



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Youth participation in national parliaments 2016



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Cover images: Young MPs met throughout 2015 to look at ways to address some of the biggest challenges facing the world's 3.5 billion youth population. ©IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2015, ©Japanese Parliament, 2015, ©IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2015

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Key findings

- Young people under 30 make up less than 2 per cent of the world's MPs.
- About 30 per cent of the world's single and lower houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30.
- More than 80 per cent of the world's upper houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30.
- Not a single upper house of parliament anywhere in the world has more than 10 per cent of its members aged under 30.

Trends for different age groups

- 1.9 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 30 – up from 1.6 per cent in 2014.
- 14.2 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 40 – up from 12.9 per cent in 2014.
- 26 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 45 – up from 23.9 per cent in 2014.
- Male MPs outnumber their female counterparts in every age group.

Encouraging signs

- The gender imbalance is less pronounced among younger MPs, where the male/female ratio is 60:40.
- Recent elections have seen a global trend towards more young MPs aged under 45.
- Youth quotas, lower eligibility ages, proportional representation and inclusive parliaments are all factors that increase the number of young MPs.

Best performers

- Ecuador, Finland, Norway and Sweden are the only parliaments in the world where more than 10 per cent of members are aged under 30.
- Andorra, Denmark and Ecuador have the highest proportion of MPs aged under 40 in lower or single houses of parliament.
- Belgium, Bhutan and Kenya have the highest proportion of MPs aged under 40 in upper houses of parliament.
- More than 60 per cent of MPs in the unicameral parliament of Andorra and in the lower houses of parliament of Ethiopia and Oman are aged under 45.
- More than 80 per cent of MPs in the upper house of the parliament of Bhutan are aged under 45.

Youth and policy-making in parliaments

- Networks of young MPs, as well as caucuses that promote youth issues in public policy, are present in a small but growing number of parliaments.
- Parliamentary committees dealing with youth issues exist in the vast majority of countries, but most share their remit with other subjects such as sports, education, the family or vulnerable groups.
- Parliamentarians under the age of 45 chair less than 25 per cent of those committees, and form a majority in less than one third.

Other strategies to engage young people in parliaments

- Youth parliaments exist in half the countries surveyed. Some have formal ties to the national parliament but most are coordinated by non-governmental organizations, government ministries, schools or other local authorities.
- New technologies and online tools are helping citizens, including young people, to understand and monitor the work of parliaments, and are also boosting accessibility and transparency.

Introduction

Engaging young people in politics is critical to the safeguarding and strengthening of democracy worldwide. With an estimated 1.2 billion people aged 15–24 on the planet, justice and democratic legitimacy demand more than a token youth presence in parliament. People between the ages of 20 and 44 make up 57 per cent of the world’s voting age population¹ but only 26 per cent of the world’s MPs.

A variety of issues can have particular impact on the young – not just in traditional “youth” areas like education, employment and military service, but in broader fields such as climate change and pension reform, which will impact heavily on future generations. In addition, the presence of young people in political positions can change attitudes, eroding stereotypes about readiness or fitness to lead, while also encouraging young people to see politics as an arena open to their participation.

Two seemingly contradictory trends in youth engagement can currently be observed. The first, considered a sign of political apathy, is that young people tend to be less engaged than older generations in voting, party membership, volunteer work and participation in group activity. The second trend concerns the active role young people have played in democracy movements around the world. Youth mobilization has been critical to a host of anti-government protests and the emergence of new democratic regimes. During the Arab Spring, for example, young people marched on the streets and used the Internet, including social networking sites, to reach domestic and international audiences. Debates on youth participation in politics have traditionally focused more on young people’s role as voters and activists

than on their election to political office. But as with gender equality – where the increased participation of women benefits society as a whole – the presence of young people in elected positions benefits all citizens and not just youth.

What’s being done?

IPU has been dynamically involved in resolving the issue of youth underrepresentation and under-engagement in formal politics for more than five years. In particular, it has succeeded in shifting the terms of the debate away from the question of whether young people’s views are being heard, to whether young people are present in the world’s parliaments. This shift from “consultation” to “representation” is central to the wider re-engagement of young people in politics.

IPU Member Parliaments first highlighted the need for action in a Resolution² adopted in 2010, leading to the creation of IPU’s Forum of Young Parliamentarians in 2013. This body brings together young members of national parliaments from all around the world, with the goal of “enhancing the quantitative and qualitative participation of youth in parliaments.”³ The following year, IPU commissioned its first report on the representation of young people in national parliaments. IPU has since held two global conferences for young MPs – in Switzerland in 2014 on the theme “Taking democracy to task” and in Japan in 2015 on “Democracy, peace, and prosperity.” A third conference will take place in Zambia in 2016, focusing on “Agenda 2030: Youth leading the way, leaving no one behind.”

Thousands of students protested against rising higher education fees in the UK.
©Citizenside/Dave Evans, 2014



1 <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>
2 <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/122/res-3.htm>
3 <http://www.ipu.org/strct-e/young-new.htm>



Participants to the IPU's Forum of Young Parliamentarians worked on finding ways to increase youth political participation and input into decision-making.
©IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2015

IPU's core strategies will continue to include monitoring youth participation in parliaments and sustaining youth-led global platforms to empower young MPs and expand their influence.

Initiatives by other international organizations include the decision in 2013 by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to create an Envoy on Youth, to enhance participation by and advocacy for young people within and beyond the United Nations system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published a report in 2014 on *Enhancing youth political participation throughout the electoral cycle*. This was followed by publication of the *UNDP youth strategy for 2014–2017*, which identified the strengthening of youth participation in politics and public institutions as one of its key goals. In 2014, "Engaging young people in democracy" was selected by the United Nations and the Council of Europe as the theme for International Democracy Day and the Third World Forum for Democracy, respectively.

About this study

The importance of youth participation, and the scarcity of information on young people in parliaments, led IPU to conduct this study, using a questionnaire (see Annex 3) to gather data from its Member Parliaments around the world. Information was requested on the age distribution of male and female parliamentarians, legal regulations regarding the rights to vote and run for political office, and measures to promote youth participation. Nearly 100 parliamentary chambers in 76 countries responded to the survey in 2014.

Data gathering was carried out in 2014 and 2015. Additional information was collected from parliamentary websites on the age distribution of MPs and the existence of parliamentary committees on youth issues. Data was gathered from 128 countries: 126 single and lower houses and 43 upper houses. All regions are well represented, including 38 chambers in Africa, 28 in the Americas, 38 in Asia, 59 in Europe and 7 in Oceania (for a full list of countries, see Annex 4).

The IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians defines MPs as "young" if they are under 45, in a bid to be inclusive of all parliaments, recognizing that some chambers – especially upper houses – have relatively high minimum age requirements. Many United Nations bodies define "youth" as aged 15–24, but young people rarely gain office before the age of 35 (UNDP, 2014). Survey responses also indicate varied definitions of "youth" across countries. This report thus also uses three cut-off ages: 30, 40 and 45.

Substantial variations were found in the proportions of young parliamentarians being elected or appointed. The top-performing countries are not limited to a single region of the world but are found in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. Parliamentarians under 45 increased or substantially increased their share in half the countries for which 2014 and 2015 data were available. But many countries – and especially upper houses – continue to lag behind.

Gender differences are also apparent. Although female MPs tend to be younger than their male counterparts, men outnumber women in every age group. Younger women also appear to be doubly disadvantaged in terms of opportunities to be elected.

Some of these variations can be explained in relation to electoral system, youth quotas, eligibility ages and levels of women's representation (as a measure of the broader inclusiveness of a parliament).

A small but growing number of countries have networks of young parliamentarians and caucuses to advance youth issues in public policy. Parliamentary committees on the subject are more common but in most cases also deal with other topics or vulnerable groups. Many countries also organize youth parliaments as a long-term measure to promote youth participation. A handful of promising initiatives make use of new technologies to reach out to and engage young people in the work of parliament.

This study highlights three key areas for attention: *electing* young MPs, *empowering* young parliamentarians, and *engaging* the wider youth population. The study's 10 recommendations provide a framework for action by governments, national parliaments, political parties and civil groups which, if acted on, will ensure young people are fully engaged in politics for the benefit of all.

Electing young parliamentarians

Key findings:

- The proportion of young MPs is lowest among under-30s, at 1.9 per cent, rising to 14.2 per cent among under-40s and 26 per cent among under-45s.
- Almost one-third of all single and lower houses and more than 80 per cent of upper houses have no members aged under 30.
- Men outnumber women in all age groups, but among the youngest MPs the ratio is reduced to 60:40.
- The proportion of young MPs under-30 exceeds 10 per cent in only four countries: Ecuador, Finland, Norway and Sweden.
- The proportion of young MPs under-30 exceeds 5 per cent in single and lower chambers in diverse regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe.
- Comparing subregions, the proportion of young MPs under-30 among single and lower chambers is highest in east Africa.

There are several reasons why young people may be underrepresented in parliament. Firstly, the minimum age required to run for office is often higher than the minimum voting age, requiring a wait in some cases until 25, 35 or even 45 years of age. This is especially true in the case of upper houses, which tend to establish a higher eligibility age.

Secondly, fewer young people than older people tend to vote and to join political parties, possibly out of a sense of alienation from formal politics, normally ruling them out as potential candidates. Most parties do, however, have some young members, as well as youth wings that could be mobilized as a potential source of young candidates.

Thirdly, parties often look for parliamentary candidates with prior political experience. In addition to being viewed as “too young” or “immature”, young candidates tend to have limited political track records, making them appear less qualified in the eyes

of party elites. Nonetheless, some countries have succeeded in electing high shares of young parliamentarians, suggesting that favourable contextual factors such as proportional electoral systems, strong youth movements and more inclusive political environments may play a role in opening up opportunities for young people to participate.

Global patterns

Information was collected through the IPU survey and online research on the number of parliamentarians per age bracket – 18–20, 21–30, 31–40, 41–50, 51–60, 61–70, 71–80, 81–90 and 91+ – disaggregated by sex. Levels of youth representation were then calculated using three cut-off points – ages 30, 40 and 45 – for each parliamentary chamber. Country rankings according to the proportion of young parliamentarians, shown separately for single/lower and upper houses, are presented in Table 1 (under 30), Annex 1 (under 40) and Annex 2 (under 45).

Young MPs from the Spanish political party Podemos (We Can) take the oath of office during the first parliamentary session following a general election.

©Reuters/Juan Medina, 2016



Members of parliament under-30

The results show that where “young” is defined as under age 30, very few young parliamentarians are elected. The average share of this age bracket amounts to 1.9 per cent in single and lower houses and 0.3 per cent in upper houses, a slight improvement over the figures for 2014 (1.6 per cent and 0.4 per cent, respectively).⁴ The proportion of under-30 parliamentarians exceeds 10 per cent in only four countries: Ecuador, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Their proportion exceeds 5 per cent in single and lower chambers in diverse regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. Young parliamentarians are present in only eight upper houses (out of 43). Almost one-third of all the single and lower houses, and more than 80 per cent of the upper houses, have no under-30 parliamentarians at all.

