



# Legal Review of Women's Representation in the 2024 General Election (Case Study in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi)

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Received: 19/11/2024

Accepted: 20/06/2025

Published: 31/03/2026

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## ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are: (1) to identify and analyze women's representation in the 2024 general election in Muna Regency, and (2) to examine the factors that hinder female legislative candidates in fulfilling their representation quota. This research was conducted in Muna Regency, specifically at the General Elections Commission (KPU) office and political party offices, using a normative-empirical research approach. Data collection methods included document analysis, field surveys, and interviews, with data analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques. The findings show that: (1) women's representation in the 2024 General Election in Muna Regency included a total of 387 legislative candidates, consisting of 243 male candidates (62.79%) and 144 female candidates (37.21%). Compared to the 2019 election, where there were 166 female candidates (39.71%), the number decreased to 144 (37.21%) in the 2024 election. This indicates a decline in women's representation on the candidate list by 3.65% in the 2024 election. (2) There are three main barriers faced by female legislative candidates in fulfilling representation requirements: double burden constraints, financial limitations, and quota implementation without adequate cadre preparation.

**Keywords:** 2024 General Election, Election Law, Gender Quota, Political Participation, Women's Representation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women's political representation in Indonesia has historically developed since the first Women's Congress in Yogyakarta in 1928. Political awareness, in the form of actual participation and the exercise of women's political rights, was also reflected in the 1955 General Election, in which women possessed both the right to vote and to be elected. Equal recognition of political rights between women and men in national and state life in Indonesia has been explicitly acknowledged. This recognition has been established through various legal instruments and by ratifying international conventions that guarantee women's political rights.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights, Article 6, stipulates that the electoral system, political parties, and the election of members of legislative, executive, and judicial bodies must ensure women's representation in accordance with specified requirements. The affirmation of women's political rights is further strengthened by Indonesia's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through Law No. 7 of 1984.

The development and progress of women's political participation cannot be separated from the historical evolution of elections in Indonesia, which has been characterized by dynamic political changes. During the Old Order era, the first general election was held in 1955 and involved numerous political parties. After the 1955 election, there was a vacuum in electoral processes due to political transitions and a shift in governmental power toward the New Order regime. During the New Order period, six general elections were conducted under a changing party system. Since 1973, only three political parties were recognized by the state: Golkar, PPP, and PDI, under the principle of Pancasila as the sole ideology.

In 1998, a political transition occurred from the New Order to the Reform Era, which opened opportunities for the emergence of political parties. In 1999, elections were held with 48 participating parties. In the 2004 election, this number decreased to 24 parties. The 2009 election involved 38 national parties and 6 local parties. The 2014 election was followed by 12 national parties and 3 local parties, while the 2019 election involved 16 national parties and 4 local parties.

Since the Reform Era, efforts to expand women's political participation in political institutions have intensified. One of the key breakthroughs introduced to enhance women's political participation has been the implementation of affirmative action policies for women in politics. The Reform Era in Indonesia has brought significant political transformation, including changes in the party system and its functions, increased political participation, electoral system reforms, and other institutional changes. The most progressive development is the increasing opportunity for women to participate in political arenas.

To ensure greater advancement and opportunities for women in government politics, since 1999 Indonesia has implemented an affirmative action regulation known as the gender quota system. This policy aims to reduce gender disparity and continues to be used to ensure women's representation as legislative candidates.

The quota system has been widely adopted in several countries with significant gender disparities, including countries in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. These countries have reformed their electoral regulations to improve the effectiveness of quota implementation. Some even apply reserved seat systems, where a certain number of positions are exclusively allocated for women. Such arrangements represent institutional solutions that strengthen the legal framework for ensuring women's political rights.

The implementation of the women's quota system began to take shape in the 2004 election, based on Article 65 paragraph (1) of Law No. 12 of 2003 on Elections. This article mandates that political parties participating in elections must take into account at least 30% women's representation in the nomination of candidates for the House of Representatives (DPR) and Regional Legislative Councils (DPRD).

To further strengthen women's representation not only in the legislature but also in electoral administration, Law No. 27 of 2007 was introduced. Article 6 paragraph (5) of Law No. 22 of 2007 on Election Administrators states that the composition of election organizers must ensure at least 30% women's representation at all levels of the General Elections Commission (KPU), both nationally and regionally.

