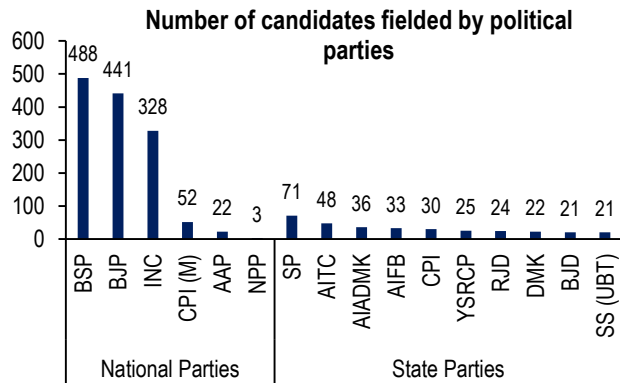# Vital Stats
Profile of Candidates Contesting in General Elections 2024

Elections to the 18th Lok Sabha are being held between 19th April and 1st June, 2024. 8,360 candidates are contesting elections across 543 constituencies. This note looks at the profiles of candidates contesting these elections.
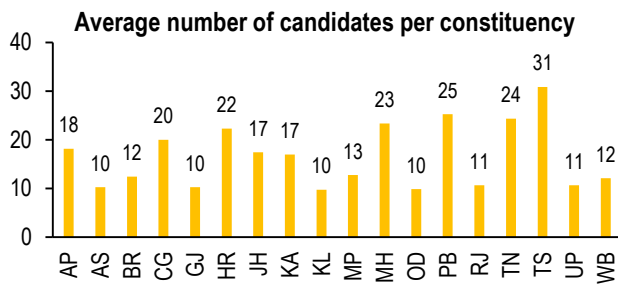
BSP fielded the highest number of candidates, followed by BJP

Number of candidates fielded by political parties

Note: AIFB-All India Forward Bloc; NPP-National People's Party. This chart only includes national parties, and state parties which fielded more than 20 candidates.

- 744 parties have fielded candidates in this election. Of these, six have been recognised by the ECI as national parties. 16% of candidates have been fielded by national parties, 6% by state parties, and 47% of candidates are independents.

- BSP has fielded the highest number of candidates (488). Among state parties, the Samajwadi Party (71) and the Trinamool Congress (48) have fielded the highest number of candidates. Of the six national parties, the National People's Party has fielded the fewest candidates (three), followed by the AAP (22).

- Among the unrecognised parties, the Social Unity Centre of India (Communist) fielded the highest number of candidates (150), followed by the People's Party of India (Democratic), which fielded 79 candidates.

On average, 15 candidates are contesting from each constituency

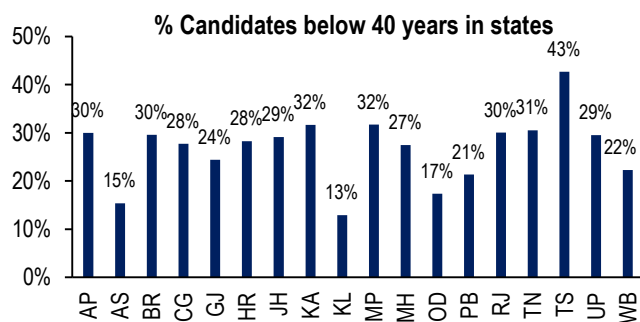**Average number of candidates per constituency**

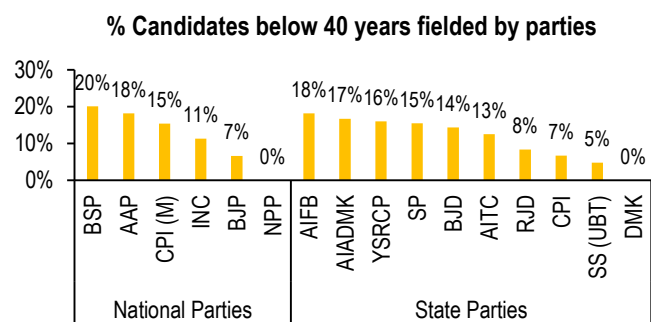Note: Only states with at least 10 constituencies are shown.

- The number of candidates contesting from each constituency varies widely across states. On average, each constituency in Telangana had 31 contesting candidates, whereas four states had 10 candidates per constituency. Ladakh and Nagaland had three candidates each.

- Karur, in Tamil Nadu, had the highest number of candidates (54). 46 of these candidates, contested as independents (85%). Eight other constituencies had more than 40 candidates.

