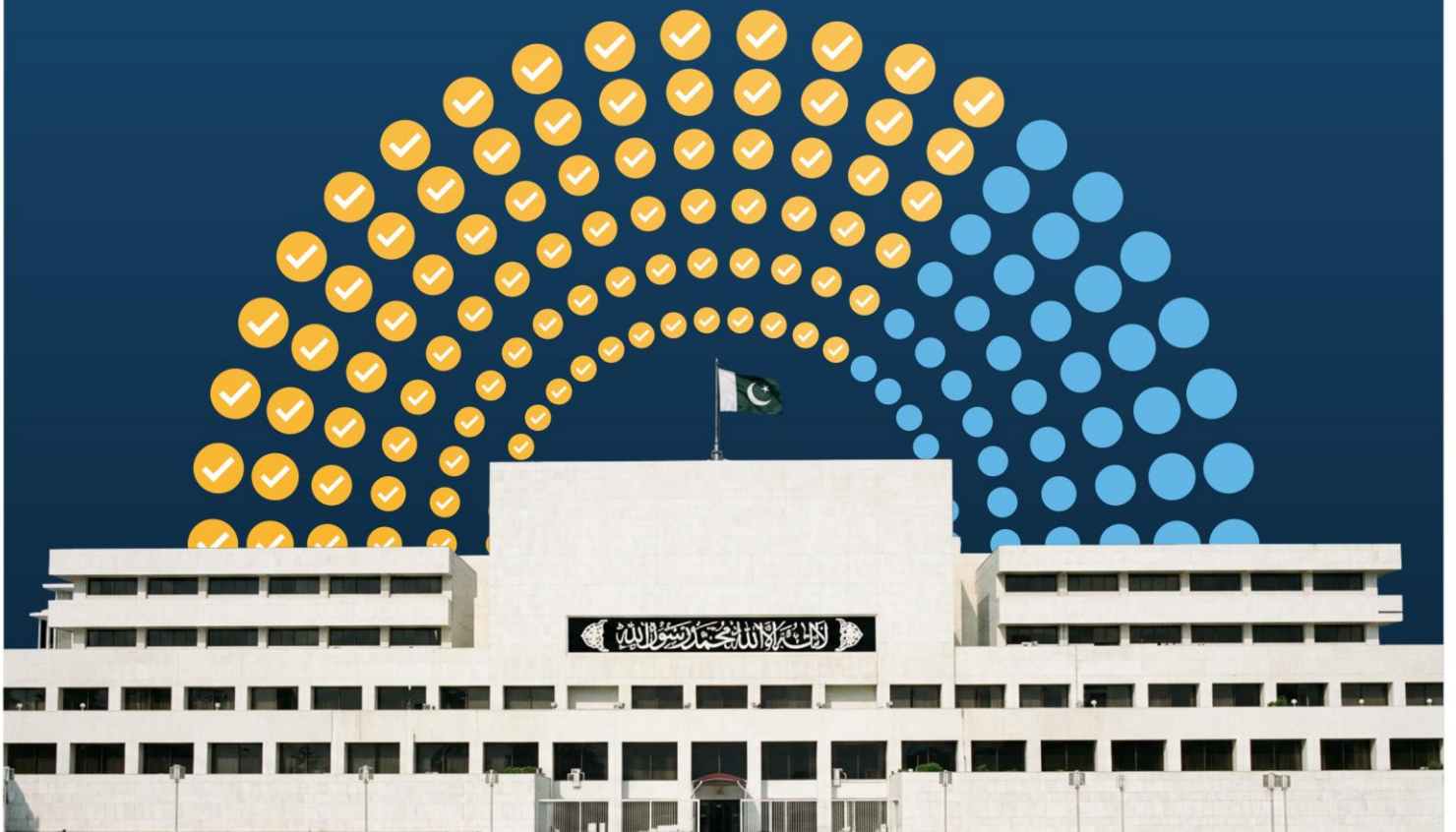


# Women Senators Did It Too!

Women Parliamentarians  
Performance – Senate

2025 - 2026



## SENATE

# Women Parliamentarians Performance Report 2025 - 2026



*This report documents the contributions of female Senators of Pakistan to plenary proceedings during the 23<sup>rd</sup> parliamentary year of the Upper House. All data are drawn from official records of the House proceedings.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### What This Report Measures – And Why It Matters

Female Senators make almost 18 percent of the 96-member strong House of Federation or the Senate of Pakistan. As many as 17 of them are elected on seats reserved for women – two from each province and one from Islamabad Capital Territory – while one is elected on a general seat from Sindh province.

