

**IN BRIEF**

# Women’s Representation and Leadership in Lebanon’s Judiciary

Findings from the 2025 Official Judicial Formations

This analysis was conducted by UN Women in the framework of the Canada-funded project ‘BRIDGE: Building Rights, Dignity & Gender Equality,’ based on official court formations provided by the Ministry of Justice, and involved the systematic compilation, cleaning, coding, and analysis of administrative data to generate a comprehensive, sex-disaggregated mapping of women’s and men’s representation across the judiciary, as part of a collaborative effort to strengthen evidence-based analysis and policymaking.

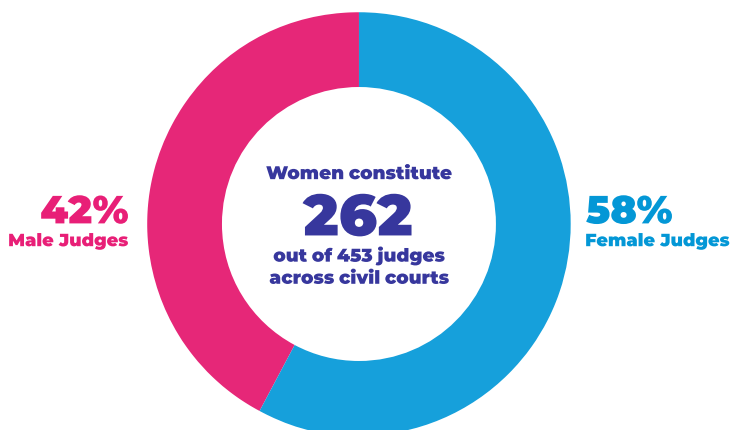
## Background and Scope

This brief presents an analysis of women’s representation in courts and judicial bodies in Lebanon based exclusively on the official judicial formations published in 2025. The figures reflect the positions captured in those formations and therefore cover the courts and judicial bodies included in that official publication.

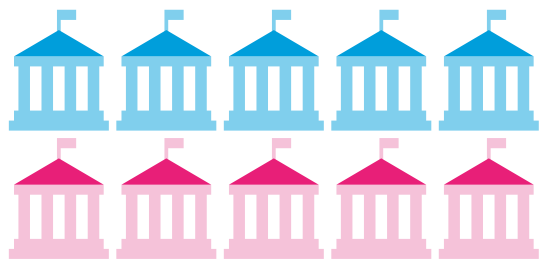
Across the civil courts, women constitute 262 out of 453 judges, representing 57.8% overall. Women are no longer marginal actors in Lebanon’s civil judiciary. On the contrary, they form a majority of judges overall and are strongly represented across multiple levels of the court system. This reflects significant progress in access, professional advancement, and institutional integration. It also suggests that, within the courts captured, barriers to entry into the judiciary are not preventing women from becoming judges in large numbers.

## Governance:

- Women constitute 50% of the Higher Judicial Council (5 out of 10 members). As the body responsible for oversight, transfers, promotions, and institutional direction, the Higher Judicial Council plays a central role in shaping the judiciary’s development. Gender parity at this level represents a landmark achievement in judicial governance and signals women’s meaningful participation in system-level institutional leadership.



**50%** Women in the Higher Judicial Council (5 of 10 members)



**50%** Men in the Higher Judicial Council (5 of 10 members)

## Representation by Court Type:

- Representation is strongest at the Courts of First Instance (68.8%), remains above parity at the Courts of Appeal (54.8%), and declines at the Court of Cassation (41.7%). This progression reflects strong representation at foundational and mid-level adjudication, alongside more limited representation at the apex of the judicial hierarchy.

**TABLE 1**

Women's Share by Court Type

Civil Courts	Female	Male	Total	% Female	Gap vs Parity (pp)
Court of Cassation	25	35	60	41.7	-8.3
Courts of Appeal	131	108	239	54.8	+4.8
Courts of First Instance	106	48	154	68.8	+18.8

"Gap vs parity" is the difference between women's share and 50% (in percentage points, pp). Positive values mean women exceed parity.

