

# APPENDIX III

## GLOBAL REVIEW OF GOOD PRACTICES

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## INTRODUCTION

On March 22, 2016, the Committee on Citizen Relations unanimously adopted a self-initiated order on women's place in politics.<sup>1</sup>

In order to better define the order, the Committee members requested that a summary be produced describing the main obstacles to women's active participation in politics. They also wanted information on best practices used in other parliaments comparable to the National Assembly for overcoming those obstacles.

This document describes measures regarding four spheres of action:

- the electoral system and political financing;
- women's interest in politics;
- political parties; and
- parliamentary work.

## A LOOK AT THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Each parliament has its own specific realities, in particular concerning its political structures (type of regime, rules of procedure, party system, etc.), representatives (number of parliamentarians, socio-demographic profile, etc.) and relationship with social, political and institutional cultures. The notion of “comparable parliament” therefore leaves much room for interpretation.

However, it is pertinent to choose the parliaments that are the top performers as regards women's representation. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) collects this information and updates it regularly.<sup>2</sup>

The following table shows the 20 countries with the highest percentage of women parliamentarians as of December 1, 2016. It also shows whether a special measure is in effect to encourage women's representation in parliament. Such measures are of three types: seats reserved for women, legislative quotas and voluntary measures adopted by one or more political parties.

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1. The information and documents associated with the self-initiated order are available online: <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/travaux-parlementaires/commissions/crc/mandats/Mandat-34995/index.html>.

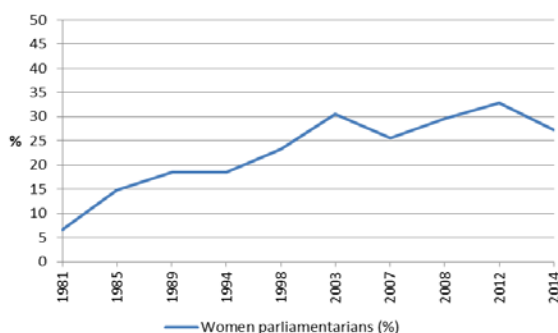
2. Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments* [online]: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (consulted on February 6, 2017).

# THE 20 COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2016

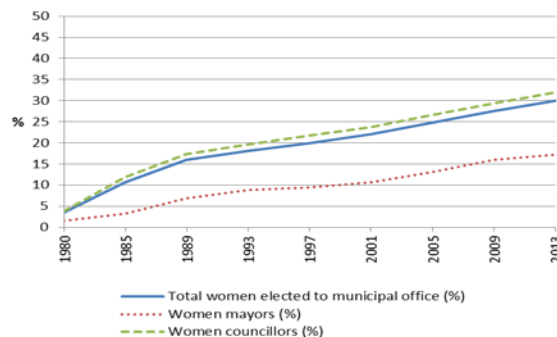
Rank	Country	Date of general election	Number of seats occupied on Dec. 1, 2016	Number of women Members on Dec. 1, 2016	Percentage of women	Special measure	Reserved seats	Legislative quotas	Voluntary measures by political parties
1	Rwanda	Sept. 16, 2013	80	51	63.8%	Yes	Yes		
2	Bolivia	Oct. 12, 2014	130	69	53.1%	Yes		Yes	Yes
3	Cuba	Feb. 3, 2013	612	299	48.9%	No			
4	Iceland	Oct. 29, 2016	63	30	47.6%	Yes			Yes
5	Nicaragua	Nov. 6, 2016	92	42	45.7%	Yes		Yes	Yes
6	Sweden	Sept. 14, 2014	349	152	43.6%	Yes			Yes
7	Senegal	July 1, 2012	150	64	42.7%	Yes		Yes	
8	Mexico	June 7, 2015	500	212	42.4%	Yes		Yes	Yes
9	South Africa	May 7, 2014	400	168	42.0%	Yes			Yes
10	Ecuador	Feb. 17, 2013	137	57	41.6%	Yes		Yes	
11	Finland	April 19, 2015	200	83	41.5%	Yes			Yes
12	Namibia	Nov. 29, 2014	104	43	41.3%	Yes			Yes
13	Mozambique	Oct. 15, 2014	250	99	39.6%	Yes			Yes
"	Norway	Sept. 9, 2013	169	67	39.6%	Yes			Yes
15	Belgium	May 25, 2014	150	59	39.3%	Yes		Yes	
16	Spain	June 26, 2016	350	137	39.1%	Yes		Yes	Yes
17	Ethiopia	May 24, 2015	547	212	38.8%	Yes			Yes
18	Timor-Leste	July 7, 2012	65	25	38.5%	Yes		Yes	
19	Denmark	June 18, 2015	179	67	37.4%	No			
20	The Netherlands	Sept. 12, 2012	150	56	37.3%	Yes			Yes

On February 1, 2017, 36 of the 124 Members serving in the Québec National Assembly, that is, 29 percent of the House, were women. That proportion corresponds to the 50th place in the world ranking for women's representation. For information purposes, the following graphs illustrate the changes in women's political representation in general and municipal elections in Québec since the 1980s.

PROPORTION OF WOMEN ELECTED IN QUÉBEC  
GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1981-2014



PROPORTION OF WOMEN ELECTED IN QUÉBEC  
MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1980-2013



## GENDER-SENSITIVE PARLIAMENTS

The notion of “gender-sensitive parliament” is gaining ground on the international scene. According to the IPU, it refers to “a parliament that responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its composition, structures, operations, methods and work”. Such a parliament removes obstacles to women’s representation and serves as a role model for society in general.

In 2011, the IPU published a global review of good practices regarding gender sensitivity and, in 2012, it unanimously adopted the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments at its 127th Assembly in Québec City.