Another regulation reinforcing affirmative action for women is Article 20 of Law No. 2 of 2008 on Political Parties. This provision obliges political parties to include at least 30% women in their establishment and organizational structures at the national level.

Regarding legislative candidacy, Law No. 10 of 2008 on the 2009 Elections introduced Article 53, which accommodates a minimum 30% quota for women candidates. Starting from the 2009 election, a zipper system was implemented in the candidate list, meaning that in every group of three candidates, at least one must be a woman in each electoral district. This system was continued in the 2014 election, although with modifications, allowing women candidates to be placed in any ranking while still ensuring the 30% minimum requirement per electoral district.

The policy on women's representation continued into the 2019 election. Based on Law No. 7 of 2017 on Elections, Article 173 paragraph (2) stipulates that the 30% women's representation requirement in political party leadership applies only at the central level. Meanwhile, Article 246 paragraph (2) requires that at least 30% of legislative candidates are women, and that at least one woman must be included among every three candidates.

Law No. 7 of 2017, which serves as the legal basis for the 2019 elections, contains a significantly higher number of provisions regulating women's candidacy, namely 14 articles. In implementation, all 16 political parties participating in the 2019 elections were able to meet the 30% women's representation requirement in their candidate lists, as stipulated in Article 245 and Article 246 paragraphs (1) and (2).

Article 245 states that: "The list of candidates as referred to in Article 243 shall contain at least 30% (thirty percent) women representation." Article 246 paragraphs (1) and (2) state that: "(1) The names of candidates in the list referred to in Article 243 shall be arranged based on numerical order." "(2) In the list referred to in paragraph (1), every three candidates shall include at least one female candidate."

Various regulations governing women's quotas have been established by the state, all of which aim to ensure women's representation both in political party leadership and in legislative candidate lists. Ideally, these policies are expected to increase the number of women in legislative institutions. For clarity, the following table presents the model of women's quota implementation in Indonesia's elections during the Reform Era.

**Table 1.1** Implementation of the women's quota system in elections in Indonesia

Election Period	Legality of the Women's Quota	Strategies for the Women's Quota	Nature of the Enforcement of the Women's Quota	Results of the Women's Quota in the Legislature
1999	Law no. 3 of 1999	30% Quota: Free in serial number placement.	Advice and no sanctions	9%
2004	Law no. 12 of 2003, Article 16 Paragraph (1)	30% Quota: Free in serial number placement	Advice and no sanctions	11,2%
2009	Law no. 2 of 2008	30% Quota and Zipper System	Mandatory	18,2%
2014	Law no. 12 of 2012	30% Quota and Zipper System	Mandatory	17,32%
2019	Law no. 7 of 2017	30% Quota and Zipper System	Mandatory	20,5%

Several reasons underline the necessity of implementing women's quotas in various political positions. First, historically, the low representation of women has occurred in parallel with the dynamics of electoral system implementation. Electoral systems characterized by party-centered voting and closed-list mechanisms tend to produce

lower levels of women's representation in legislative candidate lists. In contrast, open-list electoral systems provide greater opportunities for women to run for office in legislative institutions.

Second, the persistence of patriarchal structures within political parties continues to marginalize women in political arenas. Therefore, the regulation of women's quotas in elections has become a crucial breakthrough in achieving political representation. However, this argument has not significantly shifted over successive elections, with women's representation remaining around 21% in legislative bodies. Nevertheless, political parties sometimes violate these provisions by placing female candidates in lower list positions. The level of compliance by political parties in ensuring women's representation in legislative candidate lists must be reinforced by important instruments such as General Election Commission (KPU) regulations. Moreover, the women's quota has been a demand for political representation in Indonesia since the Reform era.

Political parties are obliged to comply with women's quota requirements. Compliance with these legal provisions was reflected in the 2019 General Election, in which more than 30% of legislative candidates were women. Specifically, there were 4,774 male candidates for the House of Representatives (61.74%) and 3,194 female candidates (39.08%). However, in the final results of the 2019 election, the Election Commission (KPU) confirmed that 118 women were elected as members of the House of Representatives out of a total of 575 seats. Throughout the post-reform electoral history, the highest level of women's representation occurred in the 2019 election at 20.52%. In the 2014 election period, women's representation in the DPR was only around 97 members (17.32%) out of 560 seats.

