Kai L. Chan, PhD

CANADA'S GOVERNING CLASS

Who rules the country?

CANADA'S GOVERNING CLASS: WHO RULES THE COUNTRY?

Author: Kai L. Chan, PhD[1][2]

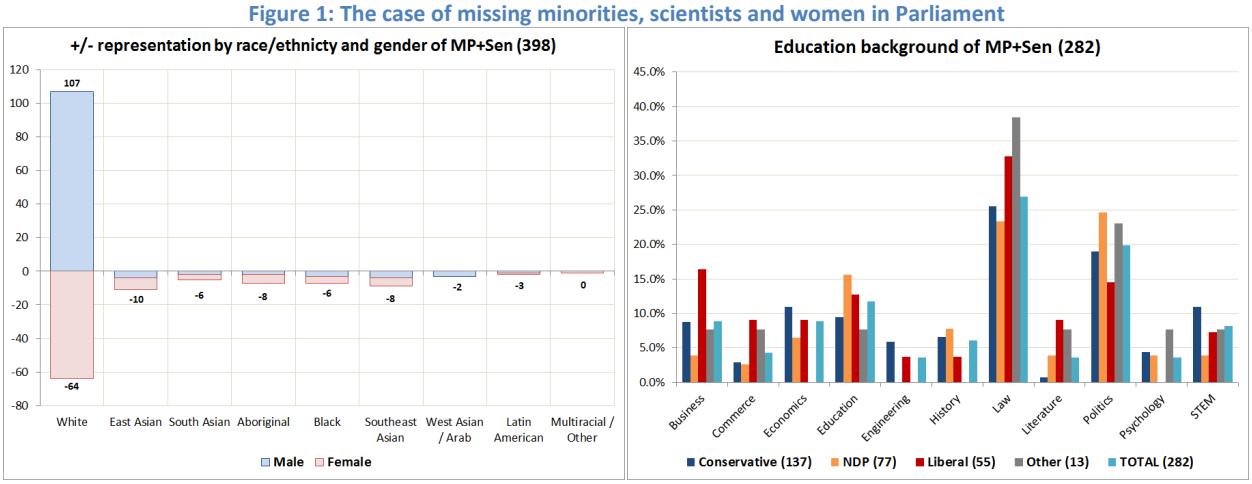
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although Canada's population is often described as a "mosaic" and it espouses official policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism, as well as being a highly-ranked country for gender equality (e.g. it is ranked 19th in the WEF's[3] 2014 Global Gender Gap Report), the composition of the Parliament of Canada (members of parliament (MP) and senators) does not mirror its demographics or espoused values.

Relative to the makeup of the population, there are 107 "extra" white males in Parliament, 64 "missing" white females and 45 "missing" minorities.[4] Beyond deficits in the gender and ethnic composition of Parliament, Canada's governing class also shows biases in its educational credentials and professional backgrounds, especially with respect to an underrepresentation by persons of scientific and technical backgrounds ("scientists"), who number less than 1 in 12 parliamentarians (amongst those with declared higher education specialisations). These deficiencies express themselves in varying degrees across the three major political parties.

The socio-demographic biases are not without consequence as Parliament is the policymaking and political governing body of the country. As such, when these decision makers debate the merits of initiatives, laws or policies that affect, *inter alia*, women, minorities or the scientific community (and society at large), the opinions of Parliament are likely to be uninformed and/or not reflective of the general population. As such, some ideas are explored on how to better draw underrepresented groups to Parliament.

Figure 1: The case of missing minorities, scientists and women in Parliament



Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages, Statistics Canada.

[1] Correspondence email: Kai.Chan@INSEAD.edu ; author webpage: www.KaiLChan.ca
[2] Most recent version available for download at www.KaiLChan.ca/policy/politics
[3] The World Economic Forum (www.weforum.org) is a Geneva-based global non-profit foundation.
[4] Minorities are defined here as visible minorities plus Aboriginals. See Footnote 6 below for the definition of visible minorities. Numbers might not add up due to rounding of figures to whole numbers.

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UPDATE: TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT

This report was initially produced in September 2014, when the Conservatives formed the government and the NDP was the official opposition. The November 2015 elections saw the Liberals come to power with a majority government and the NDP relegated to third-party status.

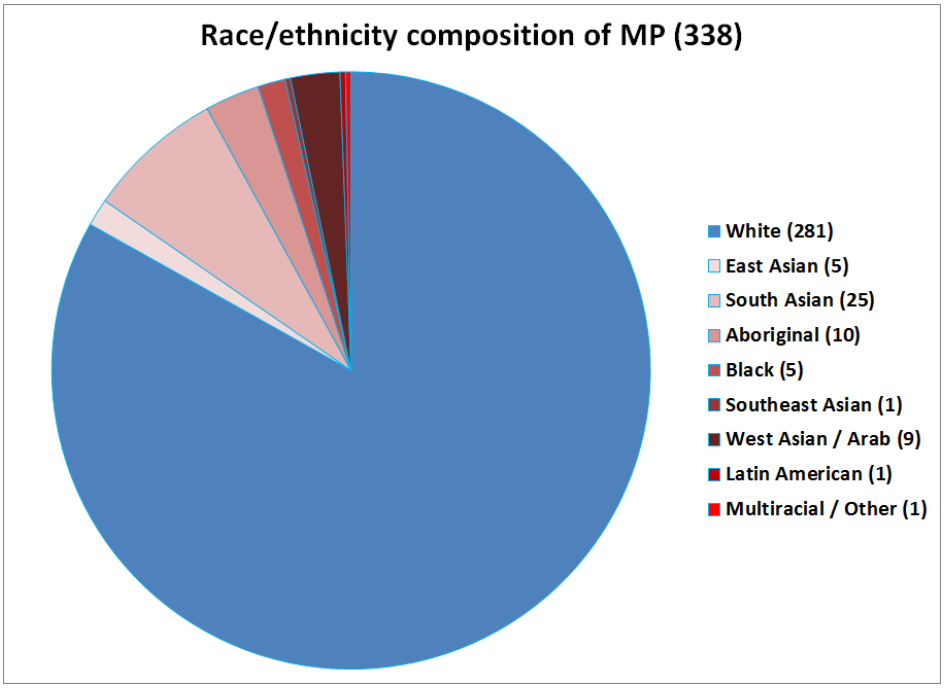
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also made headlines around the world when he introduced the gender-balanced and minority-representative Cabinet. (The Cabinet was half women and close to one quarter minorities.) This begs the question whether things really did change after the last election. How much more aligned with Canada's demographics is the new House? Did non-visible (but meaningful) traits also change with the new House? Namely, are there now more scientists and technically-trained MPs than before? Were changes to the Cabinet just a masquerade to an unchanged House?

