



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Youth participation in parliament and democracy



Why is youth participation important?

- **Inclusivity**
- **Better Governance**
- **Democratic Rejuvenation**



Transforming youth participation

- 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.



Key challenges faced by young aspirants to political office

- Legal obstacles in 73% of countries
- Major financial challenges
- Cultural challenges
- Lack of access to elders' networks
- Politics are not always appealing to youth
- Young women facing additional specific challenges of direct and indirect discrimination, sexism and harassment and responsibilities within the family



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**
- **More research** to inform advocacy efforts





Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Youth participation in national parliaments: 2018



Inter-Parliamentary Union

Key findings



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:



GENDER



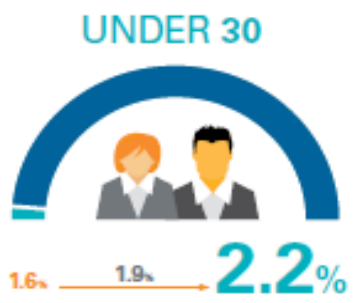
2.2% Young people under 30 make up only 2.2 per cent of the world's 45,000 MPs, up from 1.9% in 2016.

Just over 30 per cent of the world's single and lower chambers of parliament have no MPs aged under 30 as in 2016. **0%**

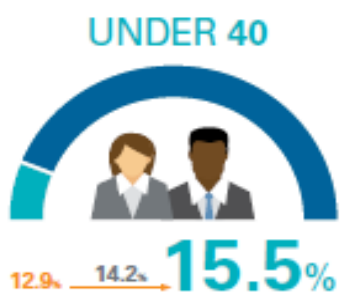
76% 76 per cent of the world's upper chambers of parliament have no MPs aged under 30 down from 80% in 2016.

AGE

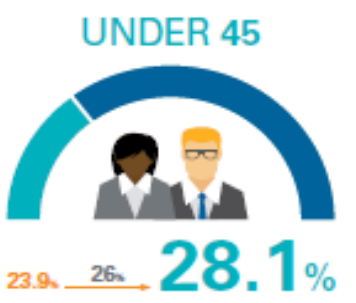
Youth participation in national parliaments 2018



2.2 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 30 - up from 1.6 per cent in 2014 and 1.9 per cent in 2016.



15.5 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 40 - up from 12.9 per cent in 2014 and 14.2 per cent in 2016.



28.1 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 45 - up from 23.9 per cent in 2014 and 26 per cent in 2016.

QUOTAS

As in 2016, in countries where youth quotas exist, the proportion of parliamentarians under 30 is much smaller than of the under-40 age group.

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



65 per cent of chambers impose a 'waiting time' between voting age and age of eligibility for office.



The age requirements for upper chambers range from 18 to 45, with an average of 27.9. **The average waiting time is 9.7 years.**



The age requirements for single and lower chambers range from 17 to 40 with an average of 21.4. **The average waiting time is 3.4 years.**

ELIGIBILITY



40.7% Less than half of the chambers analyzed have a **committee** or parliamentary body whose name explicitly refers to 'youth'.



72% Youth parliaments exist in 72 per cent 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 2018. Prepared in collaboration with IPU and UN Women. Photo credit: iStockphoto.com/Andreas Schell

Best performers

Young MPs under 30

- More than 10% in Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden and Finland
- Around 10% in the single or lower chambers of San Marino, the Republic of the Gambia, Montenegro and Venezuela
- The only upper chamber approaching that level is Bhutan, at 9.1%

Young MPs under 40

- 40% in Denmark, Ukraine and Andorra
- In upper chambers: 54% in Bhutan, 27% in Kenya and 20% in Somalia

Young MPs under 45

- Over 60% in Ukraine, Ethiopia and Andorra
- In upper chambers: More than 80% in Bhutan and 40% in Kenya and Afghanistan





Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

From words to action: A target for youth participation in parliament!

Youth target: Uniting for a common goal

- IPU has called for more young parliamentarians
- The Forum of Young Parliamentarians proposed to make this call for action more concrete
- Having a common target for us all to work towards was identified as a priority
- Targets for representation are often used by parliaments and have had positive results (ex. for women, minorities, indigenous peoples etc.)



Key questions

How to identify a target?

What to take into account?

What proportion? Proportions of young people fluctuate
between countries and over time

What age?

What should accompany the target?

What would we find out if we looked into existing practices
for guidance?



Existing quotas – National Level

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.