An increase in women's representation has also been observed at the local level. For instance, in Muna Regency, the number of candidates for the 2019 Regional House of Representatives election reached 438 individuals, consisting of 177 female candidates (40.41%) and 261 male candidates (59.58%) from 15 political parties across 6 electoral districts (dapil). In each district, political parties generally positioned their female cadres in accordance with Law No. 7 of 2017, which mandates political parties to fulfill a minimum 30% quota for women in both candidate recruitment and party leadership structures.

In the candidate selection process within political parties, standardized procedures and formal stages are applied in determining candidates who will compete in electoral contests, particularly for legislative positions. The selection process for prospective legislative candidates must be followed by each candidate through established criteria, procedures, and nomination methods. Political party compliance with statutory regulations and the General Election Commission (KPU) regulations plays a decisive role in ensuring fair and inclusive political representation.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 General Review

#### 2.1.1 The Concept of Political Participation

Participation is one of the fundamental principles of good governance; therefore, many scholars regard participation as an initial strategy in the reform process following 1998. The term participation originates from Latin, where *pars* means "part" and *capere* means "to take," which together imply "taking part" in an activity. In English, the term "participate" or "participation" similarly refers to taking part or playing a role. Thus, political participation refers to taking part in political activities of the state (Suharno, 2004).

Political participation is a crucial element of democracy. It is a characteristic of political modernization, where political decisions made and implemented by the government affect citizens' lives; therefore, citizens have the right to be involved in determining those decisions. According to Huntington and Nelson, as cited by Cholisin, political participation refers to activities undertaken by citizens acting as private individuals to influence governmental decision-making (Cholisin, 2007:150).

Ramlan Surbakti defines political participation briefly as citizens' involvement in determining decisions that affect their lives (Cholisin, 2007:150).

According to Miriam Budiardjo, political participation can be defined as the activities of individuals or groups who actively engage in political life, including selecting national leaders and directly or indirectly influencing public policy. These activities include voting in elections, attending public meetings, joining political parties or interest groups, and contacting government officials or members of parliament (Cholisin, 2007:150).

In democratic countries, a higher level of public participation is generally considered better. High participation indicates that citizens understand political issues and are willing to engage in political activities. Conversely, low participation is often interpreted negatively, indicating lack of public concern for state affairs (Miriam Budiardjo, 2008:369).

Other scholars define political participation as the active engagement of individuals or groups in governmental processes, including participation in decision-making or opposition to government policies (Fouls, 1993). Herbert McClosky defines it as voluntary activities through which citizens take part in selecting leaders and directly or indirectly in the formation of public policy (McClosky, 1972:252). Huntington and Nelson further describe political participation as citizens' activities in decision-making processes, which may be individual or collective, organized or spontaneous, peaceful or violent, legal or illegal, and effective or ineffective (Huntington & Nelson, 1997:3).

In conclusion, political participation refers to individual or group activities related to influencing government policies, either directly or indirectly, through conventional or non-conventional means, including both peaceful and coercive actions.

## 2.1.2 The Concept of Political Recruitment

Political recruitment is a broad field of study influenced by many factors. It occurs within a structured political system that requires continuity within institutions. The term “recruitment” is widely used in political science and adopted by political parties as part of their effort to gain public support and maintain political power by encouraging individuals to join party membership.

Political recruitment operates within specific timeframes, particularly during elections or internal party regeneration processes. According to Ramlan Surbakti, political recruitment refers to the selection and appointment of individuals or groups to perform political roles within political and governmental systems. Its importance increases in single-party systems or dominant-party systems where it determines government formation in democratic systems. Recruitment is essentially a mechanism for seeking and maintaining political power (Surbakti, 1992:118).

Thus, political recruitment can be understood as the selection process of individuals or groups to occupy political positions in a political system. Political parties implement recruitment mechanisms according to their internal rules and organizational structures.

