, while the second and third surveys were published in 2021 and 2022 and expanded the dataset to 40 countries, plus the European Union (EU).

It is our hope that by continuing to document the number of women ambassadors appointed on an annual basis and tracking where they are hosted, we can monitor progression over time and give ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) a way to benchmark themselves against their peers. As more states commit to mainstreaming and applying the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and to making their foreign, security and development policy more gender inclusive, we believe that this Index can help frame the conversation on the need to promote and appoint more women to top diplomatic posts.

Methodology

To calculate the share of women ambassadors globally, a report was prepared for each United Nations member state that included the names of each country's resident ambassadors and permanent representative to the UN in New York, the countries where they are posted and their gender. The data for host states was collected in a similar way, identifying the resident ambassadors' names, their country of origin and gender. The data was then consolidated into a large dataset where results were combined, filtered, coded and analysed.

The Index relies on public data found on the countries' MFA websites, individual embassy webpages, and country lists found in the Europa World Yearbook. In a few cases, we complemented the data-gathering process with research published on other databases and through other indices to ensure reliability. When information was not publicly available, clearly not up to date, or when found to be unreliable, the share of women ambassadors was not calculated.

In 2026, we were thus able to track serving ambassadors in 167 states. The states for which we were not able to collect reliable data were excluded from the world and regional average count and from the ranking.[2] The results we published in 2018, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 were used to generate comparisons across the G20, the EU, the BRICS, and countries with feminist foreign policies. The data for this edition of the Index was gathered in October 2026.

Our dataset includes ambassadors who are resident ambassadors in another state, permanent representatives to the UN in New York, and high commissioners with ambassadorial rank in the case of Commonwealth states. The data count does not include non-resident ambassadors, consuls, consuls-general, deputy heads of mission with or without ambassadorial rank, chargés d'affaires, ambassadors-at-large for particular issues (e.g. women and girls, nuclear proliferation, migration, etc.) or persons with ambassadorial rank serving in their national capital or within their MFA. The data set also did not include foreign affairs ministers or retired ambassadors.

2026 Results

Women remain underrepresented in ambassadorship positions across the world. Indeed, in 2026, only 23.0% of all ambassadors are women (Figure 1). This is an improvement from 2025, when the global share of women ambassadors stood at 22.5%, and from 2024, when it stood at 21%. Our data shows that 79 countries, out of the 167 states we were able to track, have a percentage share of women ambassadors that is above the world average. The rest, or 88 states, fall below the average. Of this year's three new additions, Tonga (29%) sits above the world average, while Papua New Guinea (15%) and Eritrea (9.5%) fall below it.

As displayed in Table 1, Finland and New Zealand take the lead in having appointed the highest share of women ambassadors, with 52% of their ambassadorial posts being held by women. The Bahamas, Belize and Liechtenstein follow at 50%, having reached gender parity. Canada, which held the lead position in the 2022-2024 period, stands at 49% in 2026, a slight increase from 48.5% in 2025. Costa Rica, Norway, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Samoa, Lesotho, Estonia, Latvia, Australia, Liberia, South Africa, Ghana, Jamaica and the United States (US) have percentage shares of women ambassadors ranging between 40% (in the case of Ghana, Jamaica and the US) and 46% (for Costa Rica and Norway). Taken together, these countries make up the top 10 ranks of the Index, where gender equality in senior posts has been achieved or is within close reach. The Appendix lists our findings for all 167 states, ranked from highest percentage share to the lowest.

Consistent strong performers since 2023

Four countries have kept a share of women ambassadors of at least 40% in every edition of the Index since 2023: **Canada** (51% in 2023, 53% in 2024, 48.5% in 2025 and 49% in 2026), Finland (49.5%, 50%, 46% and 52% in 2026), New Zealand (42.5%, 47.5%, 50% and 52% in 2026) and **Sweden** (47% in 2023, 51%, 45% and 44% in 2026). Finland and **New Zealand** have strengthened their position to share the top rank in 2026, while Sweden's share has edged down since its 2024 peak.

Other strong performers from 2023 have been less consistent: the United States returned to 40% after dipping to 37.5% in 2024, Ghana recovered to 40% after falling from 49% in 2023, and the Bahamas rebounded to 50% after two years below 40%. The United Kingdom, by contrast, has slipped from 42.5% in 2023 to 39% in 2026, while the Maldives (from 50% to 35%) and Nicaragua (from 48% to 34%) recorded the sharpest declines among the 2023 top performers.