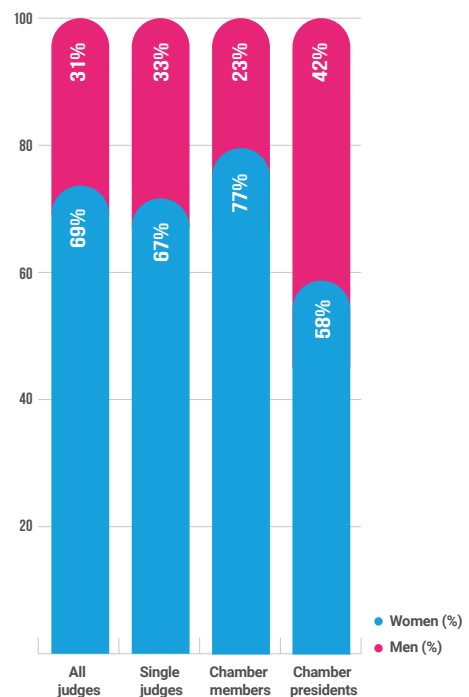
*Important note: A number of judges included in the 2025 judicial formations hold both a primary judicial appointment and one or more additional assignments, whether within the civil courts or in other judicial or administrative bodies. To ensure clarity and methodological consistency, and to avoid any double counting of individual judges, each judge has been counted only once in Table 1 and 2, based solely on their original (primary) judicial position. Any additional assignments have been excluded from these calculations. The figures therefore represent the distribution of judges according to their principal appointment only.*

## Courts of First Instance:

- The Courts of First Instance exhibit the highest level of women's representation within the civil judiciary. Women account for 68.8 per cent of judges at this level, comprising 66.7 per cent of single judges and 77.1 per cent of chamber members. They also hold 58.3 per cent of chamber president positions. These figures indicate that women are strongly represented across the largest and most operationally active tier of the court system, where frontline adjudication and case management take place. Women's majority presence in both adjudicative and chamber leadership roles demonstrates not only parity, but sustained integration into core decision-making functions that constitute the foundation for career progression and future senior judicial appointments. Overall, no significant structural imbalance is observed at this level, with women's representation exceeding parity across key judicial functions.

**GRAPH 1**

Women's Representation in the Courts of First Instance (%)



## Courts of Appeal:

- At the Courts of Appeal, women account for 54.8 per cent of judges overall, maintaining representation above parity at this intermediate tier of the judicial hierarchy. They comprise 67.7 per cent of investigative judges and 57.4 per cent of counsellors and advisors, and hold 54.2 per cent of chamber president positions. Women also achieve parity among first presidents (50 per cent). These figures demonstrate strong progression into mid- to senior-level adjudicative roles. Women are not only present within the appellate courts; they are substantively represented in investigative and chamber-based functions that are central to appellate deliberation and decision-making.
- Within the prosecutorial structure at the appeal level, women represent 51.7 per cent of Deputy Public Prosecutors, reflecting near parity at the deputy tier.
- Nonetheless, gaps persist in certain senior roles. Women account for 16.7 per cent of Chief Public Prosecutors and 33.3 per cent of First Investigative Judges at the appeal level. These figures suggest that representation in senior prosecutorial leadership and lead investigative authority remains below parity and warrants continued monitoring and targeted attention.

## Court of Cassation:

- At the Court of Cassation, women account for 41.7 per cent of judges overall. Within cassation chambers, women hold 60.0 per cent of chamber president positions and represent 43.2 per cent of counsellors. Women's strong presence among chamber presidents indicates meaningful participation in chamber-level leadership at the highest tier of the judiciary.
- At the same time, representation remains more limited in certain apex leadership and chief prosecutorial roles. The position of First President of the Court of Cassation is currently held by a man, and no woman has occupied this role to date. Women also have no representation among the Chief Public Prosecutor and Chief Financial Prosecutor posts captured at the cassation level. Among Deputy Public Prosecutors at cassation, women represent 28.6 per cent, and among Deputy Financial Prosecutors, 33.3 per cent.
- Overall, the cassation level reflects sustained women's participation within chamber structures, alongside persistent gaps in representation at the highest centralized judicial and prosecutorial authority levels, which remain below parity and warrant continued attention.

GRAPH 2

Women's Representation in the Courts of Appeal (%)



GRAPH 3

Women's Representation at the Court of Cassation (%)



## Hierarchy and Institutional Patterns:

- When examined across hierarchical levels, women demonstrate strong representation within adjudicative and chamber-based functions. Women constitute 66.7 per cent of single judges, 77.6 per cent of chamber members, 67.7 per cent of investigative judges, 56.1 per cent of chamber presidents, and 52.7 per cent of counsellors and advisors across courts.
- By contrast, representation declines at certain senior authority levels. Women account for 42.9 per cent of first presidents overall, 33.3 per cent of First Investigative Judges, 40.4 per cent across all public prosecution roles combined, and only 12.5 per cent among chief prosecutor posts.
- Overall, this distribution indicates strong integration along the judicial bench and chamber hierarchy, alongside persistent gaps in centralized executive and chief prosecutorial leadership positions, which remain below parity and warrant targeted attention.

