



Women in Diplomacy Index 2022

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Introduction:

The importance of gender balance in the workforce has long been on the agenda of organizations 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 the fact that most foreign services are recruiting an ever-larger number of female candidates at entry level positions.

The 2022 Women in Diplomacy Index maps the percentage of women ambassadors representing the countries of the 40 largest economies in the world and the European Union (EU).¹ It focuses on ambassadorships in order to gauge the degree to which women assume some of the most prominent leadership positions in the world of diplomacy.²

The dataset is unique in its nature, building on a database of more than 4,200 ambassadorial appointments. It is our hope that by continuing to document the number of women ambassadors appointed, we can monitor progression over time and give ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) a way to benchmark themselves against their peers.

This year's report constitutes the third edition of the Index. It builds on a first survey, which was published in 2018 and contained an overview of the ambassadorial appointments of all G20 states, and a second survey which was published in 2021 and expanded the data set to 40 countries, plus the EU. As such, the Index now covers the bulk of global ambassadorial appointments. Our findings indicate that progress since 2018 has indeed been made, with only a slight improvement since 2021. Nonetheless, it remains clear that diplomacy needs to become a more gender inclusive field.

Results of the 2022 Women in Diplomacy Index:

Women remain underrepresented in ambassadorship positions across the world. Out of 4,293 ambassadors currently appointed in our sample (a number of posts were vacant at the time of data gathering), only 927 are women. This indicates that the total share of women ambassadors stands at 21.6% for 2022, a slight improvement from the 20.7% share we recorded in 2021 and the 16% we recorded in 2018 for the G20 states.

The data shows that Canada and Sweden take the lead in having appointed the highest share of women ambassadors and permanent representatives in 2022, with 50.0% of both countries' ambassadorial posts being held by women, or 52 women ambassadors out of 104 in the case of Canada and 53 women out of 106 posts in the case of Sweden. Norway's share of women ambassadors stands at a close 46.1%, having appointed 35 women ambassadors out of 76 posts. Table 1 illustrates our findings from all 40 states, including the EU.

¹The Women in Diplomacy Index of 2022 was compiled and authored by Dr. Sara Chehab. A team of seven AGDA students assisted in gathering the data: Afnan Al Mansoori, Alia Al Obeidli, Fatema Al Hosani, Hamda Al Shuweihy, Mouza Al Blooshi, Shaikha Al Nuaimi and Shaima Al Marzouqi.

²Methodology: To calculate the share of women ambassadors in the 40 countries, a survey was made of each country based on the following criteria:

- The survey was limited to the 40 biggest economies in the world, including the European Union. Due to the size of their foreign services, these countries represent a large part of all ambassadorial nominations globally. The list of countries was identified using IMF data.
- The total number of ambassadors was calculated by relying on data found on the various embassy websites of each country. Only on rare occasions, when embassy websites were either unavailable or clearly not up-to-date, were secondary sources used.
- The total number of ambassadors includes active, resident ambassadors and permanent representatives to international and regional organizations (and high commissioners in the case of Commonwealth states) with ambassadorial rank serving as heads of mission abroad.
- The data count did 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. nuclear proliferation, migration, etc.) or persons with ambassadorial rank serving in their national capital as opposed to serving as heads of a diplomatic mission abroad.
- The data was gathered in January and February 2022.

Table 1: Percentage Share of Women Ambassadors Across 40 Countries and the EU in 2022

Rank	Country	Total number of missions	Total number of women ambassadors	Percentage of women ambassadors
1	Canada	104	52	50.0%
2	Sweden	106	53	50.0%
3	Norway	76	35	46.1%
4	South Africa*	92	37	40.2%
5	United Kingdom	160	64	40.0%
6	Netherlands	119	44	37.0%
7	Australia	95	33	34.7%
8	United States*	136	46	33.8%
9	Austria	92	30	32.6%
10	Ireland	72	23	31.9%
11	Thailand	54	17	31.5%
12	Philippines	60	17	28.3%
13	Singapore	48	13	27.1%
14	Colombia	60	16	26.7%
15	Spain	120	32	26.7%
16	Denmark	80	21	26.3%
17	Turkey	127	33	26.0%
18	France	170	42	24.7%
19	Switzerland	95	23	24.2%
20	European Union	136	32	23.5%
21	Mexico	86	20	23.3%
22	Germany	157	36	22.9%
23	Poland*	95	19	20.0%
24	Nigeria*	77	15	19.5%
25	Argentina	73	14	19.2%
26	India	124	21	16.9%
27	Israel	84	14	16.7%
28	Malaysia	81	12	14.8%
29	Bangladesh	60	8	13.3%