Figure 1: Global percentage shares of ambassadors (2026)

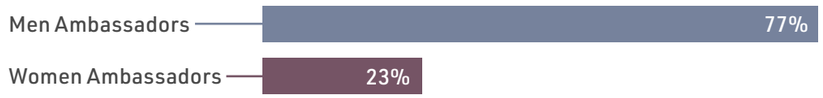


Table 1: Countries with Highest Percentage Shares of Women Ambassadors (2026)

Rank	Country Name	% Share of Women Ambassadors	Comments
1	Finland	52%	
1	New Zealand	52%	
2	Bahamas	50%	Small number of missions
2	Belize	50%	Small number of missions
2	Liechtenstein	50%	Small number of missions
3	Canada	49%	
4	Costa Rica	46%	
4	Norway	46%	
5	Netherlands	45%	
6	Ireland	44%	
6	Samoa	44%	Small number of missions
6	Sweden	44%	
7	Lesotho	43%	Small number of missions
8	Estonia	42%	
8	Latvia	42%	
9	Australia	41%	
9	Liberia	41%	Small number of missions
9	South Africa	41%	
10	Ghana	40%	
10	Jamaica	40%	Small number of missions
10	United States of America	40%	

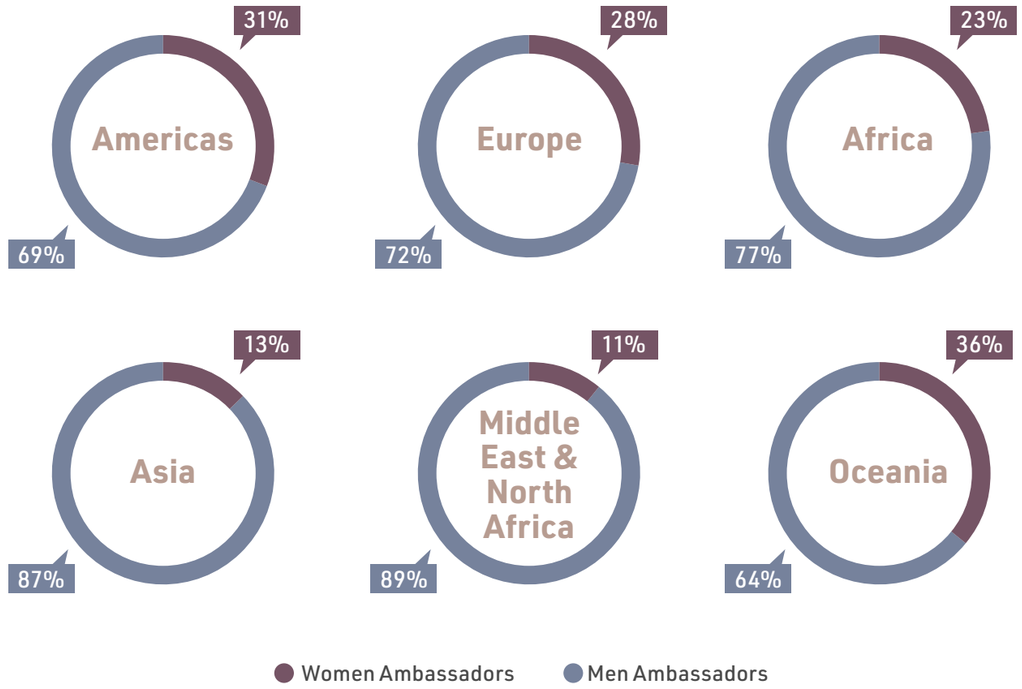
Results Vary Significantly Between Regions

As illustrated in Figure 2, our data finds that in 2026, **the Americas** have the highest average of women ambassadors and permanent representatives among the major world regions, with **31%** of their representatives being women, up from 29% in 2025. **Europe** follows with **28%**, a slight decline from 29% in 2025.

In 2026, the three countries spanning North America (Canada, Mexico and the United States) have an average percentage share of 39%, while 29.5% of the ambassadors from Latin America and the Caribbean are women. In **Oceania**, where our dataset covers five states (Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga), women make up **36%** of ambassadors. This figure is not directly comparable with 2025, as Papua New Guinea and Tonga are new additions this year.