The Women Parliamentarians Performance Report for the Senate aims at documenting the contribution of the female Senators to the House proceedings during its 23<sup>rd</sup> parliamentary year that culminated on 11 March, 2026. The report covers five dimensions of parliamentary performance of the female senators:

1	2	3	4	5
Contribution to agenda,	Participation in debates	Attendance	Parliamentary treatment of female members agenda	Individual performance rankings

Data are obtained from parliamentary records available on the Senate's official website, including orders of the day, daily journals and session attendance registers. The report is limited to an analysis of plenary performance and does not cover committee work or constituency activities. Additionally, verbal contributions during question hour, such as supplementary questions have not been covered in this report. The analysis covers 99 senators who held house membership at different points during the second parliamentary year.

The report finds that female senators contributed around 20% of the regular plenary business of the Senate. While this is two percentage point higher than their proportion in the membership i.e. 18%, it declined from 31% in 2024–2025. The per-capita agenda contribution rate of female Senators is higher than that of male Senators. On average, a female Senator contributed 12 agenda items during the year, compared to 11 items per male. Every female Senator remained active during the reporting year either through participation in plenary discussions or by sponsoring agenda items. However, one female Senator only contributed agenda

items but never participated in the plenary discussions throughout the year. Except for a general seat female Senator, all others fell in the “rarely spoke” category, indicating institutional barriers to their verbal participation in debates and discussions except for Question Hour.

The overall Gender Responsiveness Score (GRS) of the Senate – the ratio of addressed agenda for female Senators versus addressed agenda of male Senators agenda – remained 0.9, indicating that the House was less responsive to female Senators business than the business initiated by their male colleagues. Specifically, the Calling Attention Notices and proposals for amending the House rules by female Senators were not addressed at all during the House. However, their questions and private member bills were addressed at the similar rate as male Senators questions and bills.

Like the female MNAs, the female Senators agenda priorities also spanned a wide range of issues including economic policy, national security, taxation, local governance, and parliamentary procedure, in addition to legislation on women's rights and social protection.

Following are key findings of the report:

**01****Female senators contributed to the parliamentary agenda above per-capita parity with male Senators**

On a per-capita basis, female senators agenda submission rate was higher than that of male senators: 12 items per female senator versus 11 items per male senator.

**02****The Senate was slightly less responsive to female senators agenda than it was to male senators agenda**

The overall Gender Responsiveness Score for the reporting period is 0.9. GRS for female Senators CANs and rule-amendment proposals remained 0.0 as none of these were addressed during the plenary proceedings.

**03****Female senators contribute to a broad range of issues, not only gender issues**

Subject-matter analysis shows female senators raised economic, security, and governance issues in equal or greater proportion to gender-specific legislation. Women senators also contributed to procedural issues. The 'women's issues only' assumption is not supported by the data.

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>CAN</b>	Calling Attention Notice
<b>ECP</b>	Election Commission of Pakistan
<b>FAFEN</b>	Free and Fair Election Network
<b>GRS</b>	Gender Responsiveness Score
<b>IND</b>	Independent
<b>IPP</b>	Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party
<b>IPU</b>	Inter-Parliamentary Union
<b>JUIP</b>	Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan
<b>MQM</b>	Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan
<b>PML-N</b>	Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz
<b>PPPP</b>	Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians
<b>PRI</b>	Participation Rate Index
<b>SIC</b>	Sunni Ittehad Council



## 01 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) is Pakistan's largest civil society network of networks dedicated to strengthening democracy through observation and oversight of electoral, parliamentary, and governance processes. FAFEN's Parliamentary Monitoring has tracked the performance of the National Assembly since 2008, and of the Senate and provincial assemblies since 2010, producing the most comprehensive independent record of Pakistan's legislature. The analysis presented in the Women Parliamentarians Performance Report covers 23<sup>rd</sup> Parliamentary Year of the Senate.

### Data Sources

All data are drawn from FAFEN's parliamentary monitoring database, which records Orders of the Day, session attendance registers, and daily journals proceedings of the Senate.

*Period covered: 13 March 2025 – 11 March 2026*

### Key Definitions

Addressed: agenda item debated, resolved, or formally responded to during the year.

GRS: Gender Responsiveness Score = Female Senators addressed rate ÷ Male Senators addressed rate.

PRI: Participation Rate Index = debates participated in ÷ sessions attended.

### IPU RANKING (January 2026)

Pakistan ranks 136 out of 185 countries for women's parliamentary representation (Inter-Parliamentary Union, March 2025). Within South Asia region, India ranks 152, Nepal 55, Sri Lanka 166, and Bhutan 178.

### Historical Trend: Female Representation in Senate

<b>18.7%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>
Female Senators in the Senate (share of total seats)	Elected on the General Seat	Female Senators elected on Women Seat

Women's representation in the Senate has remained relatively stable at around 17 to 18 percent. Minor fluctuations have largely resulted from changes in the overall strength of the House rather than variations in the number of women elected. Historically, women's representation in the Senate has been overwhelmingly driven by reserved quota seats, with only a few exceptions. In the current Senate, only one woman—affiliated with the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians—has been elected on a general seat.

