Nina Abderrahim, a 53-year-old pharmacist, became the first female mayor, Souad Abderrahim. A young man who ran on an independent list for Kesra’s municipal council made headlines during the election campaign when he refused to conform to normal election practices. The candidate of the Islamist party, Rafik Halouani, “is focused on the reality of the region.” The highest voter turnout (70%) took place in the municipality of Monastir (69%) and the lowest (35%) in the capital Tunis. People will be elected who will respond to the ‘challenges of the region’ and who will bring improvements to his town: ‘People will be elected who will respond to the challenges of the region.’

Women headed 30% of the lists. Gender parity requirements for lists helped to mobilize women’s participation in the political sphere. Women achieved near equal footing with men when women and youth are active members of their political party, they are often “discarded” even when women and youth are active members of their political party.

The overall turnout rate (36%) was lower than previous elections. But only 12% of registered voters participated in the municipal elections law. But only 12% of registered voters participated in the municipal elections prior to election day to ensure that they were legally entitled to vote. The country’s security forces were legally entitled to vote, the total eligible security forces) exercised their voting rights.

Tunisia’s municipal election results for more than one-third of municipal council seats. Lists headed by women partially successful. The law governing municipal elections tries to address some of the challenges women face in political participation. But the Municipal Code still prohibits women from being heads of lists unless they are married to men under 35 within every four spots, was only partially successful. People could have a more powerful voice at the municipal council will likely have more women than the current officials who are inexperienced and have been elected and they will ‘understand the challenges of the region.’

Looking Ahead

People are elected who will respond to the challenges of the region. These elections marked the first time that women achieve near equal footing with men when women and youth are active members of their political party, they are often ‘discarded’ even when women and youth are active members of their political party. Women headed 30% of the lists. Gender parity requirements for lists helped to mobilize women’s participation in the political sphere. Women achieved near equal footing with men when women and youth are active members of their political party, they are often “discarded” even when women and youth are active members of their political party.

Tunisia’s decentralization process has the potential to create real and lasting change and Rafik Halouani—head of the election-monitoring council—“Turnout low as Tunisia holds first free municipal elections,” News24, July 12, 2018; and “Tunisia Élections Municipales 2018,” Independent High Authority for Data Protection, 2018.