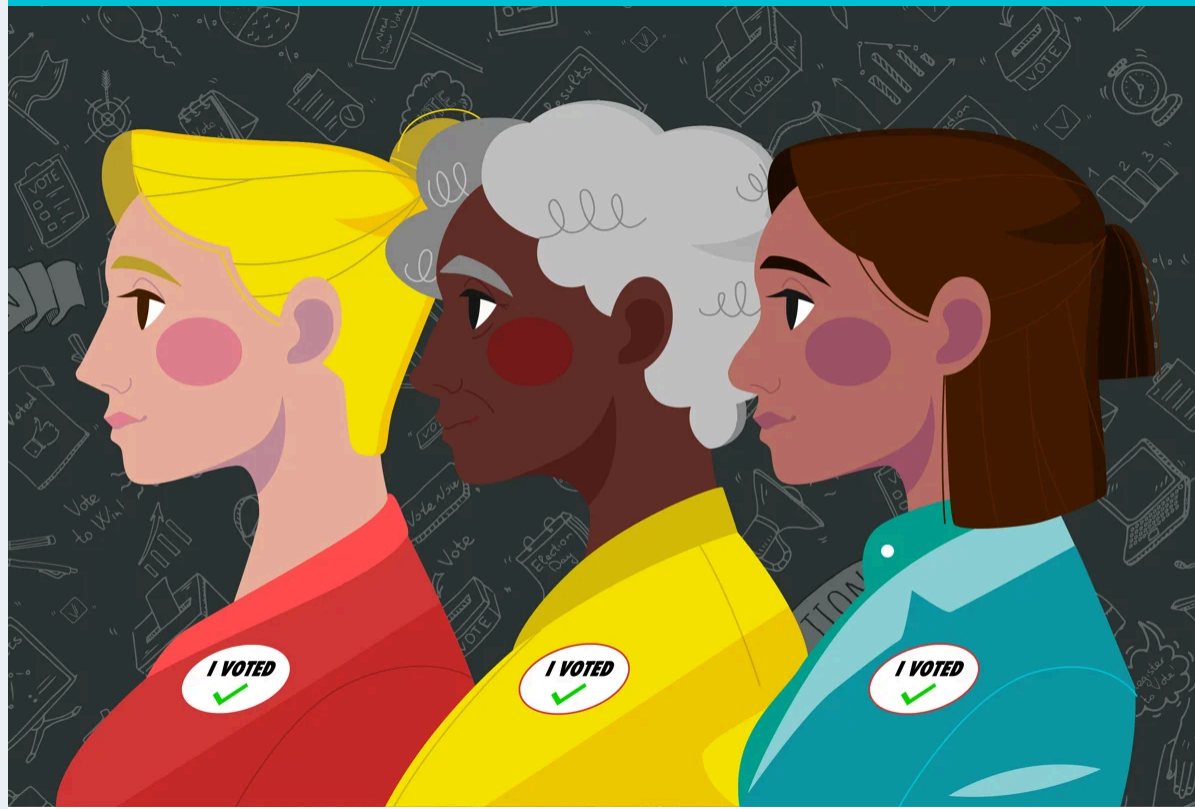


# FOURCAST

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## Women's health news and trends from Four



### GLOBAL ELECTIONS 2024: A PIVOTAL YEAR FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH GLOBALLY

The theme of International Women's Day this week (08 March) is '[Inspire Inclusion](#)'. It takes place in a year where a [record-breaking 40+ countries](#) are due to hold national elections. We've taken a look at four key countries and regions to determine the extent to which politics could impact women's health.

#### UK

The Conservative government's [Women's Health Strategy \(2022\)](#) shows progress in prioritising menstrual and gynaecological care, maternity care, support for vulnerable women and more but this is set against widespread criticism of current health policy. Meanwhile, in opposition, the Labour Party still lacks clarity in its plans but will appoint the first dedicated secretary of state for women and equalities.

Overall female representation (according to a [British Future study](#)) in parliament could increase from 65 to potentially 83 MPs, increasing first-hand experience of women's health. Whichever party forms the next UK government, it is clear that they will need to quickly move beyond policy papers and set practical goals and realistic timeframes for women's health.

*The UK general election must take place before 28 January 2025 and is [expected to be in the autumn of 2024](#).*

#### USA

Approximately half of adults in the USA face challenges in affording healthcare with [one in four reporting difficulties in covering its costs](#) for themselves or a family member within the past 12 months.

The 2024 US elections are fast approaching and will be critical in protecting women's health and reproductive rights regardless of who is elected. For example, the Supreme Court plays a crucial role in shaping the legal landscape surrounding abortion rights. The court's composition has changed over the years and shifts in ideology can influence the court's stance on abortion-related cases. Public opinion, legal arguments and evolving societal perspectives also contribute to the ongoing debate around abortion rights.

*The US presidential election is [scheduled for Tuesday 05 November](#).*

#### MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

The women's health landscape in the region has begun to shift with purpose over the past few years. For example, the FemTech industry across MENA is [projected to be worth \\$3.8 billion by 2031](#) with a growth rate of 15%. A long-standing historic barrier to this growth has been the taboo of women's health and sexual health in particular, which traditionally finds little airtime for proactive public discussion. However, spearheaded by nations such as the UAE, changing attitudes to women's health are beginning to spread throughout the region.

*Algeria, Egypt, Iran and Tunisia are [expected to go to the polls later this year](#).*

#### BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA (BRICS COUNTRIES)

Four out of five BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa) have elections this year. [Priority health areas](#) for BRICS countries are communicable diseases, access to medicine and universal health coverage. Yet, women in these countries, particularly in rural communities, often face additional health challenges including adolescent pregnancy, gender-based violence and economic disparities. On paper, left-leaning parties traditionally emphasise healthcare access, reproductive rights and gender equality, but the extent to which voters can influence change are [hampered by issues surrounding quality of democracy](#).

*Indicative election dates: Brazil (October), Russia (March/April), India (April/ May), South Africa (before 05 August).*

Our specialist health team at Four Agency Worldwide offers a range of integrated marketing, media and communications services. Within this we have public affairs and government experts constantly monitoring how manifestos and policies will impact health outcomes.

If you would like to access this expertise in a critical year in many countries around the world, please do get in touch. You can call me directly on +44 (0)7398 770 028 or email us at [womenshealth@four.agency](mailto:womenshealth@four.agency).

We would love to work together as a force for good for women and all patients. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

Yours sincerely,

**Kelly Smith**  
Chief executive, health

*\*AI (Copilot) has been used to summarise online information and produce some of the content throughout this issue, which has been edited and approved by a team of humans.*

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