This new additional chapter captures the basics stratifications of the House of Commons that was elected in November 2015. It comes over a year after the election, but the time allowed for the personal details and biographies of the MPs to have entered the public space (either through the House of Commons website, or through other means (primarily LinkedIn and party or personal websites)).

This update only assesses the composition of the House of Commons, i.e. the members of parliament (MP). Senators are appointed and so were not directly impacted by the 2015 election.

NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS (MP) STRATIFICATIONS

C.f. old Figure 2



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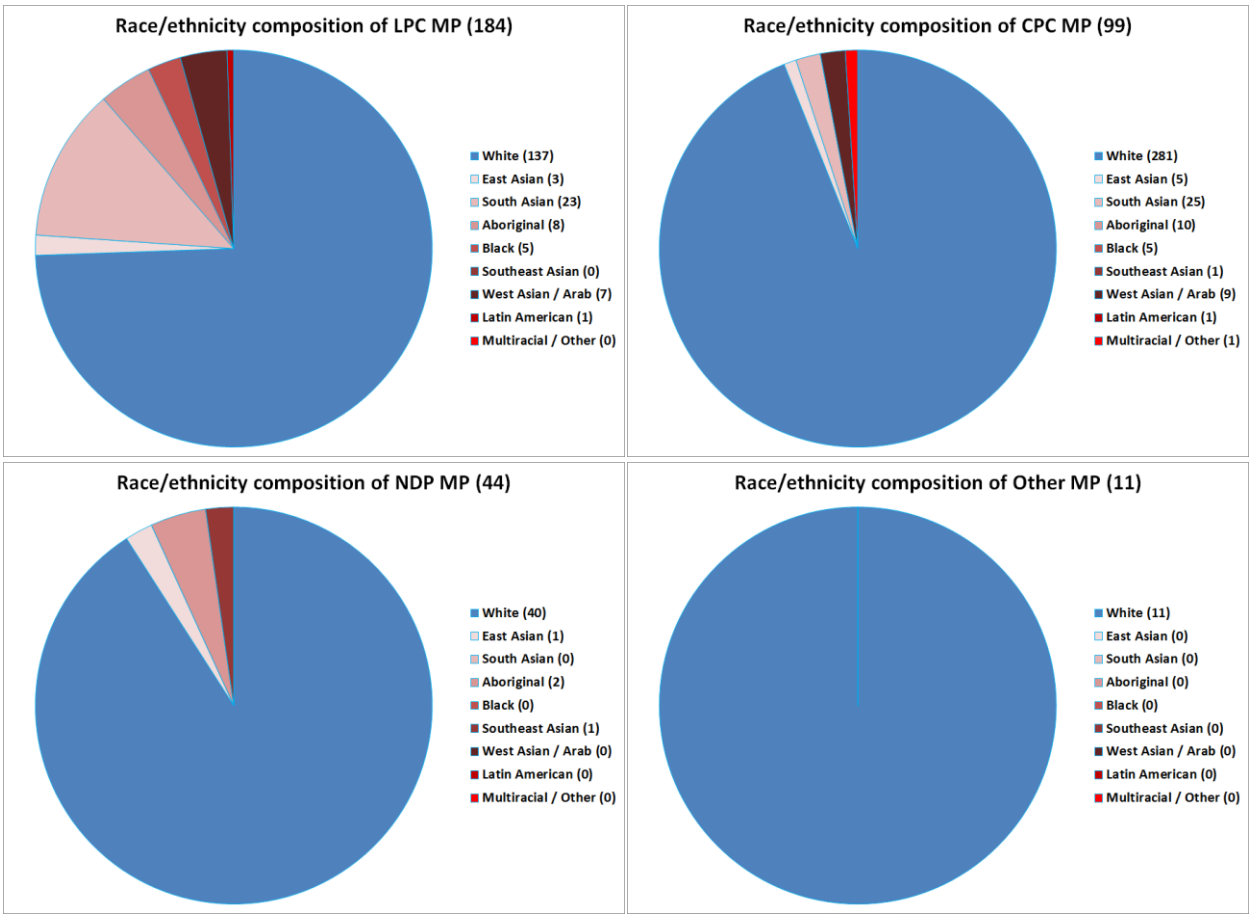
C.f. old Figure 3