30	Belgium	80	10	12.5%
31	Italy	139	17	12.2%
32	China	177	20	11.3%
33	Indonesia	91	10	11.0%
34	UAE	92	10	10.9%
35	Brazil	131	14	10.7%
36	Egypt	134	10	7.5%
37	Saudi Arabia	99	4	4.0%
38	Iran	85	3	3.5%
39	Japan	157	4	2.5%
40	Russia	148	2	1.4%
41	South Korea	121	1	0.8%
	Total	4293	927	21.6%

*The asterisk indicates a large number of vacancies at the time of data gathering.

*The green highlight indicates an improvement from 2021.

Results Vary Significantly Between Regions:

Our data finds that for the Nordic states in the sample (Denmark, Norway and Sweden), the percentage of women in ambassadorship positions is 40.8%, putting that part of the world at the top of the study. In North America (USA, Canada and Mexico), the percentage is 35.7%, with Canada appointing the highest number of women ambassadors, while in South America (Brazil, Argentina and Colombia), the percentage of women in ambassadorship positions is 18.8%. In the European Union, the percentage of women ambassadors is 23.5%, while Europe as a whole reaches a 29% share.

Elsewhere, the percentage of women in ambassadorship positions in the Asia region (excluding the Arab world) is 13.7%. Lastly, the percentage for the Arab states in the sample (Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) stands at 7.4% with the UAE scoring the highest percentage share of 10.9%.

Where Do They Go?

Turning to the question of where women ambassadors are appointed, the data shows that Portugal is the number one destination for women ambassadors, followed by the United Nations in New York. Our findings also indicate that while there is a wide geographical distribution, European destinations appear to be the top recipients of women ambassadors, with 9 destinations out of 24 being in Europe. There indeed seems to be a correlation between the countries with the highest recipients of women ambassadors and those that give women the top ambassadorial posts. For example, with a 50% share of its ambassadors being women, Canada is the country that receives the highest number of women ambassadors (with 12 women ambassadors being posted there in 2022). This is true for most states in our sample. Table 2 shows the top recipients of women ambassadors sent from the 40 countries in our Index. Where available, the last column of the table displays the percentage share of women ambassadors that the country has.

Table 2: Top 10 Destinations for Women Ambassadors in 2022

Rank	Location	Number of women ambassadors	Percentage of women ambassadors
1	Portugal	16	N/A
2	United Nations in New York	13	N/A
3	Canada	12	50.0%
3	Denmark	12	26.3%
4	Sweden	11	50.0%
4	Ghana	11	N/A
5	United States	10	33.8%
5	Norway	10	46.1%
5	Finland	10	N/A
6	Argentina	9	19.2%
6	France	9	24.7%
6	SPAIN	9	26.7%
6	Poland	9	20.0%
6	Italy	9	12.2%
7	United Nations in Geneva	8	N/A
8	Jordan	7	N/A
9	UNESCO	6	N/A
9	Thailand	6	31.5%
9	Nigeria	6	19.5%
9	Morocco	6	N/A
9	China	6	11.3%
9	South Korea	6	0.8%
10	OECD	5	N/A
10	Russia	5	1.4%

As a group, the Nordic & Scandinavian countries stand out in the sample with Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland appearing in the top-5 list. As previously noted, the Nordic countries are top senders of women ambassadors. The fact that they are also top recipients of women diplomats perhaps reflects the impression that sending a woman ambassador is a politically strong signal recognized by the receiving state. It might also reflect that these countries are generally considered family-friendly destinations.