- In Surat, the BJP candidate won without the election being held, as all other candidates withdrew their nomination.

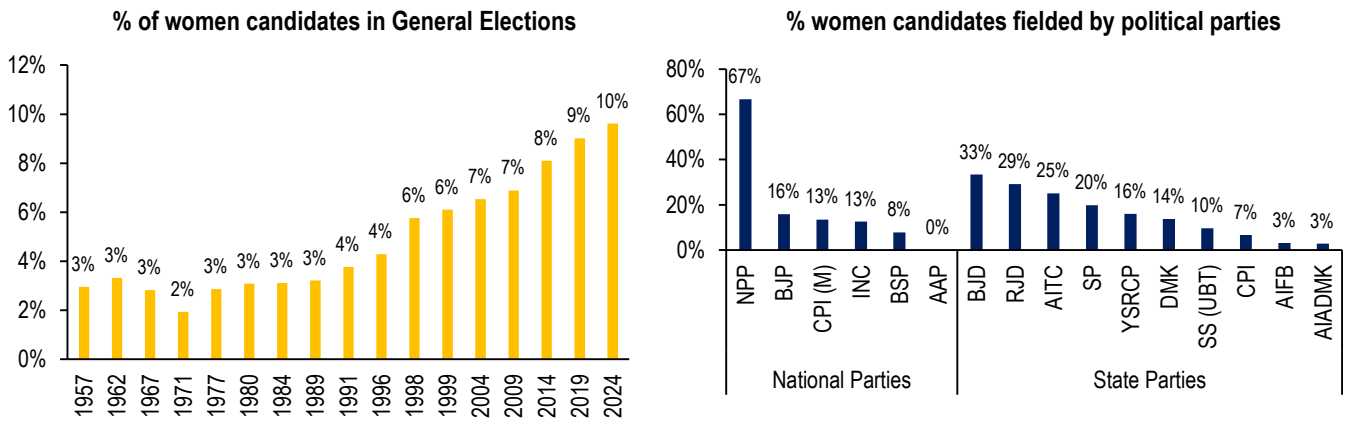## Most candidates are middle-aged; few parties field young candidates

% Candidates below 40 years in states

Note: Only states with at least 10 constituencies are shown.

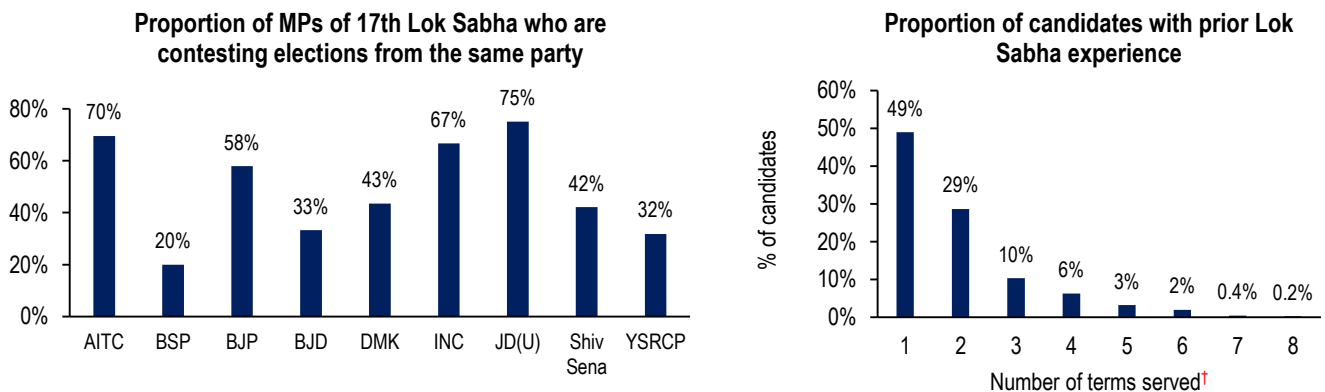**% Candidates below 40 years fielded by parties**

- The average age of candidates contesting this election is 48 years. The average age of candidates also varies significantly across states. The average age of candidates in Telangana is 44 years, whereas that in Kerala is 55 years.

- Among the national parties, 13% of candidates fielded are below the age of 40. 20% of candidates fielded by the BSP (98 candidates) are below the age of 40. None of the candidates from the NPP and the DMK are below 40 years of age. 43% of candidates fielded by the Naam Tamilar Katchi are below 40 years of age. This is the highest proportion for unrecognised parties with at least 40 candidates.