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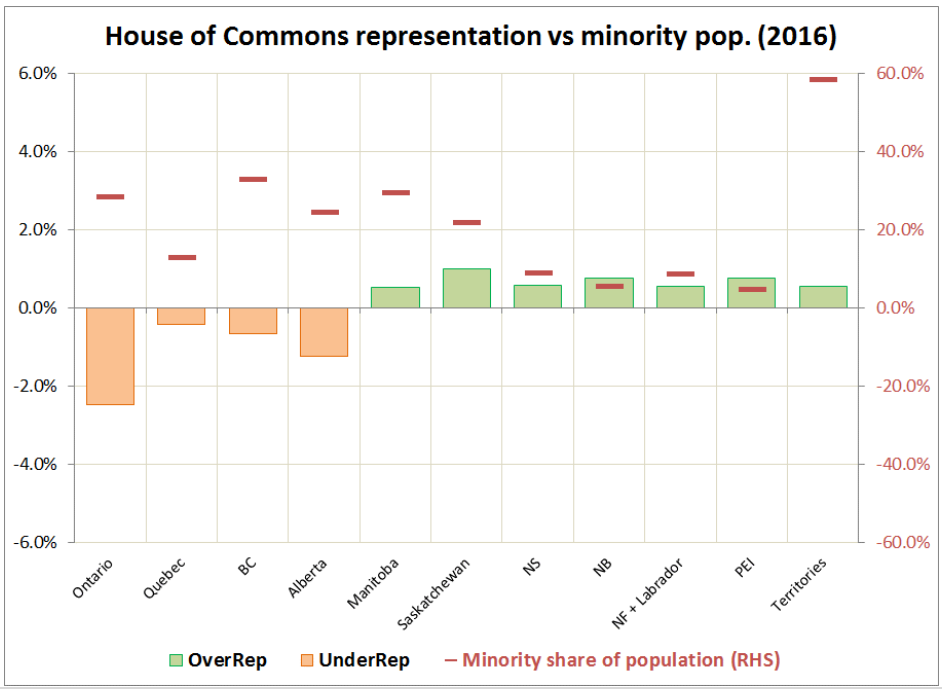

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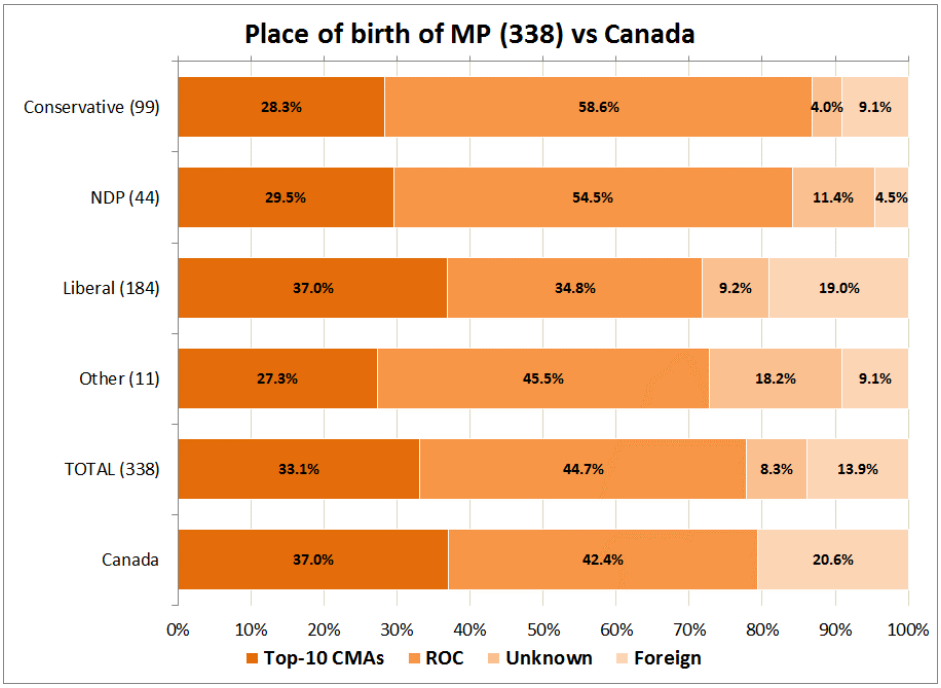
C.f. old Figure 5



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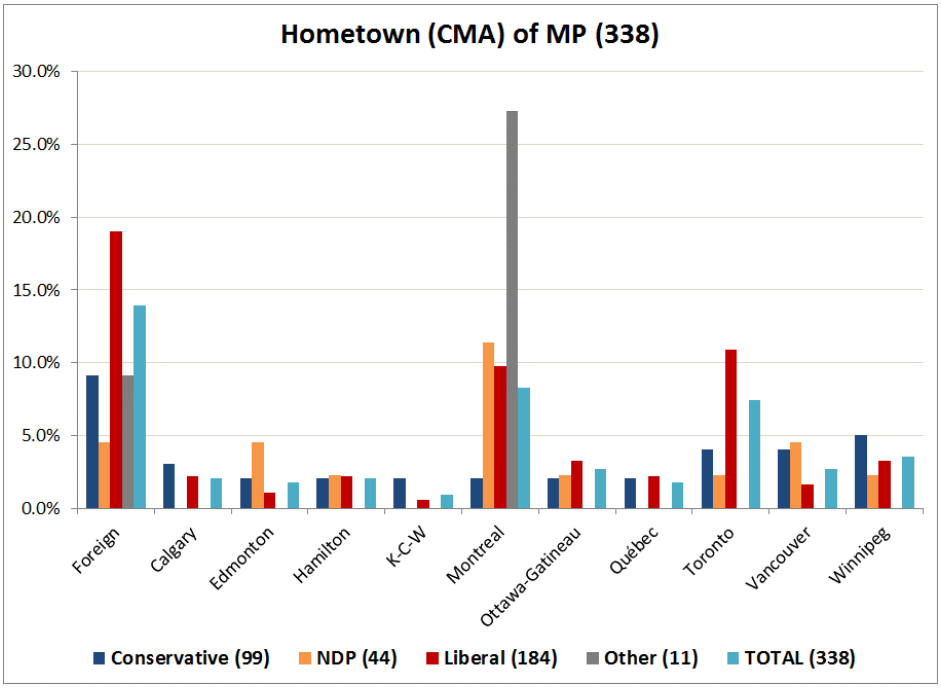