Table 1

Global ranking of parliamentarians aged under 30 (per cent)

| Single and lower houses of parliament in 126 countries* | | | Single and lower houses of parliament in 126 countries* | | |
|---|------|--|---|-----|--|
| Rank | % | Country | Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 12.3 | Sweden | 45 | 2.3 | Argentina |
| 2 | 10.9 | Ecuador | 46 | 2.2 | India, Portugal |
| 3 | 10.5 | Finland | 48 | 2.1 | Albania |
| 4 | 10.1 | Norway | 49 | 2.0 | Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Sudan |
| 5 | 7.1 | Andorra | 55 | 1.8 | Niger |
| 6 | 6.6 | Italy | 56 | 1.7 | Israel, New Zealand, Philippines |
| 7 | 6.5 | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia | 59 | 1.6 | Afghanistan, Morocco |
| 9 | 6.1 | Denmark, Ethiopia | 61 | 1.5 | Switzerland |
| 11 | 5.9 | Cuba, Suriname | 62 | 1.3 | Montenegro, Russian Federation, Rwanda |
| 13 | 5.8 | Chile | 65 | 1.2 | China, Ireland, Viet Nam |
| 14 | 5.6 | Bhutan, Slovenia | 68 | 1.1 | Algeria, Nicaragua, Uganda |
| 16 | 5.2 | Somalia | 71 | 1.0 | Equatorial Guinea, Greece |
| 17 | 5.0 | Latvia | 73 | 0.9 | Burundi, Spain |
| 18 | 4.8 | Serbia | 75 | 0.8 | Armenia, Japan |
| 19 | 4.7 | Canada | 77 | 0.7 | Croatia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia |
| 20 | 4.6 | Austria | 81 | 0.6 | United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia |
| 21 | 4.2 | Kyrgyzstan | 83 | 0.5 | Myanmar |
| 22 | 3.9 | Brazil | 84 | 0.4 | Australia, Syrian Arab Republic |
| 23 | 3.5 | Costa Rica | 86 | 0.3 | Bangladesh |
| 24 | 3.4 | Gambia, Guatemala | 87 | 0.2 | France |
| 26 | 3.3 | Bulgaria, Luxembourg, San Marino | 88 | 0.0 | Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Ghana, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Thailand, Tuvalu, United States of America |
| 29 | 3.2 | Iceland | | | |
| 30 | 3.1 | United Kingdom | | | |
| 31 | 3.0 | Uruguay, Zimbabwe | | | |
| 33 | 2.9 | Indonesia, Malta | | | |
| 35 | 2.8 | South Africa | | | |
| 36 | 2.7 | Georgia, Netherlands | | | |
| 38 | 2.5 | Germany, Paraguay, United Arab Emirates | | | |
| 41 | 2.4 | Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | | | |

| Upper Houses of Parliament in 43 countries | | | Upper Houses of Parliament in 43 countries | | |
|--|-----|---------------------|--|-----|---|
| Rank | % | Country | Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 9.1 | Bhutan | 9 | 0.0 | Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, France, Gabon, Germany, Haiti, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Namibia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Zimbabwe** |
| 2 | 5.9 | Kenya | | | |
| 3 | 3.2 | Trinidad and Tobago | | | |
| 4 | 2.7 | Netherlands | | | |
| 5 | 1.7 | Belgium, Ireland | | | |
| 7 | 1.1 | Spain | | | |
| 8 | 0.5 | Myanmar | | | |

*Data were not provided on the age distribution of MPs in Mauritius.

**Calculations for Zimbabwe are based on responses from 38 of 80 MPs.

4 The figures for 2014 are based on data from 76 countries, while the 2015 statistics are from 128 countries.

The 2015 IPU Global Conference of Young MPs, jointly organized by IPU and the Japanese Parliament, brought together about 200 young MPs, and identified ways to end marginalization and radicalization of young people, including new education policies and employment quotas. ©Japanese Parliament, 2015



Regional patterns

Comparing regions, the proportion of under-30 parliamentarians among single and lower chambers (see Table 2) is highest in the Americas and Europe, and among upper houses (see Table 3) in Asia and Oceania. Comparing subregions (see Table 4), their proportion among single and lower chambers is highest in the Caribbean, due largely to the share of young parliamentarians in Cuba (5.9 per cent).

Where the cut-off age for “young” is set at 40, the proportions of young parliamentarians are higher: 15.5 per cent among single and lower houses and 5.8 per cent among upper chambers – again, a modest improvement overall compared with 2014 (13.7 per cent, and 6.9 per cent, respectively). In single and lower houses, the top countries are Denmark, Andorra and Ecuador, at 41.3 per cent, 39.3 per cent and 38 per cent, respectively. The share held by this age bracket exceeded 30 per cent in 13 chambers, including several in countries such as Ethiopia, Finland and Italy that also rank highest for their shares of parliamentarians under 30. Among upper houses, the share of under-40 parliamentarians in Bhutan’s National Council (54.5 per cent) far surpasses that in all others, followed by the upper chambers of Kenya, at 20.6 per cent, and Belgium, at 20 per cent. Nearly a quarter of the upper chambers, but only four of the single and lower houses, have no parliamentarians in this age bracket. Looking across regions, the proportion of under-40 parliamentarians in single and lower chambers ranks highest in Europe, and in upper houses is highest in Asia and Oceania (largely attributable to results in Bhutan and Australia). At the subregional level, the

highest proportions of young parliamentarians are found in east Africa, led by such countries as Ethiopia (35.4 per cent) and Uganda (21.9 per cent).

Defining young MPs as under 45 results in a sizeable jump in the figures, to 28.1 per cent in single and lower chambers and to 13.6 per cent in upper houses. Parliamentarians under 45 make up 50 per cent or more of single and lower houses in 11 countries, and more than 60 per cent in 3 countries: Andorra (60.7 per cent), Ethiopia (63.6 per cent) and Oman (65.9 per cent). The proportion of under-45 parliamentarians is 30 per cent or more in nearly half of the chambers. Only Thailand and the Pacific island nations of the Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu have no parliamentarians at all in this age bracket. At the regional level, Europe leads the rest of the world in this category, followed by Africa and the Americas.

The pattern is less impressive among upper houses, which have fewer members under 45 for several possible reasons, including higher eligibility ages and a greater emphasis on seniority and political experience. On a more positive note, only two upper chambers have no parliamentarians in this age group. The proportion is highest in Bhutan (81.8 per cent) and exceeds 30 per cent in Afghanistan, Belgium, Germany and Kenya. In terms of regional averages, Oceania and Asia rank highest in this category, led again by Australia and Bhutan. Among subregions, east Africa again leads the pack, nearly 9 percentage points ahead of Caribbean countries in second place.

Table 2

Regional rankings for parliamentarians aged under 30, 40 and 45 (lower and single houses)

| Under 30 | | | Under 40 | | | Under 45 | | |
|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Region | Mean % | N | Region | Mean % | N | Region | Mean % | N |
| Americas | 3.4% | 18 | Europe | 20.8% | 44 | Europe | 33.6% | 44 |
| Europe | 3.1% | 44 | Americas | 16.1% | 18 | Africa | 32.1% | 29 |
| Africa | 1.5% | 29 | Africa | 15.8% | 29 | Americas | 28.4% | 18 |
| Asia | 1.1% | 29 | Oceania | 11.8% | 6 | Oceania | 28.8% | 6 |
| Oceania | 0.6% | 6 | Asia | 10.1% | 29 | Asia | 20.0% | 29 |
| Total | 2.1% | 126 | Total | 15.5% | 126 | Total | 28.1% | 126 |

Table 3

Regional rankings for parliamentarians aged under 30, 40 and 45 (upper houses)

| Under 30 | | | Under 40 | | | Under 45 | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Region | Mean % | N | Region | Mean % | N | Region | Mean % | N |
| Africa | 0.7% | 8 | Oceania | 10.3% | 1 | Oceania | 25.0% | 1 |
| Asia | 0.3% | 9 | Asia | 7.9% | 9 | Asia | 18.2% | 9 |
| Europe | 0.3% | 15 | Europe | 6.0% | 15 | Europe | 12.3% | 15 |
| Americas | 0.2% | 10 | Africa | 4.4% | 8 | Americas | 11.8% | 10 |
| Oceania | 0.0% | 1 | Americas | 2.3% | 10 | Africa | 11.5% | 8 |
| Total | 0.3% | 43 | Total | 5.8% | 43 | Total | 16.4% | 43 |

Table 4

Subregional rankings for parliamentarians aged under 30, 40 and 45 (lower and single chambers)

| Under 30 | | | Under 40 | | | Under 45 | | |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Subregion | Mean % | N | Subregion | Mean % | N | Subregion | Mean % | N |
| Caribbean | 4.0% | 4 | East Africa | 23.6% | 5 | East Africa | 43.6% | 5 |
| South America | 3.9% | 9 | Europe | 20.8% | 44 | Caribbean | 34.5% | 4 |
| East Africa | 3.4% | 5 | South America | 19.5% | 9 | Europe | 33.6% | 44 |
| Europe | 3.1% | 44 | Central Asia | 19.4% | 2 | North Africa | 32.7% | 3 |
| Central America | 2.7% | 3 | Central America | 17.2% | 3 | Central Asia | 31.7% | 2 |
| North Africa | 2.3% | 3 | North Africa | 17.2% | 3 | South America | 31.3% | 9 |
| Central Asia | 2.2% | 2 | Caribbean | 15.1% | 4 | Central America | 30.6% | 3 |
| North America | 1.9% | 2 | Southern Africa | 15.1% | 6 | Central Africa | 27.7% | 8 |
| South Asia | 1.7% | 5 | South Asia | 13.8% | 5 | South Asia | 27.4% | 5 |
| Southern Africa | 1.5% | 6 | Middle East | 12.0% | 10 | Southern Africa | 26.6% | 6 |
| South-East Asia | 1.2% | 8 | South-East Asia | 11.9% | 8 | Middle East | 25.3% | 10 |
| East Asia | 1.1% | 4 | Central Africa | 11.4% | 8 | West Africa | 24.9% | 7 |
| Middle East | 0.3% | 10 | West Africa | 11.3% | 7 | South-East Asia | 22.6% | 8 |
| Central Africa | 0.2% | 8 | North America | 9.7% | 2 | North America | 18.3% | 2 |
| West Africa | 0.2% | 7 | East Asia | 6.4% | 4 | East Asia | 13.2% | 4 |
| Total | 2.1% | 126 | Total | 15.5% | 126 | Total | 28.1% | 126 |

Results of elections in 2015

Many of the best-performing countries in the study were among the 51 chambers holding elections in 2015 or late 2014. Table 5 ranks the top 10 countries according to the proportion of young parliamentarians in each age category in single and lower chambers. The three countries ranked highest in each of the first two age categories (Ecuador, Finland and Sweden in the under-30 category; Andorra, Ecuador and Denmark in the under-40 category), and two of the top three in the under-45 category (Andorra and Oman), all held elections in 2015.

Figure 1 sheds some additional light on this pattern. It shows the percentage point change in the share of parliamentarians under 30 in single and lower houses holding elections in 2015 (for which 2014 data were available). Approximately half of the chambers saw improvement; the rest saw stagnation or decline. However, the magnitude of the increases, between 6 and 9 percentage points in some cases, far outweighed the decreases, none of which exceeded 2 percentage points. In Finland and Sweden, where the greatest gains were made, the changes may stem from decisions to create larger electoral districts (Finland) and shifts in the electoral success of different political parties (Finland and Sweden). These positive trends are even clearer for the under-45 category, whose share in many chambers rose by 10 or more percentage points. The most dramatic gain occurred in Kyrgyzstan, where the proportion of under-45 MPs increased by more than 23 percentage points, a result that may be related to reforms in 2011 to require greater diversity among candidates through quotas for young people under 36.

