

# Women in Elections: Analysis of Registered Voters in Gilgit-Baltistan

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**TRUST FOR DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION  
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## Introduction

Out of the 745,361 voters on the 2020 Gilgit-Baltistan voters' list, 339,998 (46%) are women. The figures reflect as many as 65,365 more men registered compared to women. The figures are not ideal but once contextualized, reflect an encouraging picture of a region that is pre-dominantly rural with significant environmental and infrastructure challenges that inhibit access to and provision of key public services, including the provision of National Identity Card (NIC) registration – primary requirement for registration on the electoral roll since the 2015 elections in the region. Regardless, the importance of gender-inclusive voters' list cannot be over-stated for the health and legitimacy of the elections and the democratic system. A closer look reveal the issue is not uniform across individual constituencies, highlighting the need for a proactive approach in the post-election phase to alleviate the gender-gap.

This pre-election update provides a comparative review of the number of voters across districts, constituencies and the 2015 elections. This update is aimed at providing a more in-depth look at the variance in gender-gap that can inform the post-election advocacy effort for targeted interventions on the part of concerned stakeholders. The analysis identifies four constituencies where gender-gap exceeds 10 percent and where Election Commission of Gilgit-Baltistan is obligated under Section 47(2) of the Elections Act 2017 to take special measures to alleviate the under-representation of women on the respective constituencies' electoral roll.

## Registered Voters and Gender-gap: From 2015 to 2020:

Since the last elections in the region, as many as 126,997 voters have been added to the electoral roll. Compared to 618,364 registered voters on the 2015 electoral rolls, the number has increased to 745,361 voters reflecting an increase of 21%.

**Table 1. Comparison of Registered Voters for Elections 2009, 2015 and 2020**

Election	Men	Women	Total
GBA Election 2009	383,611	326,325	709,936
GBA Election 2015	329,475	288,889	618,364
GBA Election 2020	405,363	339,998	745,361

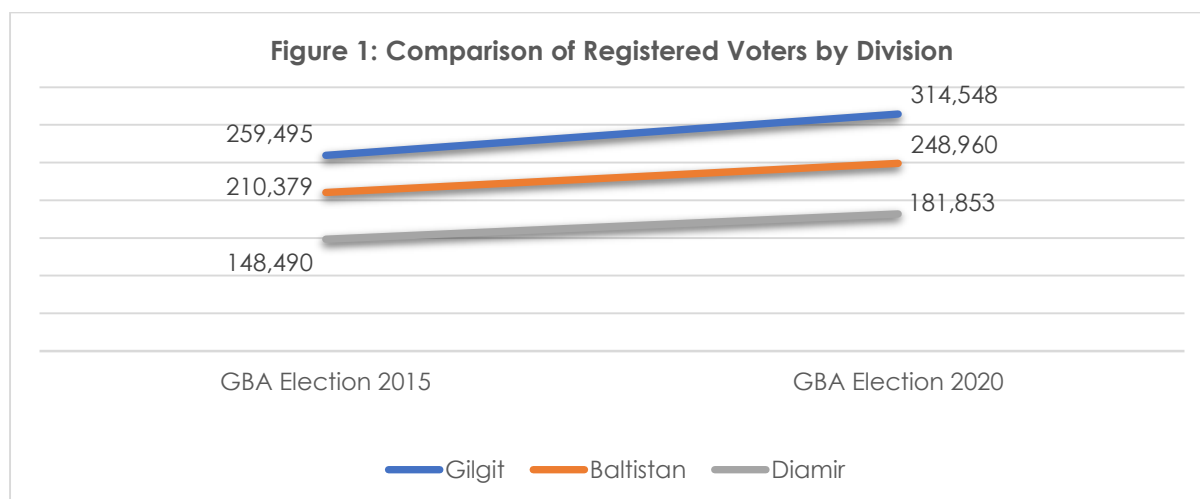
From the perspective of gender representation however, the relatively higher number of men among the new registration – 75,888 men to 51,109 women – have resulted in a slight increase in the gender-gap. The overall gender gap increased from 7% in the previous elections to 9% on the 2020 electoral roll.