**TABLE 2**

Role-by-Court Comparison (Women/Total; % Women)

Role	Courts of First Instance	Courts of Appeal	Court of Cassation
Single Judge	54/81 (66.7%)	–	–
Member	37/48 (77.1%)	–	–
Additional Member	1/1 (100.0%)	–	–
Chamber President	14/24 (58.3%)	26/48 (54.2%)	6/10 (60.0%)
Counsellor / Advisor	–	62/108 (57.4%)	16/37 (43.2%)
Additional Counsellor	–	1/5 (20.0%)	–
Investigating Judge	–	21/31 (67.7%)	–
First Investigating Judge	–	2/6 (33.3%)	–
Public Prosecutor	–	1/6 (16.7%)	0/1 (0.0%)
Public Attorneys	–	15/29 (51.7%)	2/7 (28.6%)
Financial Public Prosecutor	–	–	0/1 (0.0%)
Financial Public Attorneys	–	–	1/3 (33.3%)
First President	–	3/6 (50.0%)	0/1 (0.0%)

## Judicial Bodies:

- Several specialized and oversight-oriented bodies demonstrate particularly strong representation of women. Within the Labour Arbitration Council, women hold 10 of 13 chamber president positions (77 per cent). In the Inspection and Consultations Body, women hold the presidency and represent 75 per cent of attached judges. Within the Committee for the Implementation of Sanctions, women hold both presidency positions (100 per cent). These figures reflect strong women's representation in specialized adjudicative and oversight institutions and indicate substantive participation in institutional governance and disciplinary structures.
- Within the Committee of Cases (State Litigation Authority), women represent 83 per cent of attached judges, while the presidency of the body remains held by a man. This pattern points to strong representation within operational functions, alongside a gap at the level of formal leadership.

- More pronounced gaps are observed within the military judiciary. Women are not represented within the Permanent Military Court (0 of 3), nor within Military Prosecution, including the Government Commissioner (Chief Military Prosecutor) (0 of 1) and Assistant Government Commissioners (0 of 5). Within the military investigative structure, women hold the single First Investigative Judge post (1 of 1) but represent only 1 of 6 Investigative Judges overall (17 per cent). These figures indicate that women’s participation within the military judicial segment remains limited in the roles captured in the formations.
- Within Ministry of Justice–linked positions captured in the formations, women are not represented in the Director General post (0 of 1). Among attached judges within the Ministry’s General Directorate, women hold 6 of 19 positions (32 per cent). Women are also not represented in the single judge post captured within this segment (0 of 1), while achieving parity among investigative judge posts (1 of 2, or 50 per cent).

**TABLE 3**

Women’s Representation in Selected Judicial and Quasi-Judicial Bodies

Body	Female	Male	Total	% Female	Gap vs Parity (pp)
Labor Arbitration Council	10	3	13	76.9	+26.9
Sanctions Implementation Committee	2	0	2	100.0	+50.0
Inspection & Consultations Body	4	1	5	80.0	+30.0
Committee of Cases (State Litigation Authority)	5	2	7	71.4	+21.4
Higher Judicial Council (Secretariat posts captured)	1	2	3	33.3	-16.7
Permanent Military Court	0	3	3	0.0	-50.0
Military Prosecution	0	6	6	0.0	-50.0
Military – Investigative Judiciary	1	5	6	16.7	-33.3
Ministry of Justice – General Directorate (incl. Director General, Attached Judges, Single & Investigative Judges)	7	15	22	31.8	-18.2

*Note: In Lebanon, the military judicial system includes military personnel and civil judges. Civil judges may be assigned to perform functions within the military judiciary, including investigative or adjudicative roles. For the purpose of this analysis, the figures presented reflect only the civil judges assigned to positions captured in the 2025 judicial formations.*

*Important note: This table reflects the composition of the judicial and quasi-judicial bodies as listed in the 2025 judicial formations. In this table, positions are counted as they appear within each body, regardless of whether the judge’s appointment is their primary position or an additional assignment (انتداب / تكليف إضافي). The purpose of this table is to present the gender composition of each body as constituted. Accordingly, the figures reflect positions within bodies rather than unique individuals, and a judge holding more than one assignment may therefore appear more than once in this table.*

**Acknowledgements:** The analysis and drafting of this report were carried out by Rima Al Mokdad.

Sincere thanks are extended to the Lebanese Ministry of Justice for its cooperation and coordination throughout all stages of this work, including facilitating access to official data and reviewing the analysis to ensure its accuracy. Particular thanks are extended to Ms. Lara Saadeh, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Justice of Lebanon, for her guidance and continuous follow-up, and for her support in ensuring alignment with the official institutional framework.

Gratitude is extended to Marianne Touma for her revision of the data. The design of the report was developed by Lauren Rooney.