Beyond filling political positions, recruitment also aims to maintain institutional sustainability. In political parties, recruitment is a vital function because failure in recruitment threatens the party’s continuity. Therefore, parties must continuously regenerate their membership to sustain political influence.

Afan Gaffar (1999:155) defines political recruitment as the process of filling political positions within a state to ensure the political system functions effectively in serving and protecting society. Czudnowski (in Sigit Pamungkas, 2011:91) defines it as the process through which individuals are involved in active political roles.

Gabriel Almond (in Lily Romli, 2005:78) explains political recruitment as the selection of citizens for political activities and government positions through media exposure, organizational membership, candidacy, education, and examinations.

In Indonesia, Law No. 2 of 2011 on Political Parties (Article 29) stipulates that political parties conduct recruitment for Indonesian citizens to fill political positions such as party members, legislative candidates at national and regional levels, presidential and vice-presidential candidates, and regional head candidates. This recruitment must be conducted democratically and transparently in accordance with party statutes and bylaws (AD/ART).

## 2.2 Women’s Political Representation

### 2.2.1 The Concept of Women’s Representation

Representation is generally understood as the relationship between one party representing another. In political representation, there are two main actors: the representative and the represented. Enrique Peruzzotti explains that a representative is someone authorized to act with relative independence from the electorate. Thus, representatives do not merely act on direct voter demands but have discretion to make the best decisions, supported by public trust (trust).

Hanna Pitkin (1967), in *The Concept of Representation*, distinguishes representation as both authority and responsibility. Authority refers to the delegation of power from the represented to the representative, while responsibility refers to accountability toward those who granted that authority. Representation therefore involves a two-way relationship between authority and accountability.

Pitkin identifies four key elements of representation: the representative, the represented, the interests represented, and the political context. She further categorizes representation into two forms: “standing for” and “acting for.”

“Standing for” includes descriptive and symbolic representation. Descriptive representation occurs when representatives share similar characteristics with those they represent, such as women representing women in political institutions. Symbolic representation is based on socio-cultural symbols and shared meanings within society.

“Acting for” refers to substantive representation, where representatives actively pursue the interests of those they represent. This model emphasizes policy outcomes and collective interests, making it central to democratic representation.

### 2.2.2 Quota Policy

The issue of gender quotas is an important entry point for understanding both barriers and opportunities in women’s substantive representation. A gender quota refers to the proportion of seats or positions in party candidate lists reserved for women (Stokes, 2005:77).

The main rationale behind quotas is to ensure women’s inclusion in politics (Dahlerup, 2007:78). It is also argued that low female representation is undemocratic; thus, quotas serve as a corrective mechanism. However, critics argue that quotas are unnecessary because political systems already provide equal opportunities for men and women, and quotas may lead to discrimination against men (Dahlerup, 2007:75; Stokes, 2005:79).

Dahlerup (2007:74) counters this by arguing that political representation must also reflect differences in experiences and interests between men and women, which require political articulation.

Empirical studies support the effectiveness of gender quotas. For example, Chen (2010:13) found that increased female representation leads to higher government spending on welfare programs. Pande and Ford (2011:1) also show that gender quotas in India significantly influence policy outcomes.

These findings suggest that quotas are linked not only to descriptive representation but also to substantive representation. While quotas ensure women’s numerical presence in politics, substantive representation ensures that women’s interests and experiences are meaningfully reflected in public policy.

## 2.3 Review of the General Election Commission (KPU)

### 2.3.1 Definition of KPU

Article 22E of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia stipulates that “General elections shall be conducted by a general election commission.” The phrase “a general election commission” indicates that, in principle, the electoral management body is not strictly limited to a single institutional form such as the current institution known as the General Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum). However, Law No. 12 of 2003, as amended by Law No. 7 of 2017, explicitly affirms that the intended institution is the present-day General Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum).

The establishment of the General Election Commission in 2001, the Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslu) in 2003, and subsequently the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) generated both expectations and critical questions regarding their capacity to conduct elections that are free, fair, honest, and transparent. These institutions have generally been viewed positively by scholars and the public, who expect them to strengthen democratic consolidation.