An interesting question, separate from the focus on the percentage of women ambassadors, is the extent to which women ambassadors get the top ambassadorships. It is difficult to objectively measure

what the “top ambassadorships” are. In most cases, some neighboring countries, especially large and powerful ones that dominate political and economic relations with the sending state, will enjoy a high degree of perceived weight in the ambassadorial pecking order that that same posting may not have for a country that is farther away. As a proxy for top ambassadorships, we use the G7 countries, which in almost all cases will be coveted postings given their global political and economic clout. It is noteworthy that only two G7 countries make it to the top 5 as seen in Table 2, Canada and the United States – with a total of 22 women ambassadors being posted in both countries in 2022. Table 3 lists the number of women ambassadors being posted in the G7 countries, in addition to the EU.

Table 3: Number of Women Ambassadors in the G7 States and the EU in 2022

G7 States	Number of Women Ambassadors
Canada	12
United States	10
France	9
Italy	9
United Kingdom	7
Germany	7
Japan	6
European Union	3



The UAE in Focus:

Out of the three Arab states in our sample (Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), the UAE scored the highest percentage share of women ambassadors at 10.9%.

In addition, the UAE has 12 ambassadors, permanent representatives and consul-generals currently posted all over the world, and 19 directors and deputy-directors working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC). In 2021, women made up 41.5% of MoFAIC’s workforce and 60% of the graduates from the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy (AGDA).

Have We Made Progress?

Overall, as displayed in Table 1, our findings show that progress, albeit small, has been made since 2021 with the majority of countries appointing a larger number of women to top ambassadorial posts in 2022. Indeed, the average percentage share of women ambassadors increased to 21.6% in 2022 compared to 20.7% in 2021.

A more significant leap happened since 2018, however. In the case of the G20 countries and the EU, the average percentage share of women ambassadors stood at

17.1% in 2018 and increased to 20.4% in 2022. Table 4 compares the 2018 percentage shares of women ambassadors with those of the 2022 Index for the G20 countries and the EU.³ Within that group, and with a 14.4%, 11.2% and 10.2% percentage point difference between 2018 and 2022, our analysis finds that Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany have respectively all made significant progress. Overall, and despite these improvements, women remain underrepresented in ambassadorship positions in the G20 with a 20.4% minority share of women ambassadors in 2022.

³The 2018 iteration of the Index only covered the countries of the G20, as well as the European Union.

Table 4: G20 Countries Percentage Share of Women Ambassadors in 2018 and 2022

G20 Country	2018 % Share of Women Ambassadors	2022 % Share of Women Ambassadors	% Share Difference 2022 to 2018
Australia	36.0%	34.7%	-1.30%
Canada	35.6%	50.0%	+14.4%
USA*	33.1%	33.8%	+0.70%
South Africa*	32.7%	40.2%	+7.50%
United Kingdom	28.8%	40.0%	+11.2%
France	26.5%	24.7%	-1.80%
European Union	25.9%	23.5%	-2.40%
Turkey	22.2%	26.0%	+3.80%
Mexico	18.4%	23.3%	+4.90%
Argentina	14.6%	19.2%	+4.60%
India	14.1%	16.9%	+2.80%
Germany	12.7%	22.9%	+10.2%
Brazil	10.1%	10.7%	+0.60%
Indonesia	9.9%	11.0%	+1.10%
Italy	6.9%	12.2%	+5.30%
China	6.7%	11.3%	+4.60%
South Korea	5.0%	0.8%	-4.20%
Japan	3.7%	2.5%	-1.20%
Russia	0.6%	1.4%	+0.80%
Saudi Arabia	0.0%	4.0%	+4.0%
Averages	17.1%	20.4%	+3.28%

*The asterisk indicates a large number of vacancies at the time of data gathering.

*The green highlight indicates an improvement from 2018.

These advances, as well as those of non-G20 states, need to be recognized and efforts applauded. Nevertheless, with a mere 21.6 percentage share of the total ambassadorial posts for the 40 countries in our sample in 2022, the picture is clear: the world is still a long way away from ensuring gender equality in the top diplomatic posts.

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