Africa's percentage share of women ambassadors, excluding the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, stands at **23%**, an improvement from 2025, where it stood at 22%. Asia and the **MENA region** have the lowest shares of women ambassadors, with **13%** and **11%**, respectively. Both shares remained unchanged from 2025, while Europe was the only region of the world to record a decline in 2026.

Figure 2: Percentage share of women ambassadors by region, in 2026



Variations also exist within each region. While the Bahamas and Belize (50%) and Canada (49%) have the highest percentage shares of women ambassadors in the Americas, Trinidad and Tobago trails behind with just 8% of its ambassadors being women, followed by Antigua and Barbuda (17%) and Argentina (17.5%). Most countries in the Americas, nonetheless, are above the world average.

In Europe, Finland has surpassed gender parity in its senior diplomatic posts (with a 52% percentage share of women ambassadors), while Liechtenstein has reached it (50%). Norway and the Netherlands follow, with 46% and 45% of their ambassadors being women, respectively, while in Italy (14.5%), Cyprus (11%) and Georgia (9.5%), women make up a much smaller share of ambassadorial appointments.

Falling considerably behind are Russia and Belarus, with Russia scoring a percentage share of 2% and Belarus having no woman ambassador in 2026. For the Nordic states in our dataset (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden), women ambassadors constitute 40% of their total ambassadors, a slight decrease from 2025 where their percentage share was 41%.

Elsewhere, 23% of African ambassadors (excluding MENA) are women, with Lesotho, Liberia and South Africa topping the list with 43%, 41% and 41% shares, respectively. Ghana, which had a 49% percentage share of women ambassadors in 2023, has recovered steadily since 2024 (38%) and reached 40% in 2026. Djibouti and Chad score the lowest, with only 4% and 6% of their ambassadors being women in 2026. Eritrea, a new addition to the Index, has a percentage share of 9.5%.

In Asia, while the continent's average share of women ambassadors stands at 13% in 2026, Thailand is the top performer with a percentage share of women ambassadors of 37%, up from 27.5% in 2025. The Maldives (35%) and the Philippines (32%, down from 39% in 2025) follow. South Korea and Tajikistan have percentage shares of 3.5%, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan 3%, and Iran 1%, while North Korea, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have no woman ambassador.

The Arab states in our dataset come last, with 11% of their ambassadors being women in 2026, unchanged from 2025. Lebanon, Palestine and Morocco are the countries that have the highest shares of women ambassadors in the region, at 24%, 23% and 21%, respectively. The six countries that make up the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – together had a percentage share of 6% in 2026, with the UAE having the largest share of women ambassadors in the GCC at 13%.

Women's Representation in Multilateral Spaces

Progress in women's representation in various multilateral spaces is modest but positive in 2026. In the EU countries, the percentage of women ambassadors in 2026 reached 30%, an increase from the 2025 score of 29%. As shown in Table 2, the EU's scores fell from 26% in 2018 to 23.4% in 2021 and 23.5% in 2022, only to recover in 2023 and 2024 with a 28% and 30% average share of women representatives during those two years, before dipping to 29% in 2025. Overall, the EU improved by 4 percentage points since 2018.

Table 2: Percentage share of women ambassadors of EU Member States (2018-2026)

	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Share of women ambassadors of EU member states	26%	23.4%	23.5%	28%	30%	29%	**30%**

For the countries of the G20 – excluding the EU and the African Union – progress is also visible, albeit slow. As seen in Table 3, the G20 improved by 5.4 percentage points since 2018 and went from having a 16.7% percentage share of women ambassadors in 2018 to 22.1% in 2026. After hovering around 21% between 2023 and 2025, the G20 states' average share of women ambassadors rose above 22% for the first time in 2026.

Table 3: Percentage share of women ambassadors of G20 states (2018-2026)

	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Share of women ambassadors in the G20	16.7%	19.3%	20%	21%	21%	21.3%	**22.1%**

The expanded BRICS group comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the UAE and Indonesia stagnated in 2026 when it comes to women's representation at the ambassadorial level. Indonesia, which became a full member in January 2025, is included in our BRICS calculation for the first time this year, but its inclusion does not change the group's average. As illustrated in Table 4, the BRICS group's share of women ambassadors climbed from 11.6% in 2018 to 14% in 2024, a level it maintained in 2025 and 2026,[3] an increase of 2.4 percentage points since 2018.