The Plan has seven action areas:

1. Increase the number of women in parliament and achieve equality in participation.
2. Strengthen gender equality legislation and policy.
3. Mainstream gender equality throughout all parliamentary work.
4. Institute or improve gender-sensitive parliamentary infrastructure and culture.
5. Ensure that responsibility for gender equality is shared by all parliamentarians—men and women.
6. Encourage political parties to be champions of gender equality.
7. Enhance the gender sensitivity of, and gender equality among, parliamentary staff.

In late fall 2016, the IPU published a self-assessment tool designed to “help parliaments wishing to evaluate how gender-sensitive they are, assess their current practices and policies, identify possible areas for reform, plan for change, and establish mechanisms to monitor progress”.<sup>3</sup>

The IPU’s observations can provide relevant points of comparison on progress within Québec’s political institutions with respect to women’s representation.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016, p. 4.

4. Wherever possible, the ideas presented on the following pages are accompanied by examples, most of which are taken from the IPU’s various publications. A parliament’s performance is specified only if it is between 1 and 50 in the global ranking. If a parliament’s performance is not mentioned, then it ranks lower than Québec at this time.

## 1. MEASURES REGARDING THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND POLITICAL FINANCING

Women's representation in politics is studied by measuring various institutional factors, such as the political regime and system (parliamentary, presidential, etc.), state structure (unitary or federal) and parliamentary structure (unicameral or bicameral).

Many studies identify barriers resulting from the electoral and political financing systems. They also describe various measures in parliaments around the world for countering the negative effects that these factors have on women's representation.

The measures presented in this section concern

- the voting system;
- renewal of the House;
- nomination meetings;
- electoral and political financing;
- legislative quotas;
- coercive measures related to electoral representation targets; and
- incentives related to electoral representation targets.

## 1.1 THE VOTING SYSTEM

Québec has a first-past-the-post electoral system at the provincial and municipal levels. This type of system is often considered an obstacle to women's political representation. In contrast, a proportional representation system is said to be more favourable. However, there is no consensus on this in recent studies.<sup>5</sup>

1.1 THE VOTING SYSTEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt a voting system likely to foster socio-demographic diversity among parliamentarians.</li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• According to a comparative study covering the years 1992–2010, proportional systems seem to be more advantageous to women, followed by mixed systems and majority systems.<sup>6</sup></li><li>• (New Zealand—ranked 39th—31.4 percent W). The proportion of women Members increased following the establishment of a mixed voting system with a proportional component, but subsequently stabilized around 30 percent.</li><li>• (Victoria State, Australia). Fewer women were elected following the establishment of a proportional voting system for the Legislative Council (DGEQ, 2014, p. 52).</li></ul>
Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Québec). Québec's Chief Electoral Officer (Directeur général des élections du Québec or DGEQ) studied the impact of various factors, including the voting system, on women's representation in Québec politics, drawing the conclusion that it is not necessary to reform the voting system to significantly increase the percentage of women in the National Assembly (DGEQ, 2014, p. 85, <i>French only</i>).</li></ul>

5. Erin Virgint (2016), *Electoral Systems and Women's Representation* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament) [online]: <http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2016-30-e.html> (consulted on January 31, 2017).

6. Jennifer Rosen (2013), "The Effects of Political Institutions on Women's Political Representation: A Comparative Analysis from 1992–2010", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2, pp. 306–321.

## 1.2 RENEWAL OF THE HOUSE

According to some studies, the low rate of parliamentary renewal is an obstacle to increasing the percentage of women in political institutions. Men's overrepresentation persists because large numbers of them run again and win in each election. Some states have set rules in this respect in order to foster the renewal of political institutions.

In Québec, there is no limit on the number of consecutive terms that an individual can serve. In the last four general elections, 86 to 93 percent of parliamentarians sought re-election. On average, 70 percent of those women and men were successful.

1.2 RENEWAL OF THE HOUSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limit the number of consecutive terms that parliamentarians can serve.</li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (United States). Some states limit the number of consecutive political terms.</li></ul>
Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Studies cast doubt on the positive effects of this type of measure on women's representation because it requires women, like men, to leave office after a set period.</li></ul>

## 1.3 NOMINATION MEETINGS

It is reputedly difficult to persuade women to run for office, which means that their decision to run comes later in the game. In the meantime, nomination meetings take place across Québec and the number of available electoral divisions decreases. For example, an early nomination meeting was once held nearly a year before the general election. In such a context, the ambitions of people who later consider running may be compromised.

In Québec, there is no legislation on the timing of political parties' nomination meetings, which precede the official filing of the nomination with the Chief Electoral Officer. Moreover, frequently, no nomination meetings are held. This situation tends to favour people who already have a well-established network of supporters.

1.3 NOMINATION MEETINGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make nomination meetings compulsory.</li><li>• Place limits on the period when nomination meetings can be held.</li><li>• Advertise the nomination meeting period in the media.</li></ul>

## 1.4 ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL FINANCING

There are many costs associated with political activity, at every stage of involvement. The issue of electoral and political financing is all the more crucial given that women's incomes are generally lower than men's. In such cases, financial constraints can become real obstacles.

The rules governing electoral and political financing can have an impact on whether some women will be able to get past the nomination stage, become candidates, run campaigns, be elected and shoulder their duties appropriately. Indeed, in some countries, political parties are required to make a financial contribution to the cause of women's participation in politics.

1.4 ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL FINANCING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perform an in-depth analysis of the effects of current electoral and political financing on women's participation in politics. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ financing expenditures incurred for nomination meetings;</li><li>◦ financing political parties' candidacies;</li><li>◦ financing independent candidacies;</li><li>◦ financing and support measures for parties, at both the Québec and municipal levels; and</li><li>◦ financing and support measures for independent elected officials, at both the Québec and municipal levels.</li></ul></li><li>• Require parties to make a financial contribution to the cause of women's participation in politics. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ by reserving part of the public funding they receive for actions fostering women's participation in politics; and</li><li>◦ by reserving part of their annual budgets for actions fostering women's participation in politics.</li></ul></li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Parties must allocate 3 percent of their annual budget to training, promotion and developing women's political skills (IPU, 2015, p. 14).</li><li>• (Italy—ranked 42nd—31.0 percent W, South Korea, Brazil). Parties must allocate 5–10 percent of the public funding they receive to actions fostering women's participation in politics (IPU, 2015, p. 14).</li></ul>
Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Québec). In 2007, the DGEQ studied various financial incentives designed to increase the number of women and of people from ethnocultural communities in politics.<sup>7</sup></li></ul>

7. DGEQ (2007), *Les modalités d'un mode de scrutin mixte compensatoire* (Québec: Directeur général des élections du Québec), pp. 147–204.