Key parliamentary positions in the Senate, including the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and the Leaders of the House and the Opposition, are currently held by male senators. However, female senators chair eight of the 44 Senate committees (18 percent), including standing, functional, domestic, and other committees. Greater efforts by political parties are needed to increase women's representation on general seats rather than confining them primarily to reserved seats.

## 02 PARLIAMENTARY AGENDA SUBMITTED BY FEMALE SENATORS

**207**

Agenda items solely submitted  
by female senators

**22**

Agenda items jointly submitted by  
female and male senators

### PER-CAPITA AGENDA CONTRIBUTION RATE

**12 items / female senator vs. 11 items / male senator**

**Table 1: Agenda Submission by Policy Theme – Female Senators**

Policy Theme	Share of Female Senators Agenda
National-level policy issues (economy, security, taxation, governance)	54%
Constituency and local issues	13%
Gender-specific issues	7%
Other (procedural, cross-cutting)	25%

**DATA NOTE**

The subject-matter typology was developed to test the hypothesis that female Senators legislate beyond gender-specific issues. This includes a thematic analysis of CANs, legislative bills, motions for public importance discussions but does not cover the subject-focus of questions.

**Table 2: Top Five Most Active Female Senators by Agenda Submitted**

Rank	Member Name	Seat Type	Party	Items Submitted
1	Samina Mumtaz Zehri	Women	BAP	62
2	Anusha Rahman Ahmad Khan	Women	PML-N	32
3	Qurat-Ul-Ain Marri	Women	PPPP	25
4	Sherry Rehman	General	PPPP	24
5	Bushra Anjum Butt	Women	PML-N	23

## 03 PARTICIPATION IN PLENARY DEBATES

**Table 3: Overall Participation Indicators**

Participation Indicator	Female Senators	Male Senators
Senators who only contributed agenda items	1	8
Senators who only participated in plenary discussions	-	3
Senators who contributed agenda and participated in discussions	17	64
Senators who neither contributed agenda nor participated in discussions	-	4

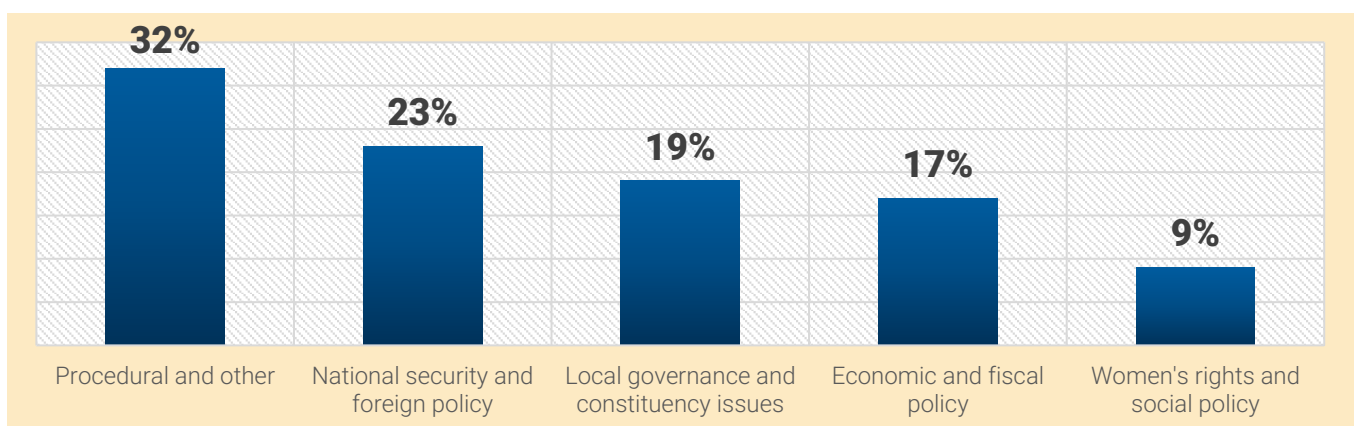
**Table 4: Verbal Participation Rate Index (PRI)**

Verbal Participation Level	PRI Score	Female Senators	Male Senators
Never spoke	0.00	1	13
Rarely spoke	0.01 to 0.49	16	59
Occasionally spoke	0.50	-	-
Frequently spoke	0.51 to 0.99	1	5
Always spoke	1.00	-	-

**PARTICIPATION RATE INDEX (PRI)**

PRI = debates participated in ÷ sessions attended. A female senator who attends every session but never speaks scores 0. This metric separates structural barriers from individual choice, making the data more policy-actionable.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Female Senators' Floor Time by Subject Area**