Table 4: Percentage share of women ambassadors of BRICS states (2018-2026)

	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Share of women ambassadors in BRICS	11.6%	12.5%	12.8%	13%	14%	14%	**14%**

For states that have declared a Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) – Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Liberia, Mexico, Slovenia and Spain, 33.1% of their ambassadors in 2026 were women, a result that is considerably higher than the world average (23.0%). This indeed signifies that their diplomatic corps are more gender-inclusive than the rest of the world (see Table 5).[4] Overall, states with FFP have managed to increase their shares of women ambassadors by 5.1 percentage points since 2023. Nonetheless, the share of women ambassadors in each individual country falls below 50%, meaning that all of them have yet to reach gender equality within their own top diplomatic ranks.

Table 5: Percentage share of women ambassadors in countries with FFP (2023-2026)

	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Share of women ambassadors in countries with FFP	28%	31%	31.3%	**33.1%**

Steady Progress Towards Gender Equality

Our dataset allows us to compare results for 40 countries since 2021[5] and globally since 2023.

As listed in Table 6, countries that made significant progress since 2018 (defined as 10 percentage points or above increase in their share of women ambassadors) include **Germany** (17.3 percentage points increase since 2018), **Canada** (13.4 percentage points increase since 2018), **Israel** (11.4 percentage points increase since 2021), **Egypt** (10.5 percentage points increase since 2022) and the **United Kingdom** (10.2 percentage points increase since 2018).

Table 6: Countries that made significant progress (2018-2026)

Country Name	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Increase (in percentage points)
Germany	12.7%	17.2%	22.9%	26.5%	25%	24%	30%	**17.3**
Canada	35.6%	46.3%	50%	51%	53%	48.5%	49%	**13.4**
Israel	N/A	15.6%	16.7%	20.5%	21%	29%	27%	**11.4**
Egypt	N/A	N/A	7.5%	7.5%	14%	17%	18%	**10.5**
United Kingdom	28.8%	33.8%	40%	42.5%	39.5%	38%	39%	**10.2**

As displayed in Table 7, countries that show moderate progress since 2018, which we define as having an increase of women ambassadors between five and 10 percentage points, include Switzerland (9.6 percentage points increase since 2021), Mexico (8.6 percentage points increase since 2018), Brazil (8.4 percentage points increase), South Africa (8.3 percentage points increase), the Netherlands (7.9 percentage points increase since 2021), Spain (7.7 percentage points increase since 2021), Italy (7.6 percentage points increase), the United States (6.9 percentage points increase), Ireland (6.2 percentage points increase since 2021) and the UAE (6 percentage points increase since 2018), followed by France, China, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Australia.

Table 7: Countries that made moderate progress (2018-2026)

Country Name	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Increase (in percentage points)
Switzerland	N/A	21.4%	24.2%	27.5%	28%	27%	**31%**	**9.6**
Mexico	18.4%	24.4%	23.3%	23%	27%	25%	**27%**	**8.6**
Brazil	10.1%	12.5%	10.7%	14.5%	14%	14.5%	**18.5%**	**8.4**
South Africa	32.7%	39.1%	40.2%	39%	41.5%	42%	**41%**	**8.3**
Netherlands	N/A	37.1%	37%	38%	42%	49%	**45%**	**7.9**
Spain	N/A	20.3%	26.7%	32.5%	23%	26%	**28%**	**7.7**
Italy	6.9%	12.8%	12.2%	12%	15%	12%	**14.5%**	**7.6**
United States	33.1%	30.9%	33.8%	41%	37.5%	40%	**40%**	**6.9**
Ireland	N/A	37.8%	31.9%	39%	37%	48%	**44%**	**6.2**
United Arab Emirates	7%	7.9%	10.9%	12.5%	11.5%	13%	**13%**	**6**
France	26.5%	21.2%	24.7%	26%	26%	29%	**32%**	**5.5**
China	6.7%	10.2%	11.3%	9%	9%	12%	**12%**	**5.3**
Thailand	N/A	31.7%	31.5%	31.5%	30%	27.5%	**37%**	**5.3**
Saudi Arabia	0%	2.1%	4%	5%	4%	4%	**5%**	**5**
Australia	36%	40.2%	34.7%	37%	41%	43%	**41%**	**5**

Biggest movers between 2025 and 2026:

Comparing this year's results with those of 2025 for the 163 states tracked in both editions, 80 states increased their share of women ambassadors, while 57 recorded a decrease. The largest gains (defined as an increase of 10 percentage points or more) were recorded by **Gabon** (from 9% to 23%) and **Nicaragua** (from 20% to 34%), both up 14 percentage points, followed by **Guatemala** (+13, from 19% to 32%), **the Bahamas** (+12.5, from 37.5% to 50%), **Congo** (+12, from 12% to 24%), **Estonia** (+12, from 30% to 42%), **Luxembourg** (+11.5, from 27% to 38.5%) and **Lesotho** (+10, from 33% to 43%). A further group of states improved by between five and 10 percentage points: Thailand (+9.5), Brunei and Mongolia (+9), Colombia and the Dominican Republic (+8), the Central African Republic (+7), Venezuela (+6.5), Burkina Faso, Finland, Germany, Mali, Nepal, Palestine, Peru and Somalia (+6), and Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Republic of Moldova, Sierra Leone and Viet Nam (+5). Gabon, the Bahamas, Lesotho and the Central African Republic have a small number of missions, so a few appointments can move their shares considerably, while Nicaragua's increase partly reverses its earlier decline (from 48% in 2023 to 20% in 2025).

Regression and Backsliding:

While most states listed in Tables 6 and 7 are striving to appoint more women to ambassadorial posts, some have recorded noticeable declines in their percentage share of women ambassadors in 2026 when compared to their earliest scores in the Index (2018 or 2021). These include **India** (5.1 percentage points decrease since 2018), **Sweden** (4.1 percentage points decrease since 2021), **Poland** (3.9 percentage points decrease), **Turkiye** (3.2 percentage points decrease), **Malaysia** (3 percentage points decrease), **Bangladesh** (2.5 percentage points decrease), **Denmark** (2.4 percentage points decrease), **Nigeria** (1.7 percentage points decrease), **South Korea** (1.5 percentage points decrease) and **Iran** (1.4 percentage points decrease).

Lack of Progress since 2025:

Fourteen states saw their share of women ambassadors fall by five percentage points or more between 2025 and 2026. The steepest declines were recorded by **Timor-Leste** (–11 percentage points, from 33% to 22%) and **Panama** (–8, from 33% to 25%). Cyprus, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar and the Philippines each fell by seven percentage points, Iceland and South Sudan by six, and Bolivia, Burundi, Georgia, Latvia, North Macedonia and Slovenia by five.

Where are the Women Ambassadors?

In 2026, the top recipient of women ambassadors is the Caribbean state of **Antigua & Barbuda**, where 75% of ambassadors posted there are women, followed by **Barbados** (56%) and **Malawi** (50%). Table 8 lists the top 10 countries that host the highest percentage shares of women ambassadors in 2026. While the data shows a wide geographical distribution in terms of where women ambassadors are posted, in Europe, Luxembourg, Iceland, Ireland, Sweden, Malta and Lithuania are the top recipients of women ambassadors.

As a group, the Nordic states in our dataset are also top sending states, with a 40% share of women ambassadors in 2026. The fact that some of them – notably Iceland (46%) and Sweden (42%) – are also top recipients or hosts of women diplomats perhaps reflects a trend of strong diplomatic reciprocity, where sending a woman ambassador is construed as a politically strong signal, recognised and reciprocated by the receiving state. It might also reflect that these countries are generally considered family-friendly and safe destinations.

Table 8: Top host countries for women ambassadors (2026)

Rank	Host Country	Percentage share of women ambassadors in host countries 2026
1	Antigua & Barbuda	75%
2	Barbados	56%
3	Malawi	50%
4	Luxembourg	47%
5	Iceland	46%
5	Ireland	46%
6	Belize	44%
7	Seychelles	43%
7	Chile	43%
8	Sweden	42%
9	Malta	41%
9	Lithuania	41%
10	Timor-Leste	40%
10	Cabo Verde	40%

Turning to the question of whether women get posted in economically and militarily strategic states, we measured the percentage share of women ambassadors posted in G7 states, China and India in 2026. Given their global political and economic clout, the G7 countries, along with China and India, can be used to test whether women ambassadors get the coveted postings. As Table 9 shows, **France** and **Germany** host the largest percentage share of women ambassadors (29%). They are followed by **Italy**, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States**, where 25% of the ambassadors posted there are women. Italy, which held the top position in 2024 and 2025, saw its share fall from 31% to 25%, while India recorded the largest increase, from 17% to 21%.