This trend for under-30 MPs, importantly, is not observed among upper houses, in large part because many countries impose a higher age requirement for this chamber.

Among the seven chambers undergoing elections or reappointments in 2015 (for which 2014 data were available), only one – the Netherlands – registered an increase in the proportion of young members under 30: from 1.3 per cent in 2014 to 2.7 per cent in 2015. Their proportion remained at zero in the other six.

However, progress in the other age categories can be observed. The Netherlands registered a notable increase in MPs under 40, rising nearly 7 percentage points. Nearly all upper chambers saw a rise in the share of members under 45, with the upper house in Uruguay seeing a dramatic 23-point increase following the 2015 elections. Argentina and the Netherlands doubled their share, while Brazil tripled its proportion of young MPs. This evidence, although not conclusive, suggests growing momentum for change in various parts of the globe.

Recommendation 1

National parliaments and IPU should continue to collect, report and publish data on the age of parliamentarians, so they can be used to assess progress – and the need for action – on getting more young people into national parliaments.

Recommendation 2

National parliaments and political parties should create strategies targeting the inclusion of MPs in their 20s and 30s, as these age groups are currently the most underrepresented. Appointed houses are in a position to lead the way in this respect, bringing in younger MPs as a strong statement of the national will to enhance youth participation.

Costa Rica ranks 23 on the global index of parliamentarians under 30. This is above much larger countries such as the United States, France or India. ©IPU/Lucien Fortunati, 2015



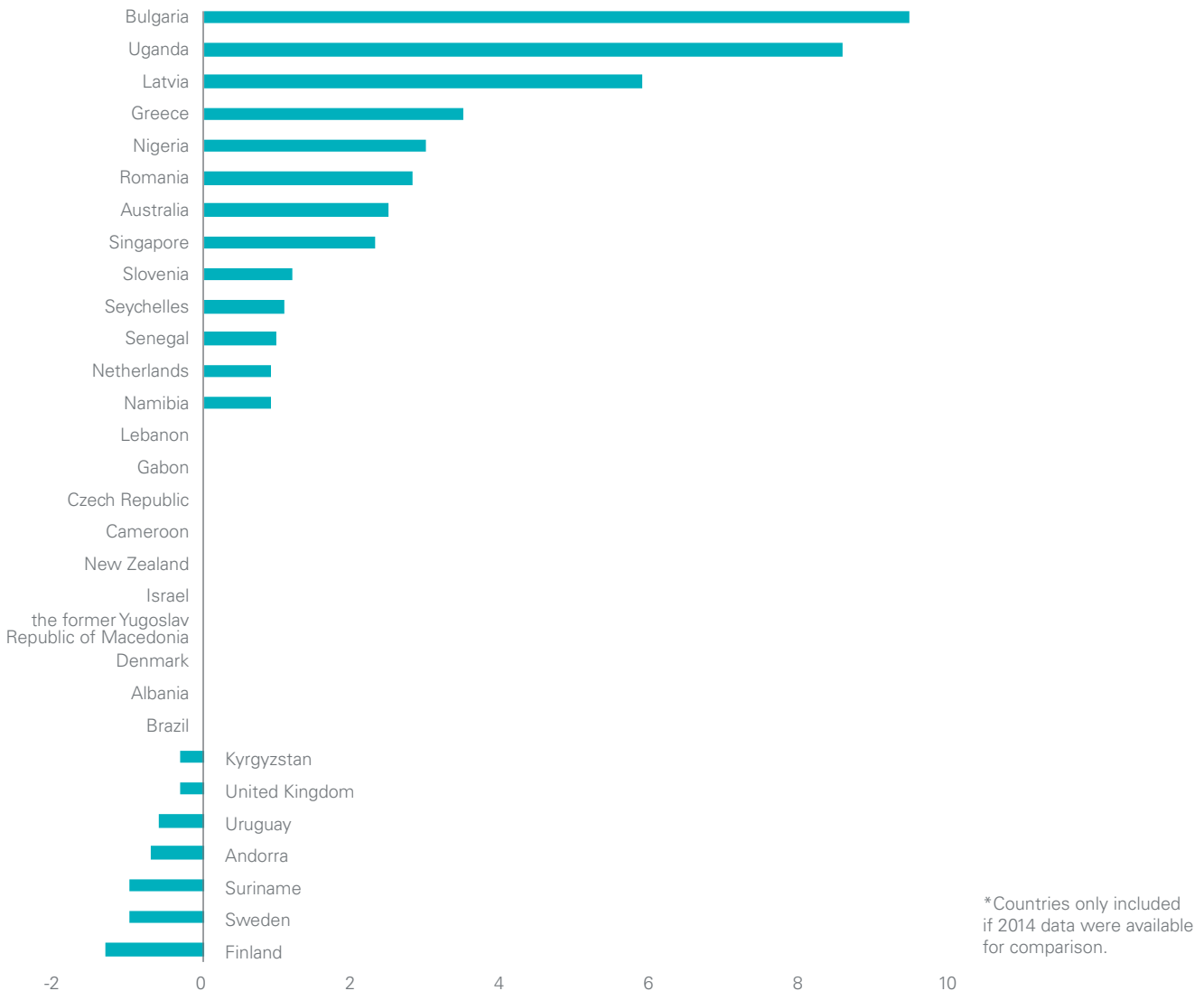
Table 5

2015 election results for parliamentarians aged under 30, 40 and 45 (lower and single chambers)

| Under 30 | | | Under 40 | | | Under 45 | | |
|----------|-------|---|----------|-------|---|----------|-------|-------------|
| Rank | % | Country | Rank | % | Country | Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 12.3% | Sweden | 1 | 41.3% | Denmark | 1 | 65.9% | Oman |
| 2 | 10.9% | Ecuador | 2 | 39.3% | Andorra | 2 | 60.7% | Andorra |
| 3 | 10.5% | Finland | 3 | 38.0% | Ecuador | 3 | 59.6% | Seychelles |
| 4 | 7.1% | Andorra | 4 | 37.9% | Finland | 4 | 55.6% | Bhutan |
| 5 | 6.5% | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | 5 | 36.1% | Bhutan | 5 | 54.8% | Namibia |
| 6 | 6.5% | Tunisia | 6 | 35.0% | Kyrgyzstan | 6 | 54.7% | Ecuador |
| 7 | 6.1% | Denmark | 7 | 32.5% | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | 7 | 54.2% | Kyrgyzstan |
| 8 | 5.9% | Suriname | 8 | 34.1% | Sweden | 8 | 53.6% | Denmark |
| 9 | 5.6% | Bhutan | 9 | 31.8% | Oman | 9 | 50.7% | Netherlands |
| | 5.6% | Slovenia | 10 | 28.8% | Bulgaria | 10 | 48.7% | Bahrain |
| 10 | 5.2% | Somalia | | | | | | |

Figure 1

Progress and setbacks for parliamentarians aged under 30 after elections in 2015 (single and lower houses)* per cent



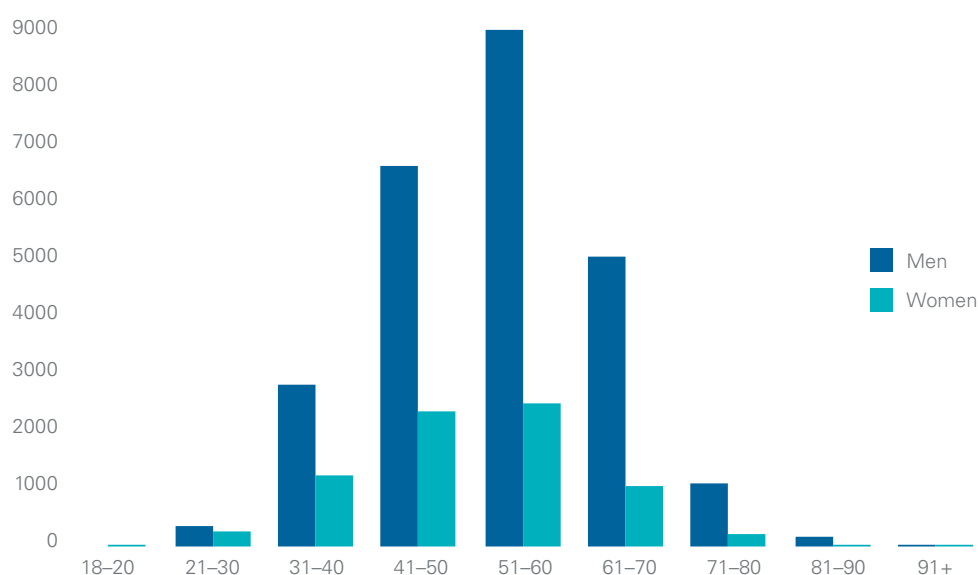
Effects of interaction between age and gender

Figure 2, showing the number of parliamentarians in each age group across all of the chambers studied, reveals several patterns. Firstly, the largest group, for male as well as female parliamentarians, is the 51–60 age bracket, followed by the group aged 41–50. Most parliamentarians, in other words, are middle-aged. Younger and older age groups are far less well represented.

Secondly, male parliamentarians outnumber female parliamentarians in all age groups, in most cases by significant margins. Interestingly, the largest number of men fall in the 41–50, 51–60 and 61–70 age groups, whereas women fall predominantly in the 31–40, 41–50 and 51–60 age groups, indicating that female MPs as a group are collectively younger than their male counterparts. However, the majority of women MPs are in their 40s and 50s; younger and older women are less well represented.

Figure 2

Number of male vs. female parliamentarians by age cohort (all chambers)



Thirdly, there are important interaction effects between the age and gender variables. Figure 3 divides male and female members of the single and lower houses into two groups each, those under and over 45. The differences across these four groups are striking. Men outnumber women in both age groups, but men over 45, accounting for 56.9 per cent of total membership, are far more numerous than the other three groups, followed by men under 45 (19.7 per cent), women over 45 (15 per cent) and women under 45 (8.4 per cent). Younger women thus appear to be doubly disadvantaged, by age as well as gender, relative to their older male counterparts. As shown in Figure 4 this imbalance is even starker among upper chambers, where the figures are 67.6 per cent for men over 45; 19.8 per cent for women over 45, 19.0 per cent for men under 45 and a mere 4.1 per cent for women under 45.

Recommendation 3

National parliaments and political parties should design strategies for political inclusion that ensure diversity among youth, addressing the disparities between the number of young men and young women entering parliament.