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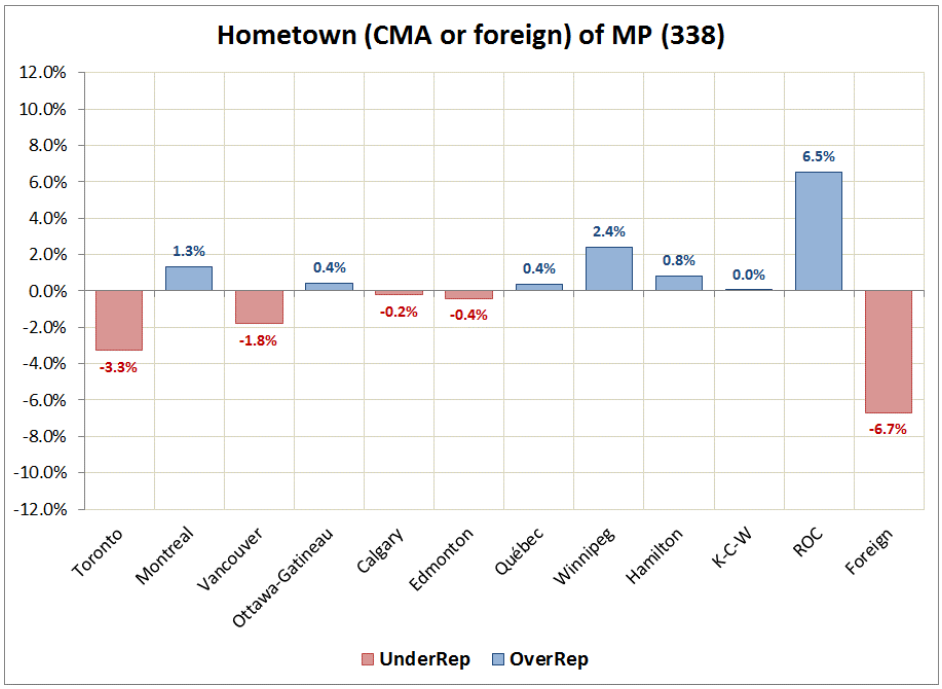
C.f. old Figure 7



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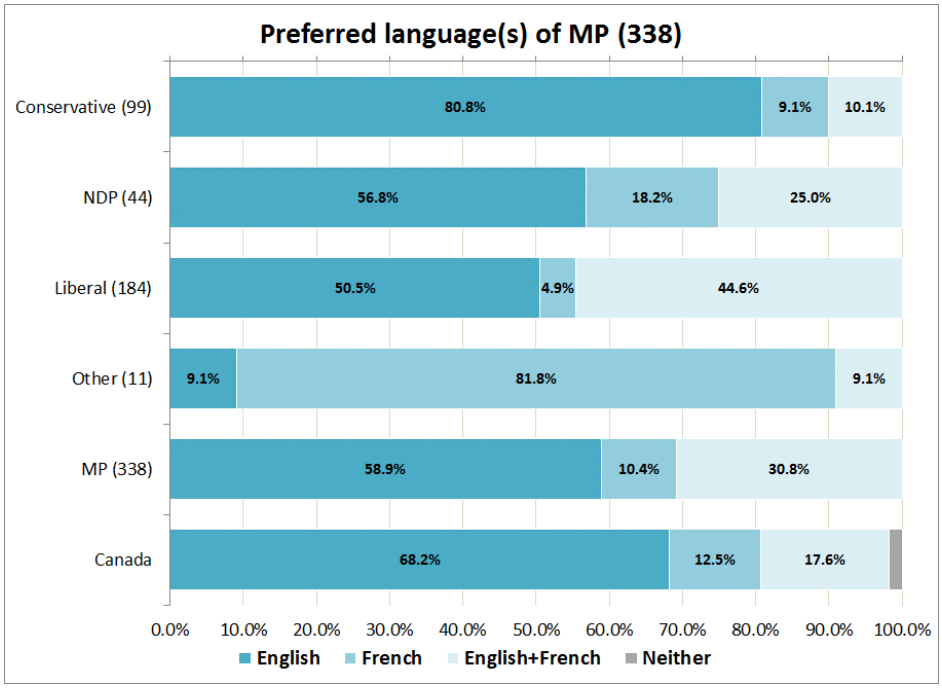

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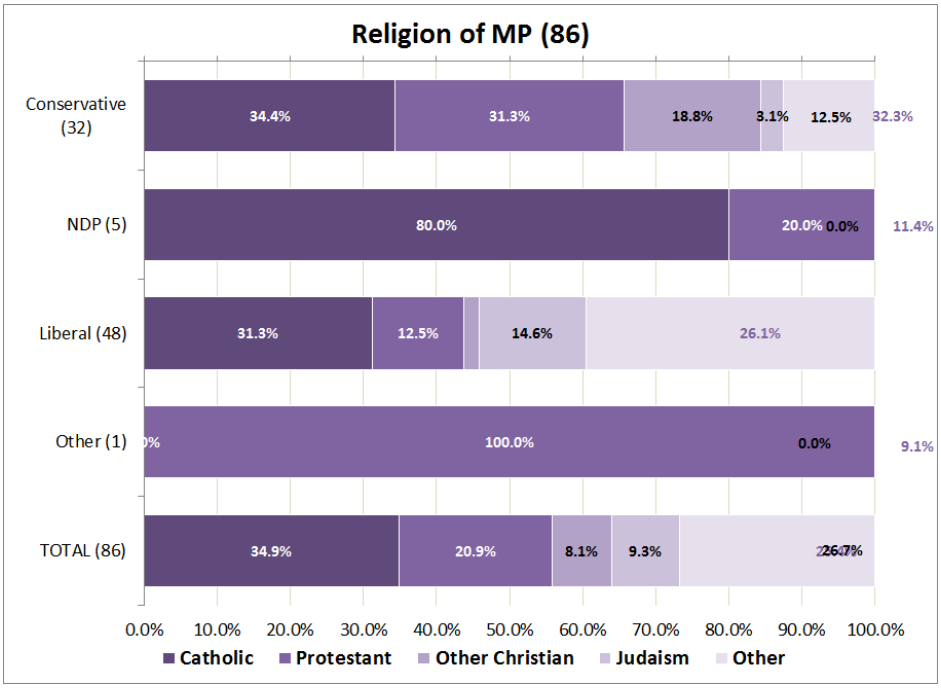

