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# Equality in politics

## Enhancing youth representation and participation





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# Youth participation in national parliaments





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# Why youth participation?

## Democracy, demography, efficiency

- The need to respond to a reality: young people have an **impact on/for democracy**
- Restoring young people's **trust, engagement and belonging**
- Changing the political landscape/ **rejuvenating democracy**
- Young people, like women, are a politically "**excluded majority**" (Joshi, 2014).
- **1.2 billion** people are aged 15 to 24 on the planet, about one fifth of the world's population. The global median age is 29.6 years.
- **57% of potential voters** are between the ages of 20 and 44 (esa.un.org)
- Improving inclusivity in **policy-making and legislation**
- Have a say as the **first impacted** by development challenges (economic crisis, unemployment, migration, global warming...)



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# The transformation brought by IPU

- Most attention had focused on young people as voters and as social movement activists as well as on mechanisms of policy consultation like youth councils and youth parliaments
- IPU brought in youth participation in terms of the need to elect and appoint more young people to political positions.



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# IPU's survey

- 128 parliaments surveyed in 2014 and 2015
- Monitor youth participation in parliament
- Gather data for MPs under 30, 40 and 45
- Gather sex disaggregated data
- Produce ranking and highlight regional trends
- Collect legal regulations to vote/run for office
- Analyze impact of electoral systems and quotas
- Follow youth in the legislative process
- Check out the engagement of youth with parliament



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# Youth participation in national parliaments 2016





# Key findings

In



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



**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.

## AGE

## 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.

### UNDER 30



1.6%

**1.9%**

1.9 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 30 – up from 1.6 per cent in 2014.

### UNDER 40



12.9%

**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



23.9%

**26%**

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

## SYSTEM

- 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.



**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.



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# Rankings

- Top IPU global rankings for **lower/single houses**
  - Sweden (12.3%) Ecuador (10.9%), Finland (10.5%), and Norway (10.1%) for MPs under 30
  - Denmark (41.3%), Andorra (39.3%) and Ecuador (38%) for MPs below 40
  - Oman (65.9%), Ethiopia (63.6%) and Andorra (60.7%) for MPs below 45
- Top IPU global rankings for **upper houses**
  - Bhutan for MPs under 30, 40 and 45 followed by Kenya for MPs under 30 and 40 and by Afghanistan for MPs under 45





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# Highlights

- **Regional trends:** Americas, Europe and Africa have the highest number of MPs under 30
- **Gender breakdown:** Male MPs outnumber women MPs in all age groups. 60:40 ratio among youngest MPs
- **Recent elections:** In nice countries, more than 50% of MPs elected were under 45
- **Population:** Inverse relationship between the size of a country's youth population and the number of its young MPs



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# Enhancing Youth Participation





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# What needs to be done

- **Appropriate policies:** quotas (reserved seats, legislated quotas) and PR system
- Rethinking **age restrictions** on running for office and aligning candidacy age with minimum voting age
- Political party to field more **young candidates**
- Particular strategies for **young candidates in their 20s and 30s** and for **young women candidates**



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# IPU's action

- Three Es:
  - **Electing** more young MPs: encouraging parliaments and political parties to adopt measures which clear the way for young candidates and young MPs into office, from changing mindsets to introducing quotas
  - **Empowering** young MPs to their fullest potential through capacity-building, international and national networking and exposure to the global stage on major issues
  - **Engaging** the wider youth population by reaching out beyond the walls of parliaments



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# What about the political process itself?

IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians held in Geneva in 2014:

- Democracy is in need of renewal: imbalance between the way that politics is being done today and the way young people are living.
- Political processes need more connectivity, dynamism, transparency, effectiveness and openness
- Politics have to deliver at last on promises of development, equity and equality.



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# Innovations

- E-Democracy and E-Participation to promote citizens' participation in public decision-making, “which impacts the well-being of society, in general, and the individual, in particular.”

Ex: The Citizens Foundation, Iceland

- to enable citizens to launch a regular dialogue with their elected representatives on an ongoing basis citywide through merging electronic democracy with machine learning algorithms and 3D gaming elements



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# Innovations

- **Liquid democracy:** a mixture of direct and indirect democracy for a decision-making process that allows every participant to choose how involved in this process s/he wants to be:
  - At every election, voters can either vote themselves or delegate their voting rights to a representative (or expert)
  - Citizens are not limited to taking just one decision for an entire legislative period, but can continuously take part in the decision-making process
- **Youth-led political parties:** new impact on socio-economic policies and principles



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# Thank You

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