## 1.5 LEGISLATIVE QUOTAS

Legislative quotas are prescribed by law or enshrined in the Constitution. They take different forms around the world, from extremely flexible to highly restrictive. The gender quotas database<sup>8</sup> covers over 50 countries that apply quotas in one form or another in their lower chambers.

There is no such measure in effect in Québec. However, this approach is proposed regularly to guarantee that at least some women are present in democratic institutions.

### 1.5 LEGISLATIVE QUOTAS

- Reserve a certain number of seats for women.
- Set a minimum percentage or number of women candidates for each political party.
- Set a maximum percentage or number of candidates of the same gender for each political party.
- Accompany these targets with coercive measures or incentives, or both.
- Set these targets in a permanent, temporary or progressive (changing over time) manner.

#### Examples of measures

- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). The Chamber has 24 seats reserved for women, two seats reserved for youth and 53 open seats (IPU, 2014, p. 3).
- (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Fifty percent of each political party's candidates for federal and state legislative elections must be women. Both titular and substitute members must be of the same gender. The National Electoral Institute reviews women's nominations to ensure that they are not confined to unwinnable electoral divisions (IPU, 2016b, p. 4).
- (Spain—ranked 16th—39.1 percent W). By law, neither gender can make up more than 60 percent of a list of candidates (IPU, 2016b, p. 7).
- (Tanzania—ranked 23rd—36.6 percent W). In the National Assembly, 30 percent of the seats are reserved for women (IPU, 2016b, p. 4).
- (Zimbabwe—ranked 38th—31.5 percent W). The new Constitution adopted in 2013 gave the National Assembly 60 additional seats reserved for women. This temporary measure applies to the 2013 and 2018 elections (IPU, 2014, p. 4).
- (Albania). The Electoral Code provides that parliamentarians resigning their seats and representing a party that has not complied with a quota of 30 percent of candidates of each gender must be replaced by candidates of the under-represented gender (IPU, 2014, p. 6).
- (Venezuela). Since 2015, a law requires that lists of titular and substitute candidates comply with a 50 percent quota, alternating between men and women (IPU, 2016b, p. 4).

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8. IDEA, IPU and Stockholm University, *Gender Quotas Database* [online]: <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas> (consulted on August 15, 2016).

## 1.6 COERCIVE MEASURES RELATED TO ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION TARGETS

Some countries have set electoral representation targets and accompanied them with coercive measures.

1.6 COERCIVE MEASURES RELATED TO ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION TARGETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt temporary or permanent coercive measures related to target numbers of running or elected candidates. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ if a party does not attain a given target for women candidates, reduce the public financing it receives;</li><li>○ if a party does not attain a given target for women candidates, reduce the promotional broadcast time it receives; and</li><li>○ if a party does not attain a given target for women elected, reduce the public financing it receives.</li></ul></li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Belgium—ranked 15th—39.3 percent W). Since 2002, a law requires parties to run an equal number of men and women candidates. If the first two spots on a list are occupied by people of the same gender, the list is rejected (IPU, 2011, p. 13).</li><li>• (Portugal—ranked 27th—34.8 percent W). If a party's list contains less than one third women, its public financing is reduced (IPU, 2011, p. 13).</li></ul>

## 1.7 INCENTIVES RELATED TO ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION TARGETS

Other countries have instead opted for incentives.

1.7 INCENTIVES RELATED TO ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION TARGETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt temporary or permanent incentives related to target numbers of running or elected candidates. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ if a party attains or surpasses a given target for women candidates, increase the public financing it receives;</li><li>○ if a party attains or surpasses a given target for women candidates, increase the promotional broadcast time it receives;</li><li>○ if a party attains or surpasses a given target for women elected, increase the public financing it receives.</li></ul></li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Bolivia—ranked 2nd—53.1 percent W; Ethiopia—ranked 17th—38.8 percent W and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Georgia, Mali, Niger). Parties that run a certain number of women candidates receive greater public financing.</li></ul>

## 2. MEASURES REGARDING WOMEN'S INTEREST IN POLITICS

Today's Québec is considered an egalitarian society. Women have become involved in the public sphere. Their level of education is equivalent to men's, or even higher. At least theoretically, they have access to the same positions as men. Overtly expressed discrimination against women aspiring to power is increasingly rare.

Yet, persistent stereotypes and prejudices can create obstacles to women's involvement.

The measures presented in this section are designed to encourage women to get involved in politics. They mainly concern

- gender construction by society, culture and the media;
- political socialization opportunities;
- positive recognition of women's political involvement;
- training and support for current and potential women candidates; and
- protection from gender-based electoral and political violence.

## 2.1 GENDER CONSTRUCTION BY SOCIETY, CULTURE AND THE MEDIA

According to numerous studies, gender-based socialization is a major obstacle to equal representation of men and women. The dominant forms of education and modes of socialization predispose men, more than women, to aspire to power and to hold political office. Socialization is a complex process of identity construction. It is based in particular on the social values, norms and representations conveyed through family, school and the media.

Measures designed to counteract these effects are already being applied in Québec. They are championed by the Secrétariat à la condition féminine and the Conseil du statut de la femme, in particular.