It is important to note that whilst the numbers of the electoral rolls of the 2009 elections are provided for record, the comparison is limited to the 2015 elections as the 2009 electoral rolls were not based on computerized NIC and involve factors that would render the comparative reading redundant.

Tracking the increase in the number of voters on the electoral rolls compared to the 2015 elections, there is a relatively similar trajectory across divisions and districts. However, the trends across constituencies show significant variations ranging from 4% in GBA-7 Sardou-I to 30% in GBA-15 Diamir-I. The section below details the variance.

### 1.1 Trends at the Division Level

At the division level, the highest increase in terms of number of registered voters was recorded in Gilgit (with an increase of 55,053 voters), followed by Baltistan (with an increase of 38,581 new voters) and Diamer (33,363 new voters).



The increase in the number of voters when assessed in percentage change has Diamer leading with 22% increase in the number of registered voters followed by Gilgit (21% increase) and Baltistan (18% increase).

**Table 2. Voters by Gender and Division: 2015 vs. 2020**

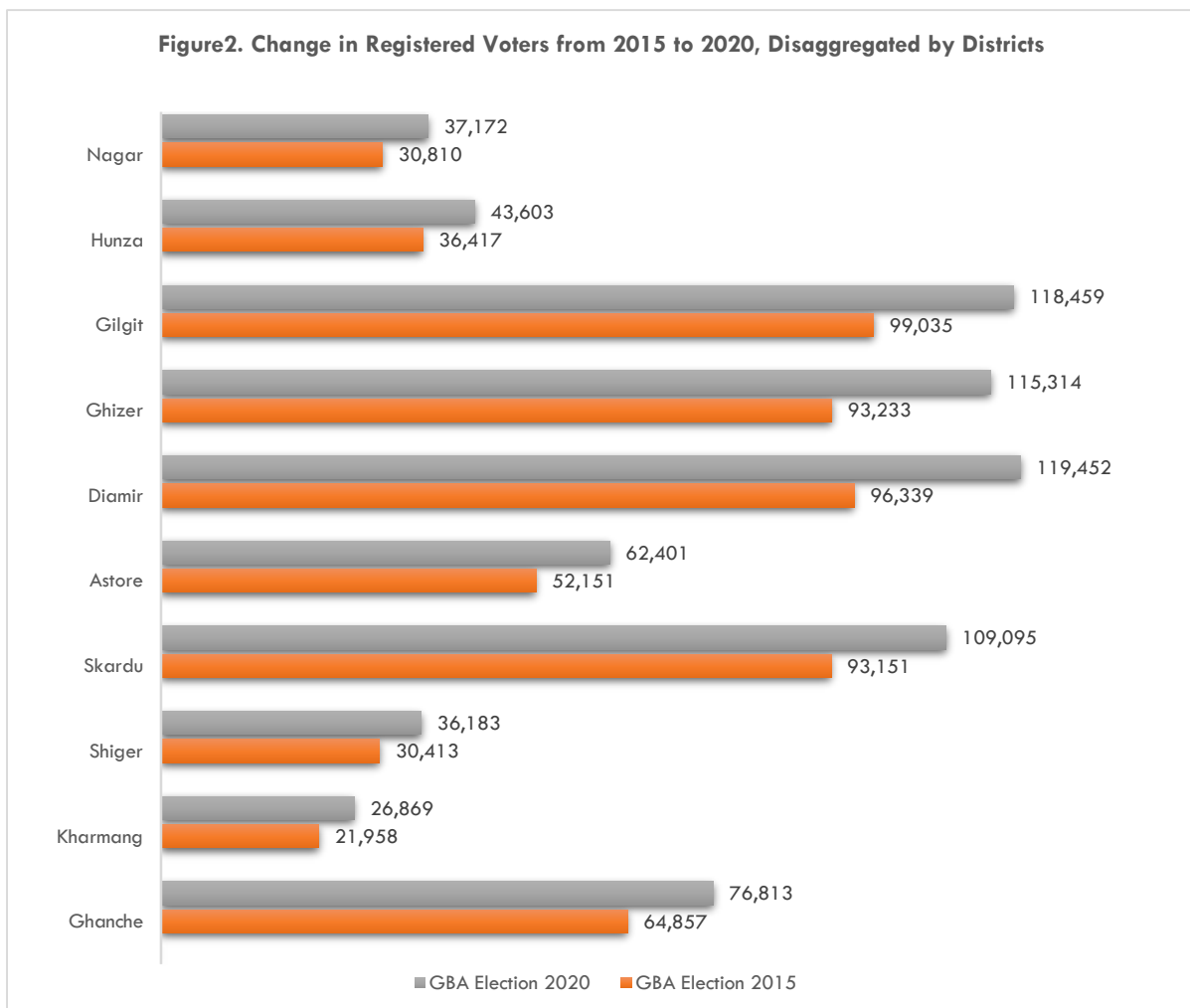
Division	GBA Election 2015			GBA Election 2020		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Gilgit	139,345	120,150	259,495	170,982	143,566	314,548
Baltistan	111,522	98,857	210,379	135,200	113,760	248,960
Diamer	78,608	69,882	148,490	99,181	82,672	181,853