Niranjana S Menon
niranjana@prsindia.org

May 31, 2024

Only 10% of candidates are women

% of women candidates in General Elections

% women candidates fielded by political parties

- The number of women contesting general elections has increased from 3% in 1957 to 10% in 2024. Among the six national parties, the BJP has the highest number and proportion of women candidates (at 16%). Two out of the three candidates of the NPP are women. Among regional parties contesting more than 20 seats, the BJD (33% women candidates) and the RJD (29%) have the highest proportion of women candidates. 50% of candidates (20 out of 40 candidates) fielded by the Naam Tamilar Katchi are women.

- Six individuals of the third gender are contesting elections. Of these, four candidates are independents, and two are contesting as candidates of unrecognised parties. There were six third gender candidates in the 2014 and 2019 elections as well.

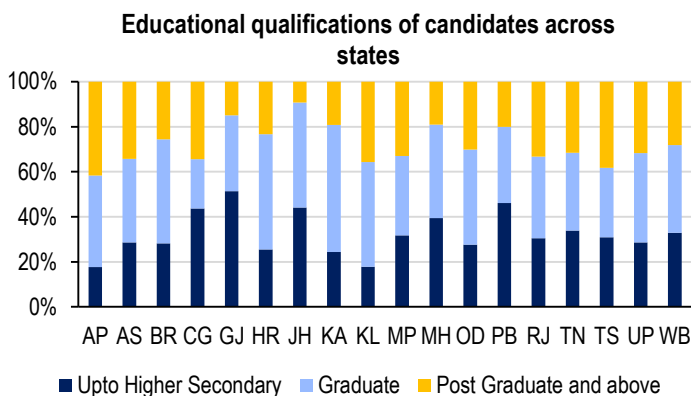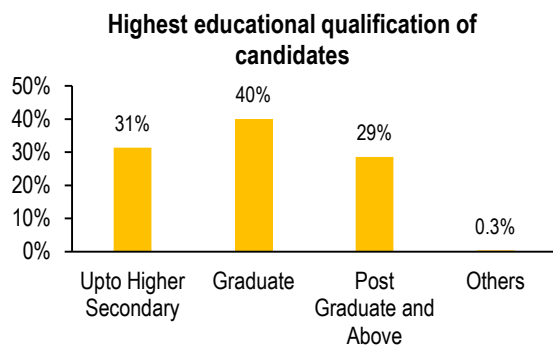## 60% MPs of the 17th Lok Sabha are re-contesting elections

Proportion of MPs of 17th Lok Sabha who are contesting elections from the same party

Proportion of candidates with prior Lok Sabha experience

Note: Only parties with at least 10 MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha have been shown.

- Of the candidates from major political parties (see note)[*], 27% have previously been an MP. 25% have previously been Lok Sabha MPs, and 4% have been Rajya Sabha MPs. 2% of candidates have been part of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

- 327 MPs from the 17th Lok Sabha are contesting again. One MP is contesting from two constituencies. 18 MPs are contesting from a different constituency from the one they represented in the 17th Lok Sabha.

- 34 MPs from the 17th Lok Sabha are contesting on a different party's ticket. 11 of these instances are due to splits in the parties, such as in the case of the Shiv Sena, NCP, and Lok Jan Shakti Party.

- 73 candidates have had Rajya Sabha experience. One candidate has served five terms in Rajya Sabha, and two have served four terms each. 25 candidates are currently members of Rajya Sabha, or vacated their seats in 2024. Of the candidates from major political parties, 12~~11~~ candidates have served six or more terms in Lok Sabha.[†]

- 53 sitting ministers are also contesting elections. Three of these ministers are currently members of Rajya Sabha, and five others completed their Rajya Sabha term in April 2024.

---

[*]Note: Major candidates include all candidates fielded by national parties and state recognised parties, as well as parties which are part of the two main pre-poll alliances, the National Democratic Alliance, and the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance. It also includes former MPs contesting from any party, or as an independent. 1,816 candidates have been included in this analysis.

[†] This has been corrected on June 7, 2024.

31% of candidates from national and state parties have not completed a college degree

Highest educational qualification of candidates

Educational qualifications of candidates across states

Legend: ■ Upto Higher Secondary ■ Graduate ■ Post Graduate and above

Note: This does not include five candidates whose details were not available.

- 69% of candidates from major parties have at least an undergraduate degree. 4% of candidates have a doctoral degree.

- 82% of candidates in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala have at least a graduate degree. Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, and Punjab have the highest proportion of candidates with only a school education.

Sources: ECI; Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha websites; PRS.