### 2.1 GENDER CONSTRUCTION BY SOCIETY, CULTURE AND THE MEDIA

- Adopt legislation, regulations and policies to protect gender equality.
- Establish systems to mainstream the notion of gender into government budgets and monitoring mechanisms.
- Examine government legislation and policies prior to passage to identify their effects on gender equality (e.g. gender-based analysis).
- Offer pedagogical and intervention tools free of gendered stereotypes to people working with children and youth (in childcare centres, schools, recreational groups, etc.).
- Raise the media's awareness of their influence regarding gender-equal representation, including with respect to women's representation in politics.
  - Give an actual or symbolic "best egalitarian media" award for press coverage during an election campaign.

#### Examples of measures

- (Sweden—ranked 6th—43.6 percent W). Since 1988, the principle of equality is considered when government budgets are being prepared. Such budgets are accompanied by an appendix that breaks down the division of economic resources between the genders (IPU, 2011, p. 34).
- (South Africa—ranked 9th—42.0 percent W). From 1995 to 2000, a "Women's Budget Initiative" was prepared through a partnership between parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups. Government appropriations were analyzed from a gender perspective. The project came to an end owing to a lack of resources (IPU, 2011, p. 34).
- (Belgium—ranked 15th—39.3 percent W). Since 2007, a law requires that part of public funding be allocated to promoting gender equality. It also requires that the consequences of all new measures be evaluated. It obliges the federal government to set strategic gender equality goals in all areas under its jurisdiction, and to have actions assessed (IPU, 2011, p. 31).
- (Spain—ranked 16th—39.1 percent W). Since 2003, a law has dictated the procedure for assessing the gender impact of legislation. Budgets contain an assessment of their gender impacts (IPU, 2011, p. 36).

## 2.2 POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

From childhood, citizenship education programs introduce young people to the mechanisms of democratic life.

In adulthood, political socialization opportunities can have a positive influence on women's involvement in a wide range of fields: culture, health, environment, media, local issues, Aboriginal communities, etc. In such environments, many women gain decision-making experience and develop their network of contacts. Their involvement can lead them to become active in representative bodies.

### 2.2 POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Support initiatives designed to introduce children to democratic life:
  - promote girls' participation; and
  - encourage gender balance in class councils and youth parliaments.
- Encourage and support political socialization opportunities where young people are involved:
  - encourage gender balance on boards of directors and in other decision-making bodies where young people are involved.
- Encourage and support political mentoring activities for girls and women.

## 2.3 POSITIVE RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Many initiatives aim to counteract the negative effects of gender-based socialization. They offer various successful role models for girls and women, in addition to showcasing their contributions to democratic life.

### 2.3 POSITIVE RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

- Conduct an awareness campaign on the theme of women's involvement in politics.
- Celebrate women in politics and make them role models in communications materials and the media.
- Draw positive attention to women's concrete contributions to politics:
  - give awards to individuals or groups that have provided exemplary support for or contributions to women's representation in politics; and
  - give awards to women who have had outstanding political careers.

#### Examples of measures

- (Québec). Since 2013, the Union des municipalités du Québec annually awards the [Prix Francine-Ruest-Jutras](#), which recognizes women's excellence and leadership in municipal politics and local governance.

## 2.4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR CURRENT AND POTENTIAL WOMEN CANDIDATES

Family responsibilities and lack of financial resources are regularly cited as barriers to women's political involvement. Moreover, involvement in politics requires many intangible resources, such as self-confidence and public-speaking ability, which means it stems strongly from a feeling of political competency.

In Québec, training and support for current and potential women candidates are well developed. The [À égalité pour décider](#) financial assistance program aims to support projects designed to increase the number of women in decision-making positions and in local and regional halls of power. Over 435 projects have been funded since the program was created in 1999.<sup>9</sup>

Women's networks as well as issue tables are also working in this sphere in Québec. They establish forums for reflection and action on general and specific issues relating to women's place in politics, such as Aboriginal women's representation and women's presence in municipal politics.

### 2.4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR CURRENT AND POTENTIAL WOMEN CANDIDATES

- Support and promote training, coaching and mentoring programs for aspiring women candidates.
  - Ensure that the cost of access to these programs is not an obstacle to participation.
- Encourage and promote the networks, issue tables and other forums supporting the cause of women's participation in politics.
- Establish a permanent fund to support women wishing to engage in active political life.

#### Examples of measures

- (Namibia—ranked 12th—41.3 percent W and Lesotho, Sierra Leone, India, Japan). Measures have been established to foster women's involvement at the local level to create a ripple effect expanding to the national level (IPU, 2011, p. 15).
- (United States, Australia). Fund-raising networks provide financial support for women wishing to be candidates. However, they are associated with political stances (EMILY's List).
- (United States). The Center for American Women and Politics specializes in developing and implementing training programs for women:
  - Ready to Run (training program for women wishing to enter politics); and
  - NEW Leadership (political socialization program for young women).
- (Québec). Several groups offer training programs and support for current and potential women candidates.

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9. Secrétariat à la condition féminine [online]: <http://www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/?id=32> (consulted on August 15, 2016).

## 2.5 PROTECTION FROM GENDER-BASED ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

According to the National Democratic Institute (NDI), a non-governmental organization, violence against women in politics has three distinguishing characteristics:

- it targets women because of their gender;
- in its very form it can be gendered or gender-based; and
- its impact is to discourage women, in particular from being or becoming active in politics.<sup>10</sup>

Ways that gender-based political violence is expressed include threats, verbal or written intimidation, hate speech, physical attacks, destruction of property and other forms of assault. These acts of violence have many consequences on their victims: stress, concern for personal safety and that of those close to them, hindrance of their ability to perform their duties appropriately, fear of expressing their opinion freely, and even questioning of their involvement in politics.

### 2.5 PROTECTION FROM GENDER-BASED ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

- Document the phenomenon of gender-based electoral and political violence.
- Set up mechanisms to protect against this type of violence.
- Encourage victims to denounce this type of violence.
- Condemn this type of violence publicly when it occurs.