<b>Overall</b>	<b>329,475</b>	<b>288,889</b>	<b>618,364</b>	<b>405,363</b>	<b>339,998</b>	<b>745,361</b>
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From the perspective of gender-gap, the increase in registered voters reflected a slight increase in two of the divisions. With a disproportionate increase in the number of men, the 2020 electoral rolls for Diamer and Baltistan reflect an overall gender-gap of 10% and 8% respectively. The gender-gap did not change in Gilgit where the gap remains consistent at 8%.

## 1.2 Trends at District Level

The increase in number of registered voters at the district level shows a similar trend where all districts show an increase in the number of registered voters. The largest increase is registered in district Diamer where over 23 thousand voters were added while district Kharmang (with 4,911 additional voters) has the lowest number of new voters added to its voters list.



Overall, two districts reflect an increase over 20 thousand, two others have an increase in the range of 15 to 20 thousand. Among the rest, two districts reflect an increase ranging between 10 to 15 thousand while the remaining four districts have an increase of less than 10 thousand in the number of registered voters.

Beyond the numbers, the percentage change in the number of registered voters across the districts reflect variance ranging between 17% to 24%.

From the perspective of gender-gap, the increase in the number of registered voters reflect a proportionately higher number of men added to the voters list in all but three of the ten districts. Of these three, only one district (district Hunza) reflect a proportionately higher number of women getting registered to the voters' list where the

percentage of women voters on the electoral roll increased from 48% in 2015 to 49% in 2020. Two other districts, Ghizer and Kharmang show a consistent gender gap (Men out-register women by 8%). The other seven districts had proportionately more men added to the list resulting in an increased gender gap for these districts. Gender gap in voters list of four districts (Shigar, Nagar, Diamer and Skardu) reflect a comparative increase of four percent while the remaining three districts (Ghanche, Astore and Gilgit) have a comparative increase of two percentage point.

### 1.3 Trends at Constituency Level

As with the division and district level trends, the number of registered voters when compared with 2015 reflect universal yet varying increase. The variance in the number of new voters to the list ranges from as low as 643 new voters in GBA-7 Skardu-I to 8,133 in GBA-20 Ghizer II.

Constituency	GBA Election 2015	GBA Election 2020	Increase in Number of Voters	% Increase
GBA-1 Gilgit-I	30,397	35,840	5,443	18%
GBA-2 Gilgit-II	34,225	41,259	7,034	21%
GBA-3 Gilgit-III	34,413	41,360	6,947	20%
GBA-4 Nagar-I	18,818	23,171	4,353	23%
GBA-5 Nagar-II	11,992	14,001	2,009	17%
GBA-6 Hunza	36,417	43,603	7,186	20%
GBA-7 Skardu-I	16,484	17,127	643	4%
GBA-8 Skardu-II	34,281	39,567	5,286	15%
GBA-9 Skardu-III	20,580	25,562	4,982	24%
GBA-10 Skardu-IV	21,806	26,839	5,033	23%
GBA-11 Kharmang*	21,958	26,869	4,911	22%
GBA-12 Shiger**	30,413	36,183	5,770	19%
GBA-13 Astore-I	27,699	33,378	5,679	21%
GBA-14 Astore-II	24,452	29,023	4,571	19%
GBA-15 Diamir-I	27,080	35,185	8,105	30%
GBA-16 Diamir-II	27,937	35,405	7,468	27%
GBA-17 Diamir-III	25,622	29,955	4,333	17%
GBA-18 Diamir-IV	15,700	18,907	3,207	20%
GBA-19 Ghizer-I	31,256	37,808	6,552	21%
GBA-20 Ghizer-II	34,400	42,533	8,133	24%
GBA-21 Ghizer-III	27,577	34,973	7,396	27%
GBA-22 Ghanche-I	24,721	29,104	4,383	18%
GBA-23 Ghanche-II	23,286	27,522	4,236	18%
GBA-24 Ghanche-III	16,850	20,187	3,337	20%

