



Kingdom of Lesotho

Electoral Commission Website
<http://www.iec.org.ls>

Parliamentary Structure

Bicameral

Election System

National: MMP
Local: FPTP

Female Political Participation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Metafile

Administrative Divisions

Lesotho has two levels of government: central and local government. The constitution makes provision for parliament to establish local government. Local government has two administrative levels however the capital Maseru has its own unique authority known as the city council. The two levels consist of district councils which is the upper level and community councils, the lower level. There are currently 11 urban councils, which include 10 district councils and 1 municipal council (Maseru), as well as 64 community councils.

Election System

National elections in Lesotho are conducted using a Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP) system and local government elections are carried out using a First Past the Post (FPTP) system.

The municipal council, Maseru City Council, is elected to represent a single-member division for a maximum of 5 years. The non-executive mayor is elected indirectly by city councillors. The council should have between 9 to 15 members and no more than 3 gazetted chiefs. Members of the district councils are nominated by the community councils in the respective districts. This includes two gazetted chiefs nominated from the community councils. The composition of community councils is slightly more complex. Councillors include members elected from the electoral division, chiefs representing traditional leadership and women filling reserved seats determined by proportional representation lists (CLGF, 2016). The council should not have less than 9 and more than 15 members. Only two of the members may be gazetted chiefs.

The last national elections and local elections took place in February 2015 and October 2011 respectively.

Women's Representation & Quota Information

Lesotho has legislated candidate quotas on a national and sub-national level however voluntary party quotas have not been adopted (Quota Project, 2014). According to the National Assembly Election Amendment Act of 2011, political parties must arrange candidates whereby a female or male candidate is followed by a candidate of the opposite sex. Furthermore, there must be an equal number of men and women on party lists. There are no legal sanctions for non-compliance. The Local Government Elections Act of 2011 stipulates that 30% of the total number of seats in municipal, urban and district councils are reserved for women.

Seats & Trends in Seat Numbers

Lesotho's parliament is comprised of two chambers. 120 members in the National Assembly, and 33 seats in the Senate. Following the May 2012 elections, women represented 30 of the 120 (25%) available seats in the National assembly, and 9 of the 33 (27.27%) seats in the Senate. These figures remained relatively constant following the February 2015 elections. Women represent 25% of seats in the National Assembly, and 8 of the 33 (24.24%) available seats in the Senate.

At the local level, women held 457 of the 821 (55.66%) available positions following the 2005 local elections. This decreased to 300 of an available 935 (32.09%) seats following the 2011 local elections.

References

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