#### Examples of measures

- (Bolivia—ranked 2nd—53.1 percent W). Since 2012, there has been a law against gender-based harassment and violence in politics. It is designed to protect women from electoral and political violence perpetrated against them. The law imposes sanctions on those guilty of such acts. Since 2016, people with backgrounds of violence against women have been prohibited from running for political office (IPU, 2016b, p. 9).
- (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Since 2013, electoral legislation and the law on violence against women have covered cases of violence against women in politics and in the electoral process (IPU, 2014, p. 6).
- (Kenya). A team of researchers studied political violence against women, its warning signs and solutions to it. During the 2013 elections, an incident report gathering tool made it possible to locate victims of violence and deliver rapid support (IPU, 2014, pp. 7–8).

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10. IPU, “Sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians”, *Issues Brief*, October 2016, p. 2.

### 3. MEASURES REGARDING POLITICAL PARTIES

In recent years, the research community has been closely following political parties' role with respect to women's political representation. Indeed, parties are now considered indispensable in the candidate recruitment and selection process.

In Québec, this is especially true at the provincial level. Since the 1960s, all of the parliamentarians who have served in the National Assembly have been elected under a partisan banner. However, parties are less important in the municipal realm, where they are present only in large cities.

The measures presented in this section concern political parties seeking to favour women's involvement. They mainly concern

- voluntary targets for women candidates;
- recruiting and selecting candidates;
- support for women candidates during the nomination process and in elections; and
- internal equality policies and action plans.



### 3.1 VOLUNTARY TARGETS FOR WOMEN CANDIDATES

Political parties are free to establish their own operating rules, and can set goals with respect to women candidates. Among the 20 countries with the highest rates of women parliamentarians, the IPU identifies 13 in which at least one political party has established such voluntary targets.

#### 3.1 VOLUNTARY TARGETS FOR WOMEN CANDIDATES

- Adopt temporary or permanent voluntary measures to increase the number of women among party candidates, such as
  - reserving a certain number of seats for women candidates;
  - reserving a certain proportion of seats for women in the pool of new candidates; and
  - favouring women candidates in so-called “safe” electoral divisions.

#### Examples of measures

- (Bolivia, Iceland, Nicaragua, Sweden, Mexico, South Africa, Finland, Namibia, Mozambique, Norway, Spain, Ethiopia, the Netherlands). In each of these 13 countries, which are among those with the highest rates of women's representation, at least one party has adopted voluntary targets for women candidates.
- (Sweden—ranked 6th—43.6 percent W). All parties have adopted special measures to increase the number of women in their internal structures (committees, internal boards, lists of candidates, etc.) (IPU, 2011, p. 81).
- (United Kingdom—ranked 49th—29.6 percent W). The Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats both have voluntary targets for women on lists of candidates: 50 percent and 40 percent, respectively (IPU, 2016, p. 7).
- (Australia—ranked 50th—28.7 percent W). The Australian Labour Party reserves 40 percent of the spots on its list of candidates for women, giving them a strong chance of being elected (IPU, 2014, p. 6).
- (Québec). The Québec solidaire party has adopted a voluntary target of 50 percent women on its list of candidates.

### 3.2 RECRUITING AND SELECTING CANDIDATES

According to various studies, a range of actions can favour the recruitment of women candidates.

#### 3.2 RECRUITING AND SELECTING CANDIDATES

- Hold awareness-raising and information campaigns for women as elections approach.
- Hold information sessions targeting women activists who are considering becoming candidates.
- Ask women directly to become candidates.
- Broaden recruitment networks to encompass sectors where women are more numerous.
- Ensure that there are women on recruitment and selection committees.
- Invite selection committees to adopt more diverse acquired experience assessment criteria for women and men.

### 3.3 SUPPORT FOR WOMEN CANDIDATES DURING THE NOMINATION PROCESS AND IN ELECTIONS

Studies stress parties' essential role in providing their women candidates with support, both during the nomination process and in elections.

#### 3.3 SUPPORT FOR WOMEN CANDIDATES DURING THE NOMINATION PROCESS AND IN ELECTIONS

- Identify the specific needs of women seeking nomination and the best ways of meeting them. For example:
  - allocate a budget to support people who have more limited financial means so they can cover nomination expenses;
  - help parents cover babysitting costs during the nomination process; and
  - fund-raise for women candidates.
- Identify women candidates' specific needs during election campaigns and the best ways of meeting them. For example:
  - hold training programs taking women candidates' specific needs into account;
  - establish mentoring programs matching new women candidates with experienced people; and
  - create support networks for women seeking election or elected.

### 3.4 INTERNAL EQUALITY POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

Finally, studies support the theory that an egalitarian party culture is necessary to guarantee lasting change in partisan organizations.

#### 3.4 INTERNAL EQUALITY POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

- Conduct an internal study to identify the party's strengths and weaknesses regarding gender equality. Identify the problems facing and real needs of the people concerned (paid staff, men and women activists, men and women candidates, etc.).
- Equip the party with a policy and strategic plan that set out its gender equality vision and goals. In particular, the policy could address the following:
  - family-work balance for activists;
  - forms of women's involvement in the party (discussion forums, duties within the party);
  - committee composition and the process for appointment to decision-making positions; and
  - the party's internal and external communications strategies.
- Assess the achievement of goals and perform follow-up through an appropriate monitoring mechanism.

## 4. MEASURES REGARDING PARLIAMENTARY WORK

When it comes to women's representation in politics, the spotlight generally swings to focus on the pre-election process. The obstacles that women meet along the way to attaining elected office are well documented.

In much research, parliamentarians' equality is reduced to the socio-demographic composition of the House. From that perspective, balanced representation of both genders would suffice for the institution to be egalitarian. Other analyses go further. They reveal that parliaments are not gender-neutral. Be it on the structural, material or cultural level, parliaments can, even in spite of themselves, hinder women's full participation in politics.