Figure 3

Numbers of male and female parliamentarians under and over age 45 (single and lower houses)

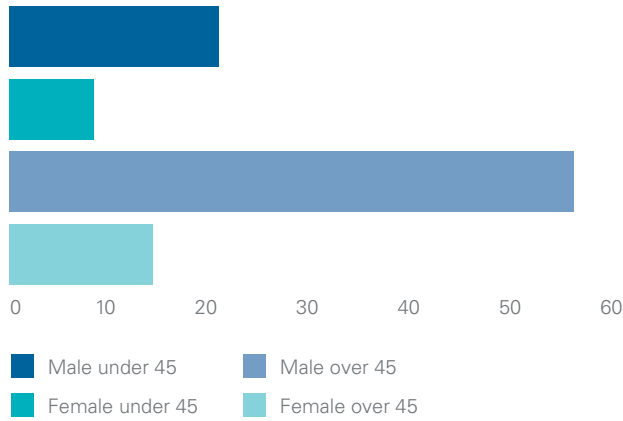
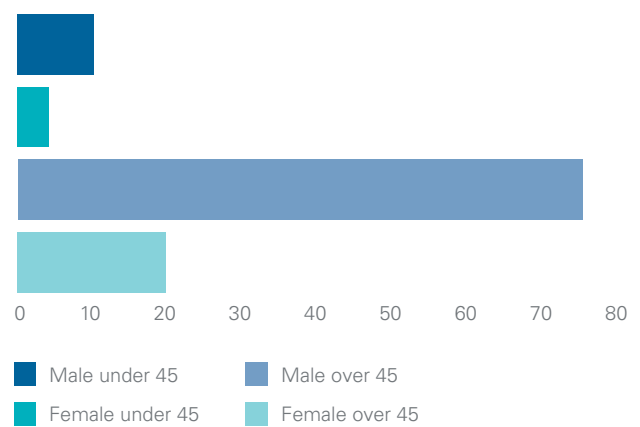


Figure 4

Numbers of male and female parliamentarians under and over age 45 (upper houses)



Youngest parliamentarians

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to identify the youngest parliamentarian in each chamber. Approximately two-thirds of those identified were first elected between the ages of 21 and 30. One-quarter arrived in parliament between the ages of 31 and 40. The youngest representatives in eight parliaments, all single and lower houses, were first elected between the ages of 18 and 20; six were first elected to parliament between the ages of 41 and 50, mainly in upper houses.⁵

Collectively, the group of youngest parliamentarians is more or less gender-balanced: 60 per cent male and 40 per cent female. This proportion compares favourably to the global average for women's representation, 22.7 per cent as of November 2015,⁶

suggesting a possible diffusion effect between women's and youth representation. The causes behind the high proportion of young women in this group are not clear: it may result from gender quotas, for example, or from increased attention to youth representation.

Recommendation 4

Governments, national parliaments and political parties should make greater efforts to support the political participation of young women, within both youth engagement programmes and within strategies to engage more women in politics.



Podemos (We Can) party deputy Alberto Rodriguez. During the Spanish general elections in 2015, Podemos successfully mobilized the youth vote to help it become one of the most popular political parties in the country. ©Reuters/Juan Medina, 2016

5 Several chambers had to be excluded due to lack of data.

6 <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

Explaining variations in youth representation

Key findings

- Countries with proportional representation systems elect around twice as many young MPs as those with mixed systems and 15–20 times as many as those with majoritarian systems.
- Parliaments electing more women also tend to perform better on youth representation, with evidence suggesting the same factors are at work in both cases.
- Laws permitting citizens to run for office at a younger age result in higher numbers of MPs under 45 but do not significantly impact the under-30 age group.
- Countries with the highest youth populations do not have the highest levels of youth representation, and the opposite is true in many cases.
- Youth quotas based on reserved seats appear very effective, sometimes exceeding their original targets; legislative quotas are also effective, but party quotas have only mixed success.

The data reveal substantial variation across countries and chambers in the share of young parliamentarians, whether defined as under 30, under 40 or under 45. There are barriers common to all countries that affect the ability of young people and the possibility for them to run and be selected as parliamentary candidates. Additionally, however, a variety of contextual factors, including the relative openness of different political systems to young people's participation, might explain higher and lower proportions of young parliamentarians in different countries.

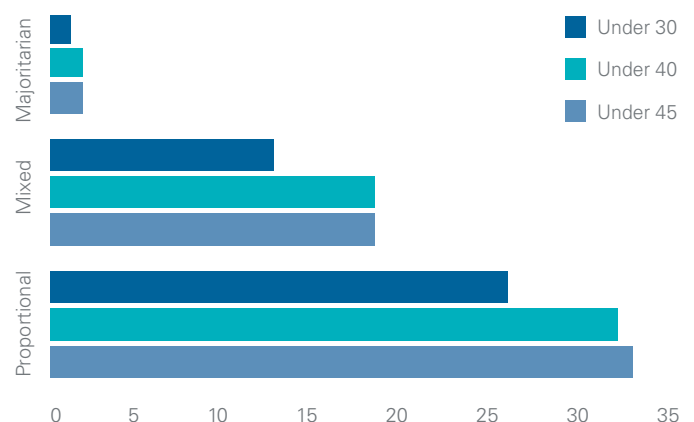
Electoral system

One such factor is the electoral system. A substantial number of studies find, for example, that the share of women in parliament tends to be higher in countries using list-based proportional representation (PR) systems.⁷ Such systems tend to create incentives for “balanced” party lists, with candidates from a variety of groups. In contrast, majoritarian or plurality-based systems focus on garnering the most votes for a single candidate. Parties therefore adopt a more conservative approach, privileging the types of candidates who have traditionally won elections, namely older men.

Figure 5 maps the average rates of representation for each category of young parliamentarians across countries with PR, mixed and majoritarian electoral systems. The differences are clear: countries with PR systems elect approximately twice as many young parliamentarians (between 24.6 per cent and 31.4 per cent) as mixed systems (between 12.1 per cent and 17.4 per cent) and 15 to 20 times as many young parliamentarians as majoritarian systems (between 1.1 per cent and 1.8 per cent).

Figure 5

Percentage of young parliamentarians by electoral system (lower and single chambers)



⁷ See for example Manon Tremblay, ed., *Women and legislative representation: Electoral systems, political parties, and sex quotas* (New York: Palgrave, 2012).

Inclusiveness of parliament

A second contextual factor is a parliament's broader ethos of inclusion – or more specifically, that of the parties and alliances charged with selecting parliamentary candidates. One measure of inclusion is a national parliament's proportion of women parliamentarians, figures which are updated monthly by IPU.⁸ Like youth, women are often excluded or overlooked as candidates. Politics is typically regarded as a "male" space, and women are often deterred or prevented from accumulating the prior political experience required to run for parliamentary office.

Quantitative analysis reveals a positive and statistically significant correlation between the percentages of women and of parliamentarians under 45 in single and lower houses of parliament. A second analysis was conducted to explore this correlation and determine whether it stemmed from the fact that female parliamentarians tend to come from younger age groups than male parliamentarians. It found a weaker but still statistically significant correlation. Taken together, these findings suggest that the factors that include or exclude women are the same as, or are related to, those that include or exclude youth.

These patterns are borne out in country-level examples. For instance, the countries with the greatest shares of parliamentarians under 30 – Ecuador, Finland, Norway and Sweden – are among those with the highest levels of women's representation (43.6 per cent, 41.6 per cent, 41.5 per cent and 39.5 per cent, respectively). At the other end of the spectrum, countries with few or no women parliamentarians, such as the Pacific island nations of the Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu, have no young parliamentarians.

Eligibility rules

A third factor relates to the minimum age to vote and stand as a candidate for parliament. Ninety per cent of the countries surveyed reported a minimum voting age of 18, with 16- or 17-year-olds eligible to vote in Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Indonesia and Nicaragua. Citizens need to be older to vote in the Republic of Korea, Bahrain, Lebanon, Malaysia and Oman (19, 20, 21 and 23, respectively).⁹

In contrast, the minimum age for election to parliament varies significantly around the world. The ages indicated by most of the chambers surveyed were 18 and 25. A substantial number indicated 21. In the majority of countries surveyed (65.1 per cent), citizens must wait a number of years after gaining the right to vote before becoming eligible for parliamentary office, sometimes as little as two or three years, but in most cases seven years or more. The wait is generally longest for upper houses, for example until age 35 in Afghanistan, Brazil, Burundi, Paraguay and the Philippines, and until 40 in Cameroon, the Czech Republic, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

Several countries have moved in recent years to reduce these age requirements: among chambers responding to the survey, five lowered the voting age (e.g. from 18 to 16 in Austria and Ecuador), and eight lowered the age for candidacy, in most instances to 18 (as in Kenya, Morocco and the United Kingdom). Algeria, where the minimum age for candidacy was lowered from 28 to 25, explicitly referred to increased youth representation as an objective of the reform.



IPU believes it is crucial for young people to be fully engaged in the democratic process and to be better represented in the world's parliaments. IPU statistics show that in 2015 only 1.9 per cent of the world's MPs were aged under 30.
©IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2015

⁸ <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
⁹ The upper houses in India and Ireland are indirectly elected by members of other bodies, whose age ranges vary.

Analysis revealed no statistically significant correlation between lower minimum age requirements to run for parliament and the percentage of parliamentarians under 30, but it did find a positive correlation between the former and the share of parliamentarians under 45. More specifically, in countries permitting citizens under 21 to stand for election, an average of 33.4 per cent of parliamentarians are under 45, compared with 27.3 per cent in countries requiring candidates to be 21 or older. This correlation suggests that lower eligibility ages are more likely to elicit candidacies, and to result in more candidates being elected to parliament, at an earlier age.

Recommendation 5

The minimum age for parliamentary candidacies should be aligned with the minimum voting age, to increase young people's access to parliament and prevent them having to wait years to become eligible to run for office. Consideration should also be given to lowering the minimum voting age where appropriate.

Age of the population

A fourth factor relates to the share of the population that is young. Statistical evidence indicates that: the higher the proportion of the population under 30, the *smaller* the proportion of parliamentarians under 30. A young median age correlates *negatively* with youth representation under 30.

These patterns suggest that having a young population does not readily and automatically translate into greater representation for young people, most likely due to a host of social, economic and political factors, in addition to the lack of young role models to whom young people can relate. These patterns form a stark illustration of the dramatic gaps in representation that remain in the world's more youthful societies, highlighting the need for corrective or mitigating measures.

French students protested throughout the country against proposed changes to pension systems.
©AFP/Fred Dufour, 2010

10 Given that the survey was completed by parliamentary officers, the responses are likely to under-estimate the number of parties with youth quotas.

Recommendation 6

Parliaments and political parties in countries with large youth populations should create strategies to ensure a youth presence in parliament to address the current inverse relationship between the size of the youth population and the number of young MPs, ensuring the democratic legitimacy of parliament and avoiding the wider threat to democracy of large-scale disengagement by a significant sector of the population.

Youth quotas

Youth quotas can entail reserving seats for young people in parliament or by requiring that parties nominate a certain percentage of young candidates, representing a fifth possible way of increasing the proportion of young parliamentarians. According to the survey responses and additional research conducted, however, this tool is used only rarely to support youth participation.

Table 6 outlines the basic features of these policies, including the type of quota adopted (reserved seats, legislated quota, or party quota), the age group affected and the percentage applied. The policies appear to be quite diverse, sharing little beyond their common purpose of including young people as candidates and elected MPs. Only four countries guarantee a youth presence in parliament through reserved seats. Six require that all parties nominate a certain proportion of young candidates, and parties in at least five countries stipulate a minimum share for young candidates on party lists.¹⁰

As an indication of the effectiveness of these measures, the last two columns in Table 6 show the percentages of young parliamentarians under 30 and under 40 reported in countries with youth quotas. The focus is limited to those two figures because all of these quotas apply to candidates



and parliamentarians below the age of 40. As shown, countries utilizing reserved seats and legislated quotas tend to have higher levels of youth representation.