The role of KPU in electoral socialization is aimed at increasing public participation so that citizens are willing to exercise their voting rights during elections. This function is crucial considering that voter abstention (commonly known as golput) remains relatively high in various regions, reaching approximately 25–35% in several local elections. Although abstention can be considered a democratic choice, it may weaken the legitimacy of electoral outcomes because the preferences of non-voters remain unknown.

Democracy is widely recognized as the most effective mechanism for involving citizens in decision-making processes. However, electoral mechanisms may become inefficient when political parties lack quality and institutional integrity. Therefore, the verification process of political parties by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and the KPU must aim at simplifying the number of contesting parties to ensure an efficient and qualified political system (Rauf, 2008).

The duties and authorities of the KPU include planning and organizing elections; verifying and determining eligible political parties; forming election committees from national to polling station levels; determining legislative seat allocations; announcing national election results; compiling and systematizing electoral data; managing electoral stages; and conducting public education and socialization regarding elections and KPU responsibilities.

Political socialization aims to provide political education that builds political awareness, political identity, and political participation (Prihatmoko, 2003). Political participation refers to citizens’ involvement in political life, including influencing public policy and selecting leaders (Sanit, 1997). Elections therefore function as a fundamental mechanism for enabling citizen participation in determining governmental leadership and policy direction.

Electoral socialization is not solely the responsibility of KPU but also involves political parties, state institutions, supervisory bodies, and civil society organizations. Structurally, KPU operates through hierarchical institutions from national to local levels, including provincial KPU, regency/city KPU, sub-district committees, village election committees, and polling station organizing groups.

Electoral socialization includes dissemination of information regarding election benefits, participants, procedures, schedules, and voting mechanisms. Effective socialization requires clear, accessible, and engaging communication strategies through simulations, mass media, printed materials, and public outreach programs. In performing its duties, KPU adheres to an electoral code of ethics emphasizing independence, neutrality, and non-partisanship.

To ensure public trust, election organizers must act independently and comply with electoral regulations and ethical standards. Electoral socialization is essential to improving the quality of democracy, as elections are a fundamental instrument of democratic governance.

### 2.3.2 KPU Regulations

The restructured KPU institution is legally and politically different from its earlier form in 1999. It carries significant expectations from civil society to function as an independent electoral body capable of ensuring fair, transparent, and credible elections, which are essential for producing legitimate representative institutions (Sudarsono, 2005).

The General Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum) is constitutionally recognized under the 1945 Constitution and categorized as an institution of constitutional importance (Jimly, 2006). Article 22E paragraph (5) states that KPU must be national, permanent, and independent, with an institutional standing equivalent to other state institutions established by law.

Independence is a universal principle for electoral management bodies and oversight institutions. It ensures continuity, credibility, and effectiveness in institutional performance. This independence is reflected in structural, functional, and personal dimensions regulated under Law No. 22 of 2007.

Structural independence is reflected in reporting mechanisms that position KPU as accountable for information delivery to the President and the House of Representatives without implying hierarchical subordination. Functional independence is demonstrated through KPU authority to design electoral systems, manage election processes, determine participants and electoral districts, and announce results. Personal independence is ensured through strict eligibility requirements such as integrity, neutrality, and prohibition of political party affiliation.

Despite its strong institutional mandate, KPU has faced political controversy, particularly regarding its independence and electoral supervision mechanisms, especially during the legislative process of electoral laws.

KPU regulations have gradually incorporated gender inclusion principles. Ratification of international conventions on women's political rights laid the foundation for affirmative action policies. Law No. 12 of 2003 introduced a requirement for political parties to include at least 30% female candidates in legislative nominations.

This affirmative policy was further strengthened through KPU Regulation (PKPU) No. 20 of 2018, which explicitly supports women's political participation by requiring proportional representation in candidate lists. However, PKPU No. 10 of 2023 introduced changes in rounding mechanisms for calculating the 30% female quota, which potentially reduces the number of female candidates in certain electoral districts.

Critics argue that such regulatory adjustments may weaken substantive representation of women in parliament and reduce affirmative action effectiveness. Instead of strengthening inclusion, these mechanisms risk transforming representation into a symbolic form rather than meaningful political empowerment.