The IPU stresses the crucial role played by parliamentary institutions with respect to equality. It documents the phenomenon and provides parliaments that so desire with tools to become "gender-sensitive", in other words, to take both men's and women's needs and interests into account in their structures, operation, methods and actions.

The measures presented in this section are intended for the various parliamentary stakeholders wishing to establish an egalitarian culture in their workplace. They concern

- equality policies and action plans;
- the fight against discrimination and harassment;
- mainstreaming gender and equality issues in parliamentary work;
- family-work balance;
- men's involvement in the equality cause;
- discussion and action forums for women parliamentarians;
- integrating women into parliament and their acquisition of political experience; and
- awareness-raising and training for parliamentary staff.

## 4.1 EQUALITY POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

An essential step for any organization wishing to undertake gender equality actions is to assess the initial situation. A comprehensive review of how a parliament operates can clarify the strengths and weakness of the institution and open the way, if necessary, for reforms adapted to its situation.

### 4.1 EQUALITY POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

- Conduct a study to clarify the Parliament's strengths and weaknesses regarding gender equality. Identify the real problems facing and needs of the people concerned (parliamentarians, political and administrative staff, etc.). The evaluation can be done
  - by parliamentarians or parliamentary staff members, or both; or
  - through an external audit.
- Equip the Parliament with a policy and strategic plan that clarify its gender equality vision and goals.
- Evaluate the achievement of goals and perform follow-up through an appropriate monitoring mechanism.

#### Examples of measures

- The Inter-Parliamentary Union offers self-assessment tools for parliaments wishing to measure their gender sensitivity with a view to undertaking a reform process. This document is available online: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gender-toolkit-e.pdf>.
- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). The Senate audited equality actions through interviews, document reviews and staff surveys. It developed an action plan taking into account the strengths and weaknesses that were revealed in the course of the audit (IPU, 2011, p. 54).
- (Sweden—ranked 6th—43.6 percent W). In 2008, the Parliament equipped itself with a gender equality action plan that covers various aspects of parliamentary and administrative activity, and is reviewed and updated annually. The Secretary General is responsible for carrying it out (IPU, 2011, pp. 72–73 and 100).
- (Finland—ranked 11th—41.5 percent W). In 2009, the Parliament adopted a gender equality action plan (IPU, 2011, p. 100).
- (Germany—ranked 24th—36.5 percent W). The German Parliament has a process for monitoring its gender equality program regularly. A committee of interdisciplinary experts analyzes the program's successes and flaws, and proposes improvements to rules and practices (IPU, 2011, p. 68).
- (Costa Rica—ranked 31st—33.3 percent W). The Legislative Assembly created a technical unit on gender equality and equity whose role is to promote, plan, coordinate and monitor gender mainstreaming in all legislative and administrative facets. It is under the responsibility of the Assembly's Executive Director (IPU, 2011, p. 55).

#### Additional information

- (Québec). The National Assembly's *Plan stratégique de l'administration* is available online (*French only*): <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/fr/publications/fiche-plan-strategique.html>.

## 4.2 THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

According to the IPU, nearly 60 percent of parliaments have no discrimination or harassment (in particular sexual) prevention policy applicable to parliamentary staff. In 2015, the National Assembly adopted the *Policy on Preventing and Managing Situations Involving Harassment in the Workplace*. It applies to parliamentarians and political and administrative staff. However, the actions it proposes can be enhanced by other measures.

4.2 THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt a code of conduct or a code of ethics that<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ refers expressly to the principle of gender equality; and</li><li>◦ expressly condemns all sexist speech and behaviour.</li></ul></li><li>• Adopt a discrimination and harassment prevention policy that<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ applies to parliamentarians and political and administrative staff;</li><li>◦ establishes a clear procedure for resolving problematic situations;</li><li>◦ specifies the sanctions to which offenders are liable; and</li><li>◦ ensures victims are protected and the complaint resolution process is independent.</li></ul></li><li>• Hold awareness-raising activities for parliamentarians and political and administrative staff on the issues of discrimination and harassment.</li><li>• Evaluate, from the perspective of gender equality, the facilities and resources made available to parliamentarians and political and administrative staff.</li><li>• Perform a critical appraisal of the rituals, dress codes, time-honoured expressions, usual vocabulary, customs and other parliamentary rules from the perspective of gender equality.</li></ul>
Examples of measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Belgium—ranked 15th—39.3 percent W). The Senate has appointed external advisers on prevention and a trusted internal person. The two people in charge work collaboratively (IPU, 2011, p. 104).</li><li>• (Spain—ranked 16th—39.1 percent W). The Parliament's rules of procedure were revised to impose the use of male and female forms in plenary assembly and in committee, instead of only the masculine plural.</li><li>• (Israel). The Knesset has a resource person who monitors sexual harassment issues. That position is held by a woman who is also a deputy secretary general (IPU, 2011, p. 104).</li></ul>
Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (France). In cases where the institutional procedures provide insufficient or ineffective protection for victims of harassment, other methods are used to denounce problematic situations. For example, <i>Chair collaboratrice</i> gathers anonymous accounts by parliamentary assistants who have been victims of sexism: <a href="https://chaircollaboratrice.com/">https://chaircollaboratrice.com/</a>.</li></ul>

## 4.3 MAINSTREAMING GENDER AND EQUALITY ISSUES IN PARLIAMENTARY WORK

According to the IPU, a parliament seeking to promote gender equality must develop specific mechanisms to mainstream gender issues in its work. There are a number of ways to do this.

