IFES Ukraine Statement

Call on political parties to run more women in the parliamentary election

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On July 21, Ukrainians will go to the polls to decide who represents them in parliament. Women make up over half of the population in Ukraine. But, while there are over 22 million women in Ukraine, less than 50 women are in the Rada. There are over 370 men.

Ukraine is far below regional and global averages at only 11.6 percent women in parliament. The global average is 24.3 percent and the European average is even higher at 28.5 percent. Out of the 193 countries on the Inter-Parliamentary Union database, Ukraine is ranked 156th - the lowest ranked European country on this list.

In 2014, only two women were elected from the 198 single-mandate districts, the rest were elected on party lists without a gender quota requirement. This calls for reform of the electoral system and special measures to bring Ukraine closer to global and European levels of women's representation.

Women deserve better. Ukraine deserves better. Call on all political parties to run more women in the upcoming parliamentary election. To make a real change in how many women are elected, political parties must place these women prominently and high on their candidate lists; at an absolute minimum, two women in every five candidates on the list, which would guarantee around 90 women out of 225 elected from political party lists - this is still only around 20 percent of the full parliament.

Therefore, this measure cannot stand alone. Political parties must also run substantially more women in winnable single member constituencies.

If these measures are widely accepted, Ukraine will move towards electing the minimum of 30 percent women in line with global commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, and towards the goal of 40 percent set in standards by the Council of Europe.

#runmorewomen