Table 9: Percentage share of women ambassadors posted in G7 states, China and India (2026)

Rank	Host Country	Percentage share of women ambassadors in host states 2026
1	France	29%
1	Germany	29%
2	Italy	25%
2	UK	25%
2	USA	25%
3	Canada	22%
4	India	21%
5	Japan	17%
6	China	15%

Why does it matter?

Tracking the number of women ambassadors and permanent representatives globally is significant for several reasons. The lack of women representation in foreign policy has long been regarded as detrimental to peace. Women's exclusion from negotiation processes, as official state representatives, means that sustainable pathways to peace and security remain uneven. Our data shows that women are a minority when looking at global ambassadorships in the 2018–2026 period. In addition, in 2024, only 7% of negotiators and 14% of mediators were women,[6] and women constituted only 26.6% of signatories in peace processes.[7] This goes against a growing body of evidence that found that when women have a seat at the table, the odds of reducing instability and conflict improve significantly.[8]

Urgent Action is Needed Now

Despite the improvements that have been recorded since 2018 and an increase of 0.5 percentage points in the world average in 2026, our findings confirm that women remain underrepresented in ambassadorial positions globally. Concrete steps must be taken to increase women's representation in senior diplomatic posts.

The advances that some states recorded recently need to be recognised and their efforts applauded. The cases of Germany, Canada, Israel, Egypt and the United Kingdom, which each recorded an increase of more than 10 percentage points in their share of women ambassadors since they were first included in the Index, prove that promoting women diplomats to senior posts is indeed possible when the right policies are in place. The consistency of Canada, Finland, New Zealand and Sweden, which have kept their shares at or above 40% every year since 2023, shows that such gains can also be sustained.

Nevertheless, with a mere **23.0%** share of the total global ambassadorial posts in 2026, the picture is clear: while the world is making progress, it is still a long way away from ensuring gender equality in the top diplomatic posts. In 2026, we still have not managed to transform diplomacy into a more gender-inclusive field.

Appendix: Percentage Share of Women Ambassadors in 2026 (Ranked)

Rank	Country Name	% Share of Women Ambassadors	Comments (2026)
1	Finland	52%	
1	New Zealand	52%	
2	Bahamas	50%	Small number of missions
2	Belize	50%	Small number of missions
2	Liechtenstein	50%	Small number of missions
3	Canada	49%	
4	Costa Rica	46%	
4	Norway	46%	
5	Netherlands	45%	
6	Ireland	44%	
6	Samoa	44%	Small number of missions
6	Sweden	44%	
7	Lesotho	43%	Small number of missions
8	Estonia	42%	
8	Latvia	42%	
9	Australia	41%	
9	Liberia	41%	Small number of missions
9	South Africa	41%	
10	Ghana	40%	
10	Jamaica	40%	Small number of missions
10	United States of America	40%	
11	El Salvador	39%	
11	United Kingdom	39%	
12	Luxembourg	38.5%	
12	Romania	38.5%	
12	Suriname	38.5%	Small number of missions
13	Greece	38%	
14	Austria	37.5%	
15	Botswana	37%	
15	Thailand	37%	
16	Cuba	36%	
16	Uganda	36%	
17	Malawi	35%	
17	Maldives	35%	Small number of missions
18	Nicaragua	34%	
19	Colombia	33%	
19	Croatia	33%	
19	Iceland	33%	
19	Seychelles	33%	Small number of missions
20	Zimbabwe	32.5%	
21	Albania	32%	
21	France	32%	
21	Guatemala	32%	
21	Kenya	32%	
21	Philippines	32%	
21	Serbia	32%	
21	Slovenia	32%	
22	Ecuador	31%	
22	Mozambique	31%	
22	Switzerland	31%	
23	Bolivia	30%	
23	Germany	30%	
23	Sri Lanka	30%	
24	Bulgaria	29%	
24	Honduras	29%	
24	Kosovo	29%	
24	Madagascar	29%	Small number of missions
24	Tonga	29%	New addition (2026)
24	Zambia	29%	
25	Dominican Republic	28%	
25	Hungary	28%	
25	Lithuania	28%	
25	Spain	28%	
26	Barbados	27%	
26	Central African Republic	27%	Small number of missions
26	Israel	27%	
26	Mexico	27%	
27	Venezuela	26.5%	
28	Angola	26%	
28	Benin	26%	Small number of missions

