Women’s Participation in Politics

Five female presidents govern today in Latin American and Caribbean countries, and the number of women legislators, judges and mayors has increased in recent years. But these leaders represent no more than 26% of the total, on average, according to data from ECLAC’s Gender Equality Observatory. The Commission provides here the latest data on women’s participation in different spheres of political power.

Decision-making autonomy is referred to on women’s involvement in decision-making at various levels of the different branches of government, and as reflected in measures designed to promote women’s full participation under conditions of equality.

Economic, physical and decision-making autonomies are the three pillars needed to achieve greater gender equality in the region, according to ECLAC.

25.6% of elected city council members in Latin American and Caribbean countries are women (2012).

24.3% of high court judges in Latin America and the Caribbean are women (2012).

11.7% of elected mayors in Latin America and the Caribbean are women (2012).

25.9% of the seats in Latin American and Caribbean parliaments are held by women (2014).

Five countries are governed by women in 2014

- Argentina (Cristina Fernández)
- Brazil (Dilma Rousseff)
- Chile (Michelle Bachelet)
- Jamaica (Portia Simpson)
- Trinidad and Tobago (Kamla Persad-Bissessar)

Only 14 Latin American and Caribbean nations have gender quota laws to improve women’s participation in elected positions.