Interestingly, the share of young parliamentarians in countries with reserved seats tends to far exceed the minimum percentage stipulated by the quota. Quotas may be performing a mobilizing function, increasing both the supply of and demand for candidates with a particular background.¹¹ In contrast, among countries with legislated quotas, only in Kyrgyzstan does the share of young parliamentarians exceed the quota mandate (although the figures in Tunisia come close). Party quotas, on the other hand, have highly variable results – a function, at least in part, of the size and electoral success of the parties applying them. Sweden is the exception among these cases, at least in part because multiple parties across the ideological spectrum have adopted formal or informal policies to include young people on their candidate lists.

A final observation on these data concerns the striking variation across all countries in the percentages of different definitions of “young” MPs. The proportion of parliamentarians under 30 is without exception much smaller than that of the under-40 age group. This may stem from the design of these policies: setting the cut-off age at 35 or 40 appears to facilitate the election of parliamentarians in their 30s and 40s, rather than their 20s.

Recommendation 7

Parliaments and political parties should consider youth quotas as a means of increasing the number of young MPs. The most effective systems appear to be reserved seats and legislated quotas, but party quotas can also play an important role in reducing barriers to nomination and election.

Table 6

Youth quotas and youth representation in parliament

| Country | Quota type | Age group | Quota % | % under 30 | % under 40 |
|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Rwanda | Reserved | Under 35 | 7.7% | 1.3% | 22.5% |
| Morocco | Reserved | Under 40 | 7.6% | 1.9% | 17.9% |
| Kenya | | | | | |
| Lower house | Reserved | Under 35 | 3.4% | No data | No data |
| Upper house | Reserved | Under 35 | 2.9% | 5.9% | 20.6% |
| Uganda | Reserved | Under 30 | 1.3% | 1.1% | 21.9% |
| Philippines | Legislated | Unknown | 50%* | 1.7% | 15.8% |
| Tunisia | Legislated | Under 35 | 25%** | 6.5% | 22.6% |
| Sri Lanka | Legislated | Under 35 | 25%*** | 2.4% | 12.4% |
| Gabon | Legislated | Under 40 | 20% | 0.0% | 8.6% |
| Kyrgyzstan | Legislated | Under 36 | 15% | 4.2% | 35.0% |
| Egypt | Legislated | Unknown | Varied**** | No data | No data |
| Nicaragua | Party | Unknown | 40%, 15% | 1.1% | 14.1% |
| Sweden | Party | Under 35 | 25% | 12.3% | 34.1% |
| Cyprus | Party | Under 45, 35 | 20% | 0.0% | 1.8% |
| Senegal | Party | Unknown | 20% | 0.0% | 11.3% |
| Croatia | Party | Unknown | Unknown | 0.7% | 14.6% |

Policies apply to single and lower houses of parliament, except in Kenya as noted.

*50% of proportional representation lists must come from different sectors, including youth.

**In districts with four or more seats, one young candidate should be placed in one of the top four list positions.

***Women and youth candidates together.

****Minimum of 16 young candidates must be nominated across 4 electoral districts.

11 Brigitte Geissel and Evelin Hust, “Democratic mobilisation through quotas: Experiences in India and Germany”, *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 43 (2): 222–244 (2005).

Youth and the legislative process

Key findings

- Networks of young MPs are increasing in number and can prove helpful in bringing young politicians together and coordinating work on youth issues.
- Many parliaments have committees dealing with youth affairs but nearly all of them deal with other issues too.
- Most committees dealing with youth affairs are chaired by men aged over 40.
- Only a third of committees dealing with youth affairs have a majority of young MPs serving on them, and only a quarter are led by young MPs.

In addition to electing young parliamentarians, a second way to support youth participation in parliament involves empowering young MPs with tools for success in bringing youth perspectives to public policy formulation. This can entail establishing networks of young parliamentarians, i.e. creating connections that can facilitate legislative work and empower young members. It can also involve forming a legislative caucus on youth, participating in a committee dedicated to youth issues, supporting legislative initiatives on behalf of young people or otherwise seeking to address youth needs and interests in parliamentary work.

The goals of electing young parliamentarians and advancing youth issues are not mutually exclusive, but they do not always overlap either. Young parliamentarians may not view representing youth as their main or only purpose as elected officials. Conversely, older MPs may be sympathetic with a host of concerns to youth. For the moment, the concept of an active “youth constituency” is still new, although it may take hold through emerging initiatives on the ground.

Box 1: IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians

The IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians was established in 2013 to serve as an international youth-led platform for young members of parliament around the world. Its purpose is to enhance youth participation, to empower young parliamentarians, through experience-sharing, to exert greater influence and bring the perspectives of youth to policy-making at the global parliamentary level. The Forum has also been a model for national networks of young parliamentarians, for example in Nigeria, where a national chapter of the IPU Forum was created in 2015.

Networks and caucuses

Networks and caucuses of parliamentarians may serve two purposes: bringing young parliamentarians together and coordinating work on youth issues within parliament (see Box 1). Some young politicians express scepticism about the value of such networks: while they face common or similar challenges, they are also divided by party loyalties and distinct personal experiences stemming from gender, race, religion, class and many other factors. While not common, networks of young parliamentarians exist in several chambers and appear in most cases to have been created fairly recently. Most but not all of these chambers have above-average levels of youth representation.

Some of these networks are formal. Examples include the Network of Young Parliamentarians in Cameroon, established in 2010; the Young Parliamentarians Association in Kenya, created in 2004; the Youth Parliamentarian Cabinet in Mozambique, set up in 2010; and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians in Nigeria, created in 2015.

But the majority of networks are informal, as in Chile and the Philippines. Networks were reported to be in the process of being formed in Denmark, South Africa and the United Kingdom, which could mark a longer-term trend.

Various parliamentary caucuses also focus on youth issues or serve as a link to youth parliaments (for examples of both, see Table 7).

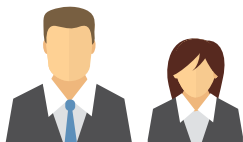
Recommendation 8

Parliaments should promote the creation of national parliamentary networks of young MPs, which can empower group members by enhancing their legislative skills, fostering collaboration, and raising awareness on youth issues in public policy.

Infography



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.



Young male MPs outnumber their female counterparts in every age group.

ENCOURAGING SIGN

The gender imbalance is less pronounced among younger MPs where the ratio is:

60:40

MALE

FEMALE

GENDER

Youth participation in national parliaments 2016



UNDER 40

UNDER 30

QUOTAS

In countries where youth quotas exist, the proportion of parliamentarians under 30 is without exception much smaller than that of the under-40 age group.

AGE

UNDER 30



1.6%

1.9 per cent of the world's MPs under 30 – up from 1.6 per cent

SYSTEMS

- Under 30
- Under 40
- Under 45



Majoritarian



Mixed



Proportional

Countries with PR systems elect around twice as many young MPs as those with mixed systems and 15-20 times as many as those with majoritarian systems.



1.9%

Young people under 30 make up only 1.9 per cent of the world's 45,000 MPs.

Nearly one-third of the world's single and lower houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30.

0%

80%

More than 80% of the world's upper houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30.

30



1.9%

MPs are aged under 30 in 2014.

UNDER 40



14.2%

14.2 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 40 - up from 12.9 per cent in 2014.

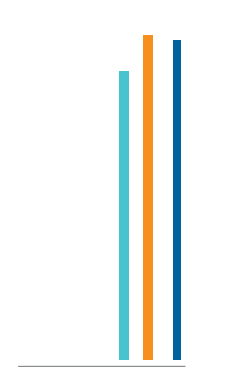
UNDER 45



26%

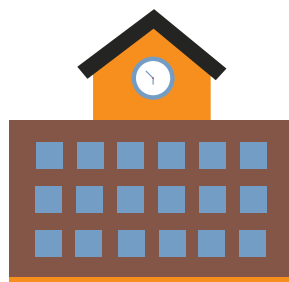
26 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 45 - up from 23.9 per cent in 2014.

EM



25%

Young parliamentarians chair fewer than 25 per cent of youth-related **committees**, and form a majority in less than one-third.



50%

Youth parliaments exist in half of the countries surveyed, some with formal ties to the national **parliament** but most coordinated by **non-governmental organizations, government ministries, schools** or **other local authorities**.

Source: Youth participation in national parliaments 2016
Based on data gathered from 128 countries
(126 single and lower houses and 43 upper houses of parliament)

Infography

Table 7

Youth networks and caucuses in parliament

Networks of young parliamentarians

Network of Young Parliamentarians (Cameroon)
 Network of Young Parliamentarians (Ecuador)
 Intergroup of Youth in the Chamber of Deputies (Italy)
 International Network for Young Parliamentarians (Finland)
 Young Parliamentarians Association (Kenya)
 Forum of Young Parliamentarians (Nigeria)

Caucuses for youth issues

Parliamentary Forum on Youth (India)
 Caucus to Promote Youth Policies (Israel)
 Association of Parliamentarians for Children and Youth (Suriname)
 Parliamentary Network for Youth Perspective in Politics (Sweden)
 Parliamentary Group on Childhood and Youth (Switzerland)
 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs (United Kingdom)

Parliamentary committees

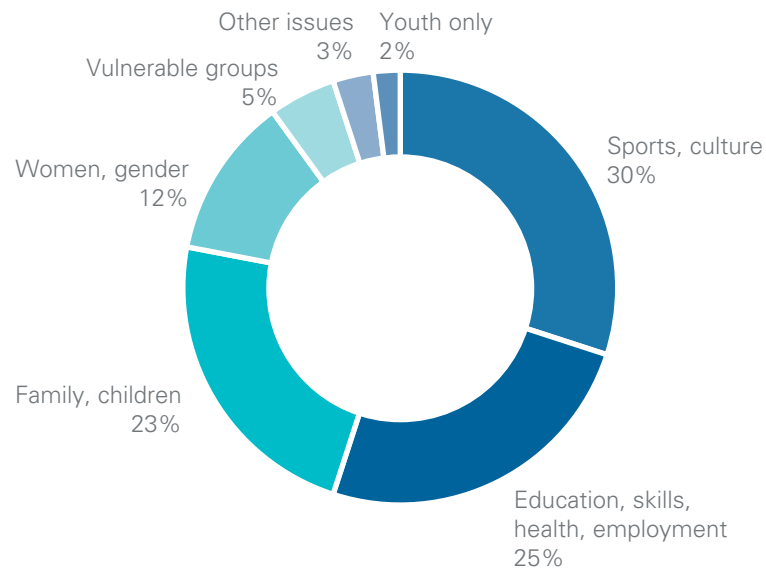
The IPU survey asked whether countries had “any parliamentary bodies dealing with youth issues”. Fifty chambers answered “yes”; but then named committee and commission titles that did not include such words as “youth” or “children”. The answers provide insight, however, into the types of issues that are associated with young people in countries around the world, as well as the degree to which youth issues may be incorporated into the work of other committees. Education is perhaps the topic most often mentioned, but others appear frequently as well: community, culture, employment, public health, housing, human rights, science, social affairs, social welfare, sports, and technology and social media.