\*GBA-11 Khanmang was GBLA 11-Skardu V in 2015 Elections  
 \*\*GBA 12-Shigar was GBLA 12-Sakrdu VI in 2015 Elections

The trend at the constituency level reflects an increase of over 20% in registered voters of 11 constituencies and between 15% to 20% in 12 other constituencies. Only one constituency show an addition of new voters under five percent. Among the new voters, in all but two constituencies, a disproportionately higher number of men were registered. Only one constituency, GBA-6 Hunza, the percentage increase in women exceed the percentage of increase in the men voters (22% increase in women voters compared to 19% increase in men voters). In one constituency, GBA-7 Skardu, the percentage of increase in men and women voters remained the same at 4%.

Among the 22 remaining constituencies, the percentage of men voters in the new additions to the voters list outdid the entries of women voters by a margin ranging between one percentage point to 20 percentage points.

Constituency	GBA Election 2015					GBA Election 2020				
	Men	Men%	Women	Women%	Total	Men	Men%	Women	Women%	Total
GBA-1 Gilgit-I	16,849	55%	13,548	45%	30,397	20,050	56%	15,790	44%	35,840
GBA-2 Gilgit-II	18,734	55%	15,491	45%	34,225	23,058	56%	18,201	44%	41,259
GBA-3 Gilgit-III	18,226	53%	16,187	47%	34,413	22,341	54%	19,019	46%	41,360
GBA-4 Nagar-I	10,024	53%	8,794	47%	18,818	12,731	55%	10,440	45%	23,171
GBA-5 Nagar-II	6,353	53%	5,639	47%	11,992	7,760	55%	6,241	45%	14,001
GBA-6 Hunza	18,931	52%	17,486	48%	36,417	22,328	51%	21,275	49%	43,603
GBA-7 Skardu-I	8,871	54%	7,613	46%	16,484	9,222	54%	7,905	46%	17,127

GBA-8 Skardu-II	18,461	54%	15,820	46%	34,281	21,851	55%	17,716	45%	39,567
GBA-9 Skardu-III	11,070	54%	9,510	46%	20,580	13,993	55%	11,569	45%	25,562
GBA-10 Skardu-IV	11,316	52%	10,490	48%	21,806	14,741	55%	12,098	45%	26,839
GBA-11 Kharmang	11,766	54%	10,192	46%	21,958	14,460	54%	12,409	46%	26,869
GBA-12 Shiger	15,806	52%	14,607	48%	30,413	19,520	54%	16,663	46%	36,183
GBA-13 Astore-I	15,016	54%	12,683	46%	27,699	18,232	55%	15,146	45%	33,378
GBA-14 Astore-II	12,916	53%	11,536	47%	24,452	15,831	55%	13,192	45%	29,023
GBA-15 Diamir-I	13,238	49%	13,842	51%	27,080	17,737	50%	17,448	50%	35,185
GBA-16 Diamir-II	15,439	55%	12,498	45%	27,937	19,745	56%	15,660	44%	35,405
GBA-17 Diamir-III	13,063	51%	12,559	49%	25,622	16,273	54%	13,682	46%	29,955
GBA-18 Diamir-IV	8,936	57%	6,764	43%	15,700	11,363	60%	7,544	40%	18,907
GBA-19 Ghizer-I	16,547	53%	14,709	47%	31,256	20,297	54%	17,511	46%	37,808
GBA-20 Ghizer-II	18,695	54%	15,705	46%	34,400	23,288	55%	19,245	45%	42,533
GBA-21 Ghizer-III	14,986	54%	12,591	46%	27,577	19,129	55%	15,844	45%	34,973
GBA-22 Ghanche-I	13,079	53%	11,642	47%	24,721	15,936	55%	13,168	45%	29,104
GBA-23 Ghanche-II	12,416	53%	10,870	47%	23,286	14,889	54%	12,633	46%	27,522
GBA-24 Ghanche-III	8,737	52%	8,113	48%	16,850	10,588	52%	9,599	48%	20,187