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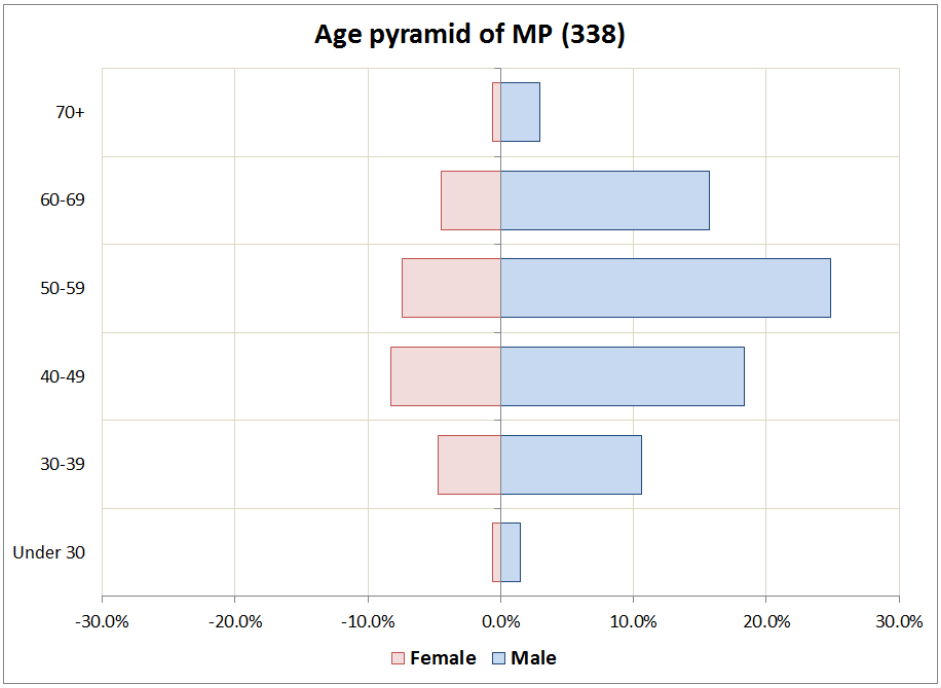

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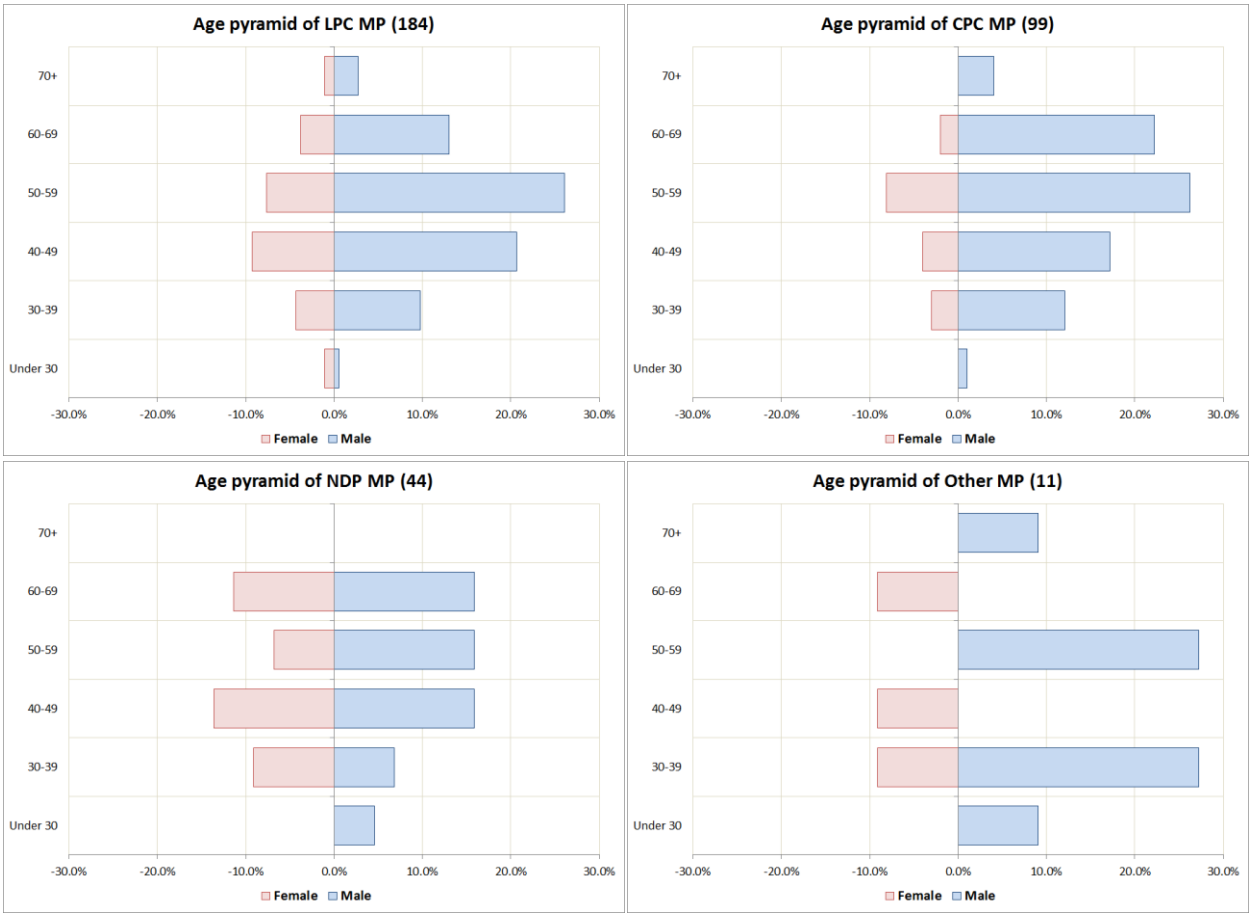