## 04 ATTENDANCE PATTERNS

# 38

Average number of sittings attended by female Senators during the year

# 34

Average number of sittings attended by male Senators during the year

**Table 6: Average Attendance by Seat Type**

Seat Type	Female Senators (avg. sittings attended)	Male Senators (avg. sittings attended)
Women	38	-
General Seat	43	33
Non-Muslims	-	50
Technocrats including Ulema	-	35
<b>Overall</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>34</b>

**Table 7: Top Five Most Regular Female Senators by Sittings Attended**

Rank	Member Name	Party	Attendance
1	Falak Naz	PTI	60 (100%)
2	Husna Bano	PPPP	58 (97%)
3	Fawzia Arshad	PTI	50 (83%)
4	Saadia Abbasi	IND	48 (80%)
5	Khalida Ateeb	MQM	46(77%)
6	Rubina Naz	IND	33 (89%)*
7	Mashal Azam	IND	36 (81%)*

### DATA NOTE

\*Senator Rubina Naz and Senator Mashal Azam took oath of Senate membership on 25 July 2025 and 12 August 2025, respectively. Their percentage attendance is calculated from the total number of sittings held since their respective date of taking oath.

## 05 PARLIAMENTARY TREATMENT OF FEMALE SENATORS AGENDA

### Senate – Gender Responsiveness Score (GRS)

GRS = Addressed Rate (Female Senators) ÷ Addressed Rate (Male Senators)

A score below 1.0 indicates institutional under-responsiveness to female senators agenda.

# 0.9

Overall GRS  
Target ≥ 1.0

**Table 8: Addressed and Unaddressed Agenda by Sponsor Type – Senate**

Agenda Type	Male Senators Agenda		Female Senators Agenda		Jointly Sponsored Agenda		GRS Score
	Addressed ✓	Left-over ✗	Addressed ✓	Left-over ✗	Addressed ✓	Left-over ✗	
CANs	17	15	0	4	1	0	0
Private Member Bills	52	15	29	8	2	1	1.0
Motions for Public Importance Discussions	19	8	4	4	0	2	0.7
Private Resolutions	6	3	1	3	7	0	0.4
Questions	511	21	113	5	0	0	1.0
Rule Amendments	3	3	0	2	1	0	0.0
Committee/Statutory Report	98	2	21	1	0	0	1.0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.9</b>

#### HOW TO READ THIS TABLE

Each agenda type shows addressed (resolved/debated) and unaddressed (lapsed/pending) counts for male Senators, female Senators, and jointly sponsored items. The GRS column is the key equity indicator – values below 1.0 indicate that female senators agenda in that category receives less parliamentary attention than equivalent submissions by male Senators. The GRS scoring was not done for government bills and resolutions as there is no female Senators who is part of the cabinet.

## 06 FEMALE SENATORS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Senators are ranked on a composite index: attendance rate (30%) + per-capita agenda submission (35%) + Participation Rate Index (35%).

The table below presents a ranking of female Senators based on their plenary performance during the second parliamentary year of the Upper House. Data are sourced from official proceedings reports and attendance records. The frequency of participation in plenary discussions does not include verbal contributions during Question Hour.

Name	Party	Frequency of Participation in Plenary Discussions (Excluding Question Hour)	Attendance Rate	Agenda Items Sponsored	Addressed Agenda (%)	Performance Rank
Samina Mumtaz Zehri	BAP	10	48%	35	74%	1
Sherry Rehman	PPPP	23	72%	24	88%	2
Anusha Rahman Ahmad Khan	PML-N	1	62%	14	94%	3
Qurat-UI-Ain Marri	PPPP	4	37%	9	88%	4
Fawzia Arshad	PTI	8	83%	8	84%	5
Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan	PPPP	6	70%	7	95%	6
Bushra Anjum Butt	PML-N	3	62%	23	74%	7
Dr Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur	PTI	5	33%	7	85%	8
Rubina Qaim Khani	PPPP	7	65%	4	93%	9
Khalida Ateeb	MQM	12	77%	2	100%	10
Falak Naz	PTI	8	100%	5	100%	11

Name	Party	Frequency of Participation in Plenary Discussions (Excluding Question Hour)	Attendance Rate	Agenda Items Sponsored	Addressed Agenda (%)	Performance Rank
Mashal Azam	IND	7	81%	0	100%	12
Naseema Ehsan	IND	8	43%	1	100%	13
Husna Bano	PPPP	3	97%	4	75%	14
Rubina Khalid	PPPP	4	74%	2	50%	15
Saadia Abbasi	PML-N	1	80%	4	75%	16
Rubina Naaz	IND	1	89%	0	100%	17
Rahat Jamali	PML-N	0	60%	4	100%	18

## About FAFEN

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) is Pakistan's leading civil society network dedicated to strengthening democracy through observation and oversight of electoral, parliamentary and governance processes. FAFEN has been observing the National Assembly proceedings since 2008 and Parliament and Provincial Assemblies since 2010.



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