

Women and other under- represented groups Working Group

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1. Members

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Only when every candidate has:

- (1) equal opportunity to enter the political race
- (2) equal motivation and social support
- (3) equal wage and employment benefits
- (4) equal power and status on the job
- (5) equal opportunity to be respected in the performance of her or his duties

will politics be gender fair

2. Research question

- Can FPTP adequately incorporate fair representation for women and minorities?
- How can we improve the representation of women and under-represented groups in the Ontario legislature?

3. Main issues

- Why does the representation of women and other groups matter?
 - Equal chance of participation
 - Representation of different interests
 - Value of diversity and inclusiveness

3. Main issues

- What does under-representation mean?

	% in Ontario (2001 census)	% in legislature (2006)
Women	50.6 (2006 census)	24..3
Immigrants*	26.8	17.5
Visible minorities*	19.1	7.8
Francophones	4.7	NA
Aboriginal peoples	1.7	NA

*minimum numbers only.

Membership information depends entirely on data gathered through publicly-available sources.

3. Main issues

- Which values are related to the representation of women and other groups?
- Which groups are we concerned about?
- Importance of culture as well
 - Education and opportunity
 - Behaviour of political parties
- Pace of change

4. Research summary

- Most of the research is on the inclusion of women
 - Electoral system can provide incentives for parties to include women
 - Importance of culture
 - In general, PR systems have a better record on women's representation than does FPTP

4. Research summary

Top 10 national legislatures, by gender representation and electoral system, 2005

Country	% women	Electoral system
Sweden	45.3	PR, multi-member
Norway	38.2	PR, multi-member
Finland	37.5	PR, multi-member
Denmark	36.9	Mixed
Netherlands	36.7	PR multi-member
Spain	36.0	PR, multi-member
Belgium	34.7	PR, multi-member
Austria	33.9	PR multi-member
Germany	32.8	Mixed
Iceland	30.2	PR, multi-member
<i>Canada</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>Single Member Plurality</i>

5. Future directions

- Questions:
 - How can we achieve demographic representation when looking at electoral systems?
 - Where is the accountability to make the system more accessible for under-represented groups?
- Citizens Assembly should discuss:
 - Whether we would like to set aside seats for particular groups of candidates
 - Whether quotas for certain types of candidates would be a good idea

Questions and answers