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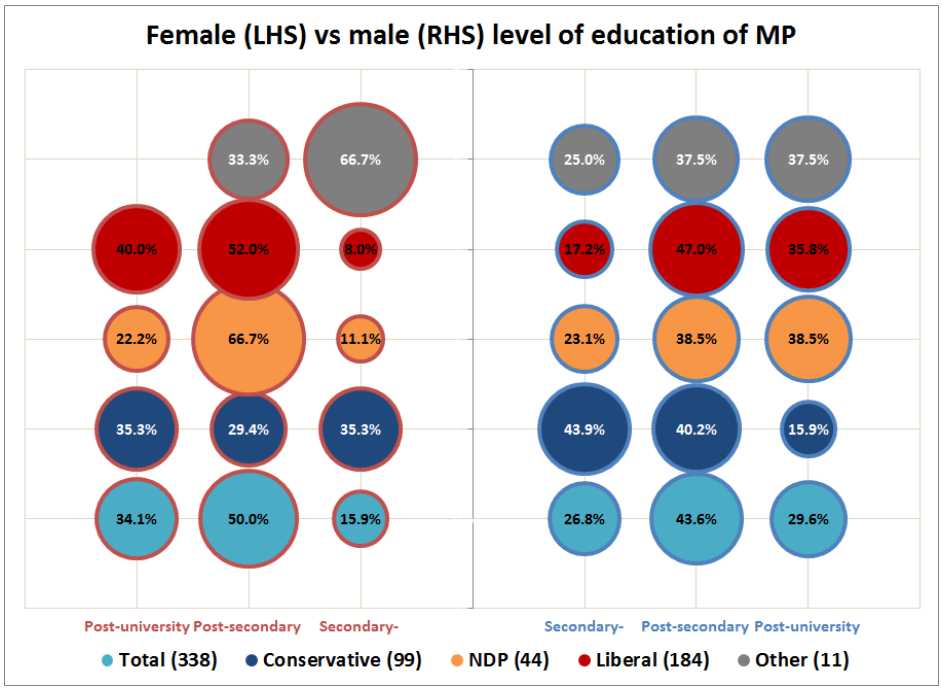

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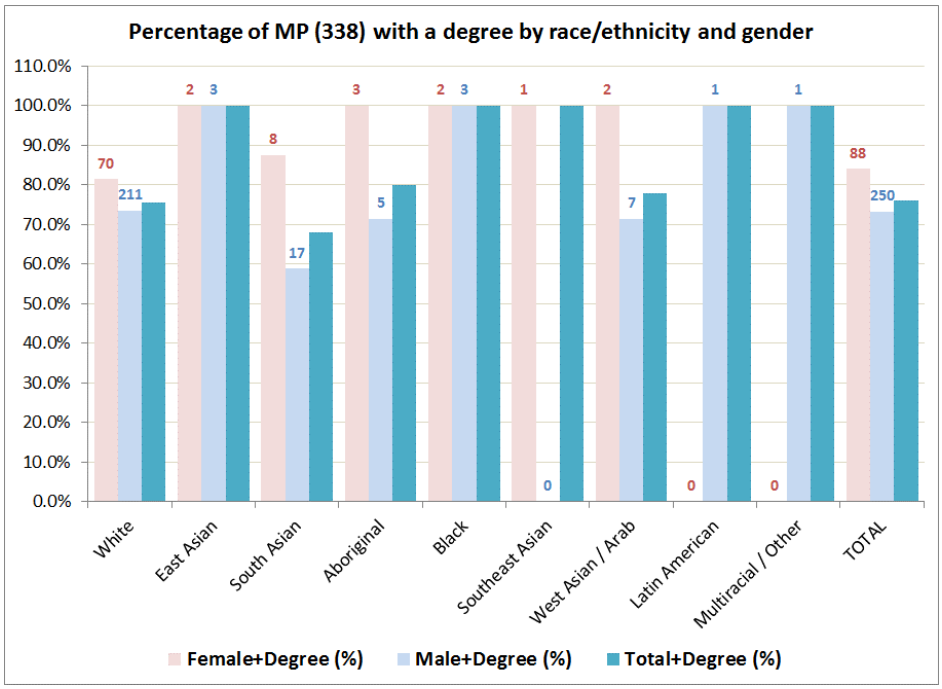
C.f. old Figure 16