Responses from another 48 chambers listed parliamentary committees with titles referring to “youth” or related terms (like children, adolescents or teenagers). Supplemental research using parliamentary websites brought the total number of chambers with youth committees to 72. Strikingly, standalone committees on youth were found to exist in only two cases: Guatemala and the Syrian Arab Republic. As seen in Figure 6, it is much more common for “youth” to be grouped together with other interests and issues. The titles of 30 per cent of these committees contain the word “sports” or “culture,” while 25 per cent refer to issues related to education, skills, health or youth employment (or unemployment). Twenty-three per cent deal with family and children’s issues. A smaller group place youth together with women and gender equality (12 per cent), while a handful mention vulnerable groups, such as the elderly or people with disabilities (5 per cent).

According to the survey data, the chairs of these committees are overwhelmingly male, varying in age but most commonly in their 40s or older. Fewer than 25 per cent of these committees are led by young parliamentarians. In terms of gender balance they vary widely, from almost all-male, to evenly mixed, to almost all-female. Young parliamentarians make up a majority of committee members in only one-third of the chambers for which data were available. Interestingly, the members of some of these committees – in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Namibia, Oman and the Philippines – are almost exclusively under the age of 45. Other committees covering youth issues – in Cameroon, Monaco, Nigeria, Poland and Zimbabwe for instance – have virtually no young members. Higher proportions of parliamentarians under 45 correlate with larger shares of young members on these committees, but not with young committee chairs.

Figure 6

Parliamentary committees on youth and other issues



Box 2: Rethinking constituencies

Efforts to connect young parliamentarians with young segments of the population remain under-developed. An innovative experiment to this effect is being piloted in South Africa, where the Democratic Alliance has created a non-geographically based constituency consisting of “institutions of higher learning,” assigned to the party’s youngest parliamentarian. On a weekly basis, he visits different universities around the country to hear what issues are being raised. He communicates these to various ministers, providing more direct access to centres of decision-making for students and university employees. As well as informing public policy, these visits also benefit the party, getting young people more engaged with the party and activating a large population of new voters.

Engaging youth with parliament

Key findings

- Youth parliaments exist in half the countries surveyed and fulfil several functions, including allowing young people's voices to be heard, giving them experience in debating, empowering them politically and raising awareness about parliamentary work.
- Youth parliaments should focus on young people below the voting age, to avoid becoming an alternative to national parliaments.
- The creative and effective use of new technology in some countries is helping engage young people, and can make parliaments more accessible and transparent to all citizens.

A third dimension of promoting youth participation in parliament, alongside electing and empowering young MPs, is to initiate young people into the work of parliament at an early age, whether or not they intend to run for office in the future. The most common strategy along these lines is to organize youth parliaments, creating opportunities for young people of various ages to learn more about how parliament works and in some cases to inform policy debates.

A second series of initiatives uses new technologies to make parliaments more accessible to young people. A by-product of some of these programmes has been, in turn, to develop the capacity of youth to monitor parliament itself, in ways that enhance transparency for all citizens.

Youth parliaments

According to survey responses, youth parliaments exist in about half of the countries responding to the questionnaire. While some enjoy a formal relationship with the national parliament, most are coordinated by non-governmental organizations, government ministries, schools or other local authorities. Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff may nonetheless be involved in some of the organizational work and the parliament building itself may be used for meetings.

Target groups vary enormously. Some youth parliaments direct their efforts at younger children aged eight and over, while others seek to engage teenagers. The majority focus on young people from around the voting ages of 16 or 18 through to those aged 30 or 35. Most youth parliaments are more or less gender-balanced, albeit with a few exceptions, like Pakistan and Peru, where boys constitute the largest share of participants.

Participants are selected through a variety of methods. Most often there is an application process that goes through a central committee or a school-based election process. Participants are occasionally selected through open and public elections. In several cases, local youth councils play a role. The frequency of activities is similarly varied. Most youth parliaments meet once a year, typically in the parliament building, after weeks or months of preparation. Others are conceived as an annual programme or as a cycle of activities leading to a formal meeting every other year.



2015 marked the fifth anniversary of an IPU resolution on youth participation in the democratic process.
©IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2015

The objectives of youth parliaments fall into three broad categories. The first is deliberative. The aim is to listen to young people and give them a chance to express their points of view, improving their opportunities to be heard and to articulate their concerns. This will give them a voice in defining the “youth agenda” for public policy, to be transmitted – in some cases – directly to policy-makers and even on live television. Another purpose is to create ongoing connections among youth and between young people and parliamentary and government officials.

A second objective is awareness-raising. Youth parliaments seek to confer knowledge about parliamentary work: the drafting of bills, participation in debates and voting on laws. Some responses characterize this process as an “apprenticeship” or “education on democracy.” In New Zealand, the experience is “as close as possible to the real thing,” including constituency work and interaction with a youth press gallery. Even if the participants do not go on to be elected, the experience can help them learn how to influence government decision-making as citizens.

A third purpose of youth parliaments is political empowerment. The hope is that providing youth with the experience of participatory democracy and encouraging the development of debating and other leadership skills will increase active citizenship and arouse interest in public affairs. One aim is to strengthen youth leadership in parliament, but a broader goal is to promote youth-led advocacy in civil society, thereby furthering democratization and projecting a more positive image of youth and politics.

Recommendation 9

Parliaments, local governments and non-governmental organizations should invest in youth parliaments and youth councils, enabling young people to voice their opinions, learn how to influence policy-making and develop the skills to be politically effective – as well as signalling that politics is open to their participation. These bodies must focus on young people below the voting age, to avoid becoming an alternative to youth representation in national parliaments.

Youth-initiated parliamentary transparency

In recent years, the potential of online technologies has been tapped in various ways to make parliaments more accessible to young people – and to citizens at large. In Brazil, a group of young people were granted permission to organize a week-long “hackathon” at the Chamber of Deputies. The idea was to use open data recently made available on the chamber’s website to create user-friendly websites and apps designed to help citizens – especially youth – better understand the legislative process and activities of parliament. Tapping into the “hacker ethics” of sharing information, crowdsourcing ideas and finding new ways of building solutions, the success of the hackathon led to the establishment of a “Hacker Lab”¹² within the lower house, bringing together programmers with politicians and civil servants to explore new ways of communicating with the public.¹³ Through a “Wikilegis” initiative, for example, citizens can comment on bills currently being discussed in parliament.¹⁴

Innovations in other countries include online tools to monitor the work of parliaments, making them more accessible and transparent. In Tunisia, following the Arab Spring protests in 2010 and 2011, a group of young people began an online project to monitor the work of the National Constituent Assembly,¹⁵ publishing the proposed texts and amendments and reporting which members voted for and against each article. After the first parliamentary elections in 2014, the group continued its work, providing profiles and contact details for every parliamentarian, and meticulously documenting the work of parliament. On the sophisticated yet easy-to-use website, details on debates and votes are tweeted in real time in both French and Arabic.¹⁶ In Jordan, a youth-based activist organization, Al-Hayat Centre, also engages in parliamentary monitoring, attending sessions and creating scorecards on each member’s performance in terms of questions, votes and attendance.¹⁷

Recommendation 10

Parliaments and civil society organizations should harness new technology to share information and allow the work of parliament to be monitored more easily, making it more accessible and transparent to young people and indeed all citizens. Young people should also get involved in these democratic monitoring tasks.

12 <http://labhackercd.net/>

13 Similar Hacker Labs have also been established in Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

14 <http://edemocracia.camara.gov.br/>

15 http://www.albawsala.com/marsad_majles

16 <http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/fr/>

17 <http://www.hayatcenter.org/>

Conclusions

- There is an urgent need for action by the world's parliaments to address the underrepresentation of young people in their membership. IPU has led the way in viewing the issue of youth participation in politics through the lens of youth representation in parliament. While there are some encouraging signs among MPs in their 40s, the number of young MPs under 30 remains stubbornly and persistently low, at 2.1 per cent of the world total.
- This is not a self-correcting problem. Indeed, the evidence of this report indicates that in countries with the largest youth populations, the problem persists and may even be worsening. Making progress requires proactive solutions, ranging from relatively simple changes in practice, to more radical solutions like youth quotas, which have been proven to be effective.
- Levels of youth representation vary substantially across countries and age brackets. At the regional level, countries in Europe, the Americas and Africa have the greatest number of young parliamentarians in single and lower chambers, while countries in Asia, Oceania and Africa perform the best among upper chambers. When viewed subregionally, however, countries in east Africa elect the highest share of young parliamentarians nearly in all age categories. Electoral systems, women's representation, youth quotas and eligibility ages explain some of these variations.
- National parliaments and IPU should continue to *collect systematic data* on the age of parliamentarians, disaggregated by sex. This information can then be used to assess progress – and the need for action – on getting more young people into national parliaments. Subsequent data and reports, however, should take care to *recognize diversity among youth*. In addition to the gender differences, other identities may also be relevant dividing lines, and young parliamentarians should reflect this diversity.
- Parliaments and political parties should consider a host of strategies to facilitate the inclusion of young people. The possibilities include legal reform to *align the age of eligibility to run for political office with the minimum voting age*. There is a correlation between lower eligibility ages and higher levels of youth representation, with lower legal thresholds fostering a climate in which young people are more likely to come forward and be elected to parliament at an earlier age.
- A second possibility is to *adopt youth quotas*. While quotas are used only rarely, countries that employ them tend to have higher average levels of youth representation. This is especially true in the case of reserved seats, which guarantee a minimum level of youth representation in parliament, and legislated quotas that require that all parties field a certain percentage of young candidates.
- Efforts to enhance youth participation in politics should pay particular attention to the participation of young parliamentarians in their 20s and 30s as well as to young women, as these groups are particularly underrepresented.
- In terms of current global efforts to enhance youth perspectives in policy-making, two sets of initiatives emerged: the facilitation of networks among young parliamentarians and legislation for young people. While not common, networks and caucuses have been established in several chambers relatively recently. In contrast, parliamentary committees dealing with youth issues are widespread, although nearly all of them also deal with other matters.
- To fill the networking gap, parliaments should *promote the formation of national networks of young parliamentarians* and encourage them to connect with IPU's Forum of Young Parliamentarians. The IPU Forum seeks to enhance youth participation and to empower young MPs through personal connections, information-sharing, influence-building and development of a youth perspective in policy-making at the global parliamentary level. National networks are also necessary to empower members as legislators and youth advocates within their own parliaments and countries.
- Among the wider strategies to encourage youth engagement in parliament, youth parliaments are the most prevalent. They aim to acquaint young people with the work of parliament through various types of role play. Signals that politics is open to youth participation can be bolstered by *further investment in youth parliaments and youth councils*, which allow young people to voice their opinions, learn how to participate in and influence the policy process, and develop the skills to be politically effective. It is vital that these youth parliaments and councils focus on young people below the age of eligibility to run for office, to avoid becoming an alternative to youth representation in national parliaments.
- A series of promising new initiatives in various countries, *using new technologies to make parliaments more accessible to young people*, could have an even greater impact. The Internet and other new technologies provide an unprecedented opportunity to communicate with and among young people. Some parliaments and youth organizations have launched Internet-based programs for young people to share information and monitor the work of parliament in ways that make it more accessible and transparent for all citizens.
- Evidence and emerging best practices from various corners of the world suggest that positive change is possible and that the opportunities for youth to be elected to, and inform the work of, parliament can be enhanced. All stakeholders, however, should continue to *explore additional institutional mechanisms to engage youth*.