Recent amendments to PKPU No. 10 of 2023 simplify the rounding rule by requiring rounding up only, replacing the previous dual-threshold system. While the KPU argues that this improves administrative efficiency and electoral consistency, concerns remain regarding its implications for gender equality and democratic inclusiveness.

Overall, KPU regulations reflect an ongoing tension between administrative efficiency, political neutrality, and substantive democratic inclusion, particularly in relation to gender representation and electoral fairness.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

#### 3.1 Research Location

This research is conducted within the jurisdiction of Muna Regency, specifically at the General Elections Commission (KPU) Office of Muna Regency and political party offices in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province. The researcher selected this location due to its relevance to the research problem being examined. The study focuses on legal objects, both law as a scientific discipline and as a set of normative (dogmatic) rules, as well as law in relation to social behavior and community life.

According to Soerjono Soekanto (2006:15), legal research is a scientific activity based on systematic methods and specific reasoning aimed at examining one or more legal phenomena by analyzing them in a structured manner.

#### 3.2 Types and Sources of Data

The data used in this study consist of primary and secondary data:

##### 1. Primary Data

Primary data are data obtained directly from the field by the researcher as the object of study. These data are collected through interviews as supporting evidence for the research. In addition, data are obtained from the General Elections Commission (KPU) of Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province, particularly information related to women's political representation in the 2024 general election.

##### 2. Secondary Data

Secondary data are data that are not obtained directly by the researcher but through intermediaries or documents. These data are collected through literature studies, including books, legal documents, research notes related to the topic, as well as credible internet-based sources.

#### 3.3 Data Collection Techniques

##### 3.3.1 Data Collection Procedures

Based on the research approach and required data sources, data collection in this study is conducted through literature review, document study, and interviews:

##### a. Library Research

Secondary data are collected through library research by reading, reviewing, and citing relevant literature and statutory regulations related to the research topic.

##### b. Interviews

Interviews are conducted with parties who have relevant knowledge regarding the issues under study. This method serves as supporting data collection by using both oral questions and structured interview guidelines.

##### 3.3.2 Data Processing

After data collection, the data are processed to enable systematic analysis of the research problem. The processing stages include:

- Editing – examining the collected data to ensure completeness, accuracy, and relevance to the research problem.
- Reconstruction – reorganizing the data in a systematic, logical, and coherent order to facilitate interpretation.
- Systematization – arranging data according to the established framework of the research problem.

#### 3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is conducted by describing the data in systematically arranged sentences that are clear and detailed, followed by interpretation to draw conclusions. This study employs qualitative analysis, and conclusions are drawn using an inductive method, which involves analyzing specific facts and then deriving general conclusions relevant to the research problem.

The qualitative analysis in this study connects empirical findings in the field with applicable legal regulations governing women's political representation in elections. The research uses a juridical-empirical approach, combining normative legal analysis with empirical social conditions.

#### 3.5 Research Timeline

The data collection process in this study is conducted in accordance with university regulations, with the following schedule:

1. One month of library research
2. Two weeks of field research
3. One and a half months of data analysis

#### IV. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Women's Representation in the 2024 General Election in Muna Regency

Women's representation within political and governmental institutions is intended as an instrument to address gender inequality. Based on Indonesia Population Projection 2010–2035, out of a total population of 261.9 million in 2017, women accounted for approximately 130.3 million or 49.75 percent of the population. However, this substantial demographic presence is not proportionally reflected in political representation. Women's share of parliamentary seats remains significantly lower compared to men, indicating a persistent gender gap in political institutions.

This imbalance necessitates affirmative policy interventions aimed at preventing dominance by one gender in political decision-making bodies that formulate public policies. Strengthening the 30% affirmative action policy on women's representation through laws and General Election Commission (KPU) regulations is crucial, as these instruments function as binding mechanisms for political parties to fulfill their responsibilities as election participants. The 30% threshold is based on studies by the United Nations, which suggest that a minimum of 30% representation is sufficient to trigger meaningful change and improve the quality of decisions within public institutions.

Efforts to increase women's political participation have been supported through various legislative instruments that ensure greater representation in legislative seats. These regulations include Law No. 31 of 2002 on Political Parties; Law No. 12 of 2003 on General Elections; Law No. 2 of 2008 on Political Parties; and Law No. 10 of 2008 on the Election of Members of the House of Representatives, Regional Representative Council, and Regional People's Representative Council.