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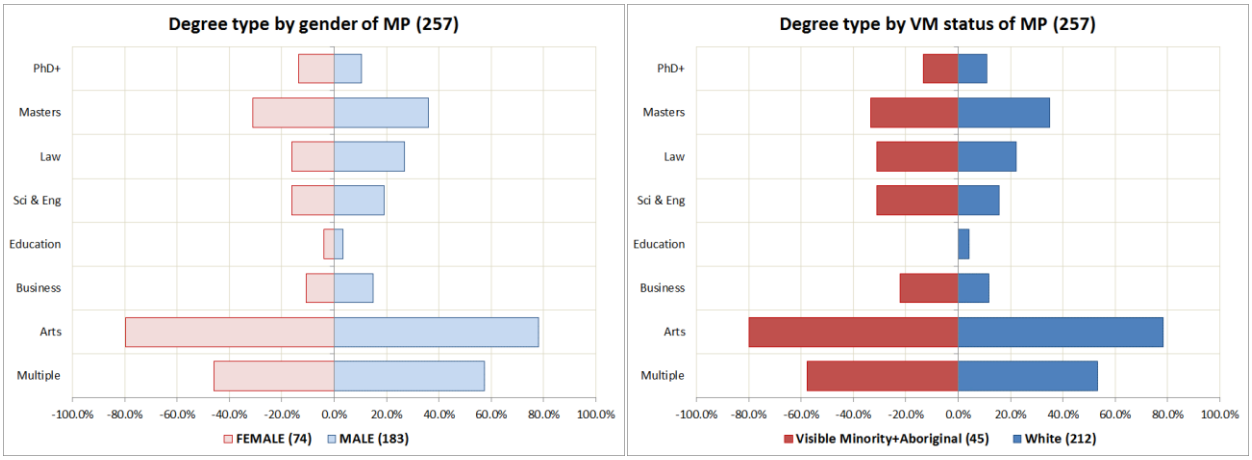

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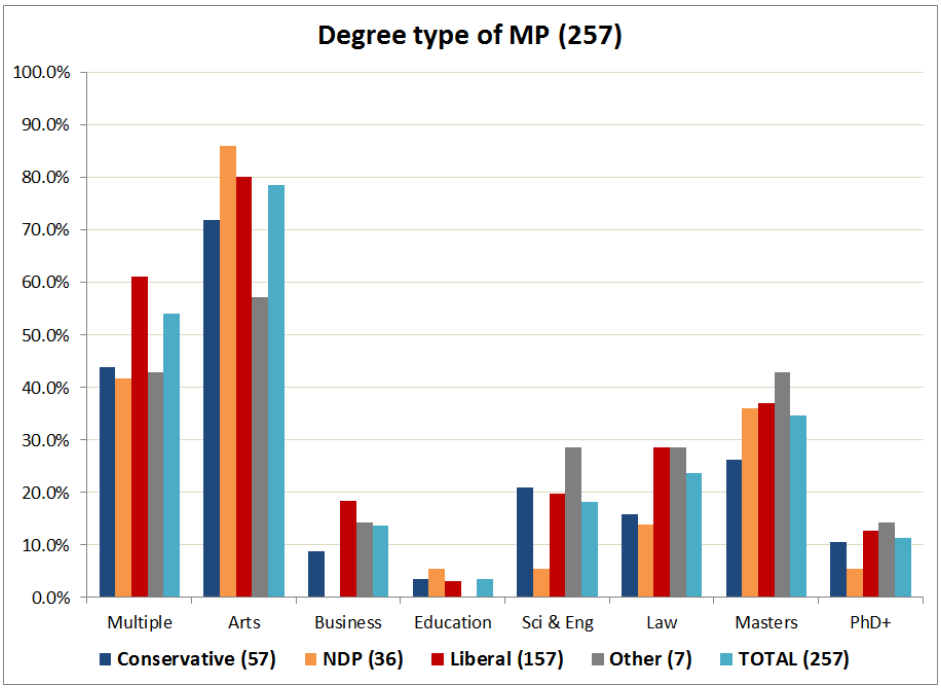