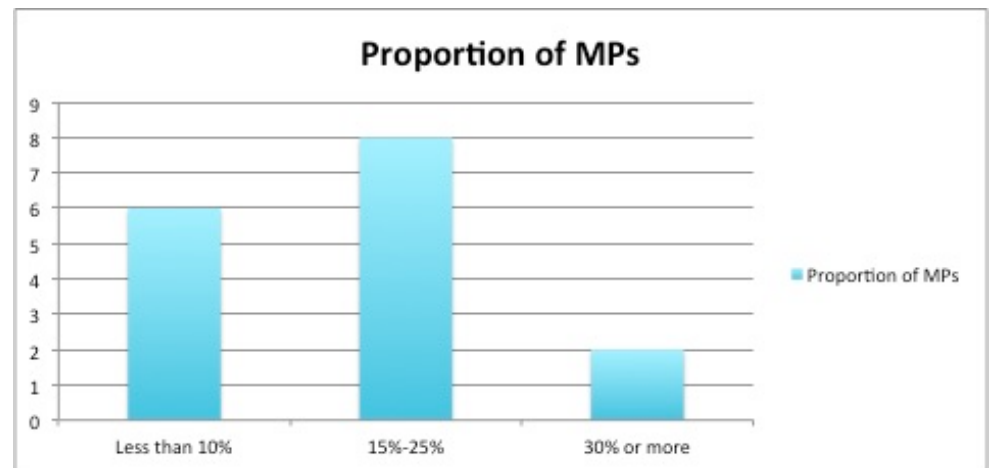
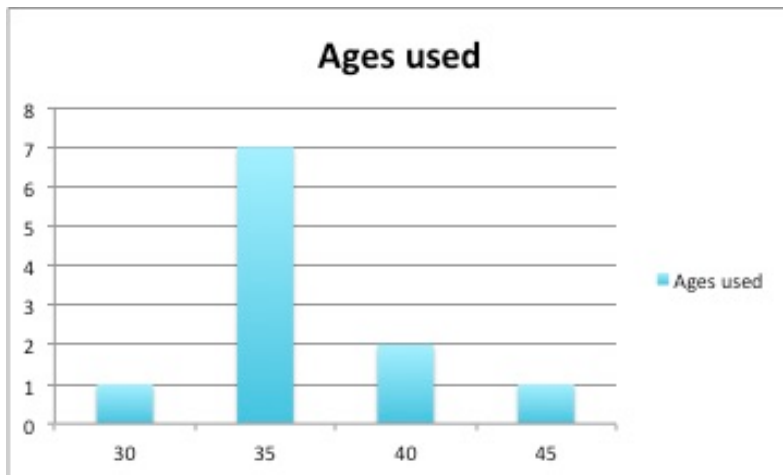
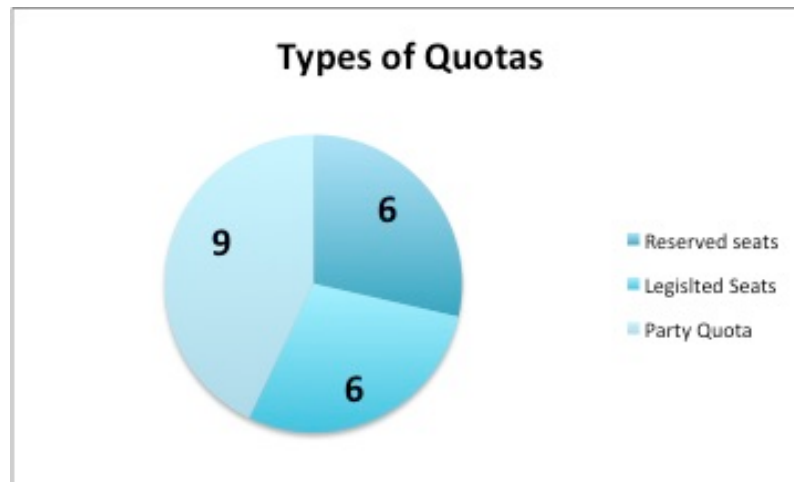
*50% of proportional representation lists must come from different sectors, including youth.