The disproportionately higher number of new men voters to the voters' list have added to the gender-gap in 20 constituencies. Among these, the gender-gap in 12 constituencies increased by two percentage points, four percentage points in five constituencies and six percentage points in the remaining three constituencies. Gender-gap decreased in only one constituency while it remained consistent in three constituencies.

**Table 5. Gender-gap by Constituency: 2015-Vs 2020**

Constituency	Gap% 2015	Gap% 2020	Change in Gender Gap
GBA-6 Hunza	4%	2%	-2%
GBA-7 Skardu-I	8%	8%	0%
GBA-11 Kharmang	8%	8%	0%
GBA-24 Ghanche-III	4%	4%	0%
GBA-3 Gilgit-III	6%	8%	2%
GBA-19 Ghizer-I	6%	8%	2%
GBA-23 Ghanche-II	6%	8%	2%
GBA-1 Gilgit-I	10%	12%	2%
GBA-2 Gilgit-II	10%	12%	2%
GBA-8 Skardu-II	8%	10%	2%
GBA-9 Skardu-III	8%	10%	2%
GBA-13 Astore-I	8%	10%	2%
GBA-15 Diamir-I	-2%	0%	2%
GBA-16 Diamir-II	10%	12%	2%
GBA-20 Ghizer-II	8%	10%	2%
GBA-21 Ghizer-III	8%	10%	2%
GBA-4 Nagar-I	6%	10%	4%
GBA-5 Nagar-II	6%	10%	4%
GBA-12 Shiger	4%	8%	4%
GBA-14 Astore-II	6%	10%	4%
GBA-22 Ghanche-I	6%	10%	4%
GBA-10 Skardu-IV	4%	10%	6%
GBA-17 Diamir-III	2%	8%	6%
GBA-18 Diamir-IV	14%	20%	6%

To summarize, the gender-gap, as it stands in the 24 constituencies, reflects a trend that reinforces the case for measures to make the voters' lists more representative and gender-inclusive. At present, only three constituencies have a gender-gap under five percent while 17 constituencies have a gender-gap between five to ten percent.

Four constituencies have a gender-gap in excess of ten percent. This obligates the ECGB to take special measures to reduce the variation under Section 47(2) of the 2017 Elections Act-- The Act providing the legal framework for the elections, albeit, *mutatis mutandis*.

*Where the variation in the disaggregated data under sub-section (1) is more than ten percent in a constituency, the Commission shall take special measures to reduce such variation.*

**Section 47(2) of the Election Act, 2017.**

## Key Observation Points

With 21% increase in the number of registered voters compared to 2015, the voters' list for the 2020 elections in Gilgit-Baltistan reflects a remarkable achievement of expanding the list to include 126,997 new citizens. The increase, however, is not proportionate between men and women.

The number of women voters on the electoral roll for the 2020 GB elections presents an encouraging picture. However, the disproportionately lower registration of women since the 2015 elections reflects a trend that would require serious consideration to stem and reverse the increasing gender-gap.

IN the post-election phase, the issue of a representative voters' list shall be pursued as a cause of common concern by all relevant stakeholders, especially the Election Commission of Gilgit-Baltistan. Starting with the four constituencies where the gender-gap exceeds the legally defined threshold of 10 percentage points, there is a need for a proactive approach to ensure registration of eligible-age women at a level that establishes the balance among registered voters across genders.

The template for cooperation and coordination among stakeholders with specific goal of increasing women representation on the voters list, as implemented in Pakistan, may be replicated in the region.