Annex 1

Members of parliament aged under 40 in 128 countries (per cent)

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|---|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 41.3 | Denmark |
| 2 | 39.3 | Andorra |
| 3 | 38.0 | Ecuador |
| 4 | 37.9 | Finland |
| 5 | 36.7 | San Marino |
| 6 | 36.1 | Bhutan |
| 7 | 35.4 | Ethiopia |
| 8 | 34.1 | Sweden |
| 9 | 35.0 | Kyrgyzstan |
| 10 | 32.8 | Italy |
| 11 | 32.5 | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| 12 | 31.8 | Oman |
| 13 | 31.2 | Serbia |
| 14 | 29.4 | Hungary |
| 15 | 28.8 | Bulgaria |
| 16 | 28.7 | Belgium |
| 17 | 27.2 | Norway |
| 18 | 26.7 | Chile, Netherlands |
| 20 | 25.7 | Afghanistan |
| 21 | 25.6 | Slovenia |
| 22 | 25.5 | Burundi |
| 23 | 24.3 | Romania |
| 24 | 23.8 | Estonia |
| 25 | 23.5 | Suriname |
| 26 | 23.4 | Seychelles |
| 27 | 23.1 | Bahrain |
| 28 | 23.0 | Portugal |
| 29 | 22.6 | Tunisia |
| 30 | 22.5 | Haiti, Rwanda |
| 32 | 21.9 | Uganda |
| 33 | 21.7 | Singapore |
| 34 | 21.4 | Armenia |
| 35 | 21.3 | Paraguay |
| 36 | 21.2 | Uruguay |
| 37 | 20.6 | Iceland |

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|---|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 38 | 20.3 | Georgia |
| 39 | 20.0 | Malta, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates |
| 42 | 19.4 | Cabo Verde |
| 43 | 19.3 | Costa Rica |
| 44 | 19.1 | Austria |
| 45 | 19.0 | Bosnia and Herzegovina, Latvia, Somalia |
| 48 | 18.9 | Brazil |
| 49 | 18.3 | Ireland |
| 50 | 18.2 | Guatemala |
| 51 | 17.9 | Indonesia |
| 52 | 17.6 | Germany |
| 53 | 17.4 | Israel, New Zealand |
| 55 | 17.2 | Mozambique |
| 56 | 17.0 | Czech Republic |
| 57 | 16.7 | Algeria, Slovakia |
| 59 | 16.5 | Cuba |
| 60 | 16.3 | Albania |
| 61 | 16.4 | Sao Tomé and Príncipe |
| 62 | 15.8 | Philippines, Zimbabwe |
| 64 | 15.5 | South Africa |
| 65 | 15.2 | Switzerland |
| 66 | 15.0 | Montenegro |
| 67 | 14.7 | Morocco |
| 68 | 14.6 | Croatia |
| 69 | 14.3 | Mongolia |
| 70 | 14.2 | Poland |
| 71 | 14.1 | Canada, Nicaragua |
| 73 | 14.0 | Spain, Venezuela |
| 75 | 13.6 | Russian Federation |
| 76 | 13.3 | Australia |
| 77 | 13.2 | Iraq |
| 78 | 13.1 | Ghana |
| 79 | 12.7 | Japan |
| 80 | 12.6 | India |

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|---------------------------------------|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 81 | 12.5 | Argentina |
| 82 | 12.4 | Sri Lanka |
| 83 | 12.3 | Peru |
| 84 | 12.1 | Lithuania |
| 85 | 12.0 | Chad, Greece |
| 87 | 11.7 | Luxembourg |
| 88 | 11.5 | Cambodia |
| 89 | 11.3 | Senegal |
| 90 | 11.1 | Nigeria |
| 91 | 10.8 | Malaysia, United Republic of Tanzania |
| 93 | 10.6 | Namibia |
| 94 | 10.4 | Zambia |
| 95 | 10.2 | Myanmar |
| 96 | 9.8 | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| 97 | 9.5 | Sudan |
| 98 | 9.2 | Syrian Arab Republic |
| 99 | 8.8 | Côte d'Ivoire, Niger |
| 101 | 8.6 | Dominican Republic, Gabon, Viet Nam |
| 104 | 8.0 | Equatorial Guinea |
| 105 | 7.6 | France |
| 106 | 7.3 | Trinidad and Tobago |
| 107 | 7.0 | Iran |
| 108 | 6.9 | Gambia |
| 109 | 6.7 | United States of America |
| 110 | 6.5 | Timor-Leste |
| 111 | 6.3 | Lebanon |
| 112 | 5.7 | Bangladesh, Qatar |
| 114 | 5.6 | China |
| 115 | 5.5 | Belarus |
| 116 | 4.9 | Solomon Islands |
| 117 | 4.2 | Azerbaijan, Kuwait |
| 119 | 3.9 | Cameroon |
| 120 | 2.3 | Republic of Korea |
| 121 | 1.9 | Kazakhstan |
| 122 | 1.8 | Cyprus |
| 123 | 0.0 | Micronesia, Monaco, Thailand, Tuvalu |

*Data were not provided on the age distribution of MPs in Mauritius.

| Upper houses of parliament | | |
|----------------------------|------|--|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 54.5 | Bhutan |
| 2 | 20.6 | Kenya |
| 3 | 20.0 | Belgium |
| 4 | 18.6 | Ireland |
| 5 | 18.5 | Germany |
| 6 | 13.3 | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| 7 | 12.1 | Romania |
| 8 | 12.0 | Netherlands |
| 9 | 11.5 | Myanmar |
| 10 | 10.3 | Australia |
| 11 | 10.2 | Spain |
| 12 | 9.5 | Japan |
| 13 | 8.8 | Afghanistan |
| 14 | 8.6 | Russian Federation |
| 15 | 8.2 | Austria |
| 16 | 7.3 | Burundi |
| 17 | 6.5 | Trinidad and Tobago |
| 18 | 5.3 | Chile |
| 19 | 5.2 | Belarus |
| 20 | 4.8 | Malaysia |
| 21 | 4.3 | Algeria, Switzerland |
| 22 | 4.2 | Philippines |
| 23 | 3.8 | Namibia |
| 24 | 3.1 | Poland |
| 25 | 3.0 | India |
| 26 | 2.9 | Czech Republic |
| 27 | 2.8 | Argentina |
| 28 | 2.5 | Brazil |
| 29 | 2.2 | Paraguay |
| 30 | 2.0 | United States of America |
| 31 | 1.2 | Canada |
| 32 | 0.9 | France |
| 33 | 0.6 | United Kingdom |
| 34 | 0.0 | Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uruguay, Zimbabwe** |

**Calculations for Zimbabwe are based on responses from 38 of 80 MPs.

Annex 2

Members of parliament aged under 45 in 128 countries (per cent)

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|---|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 65.9 | Oman |
| 2 | 63.6 | Ethiopia |
| 3 | 60.7 | Andorra |
| 4 | 59.6 | Seychelles |
| 5 | 55.6 | Bhutan |
| 6 | 54.7 | Ecuador |
| 7 | 54.2 | Kyrgyzstan |
| 8 | 53.6 | Denmark |
| 9 | 53.3 | San Marino |
| 10 | 50.7 | Netherlands |
| 11 | 49.3 | Belgium |
| 12 | 48.7 | Bahrain |
| 13 | 48.6 | Afghanistan |
| 14 | 48.1 | Sweden |
| 15 | 48.0 | Equatorial Guinea |
| 16 | 47.9 | Bulgaria |
| 17 | 46.3 | Paraguay, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| 19 | 46.1 | Haiti |
| 20 | 45.2 | Italy |
| 21 | 44.8 | Serbia |
| 22 | 44.4 | Slovenia |
| 23 | 41.7 | Portugal |
| 24 | 41.1 | Finland |
| 25 | 41.0 | Uganda |
| 26 | 40.6 | Hungary |
| 27 | 40.0 | Rwanda, United Arab Emirates |
| 29 | 39.6 | Burundi |
| 30 | 39.2 | Cuba, Suriname |
| 32 | 38.5 | Norway |
| 33 | 38.3 | Chile |
| 34 | 38.1 | Romania |
| 35 | 38.0 | Latvia, Singapore |
| 37 | 37.7 | Indonesia |
| 38 | 37.6 | Albania |
| 39 | 37.2 | Georgia, Guatemala |
| 41 | 37.1 | Malta, United Kingdom |
| 43 | 36.4 | Tunisia |

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|----------------------------------|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 44 | 35.7 | New Zealand |
| 45 | 35.6 | Estonia |
| 46 | 34.7 | Cabo Verde |
| 47 | 34.5 | Gambia |
| 48 | 34.3 | Algeria |
| 49 | 33.3 | Costa Rica |
| 50 | 32.7 | Sao Tomé and Príncipe |
| 51 | 32.3 | Ireland |
| 52 | 31.7 | Iceland, Solomon Islands |
| 54 | 31.3 | Armenia, Slovakia, Somalia |
| 57 | 29.7 | Sri Lanka |
| 58 | 29.6 | Australia |
| 59 | 29.5 | Czech Republic |
| 60 | 29.4 | Brazil |
| 61 | 29.2 | Germany |
| 62 | 29.1 | Zimbabwe |
| 63 | 28.7 | Israel, Morocco |
| 65 | 28.6 | Mongolia |
| 66 | 28.0 | Ghana |
| 67 | 27.8 | Croatia |
| 68 | 27.7 | Austria |
| 69 | 27.3 | Uruguay, Zambia |
| 71 | 27.1 | Iraq |
| 72 | 26.6 | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| 73 | 26.4 | Poland |
| 74 | 26.3 | Montenegro, South Africa |
| 76 | 26.2 | Peru |
| 77 | 26.1 | Spain |
| 78 | 26.0 | Philippines |
| 79 | 25.8 | Nigeria |
| 80 | 25.1 | Russian Federation |
| 81 | 25.0 | Japan |
| 82 | 24.4 | Mozambique |
| 83 | 24.2 | Canada, Switzerland, Timor-Leste |
| 86 | 24.1 | United Republic of Tanzania |
| 87 | 23.8 | Venezuela |
| 88 | 23.0 | Chad |
| 89 | 22.9 | India |

| Single and lower houses of parliament* | | |
|--|------|--|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 90 | 22.2 | Argentina |
| 91 | 22.0 | Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago |
| 93 | 21.8 | Syrian Arab Republic |
| 94 | 21.7 | Luxembourg |
| 95 | 21.0 | Greece |
| 96 | 20.4 | Niger |
| 97 | 20.1 | Côte d'Ivoire |
| 98 | 19.8 | Malaysia |
| 99 | 19.7 | Myanmar |
| 100 | 19.1 | Lithuania |
| 101 | 19.0 | Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sudan |
| 103 | 18.9 | Cambodia |
| 104 | 18.8 | Kuwait |
| 105 | 18.5 | Nicaragua |
| 106 | 18.2 | Iran |
| 107 | 17.2 | Cameroon |
| 108 | 16.4 | Gabon |
| 109 | 16.1 | Dominican Republic |
| 110 | 15.5 | France |
| 111 | 15.2 | Viet Nam |
| 112 | 15.1 | Bangladesh |
| 113 | 14.3 | United States of America |
| 114 | 13.5 | Namibia |
| 115 | 12.5 | Monaco |
| 116 | 11.9 | Belarus |
| 117 | 11.6 | China |
| 118 | 10.9 | Azerbaijan |
| 119 | 9.4 | Lebanon |
| 120 | 8.9 | Cyprus |
| 121 | 6.5 | Kazakhstan |
| 122 | 6.3 | Republic of Korea |
| 123 | 5.7 | Qatar |
| 124 | 0.0 | Micronesia (Federated States of), Thailand, Tuvalu |

