

Women in Judiciary

What is the ratio of women judges in Indian courts?

- **Supreme Court** - The apex court currently has only 3 women judges: Justices B V Nagarathna, Hima Kohli and Bela M Trivedi
- The Supreme Court now has a working strength of 27 judges, against a sanctioned strength of 34 (including CJI) out of which only 3 are women.
- Out of a total of 37 women candidates recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium for appointment as high court judges, only 17 were appointed so far.
- **High Courts** - Out of 192 candidates recommended for the High Courts, only 37 were women.
- Women judges make up 9.5% of the total strength of high courts, according to Bar Council of India (BCI).
- Sikkim High Court, with a total strength of just three judges, has the highest national average at 33.3% of women judges.
- There is no woman chief justice at any high courts of the country.
- **District-level Courts** - There are more women judges at the district court level than at the High Court level.
- The India Justice Report (IJR) 2022 has revealed that the representation of women judges is steadily rising in subordinate courts, but in High Courts, the share of women judges remains low.
- Goa with 70%, has the highest percentage of women judges at subordinate courts, followed by Meghalaya and Nagaland at 63% each.
- **Advocates** - Supreme Court has till date, conferred the senior designation to over 488 advocates, and of which only 19 are women.

What are the issues for women in judiciary?

- The legal profession still remains male dominated.
- Despite of acquiring sufficient skills and knowledge, women are severely under-represented in judiciary.
- There is no reservation of girls in legal education.
- The share of women judges remains uneven across States.
- Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have a very low proportion of women in legal aid.
- Caste-based reservations of judges at district-court level could not fully meet all its Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes quotas.

What are the positive impacts of having women in judiciary?

- The presence of women as judges and lawyers, will substantially improve the justice delivery system.
- Women judges bring diverse perspectives, experiences, and skills to the bench.

- They have nuanced understanding of the differing impacts that certain laws may have on men and women.
- Women in judiciary enriches the judicial process and contributing to better decision-making.
- Women's leadership in justice can enhance public trust and confidence, and make the court environment accessible to the marginalized.

What needs to be done?

- To enrich the pool of talent among girls, the reservation of girls in legal education.
- Horizontal reservation of women in higher judiciary similar to the one in few subordinate courts.
- More transparency in collegium system in appointment of judges especially women judges.
- Create awareness and mobilise political will among women.
- Encourage women to take up legal profession.

Reference

1. [The Indian Express | CJI for greater women share in judiciary](#)