Law No. 2 of 2008 stipulates that political parties are required to include at least 30% women in their establishment and central executive structures. Conceptually, political parties serve the function of political recruitment, as reaffirmed in Article 11 paragraph (1) letter (e), which states that political recruitment must consider gender equality and justice. Article 2 paragraph (5) further emphasizes that party leadership at the central level must include at least 30% women representation. Similar provisions are also regulated for provincial and district/city levels.

Law No. 10 of 2008 also requires political parties participating in elections to fulfill the 30% women's representation requirement in their central executive structures and candidate lists. Article 53 mandates that candidate lists must include at least 30% women, while Article 66 paragraph (2) requires the Election Commission (KPU) to publicly announce the percentage of women in party candidate lists through national print and electronic media.

These regulations are reinforced by the zipper system, which requires that at least one woman be included among every three candidates in the list. Subsequent amendments and election laws, including Law No. 8 of 2012 and Law No. 7 of 2017, reaffirm the obligation for political parties to ensure at least 30% women's representation in party leadership and candidate lists, as well as transparency in reporting by the KPU.

Furthermore, technical regulations issued by the KPU, including PKPU No. 20 of 2018 and related decrees, strictly regulate the fulfillment of the 30% quota requirement in each electoral district. Candidate lists that do not meet this requirement are not eligible for election participation in the respective constituencies. The regulations also mandate proportional placement of women candidates and rounding-up mechanisms when calculating fractional percentages.

The importance of women's representation is viewed from both descriptive and substantive perspectives. Descriptive representation refers to the numerical presence of women as legislative candidates or elected members, while substantive representation concerns women's ability to influence policy outcomes that are responsive to women's interests and needs. Key variables in assessing women's representation include political party compliance with the 30% quota, candidate placement across electoral districts, and candidate ranking positions.

In the 2024 General Election in Muna Regency, all political parties complied with the legal requirements and KPU regulations regarding the minimum 30% women's representation. Each party successfully met the minimum quota in candidate nomination processes for the 2024 election. The following table presents the composition of women candidates in Muna Regency during the 2024 General Election.

**Table 4.1 Data on Legislative Candidates (DPRD) in Muna Regency in the 2024 General Election**

No	Political parties	2024 Legislative Candidate				
		∑ L	L%	∑ P	P%	Total
1	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30
2	Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30
3	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30
4	Partai Golongan Karya	18	60%	12	40%	30
5	Partai Nasional Demokrat	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30
6	Partai Buruh	3	60%	2	40%	5
7	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera	18	60%	12	40%	30
8	Partai Kebangkitan Nasional	16	61,54%	10	38,46%	26
9	Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30

10	Partai Amanat Nasional	19	65,52%	10	34,48%	29
11	Partai Bulan Bintang	20	66,67%	10	33,33%	30
12	Partai Demokrat	19	63,33%	11	36,67%	30
13	Partai Solidaritas Indonesia	6	60%	4	40%	10
14	Partai Persatuan Indonesia	10	58,82%	7	41,18%	17
15	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan	14	46,67%	16	53,33%	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>243</b>	<b>62,79</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>37,21</b>	<b>387</b>

## 4.2 Obstacles Faced by Female Legislative Candidates in Fulfilling Representation

Based on the research findings, the low representation of women in the Muna Regency Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in the 2024 Election is caused by several obstacles:

### 4.2.1 Double Burden Constraint

The double burden experienced by women is reflected in: (1) their domestic role as housewives (feminine role), which, although not directly generating income, is considered productive in supporting men (as household heads) in earning income; and (2) their role as income earners, either as additional or primary providers. The dual role of women refers to their position within the family as independent individuals, mothers, caregivers, and wives, while also serving as members of society, workers, and citizens, all of which must be performed in balance.

Situational barriers arise when gender stereotypes create behavioral patterns that differentiate men and women. This condition limits women's political participation. The time and energy spent on domestic responsibilities often reduce women's willingness to enter political spaces. Women face a double burden in politics: on one hand, they are expected to build careers, while on the other hand, they are still socially attached to domestic responsibilities. Success for women in politics is often measured not only by their political achievements but also by their ability to fulfill domestic roles simultaneously. This creates structural pressure that discourages women from engaging in political life.

