



# Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów

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Sekretarz Stanu  
Katarzyna Kotula

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Dina Loghin  
President  
European Women's Lobby  
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Dear Madam President,

Dear Ladies,

Thank you for your letter and for your efforts and support, including during the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. European Women's Lobby work for full equality between women and men in decision-making processes is essential for better future. I fully share the conviction that democracy cannot be fully mature and responsible if half of society is not adequately represented within it – not merely symbolically, but in a real and effective sense.

Poland has had its successes, but there is still much to be done. Since 2011, a statutory quota mechanism has been in force for elections to the Sejm, the European Parliament and local government elections, which guarantees that at least 35% of places on electoral lists must be allocated to each gender. In recent years, the so-called 'zipper' principle has also been introduced in some electoral committees, which in practice has increased the effectiveness of this solution and strengthened women's participation in political life. As a result of the parliamentary elections in 2023, women currently make up around 29% of the Sejm. This is the highest figure in recent years, though still far from the 50/50 parity principle you have advocated – and which, in my view, is the right one.

It is worth noting that the increase in women's representation in parliament has translated into a more visible presence of women in the leadership of Sejm committees, in the Sejm Presidium and within the Council of Ministers. At the same time, we are aware that quotas on electoral lists alone do not solve the problem of structural barriers – including access to campaign funding, media visibility or balancing public life with family responsibilities.

Another key area of action in Poland is the development of institutional forms of women's participation at the local level, which, as a local activist and politician, is particularly close to my heart. . An increasing number of local authorities are establishing Women's Councils as consultative and advisory bodies to city mayors and local mayors. Work is currently underway in my Department on legislative solutions designed to strengthen the legal basis for the functioning of women's councils and standardise their status. The aim of the government's draft bill, which has already undergone public consultation – during which I

received over 200 stories from women engaged at a local level – is not merely to symbolically amplify women’s voices, but to create a lasting mechanism for influencing local public policy – from social and health issues to security and economic development.

Nor can we overlook the broader regional context. The security situation in Central and Eastern Europe, including the ongoing war in Ukraine, has a huge impact on the priorities of the countries in our region. Crises – military, migration and economic – often shift the focus away from equality policies towards issues of security and stability. This makes it all the more necessary to consistently strengthen women’s participation

in decision-making processes, including in the areas of security and defence. And that is why, this year, during the 70th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, together with Ukraine, we have organised joint events on women’s participation in decision-making processes and in peace talks.

Experience in recent years shows that women play a key role in crisis management, humanitarian aid and building social resilience. I agree that achieving real Equality requires not only declarations, but systemic changes – legal, institutional and cultural. Poland’s experience shows that quota mechanisms can be an effective transitional tool, but to move closer to parity, it is necessary to further strengthen the position of women in political parties, public administration and the economy.

Thank you for inviting me to this dialogue, and I assure you of my readiness to continue working together to strengthen women’s participation in public life – both at national and European level.

Best regards

Katarzyna Kotula  
Sekretarz stanu, pełnomocnik rządu ds. równości  
/dokument podpisany elektronicznie/