### 4.3 MAINSTREAMING GENDER AND EQUALITY ISSUES IN PARLIAMENTARY WORK

- Institute a specialized parliamentary committee responsible for reviewing government policy, legislation and budgets from a gender equality perspective.
- Mainstream gender in a transversal manner in all parliamentary committees so that they address the impact of strategies, legislation and budgets on gender equality.
- Create a multi-party task force with a specific mandate concerning equality issues.
- Create a multi-party advisory group responsible for defining the Parliament's equality policy and program, and for monitoring their implementation.

#### Examples of measures

- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). A specialized committee is responsible for gender issues. It collaborates regularly with the other committees to examine their bills from the perspective of gender equality (IPU, 2011, p. 46).
- (Bolivia—ranked 2nd—53.1 percent W). Gender issues are addressed by a committee that does research and coordinates the operational activities of commissions. (In Bolivia, committees are operational and investigative bodies that complement commissions.) (IPU, 2011, p. 42).
- (Sweden—ranked 6th—43.6 percent W). Each committee is responsible for dealing with gender issues within its area of responsibility. There is also a committee responsible for gender equality issues when they do not fall under the purview of any other committee (IPU, 2011, p. 45).
- (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Gender and equality issues are addressed by specialized parliamentary committees (IPU, 2011, p. 43).
- (Belgium—ranked 15th—39.3 percent W). The House of Representatives and the Senate each have advisory committees on gender and equality issues that provide opinions on the work of parliamentary committees (IPU, 2011, p. 42).

## 4.4 FAMILY-WORK BALANCE

Family-work balance issues are increasingly a reality in parliaments. Although this is something that affects women more specifically, men feel they are concerned as well. Moreover, political and administrative staff members are just as concerned as parliamentarians.

Family-work balance issues most often come up in the context of parenting, but more and more people are also being called upon to care for aging parents. This means that family-work balance issues could affect a growing number of parliamentarians and staff members in coming years.

### 4.4 FAMILY-WORK BALANCE

- Conduct a study to identify the Parliament's strengths and weaknesses regarding family-work balance. Pinpoint problems and the real needs of the people concerned (parliamentarians, political and administrative staff, etc.).
- Equip the Parliament with a policy and strategic plan that clarify its vision and goals regarding family-work balance. Assess the achievement of goals and perform follow-up through an appropriate monitoring mechanism.
- Establish procedures to allow parliamentarians who become parents during their term in office (through pregnancy, birth, adoption) to
  - be absent for a prolonged period (preventive withdrawal or parental leave);
  - receive a financial indemnity; and
  - be granted temporary accommodation measures to balance their new parental responsibilities and parliamentary work (pairing, proxy voting, newborn's presence in the House, etc.).
- Adopt parenting support measures for parliamentarians who have young children. For example:
  - adapt sitting and work meeting schedules so that parliamentarians can be at home more often;
  - allow young children unlimited travel between their home and the Parliament building free of charge; and
  - allocate financial assistance to cover babysitting costs for young children.
- Make a drop-in childcare centre available to parliamentarians and staff that is adapted to the special schedule of parliamentary work.
- Make an appropriately equipped family and breastfeeding room available to parliamentarians and staff.
- Hold awareness-raising and training activities for parliamentarians and political and administrative staff on the issue of family-work balance.
- Establish information and support tools for parliamentarians and their families.

#### Examples of measures

- (Denmark—ranked 19th—37.4 percent W). No voting is allowed after 7:00 p.m. on sitting days (IPU, 2011, p. 92).
- (Germany—ranked 24th—36.5 percent W). The Parliament offers parents a room equipped with childcare equipment (changing table, toys, crib, etc.) (IPU, 2011, p. 105).
- (Portugal—ranked 27th—34.8 percent W). Childcare subsidies are provided (IPU, 2011, p. 105).
- (Australia—ranked 50th—28.7 percent W). A woman who is breastfeeding at the time of a vote can ask her whip to vote by proxy on her behalf (IPU, 2011, p. 95).
- (Canada). In 2016, a committee was given the mandate to study measures to facilitate family-work balance.

## 4.5 MEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE EQUALITY CAUSE

The idea that men must contribute to and take part in gender equality actions to the same degree as women is becoming increasingly well established.

By getting actively involved, men can hone their sensitivity to and understanding of the issues affecting women or of equality-related issues. Such involvement also helps to convey the idea that achieving equality between men and women concerns all members of society, regardless of their gender.

### 4.5 MEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE EQUALITY CAUSE

- Organize gender and equality awareness programs and training specifically for men parliamentarians.
- Offer men tools to understand, support and participate in initiatives promoting gender equality.
- Adopt men-women partnership strategies, such as
  - man-woman co-sponsoring of gender equality legislation; and
  - the inclusion of men in parliamentary activities and actions on gender and gender equality issues (International Women's Day, anti-violence against women actions, etc.).
- Encourage parity when appointing members
  - to the parliamentary committee responsible for gender and gender equality issues;
  - as the chair and vice-chair of that committee;
  - to all working committees with mandates concerning gender and gender equality; and
  - to all parliamentary delegations engaging in a study tour or activities addressing gender and gender equality.

#### Examples of measures

- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). Women parliamentarians insisted on having their male counterparts work closely on the adoption of a law on prevention of, protection from and punishment for gender-based violence. The men's involvement encouraged parliamentarians, and all citizens, to see gender-based violence as a global social problem that concerns both genders (IPU, 2011, p. 62).
- (Namibia—ranked 12th—41.3 percent W; Timor-Leste—ranked 18th—38.5 percent W). Men parliamentarians who did not have great gender sensitivity were invited to participate in study tours and field visits concerning domestic and sexual violence. Those experiences enhanced their sensitivity to these problems and equipped them with better tools to intervene politically on the issue (IPU, 2011, pp. 64–65).



## 4.6 DISCUSSION AND ACTION FORUMS FOR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

Women parliamentarians may feel the need or necessity to meet among themselves on issues that concern them more specifically. The recognition, structure, objectives and actions of women's caucuses differ from one parliament to another.