28	Brunei	26%	
28	Republic of Moldova	26%	
29	Panama	25%	
29	Sierra Leone	25%	
30	Congo	24%	
30	Denmark	24%	
30	Lebanon	24%	
30	Namibia	24%	Small number of missions
30	Portugal	24%	
31	Burundi	23%	
31	Cambodia	23%	
31	Chile	23%	
31	Gabon	23%	Small number of missions
31	Malta	23%	
31	North Macedonia	23%	
31	Palestine	23%	
32	Democratic Republic of the Congo	22%	
32	Rwanda	22%	
32	Timor-Leste	22%	
32	Uruguay	22%	
33	Mauritius	21%	Small number of missions
33	Morocco	21%	
33	Ukraine	21%	
34	Bosnia and Herzegovina	20%	
34	Tunisia	20%	
35	Burkina Faso	19%	
35	Mongolia	19%	
35	Niger	19%	
35	Paraguay	19%	
35	Peru	19%	
35	Turkiye	19%	
36	Brazil	18.5%	
37	Egypt	18%	
37	Montenegro	18%	Small number of missions
37	Singapore	18%	
38	Argentina	17.5%	
39	Antigua & Barbuda	17%	

39	Cote d'Ivoire	17%	
39	Poland	17%	
39	Slovakia	17%	
39	South Sudan	17%	
39	Tanzania	17%	
40	Armenia	16%	
40	Malaysia	16%	
40	Senegal	16%	
41	Belgium	15%	
41	Czechia	15%	
41	Nepal	15%	
41	Papua New Guinea	15%	New addition (2026)
42	Italy	14.5%	
43	Gambia	14%	Small number of missions
43	Indonesia	14%	
43	Jordan	14%	
43	Nigeria	14%	
44	United Arab Emirates	13%	
45	Bangladesh	12%	
45	China	12%	
45	Ethiopia	12%	
45	Viet Nam	12%	
46	Cyprus	11%	
46	Mali	11%	
46	Syria	11%	
46	Togo	11%	Small number of missions
47	Algeria	10%	
48	Eritrea	9.5%	New addition (2026)
48	Georgia	9.5%	
49	Cameroon	9%	
49	India	9%	
49	Iraq	9%	
49	Somalia	9%	
50	Oman	8%	
50	Sudan	8%	
50	Trinidad and Tobago	8%	Small number of missions
51	Japan	7%	

51	Kyrgyzstan	7%	
51	Pakistan	7%	
51	Yemen	7%	
52	Chad	6%	
52	Mauritania	6%	
53	Azerbaijan	5%	
53	Saudi Arabia	5%	
54	Myanmar	4.5%	
55	Djibouti	4%	Small number of missions
55	Qatar	4%	
56	South Korea	3.5%	
56	Tajikistan	3.5%	
57	Afghanistan	3%	
57	Bahrain	3%	
57	Kazakhstan	3%	
57	Kuwait	3%	
57	Libya	3%	
58	Russia	2%	
59	Iran	1%	
60	Belarus	0%	
60	North Korea	0%	
60	Turkmenistan	0%	
60	Uzbekistan	0%	

Endnotes

1. The Bahamas, Belize, Liechtenstein, Samoa, Lesotho, Liberia and Jamaica have a small number of missions; small changes in their appointments can therefore produce large shifts in their percentage shares.
2. The countries that we could not find accurate or reliable data for in 2026 include: Andorra, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Kiribati, Lao, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
3. Data for Ethiopia was not available for 2018, 2021 and 2022. Data for Egypt was not available for 2018 and 2021. Indonesia, which became a full BRICS member in January 2025, is included in the BRICS average from 2026.
4. Data for Liberia was not available in 2023 and 2024.
5. The 2021 and 2022 editions of the Index looked at women's representation at the ambassadorial level in the 40 largest economies, based on GDP data gathered through the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
6. Source: https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2025/10/wars-on-women-escalate-as-global-conflicts-reach-record-highs
7. Source: https://www.un.org/en/peaceandsecurity/why-we-need-more-women-mediators
8. Source: UN Women, "Women's Participation and a Better Understanding of the Political", accessed through: https://wps.unwomen.org/participation/

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