Most political parties experience similar difficulties in recruiting female legislative candidates due to these constraints. Muhammad Natsir Ido from the Golkar Party stated: "Women rarely want to become politicians. Their answers are mostly the same; many considerations are involved. Women are aware of their double burden, both as mothers and wives, making it difficult for them to manage their time when entering politics."

The Democratic Party also faces similar challenges. Awal Jaya Bolombo stated: "It is quite difficult to find female legislative candidates, especially mothers and wives who must take care of their children and husbands. Their mobility is limited, except for those who are unmarried or single parents."

Therefore, unmarried women or single parents tend to be more active in political party structures and candidacy processes. Patriarchal social structures further reinforce this condition by positioning the private sphere as the domain of women and the public/political sphere as the domain of men. This structural separation results in gender inequality in political participation.

### 4.2.2 Financial Constraints

Women often face challenges in securing sufficient financial resources for political campaigns. Compared to men, women generally have more limited access to financial networks and funding support required to run for office.

Financial capital for election campaigns is a major barrier for women entering politics. Economic dependency often reduces women's political participation. Campaign costs such as transportation, outreach activities, and team mobilization require substantial funding. Therefore, internal party policies regarding candidate selection must be reconsidered to ensure that women's representation is not merely a formal requirement to fulfill the 30 percent quota, as mandated by law.

For many female candidates, financial limitation is the most significant obstacle, especially when they are not economically independent. In Golkar Party, for instance, Muhammad Natsir Ido stated: "Becoming a DPRD member requires significant costs for campaigns, socialization, transportation, and today's political environment is heavily influenced by money politics. Without money, there are no votes. Women without stable finances will find it difficult to become candidates."

Similarly, PKS Party also recognizes financial constraints: "In our party, it cannot be denied that without money there are no votes. The main obstacle is not a lack of female cadres, but financial limitations."

### 4.2.3 Quota Without Cadres

Most political parties are able to meet the minimum quota for women, but female representation is often treated merely as a formality to fill empty slots. Women candidates are frequently placed only to fulfill electoral district requirements or administrative quotas, without serious consideration of their qualifications or long-term development.

Political parties often do not prepare female candidates systematically and continuously, nor do they invest in improving their quality. Women are frequently used as "complementary figures" to satisfy formal requirements. Ruslin, Secretary of Hanura Party, stated: "The obstacle is the lack of female cadres. Due to low interest in political participation, women are often included only as a formality."

Golkar Party also experiences similar issues: "In Golkar, male candidates are strictly selected, while female candidates are often sought by the party itself due to a shortage of female cadres."

Overall, the lack of female cadres is a structural issue within political parties, where candidate recruitment systems are not supported by sustainable cadre development.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Female representation in the 2024 Election in Muna Regency shows that out of 387 legislative candidates, 243 (62.79%) were male and 144 (37.21%) were female. The party with the highest proportion of female candidates was PPP with 53.33%, while several other parties such as PKB, Gerindra, PDI-P, NasDem, Hanura, and PBB each had 33.33% female candidates. Compared to the 2019 Election, female representation declined from 166 candidates (39.71%) to 144 candidates (37.21%), indicating a decrease of 3.65%.
2. The obstacles faced by female legislative candidates include three main factors: double burden constraints, financial constraints, and quota without cadres.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The government of Muna Regency should continue to promote increased women's representation in electoral participation by strengthening policies that support gender inclusion in both legislative and executive institutions.
2. Political parties in Muna Regency should actively recruit and distribute qualified female cadres to participate in legislative and executive positions. Parties should evaluate their commitment to women's representation, not merely as symbolic or descriptive representation, but toward substantive political inclusion. Increasing the number of female candidates must be accompanied by continuous capacity building and competency development to ensure women's increased representation in legislative bodies is meaningful and impactful.

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## LEGISLATION

Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights

Law Number 31 of 2002 concerning Political Parties

Law Number 12 of 2003 concerning General Elections

Law Number 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties

Law Number 10 of 2008 concerning the General Election of Members of the House of Representatives and Regional People's Representative Councils in 2009.