**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.

Quotas



Quotas – National Level

- Costa Rica, Ecuador, Hungary, Liberia, Mozambique, Peru, Romania and Vietnam also have reported having youth quotas, often at the party level.
- Quotas have come in the form of
 - Reserved seats
 - Voluntary party quotas
 - Legislated quotas

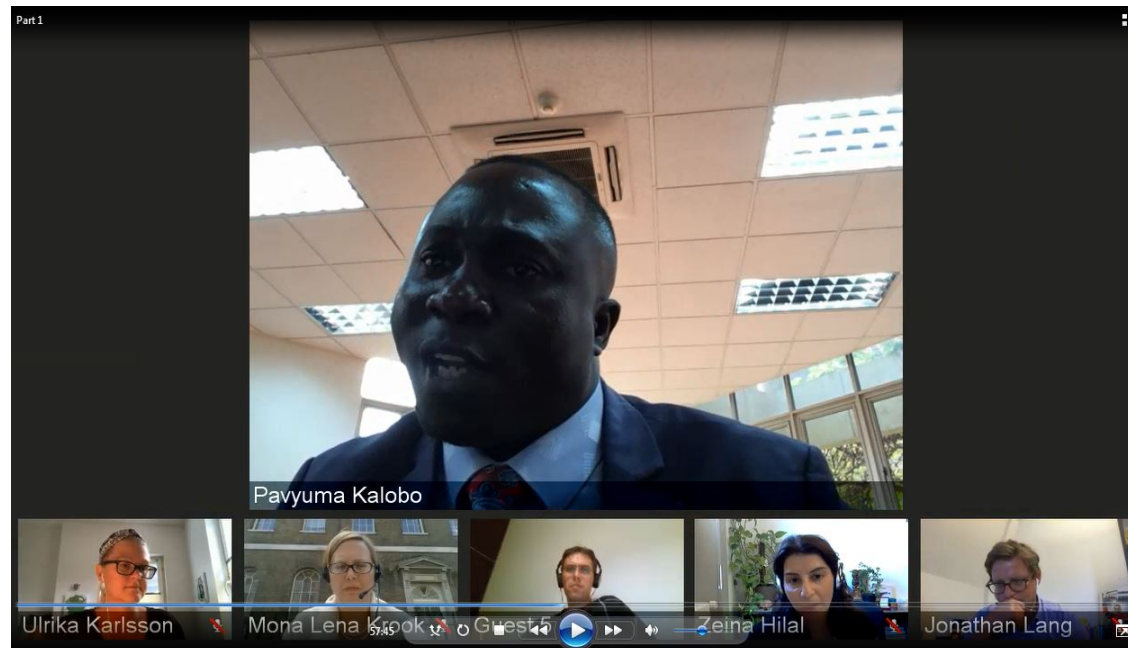
Quotas – Regional Level

- At the regional level, the European Youth Forum and International IDEA have recommended quotas of 25% for young people under 35 to be Members of the European Parliament



Youth target: Uniting for a common goal

- IPU carried out consultations with young MPs, experts and academics
- Interviews and in virtual conferences
- A summary is in the 2018 Report on Youth Participation in National Parliaments



Youth target: Uniting for a common goal

Recommendations from consultations

- Take into account the size of the youth population at country level when establishing an international youth target by setting targets suitable for small, medium and large youth populations
- Provide for different age targets (under 30, under 40, under 45)
- Incorporate a gender parity provision as part of any international youth target
- Give a target date

Youth target: Uniting for a common goal

3 targets identified based on the proportion of young people in the population according to the following three age groups:

- Target of a minimum of **15% of young MPs under 30** corresponding to the proportion of people aged between 20 and 29 in the global population (18%);
- Target of a minimum of **35% of young MPs under 40**, corresponding to the proportion of people aged between 20 and 39 in the global population (38%); and
- Target of a minimum of **45% of young MPs under 45**, corresponding to the proportion of people aged between 20 and 44 in the global population (48%).

Youth target: Uniting for a common goal

- Each target provided for gender parity of 50 per cent young women and 50 per cent young men.
- Each country should identify what pertinent strategies and measures it would put in place to meet the targets, taking into account its own national specificities.
- Target year 2035
- Launch a campaign in 2019



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

What else is IPU doing?

Participation @ IPU Assemblies

Amendments to IPU statutes and rules for more young MPs

Objective:

To gradually reach an overall minimum proportion of 25 per cent of young MPs at IPU Assemblies

Incentive 1:

A special segment for young MPs is set up for the General Debate during IPU Assemblies. A list of speakers is opened and reserved exclusively for young MPs.

Incentive 2: Members that include a young woman or man MP below the age of 45 may register one additional member on their national delegation

National Activities for youth and young MPs

How we can help:

- Trainings for newly elected young MPs
- Mentorship programmes for young MPs
- National campaigns, legislative drafting, electoral reform
- Setting up youth caucuses
- Helping parliaments provide youth perspectives to parliamentary work





Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Thank You

Zeina Hilal
Manager
Youth Participation Programme
[**zh@ipu.org**](mailto:zh@ipu.org)