

Media, Elections and Gender Monitor

Lebanon

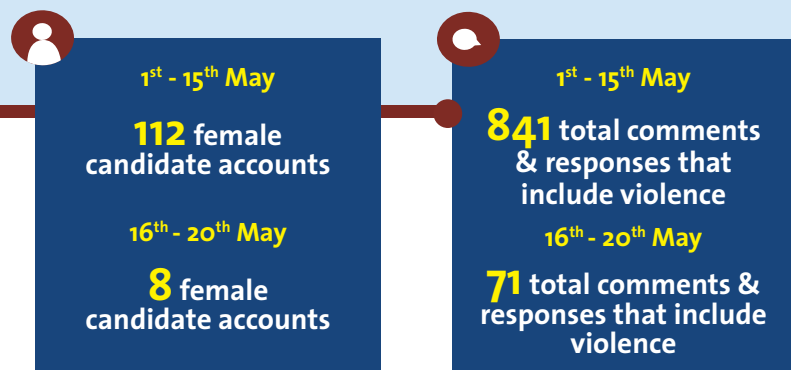
1st - 20th May 2022

Maharat Foundation, Madanyat Association and UN Women partnered to monitor how gender issues were addressed by the media in relation to Lebanon's 2022 electoral process, including measuring the presence, portrayal, and representation of female candidates by the media. This falls under the broader work of all three organisations to promote gender equality in Lebanon.

The focus of the elections media monitoring is on TV and social media.

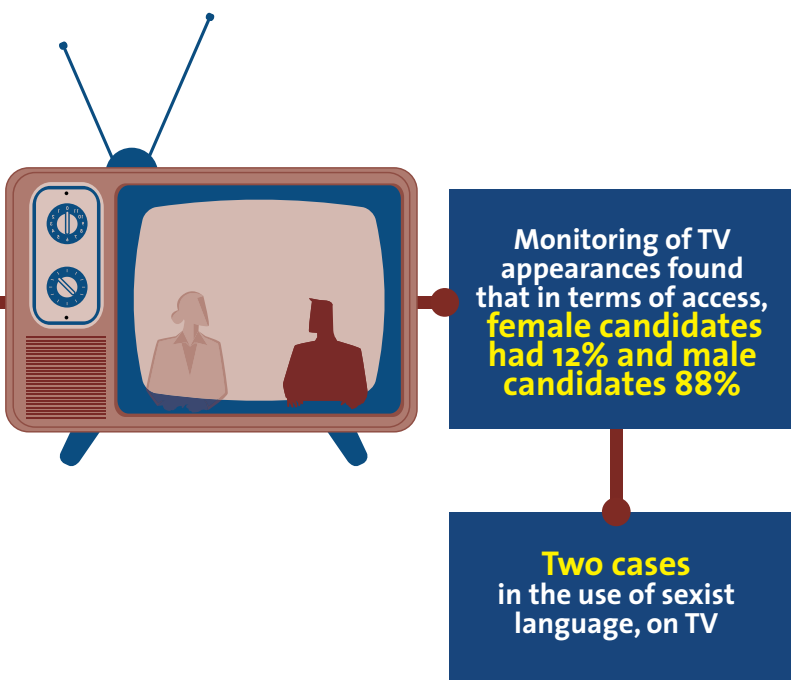
Snapshot findings

Social media



- Types of violence:
- 1 Cyberbullying
- 2 Psychological violence
- 3 sexual violence

Television coverage



Overview

From May 1 until May 15, the social media accounts of 112 women candidates were monitored. From May 16, after the election, until the May 20, 2022, the social media accounts of the 8 elected women were monitored.

From a total of 28,005 comments and replies on the 112 women candidates, 841 classified as violent speech against women in politics, representing 3% of all comments posted on their social media accounts, a slight increase of violence against female candidates compared to the 2% violent comments in April. Noting that the percentage was higher in February and March as the sample of women candidates was less and the number of monitored accounts is larger in April and May.

The social media accounts of the 8 elected to parliament were monitored for the week after their election (from May 16 to May 20). From total of 10,143 comments, only 71 replies/comments were classified as violent forms of expression against women (0.7%).

Social media platforms

Pre-elections Phase:

In April, the percentage of comments received by female candidates was 2% based on a sample of 102 women candidates who were the most active female candidates on social media platforms. It is significant to note that this number might reflect/change within reporting as candidates may have immediately deleted/reported some of the more violent comments.

The percentage of violent and sexist comments against women in politics in May increased slightly from 2% to 3% during the pre-elections period.

