Youth participation in national parliaments

10 years of empowering youth in parliament
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AGE

Global percentage of young MPs (men and women) by age category

UNDER 30
- 2014: 1.6%
- 2018: 2.2%
- 2020: 2.6%

UNDER 40
- 2014: 12.9%
- 2016: 14.2%
- 2018: 16.5%
- 2020: 17.5%

UNDER 45
- 2014: 23.9%
- 2016: 26%
- 2018: 28.1%
- 2020: 30.2%

2.6% of the world’s MPs are aged under 30 – Increase of 1% per cent since 2014.

17.5% of the world’s MPs are aged under 40 – Increase of 4.8% per cent since 2014.

30.2% of the world’s MPs are aged under 45 – Increase of 6.3% per cent since 2014.

Percentage of women in each age category of young MPs

UNDER 30: 1.1%
UNDER 40: 6.1%
UNDER 45: 9.8%

ELIGIBILITY

The age at which citizens are eligible to run for parliamentary office rarely coincides with the legal voting age

- 69% of countries impose a ‘waiting time’ between voting age and age of eligibility for office.
- 18 average: 28.6
- 45 average: 10.4 years.
- 17 average: 21.6
- 30 average: 3.5 years.

The waiting time is generally longer for upper than for single or lower chambers.

37% of chambers of parliament have no MPs under 30.

25% of the world’s single and lower chambers have no MPs aged under 30.

73% of the world’s upper chambers have no MPs aged under 30.

73 per cent of the world’s upper chambers have no MPs aged under 30.

Progression of number of young MPs towards the respective targets set by the IPU

IPU target: 15% of MPs under 30
IPU target: 35% of MPs under 40
IPU target: 45% of MPs under 45

Each target also calls for 50-50 gender parity

39% of chambers analysed have a committee whose name explicitly refers to “youth”.

16% of parliaments have a caucus of young MPs.
### Key findings

Youth participation in national parliaments

#### Top-ranking countries for parliamentarians under ages 30, 40 and 45 (single and lower chambers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Under age 30</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Under age 40</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Under age 45</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>Turkmenistan</td>
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<td>35.26</td>
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<td>Suriname</td>
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### Key findings

**Youth participation in national parliaments**

#### Top-ranking countries for parliamentarians under ages 30, 40 and 45 (upper chambers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Under age 30</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Under age 40</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Under age 45</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>3 Jamaica</td>
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<td>4 Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<td>4 Romania</td>
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<td>6 Myanmar</td>
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<td>7 Somalia</td>
<td>20.37</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>8 Colombia</td>
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<td>8 Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Netherlands (the)</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 Afghanistan</td>
<td>16.18</td>
<td>9 Somalia</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 South Africa</td>
<td>15.09</td>
<td>10 Mexico</td>
<td>29.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key findings
Youth participation in national parliaments

In addition to legal barriers, there are many others:

• Financial

• Mistrust

• Life-cycle challenges (education, family, career)
Recommendations
Youth participation in national parliaments

- **Eliminate barriers for young MPs**
  - Lower age of eligibility: Not too young to run
  - Policies and practices to address life-cycle challenges
  - More equitable campaign financing for young people

- **Prioritize special measures for youth**
  - Youth quotas
  - Youth Committees and Caucuses

- **Address double discrimination of young women**
  - Quotas that take gender into account
  - Implement Call to action on young women’s political participation
Recommendations
Youth participation in national parliaments

• **Empower young MPs**
  - Opportunities for leadership positions
  - Mentorship and training

• **Empower young people who aspire to be young MPs**
  - Create or strengthen youth wings in political parties
  - Open up parliament to youth perspectives in between elections
How IPU Can Help
Youth participation in national parliaments

- Trainings for newly-elected young MPs
- Mentorship programmes
- Technical support
  - Youth caucuses and networks
  - Legislative support for electoral reform
  - Policy guidelines
Thank You

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