At the National Assembly, the Cercle des femmes parlementaires was established in 2010. Its members are the women parliamentarians from all the parties represented in parliament.

### 4.6 DISCUSSION AND ACTION FORUMS FOR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

- Establish a women's caucus officially recognized by the Parliament.
- Equip the caucus with a strategic plan that clarifies its mission, vision and strategic objectives.
- Equip the caucus with sufficient financial, material and human resources.
- Consider mechanisms to integrate men into the caucus's activities.
- Forge ties with organizations and women parliamentarians in other parliaments:
  - engage in study tours of other parliaments; and
  - undertake joint projects with other parliaments on women's representation in politics.

#### Examples of measures

- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). The Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum (Forum des femmes rwandaïses parlementaires or FFRP) is formally recognized by the Parliament and has an office. It brings together women from both chambers and all the parties. Its mission includes ensuring gender issues are taken into account in the Parliament, legislation and government action. It works closely with the Gender and Family and Promotion Committee and women's civil society networks (IPU, 2011, p. 46).
- (Bolivia—ranked 2nd—53.1 percent W). The Union of Parliamentary Women of Bolivia (UMPABOL) is a multi-party group recognized by the House of Representatives and the Senate. It addresses the demand for gender mainstreaming in legislative work (IPU, 2011, p. 47).
- (Sweden—ranked 6th—43.6 percent W). Since 1995, the Speaker's Reference Group on Gender Equality Issues has been bringing together women parliamentarians from all of the parties represented in the Parliament. It engages in various reflection activities and seminars on gender equality, and has frequent contact with its foreign counterparts (IPU, 2011, p. 54).
- (Namibia—ranked 12th—41.3 percent W). The women's caucus holds workshops to train women in leadership, speech writing and gender-sensitive budgeting (IPU, 2011, p. 52).
- (Peru). The women's caucus in Peru developed a five-year strategic plan that defines the caucus's mission, vision and strategic objectives. This led to the adoption of a legislative program on gender issue priorities (IPU, 2011, pp. 50–51).
- Men's participation in women's caucuses varies depending on the country. They may be full members, observers, supporters, etc.

## 4.7 INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO PARLIAMENT AND THEIR ACQUISITION OF POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Many studies stated that it was not sufficient for women to be elected to parliament; they must also attain positions of power and authority to the same extent as men.

Certain initiatives help women to acquaint themselves with the realities of political life rapidly after their election. The IPU also holds that it is important to encourage their development of leadership and political skills, in particular by entrusting them with parliamentary roles.

### 4.7 INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO PARLIAMENT AND THEIR ACQUISITION OF POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

- Establish mentoring programs pairing newly elected women parliamentarians with experienced parliamentarians.
- Offer training on topics in line with women parliamentarians' needs (e.g. how to present oneself before the media in political leadership situations).
- Distribute parliamentary responsibilities between men and women on an equal or proportional basis:
  - chairs and vice-chairs of parliamentary committees; and
  - House leader, whip, caucus chair, Office of the National Assembly, etc.
- Distribute seats between men and women on an equal or proportional basis in
  - parliamentary committees;
  - parliamentary delegations; and
  - various working committees.

#### Examples of measures

- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). The Constitution provides that women must hold a minimum of 30 percent of leadership positions. That proportion is met by the Parliament (IPU, 2011, p. 21).
- (Rwanda—ranked 1st—63.8 percent W). By convention, there is gender parity in committee responsibilities. When the chair is a man, the vice-chair is a woman, and vice versa (IPU, 2011, p. 21).
- (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Legislation specifically states the importance of distributing Senate Bureau and commission leadership positions equitably (IPU, 2011, p. 18).
- (Denmark—ranked 19th—37.4 percent W). As much as possible, parliamentarians are assigned to committees according to their personal preferences (IPU, 2011, p. 24).
- (Burundi—ranked 25th—36.4 percent W). Parity is the unwritten rule in the Senate Bureau, and this also goes for committee chairs and vice-chairs (IPU, 2011, p. 21).
- (Switzerland—ranked 32nd—32.0 percent W). One party makes sure that there is at least one of its women representatives in every group, committee and delegation (IPU, 2011, p. 24).

## 4.8 AWARENESS-RAISING AND TRAINING FOR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

Several hundred people in a parliament's administration and in the political parties support parliamentarians' work. They are in a good position to advise them on various subjects, including gender equality.

In the course of performing its global review, the IPU found that parliamentary (political and administrative) staff lacked tools and knowledge on this issue. The IPU stresses the importance of raising the awareness of and training staff members so that they will be responsible, to the same degree as parliamentarians, for achieving equality goals.

### 4.8 AWARENESS-RAISING AND TRAINING FOR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

- Raise the awareness of parliamentary (political and administrative) staff about the issue of gender equality.
- Hold training workshops for political and administrative staff to equip them for doing gender-sensitive analysis (legislation, budgets, policies, etc.).
- Train library and research staff specializing in gender equality and gender-sensitive analysis.
- Appoint gender issue coordinators and specialist expert advisers.
- Establish support structures to guarantee parliamentarians are assisted by research staff specializing in gender and gender equality issues.

#### Examples of measures

- (Mexico—ranked 8th—42.4 percent W). Since 2005, the Research Centre for Women's Advancement and Gender Equality (Centro de Estudios para el Adelanto de las Mujeres y la Equidad de Género or CEAMEG) has been assisting Congress. Its mission is to provide Members with technical support and gender equality analyses in an objective, impartial manner (IPU, 2011, p. 54).
- (Canada). Gender-sensitive analysis training was given to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, the Library of Parliament staff and the Parliamentary Budget Office (IPU, 2011, p. 57).
- (South Korea). Newsletters on gender-sensitive analysis are distributed regularly to parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. A book on gender-sensitive legislation is distributed to all new parliamentarians, and to officials and jurists concerned (IPU, 2011, p. 58).

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