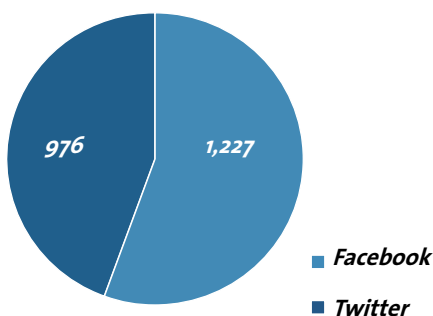
Snapshot of the cases recorded:

Women candidate	Number of violent comments
Layal Bou Moussa	252
Nada Boustany	241
Paula Yacoubian	84
Karen El-Boustany	57
Rima Njeim	42
Bushra Khalil	20
Carla Boutros	19
Miriam Skaff	18
Lina Al-Tanir	16
Zeina Majdalani	13
Cynthia Zarazir	13
Halima Kaakour	12

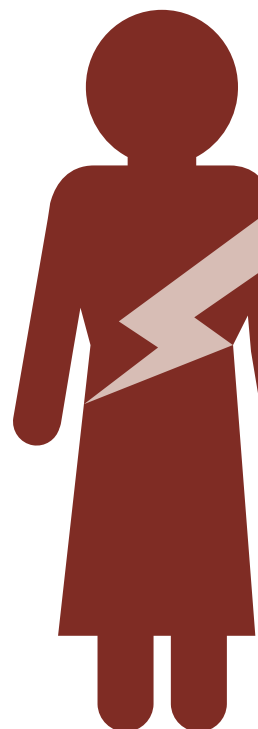
Based on the above table, it is noteworthy that the winning independent candidates, Cynthia Zarazir and Halima Kaakour, appeared to have the least attacks and cyber- violence on social media platforms.

Breakdown of violent/nonviolent comments and responses from 1st - 15th May:

Distribution of monitored total 2,203 posts/tweets of total 92 active social media accounts for women candidates from 1-15 May



Breakdown of violent form of expression from total 28,005 replies/comments on 2,203 posts/tweets of total 92 active social media accounts for women candidates from 1-15 may



Post-elections Phase:

After the election, the social media accounts of the elected female candidates were monitored:

- Paula Yacoubian
- Halima Kaakour
- Setrida Geagea
- Cynthia Zarazir
- Najat Aoun
- Nada Boustany
- Ghada Aoun
- Inaya Ezzedine

Based on the monitoring database, the elected leaders published 31 posts/tweets on their official social media accounts during the monitoring timeframe. The total replies and comments reported were 10,143, with 71 replies/comments that can be classified as violent forms of expression against women.

Examples of the comments characterized as gender-based violence include:

- “Whore”
- “Even if you won, you still look like a guy”
- “Bit*h”
- “You are a Loser in life and politics”
- “The only thing you are good at is staying home and being an obedient wife”

Breakdown of total 10,143 violent/non violent comments/replies during 16th - 20th May on 31 posts of 8 active social media accounts (winning women candidates)

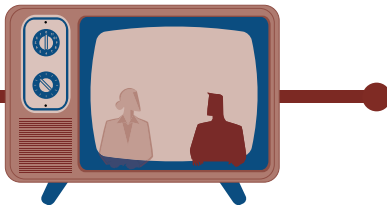
71 VAWP comments

10,143 non-violent comments

Television Coverage

Based on tv monitoring, the total airtime for female candidates on TV programs and news bulletin from May 1-15 was 80,457 seconds, compared to 604,695 seconds for male candidates.

Breakdown of total access to TV between men and women candidates - February to May 2022: -



% of TV appearances	Feb - March	April	May
% for Male candidates	93%	78%	88%
% for Female Candidates	7%	22%	12%
% of Voter educational material	0.05%	1%	1%

Within the period extending from the May 1-20, 2022, 2 cases of televised violence against female candidates were reported:

1st Case: Karen Boustani and Charbel Khalil:

The program “Mich Alil” presented by Charbel Khalil on the OTV channel broadcasted on the 2nd of May, 2022, a short video during the TV show in which the host compared the candidate in Keserwan district Karen Bustani to a “thief stripper”, while shaming her appearance and looks and accusing her of stealing purchases from the supermarket.

2nd Case: Ghada Aoun:

On May 22, 2022, on “Sar El Waet” TV program, MP Najat Aoun was introduced with to Ghada Aoun, the Lebanese judge and state prosecutor. During the introduction the presenter laughed and said, “the other Aoun is the one with messy hair”, relegating women to their looks and reminding those in the room and the audience that they will be judged on how they look.

Maharat Foundation, Madanyat Association and UN Women will continue to undertake gender, media and elections monitoring in the lead up to the 2022 elections, and will be working together, with KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation and LADE to support female candidates to address, prevent and respond to violence against women in politics.