| Upper houses of parliament | | |
|----------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| Rank | % | Country |
| 1 | 81.8 | Bhutan |
| 2 | 38.2 | Afghanistan |
| 3 | 36.7 | Belgium |
| 4 | 36.4 | Germany |
| 5 | 30.9 | Kenya |
| 6 | 29.3 | Burundi |
| 7 | 29.2 | Philippines |
| 8 | 27.1 | Ireland |
| 9 | 26.7 | Romania |
| 10 | 25.0 | Australia |
| 11 | 23.3 | Uruguay |
| 12 | 23.1 | Namibia |
| 13 | 22.6 | Trinidad and Tobago |
| 14 | 22.1 | Myanmar |
| 15 | 19.3 | Spain |
| 16 | 19.0 | Haiti |
| 17 | 18.7 | Netherlands |
| 18 | 18.4 | Chile |
| 19 | 18.0 | Austria |
| 20 | 16.9 | Japan |
| 21 | 16.7 | Argentina |
| 22 | 15.2 | Paraguay |
| 23 | 13.8 | Belarus |
| 24 | 13.3 | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| 25 | 12.3 | Russian Federation |
| 26 | 11.5 | Rwanda |
| 27 | 11.0 | United States of America |
| 28 | 9.7 | Malaysia |
| 29 | 9.4 | India |
| 30 | 8.7 | Switzerland |
| 31 | 8.2 | Poland |
| 32 | 7.4 | Brazil |
| 33 | 7.3 | Nigeria |
| 34 | 7.2 | United Kingdom |
| 35 | 7.1 | Algeria |
| 36 | 6.3 | Zimbabwe** |
| 37 | 6.2 | Czech Republic |
| 38 | 3.4 | Cambodia |
| 39 | 3.2 | France |
| 40 | 2.4 | Canada |
| 41 | 1.0 | Gabon |
| 42 | 0.0 | Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan |

*Data were not provided on the age distribution of MPs in Mauritius.

**Calculations for Zimbabwe are based on responses from 38 of 80 MPs.

Annex 3

Survey questions

Questionnaire on youth participation in national parliaments

This survey is designed to establish the number of parliamentarians below the age of 45 and to gather information on special mechanisms that encourage or enhance the participation of young people in national parliaments.

It focuses on young members of national parliaments, as opposed to members of youth parliaments^a. Please note that only question 10 deals with youth parliaments.

The survey findings will inform general debate at the 134th IPU Assembly on rejuvenating democracy and giving a voice to youth.

Country _____

Parliament/chamber _____

[For bicameral systems, please complete a separate questionnaire for each chamber]

Completed by (name/title) _____

Contact e-mail _____

Date _____

Please complete and return this form to the IPU Secretariat by **15 November 2015**, by e-mail to postbox@ipu.org or by fax to +41 22 919 41 60. Questions can be directed to Ms. Zeina Hilal via e-mail zh@ipu.org.

^a A youth parliament is a platform – outside and beyond young parliamentarians themselves – to engage young people and expose them to democratic process and practices.

1. Please indicate the number of parliamentarians per age group.

| Age group (year born) | Total | Male | Female |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| 18–20 (1996–1994) | | | |
| 21–30 (1993–1984) | | | |
| 31–40 (1983–1974) | | | |
| 41–45 (1973–1969) | | | |
| 46–50 (1968–1964) | | | |
| 51–60 (1963–1954) | | | |
| 61–70 (1953–1944) | | | |
| 71–80 (1943–1934) | | | |
| 81–90 (1933–1924) | | | |
| 91 and over (1923 and before) | | | |

2. Please provide the name and contact details of the youngest member of parliament.

Name _____

Year of birth/age _____ M F

Year of election/appointment/nomination _____

Phone number _____

E-mail _____

3. Please confirm, correct or complete the following data.

Age of eligibility for voting _____

Age of eligibility for running for parliament _____

Supplementary: has either age requirement been changed recently?
Yes No

If yes, what was the previous requirement? Please explain (for example, if the required age for running for parliament was lowered, what was it previously?)

4. Do any measures exist to ensure or facilitate the election/appointment/nomination of young parliamentarians?

Yes No

If yes, please answer the following questions:

How is “young” or “youth” defined (for example, if the measure is a legislated quota for young people, what is the age limit that it sets out)?

Age or age group _____

Which of the following special measures are in use?

| Measure | Yes | No | Do not know |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|-------------|
| Reserved seats ^b | | | |
| Legal candidate quotas ^c | | | |
| Political party quotas ^{2d} | | | |
| Other measures | | | |
| If other , please specify | | | |
| _____ | | | |

If yes, please provide details on the measure(s) in place:

Number of seats and/or percentage of candidates _____
(If multiple measures are in place, please describe them separately)

Year adopted (if known) _____

Year modified (if applicable) _____

Mechanism for selection _____
(Separate election, similar to other candidates, chosen by youth organization; please provide full details, if possible)

Source _____
(Constitutional provision, electoral law, party constitution; please provide full details, if possible)

Any additional information _____

5. Are there any other initiatives taken in the country to promote youth representation in parliament?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

b. Policies/legislation that guarantee young people a minimum number of seats in parliament.
 c. Policies/legislation that require all political parties to nominate a minimum percentage of young candidates.
 d. Policies adopted by individual political parties to ensure a certain proportion of young candidates.

6. Is there a caucus or network of young parliamentarians within parliament?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details on the caucus or network of young parliamentarians:

Name of group _____

Formal^e or informal^f _____

Year established (if known) _____

7. Is there a caucus or network dealing with youth issues within parliament?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

Name of group _____

Formal^g or informal^h _____

Year established (if known) _____

8. Are there any parliamentary bodies dealing with youth issues? (These may deal with other issues simultaneously – like a committee/commission on women, youth, and sports)

Yes No

If yes, please answer the following questions:

What is the nature of the parliamentary body or bodies?

| Type | Yes | No |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Standing committee ⁱ | | |
| Ad hoc committee | | |
| Other bodys | | |
| If other , please specify | | |
| _____ | | |

Please provide details on the parliamentary body or bodies:

Name of body _____

Chair (name, sex, age) _____

Size (number of members) _____

Number of men members _____

Number of women members _____

Number of members below the age of 45 _____

e. Formal being affiliated to parliament.

f. Informal being not affiliated to parliament.

g. Formal being affiliated to parliament.

h. Informal being not affiliated to parliament.

i. Parliamentary commission/committee or subcommission/subcommittee, etc.

9. Please provide data on political party affiliation of parliamentarians per age group and sex.

| Party name | Sex | 18–20 | 21–30 | 31–40 | 41–45 | 46–50 | 51–60 | 61–70 | 71–80 | 81–90 | 91+ |
|------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 1. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | M | | | | | | | | | | |
| | F | | | | | | | | | | |

If necessary, please insert additional rows (or add additional pages).

10. Is there a youth parliament in your country?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

Name _____

Formal^j or informal^k (please explain) _____

Targeted age group (for example, “under 25” or “ages 18–30”) _____

Size (number of members) _____

Number of boys/young men members _____

Number of girls/young women members _____

Process for selecting members (open vote, nomination, etc.) _____

Purpose (stated goals) _____

Activities and frequency _____

Website (if one exists) _____

Other information _____

j. Formal being affiliated to parliament.

k. Informal being not affiliated to parliament.

Annex 4




List of respondents

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Afghanistan (upper house) | Finland | Norway | Uruguay (lower and upper houses) |
| Albania | France (lower and upper houses) | Oman (lower house) | Venezuela |
| Algeria (lower and upper houses) | Gabon (lower house) | Paraguay (lower and upper houses) | Vietnam |
| Andorra | Germany (lower and upper houses) | Peru | Zambia |
| Argentina (lower and upper houses) | Greece | Philippines (lower and upper houses) | Zimbabwe (lower and upper houses) |
| Australia (lower and upper houses) | Hungary | Poland (lower and upper houses) | |
| Austria (lower and upper houses) | Iceland | Portugal | Data collected from parliamentary websites and other sources: |
| Bahrain | India (lower and upper houses) | Qatar | Afghanistan (lower house) |
| Bangladesh | Indonesia | Republic of Korea | Armenia |
| Belarus (upper house) | Ireland (lower and upper houses) | Romania (lower house) | Azerbaijan |
| Belgium (lower and upper houses) | Israel | Russian Federation (upper house) | Belarus (lower house) |
| Bhutan (lower house) | Italy (lower house) | Rwanda (lower and upper houses) | Bhutan (upper house) |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina (lower and upper houses) | Japan (lower and upper houses) | San Marino | Cambodia (upper house) |
| Brazil (lower and upper houses) | Kenya (upper house) | Sao Tomé and Príncipe | Canada (upper house) |
| Bulgaria | Kuwait | Senegal | Chile (upper house) |
| Burundi (lower and upper houses) | Kyrgyzstan | Serbia | Dominican Republic (lower and upper houses) |
| Cabo Verde | Latvia | Seychelles | Ethiopia (lower house) |
| Cambodia (lower house) | Lebanon | Singapore | Gabon (upper house) |
| Cameroon (lower house) | Lithuania | Slovenia (lower house) | Gambia |
| Canada (lower and upper houses) | Luxembourg | Somalia | Georgia |
| Chad | Malaysia (lower and upper houses) | South Africa (lower house) | Ghana |
| Chile (lower house) | Malta | Spain (lower and upper houses) | Guatemala |
| China | Mauritius | Sri Lanka | Haiti (lower and upper houses) |
| Costa Rica | Micronesia | Sudan (lower house) | Iran |
| Cote d'Ivoire | Monaco | Suriname | Iraq |
| Croatia | Mongolia | Sweden | Italy (lower house) |
| Cuba | Montenegro | Switzerland (lower and upper houses) | Kazakhstan (lower and upper houses) |
| Cyprus | Morocco (lower house) | Thailand | Romania (upper house) |
| Czech Republic (lower and upper houses) | Mozambique | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | Russian Federation (lower house) |
| Democratic Republic of Congo (lower house) | Myanmar (lower and upper houses) | Trinidad and Tobago (lower and upper houses) | Slovakia |
| Denmark | Namibia (lower and upper house) | Tunisia | Solomon Islands |
| Ecuador | Netherlands (lower and upper houses) | Tuvalu | Syrian Arab Republic |
| Equatorial Guinea (lower house) | New Zealand (lower house) | Uganda | Timor-Leste |
| Estonia | Nicaragua | United Arab Emirates | United Republic of Tanzania |
| | Nigeria (lower and upper houses) | United Kingdom (lower and upper houses) | United States of America (lower and upper houses) |
| | Niger | | |



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