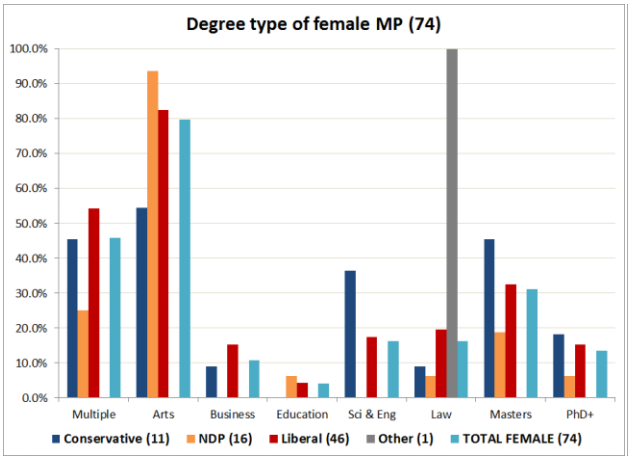

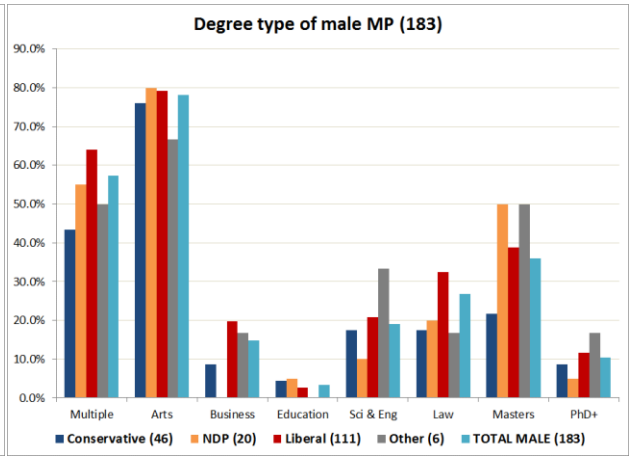

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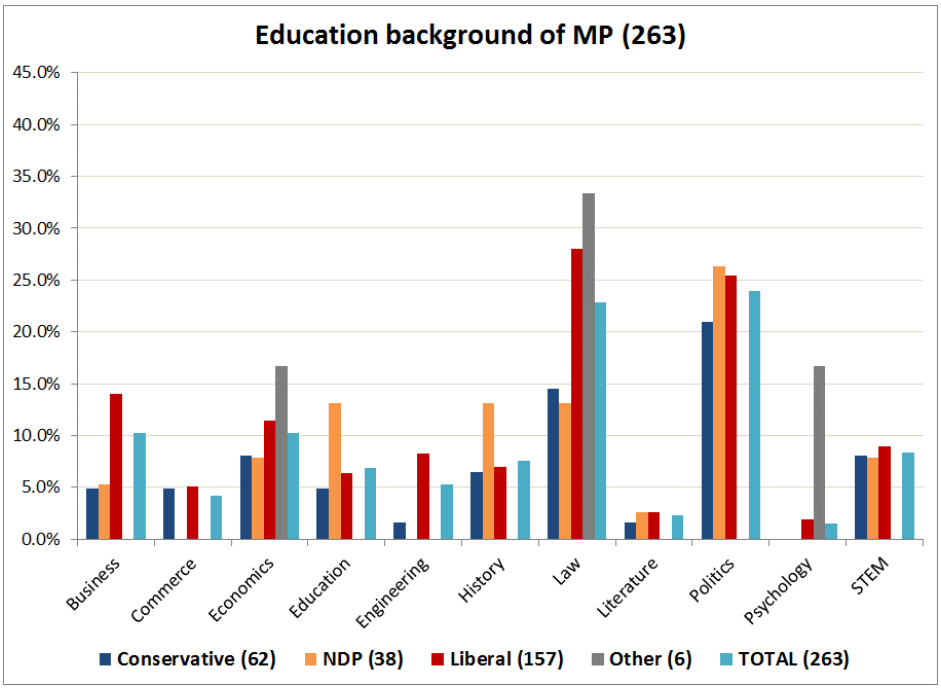

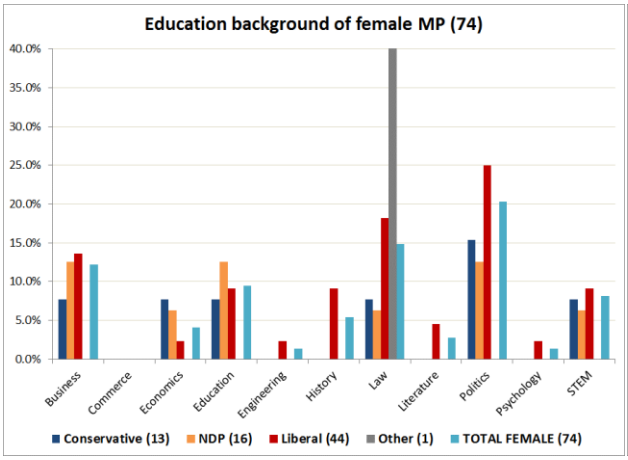

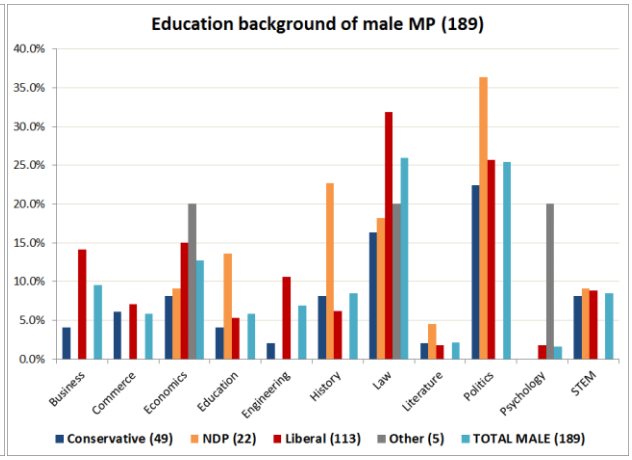

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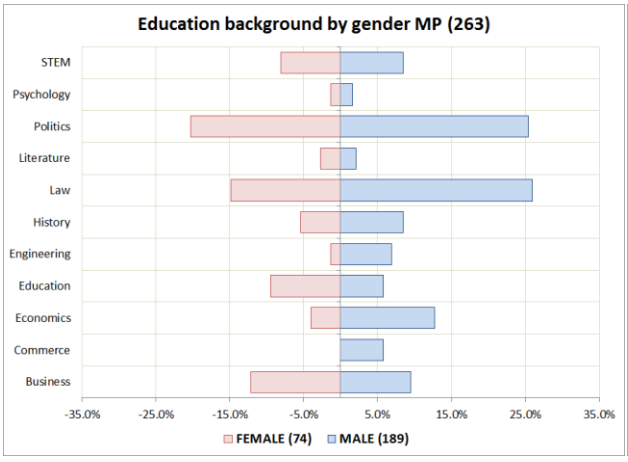

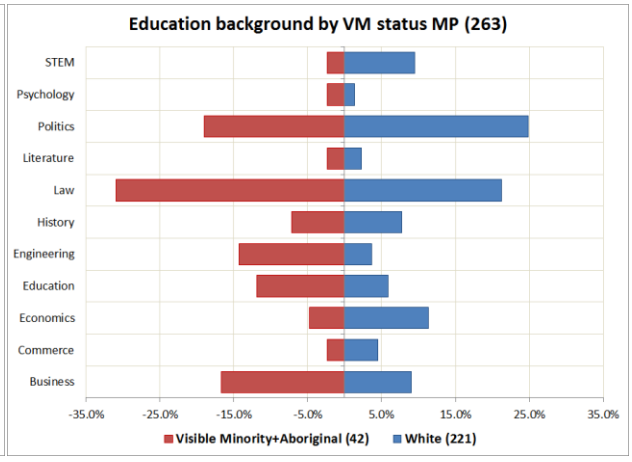

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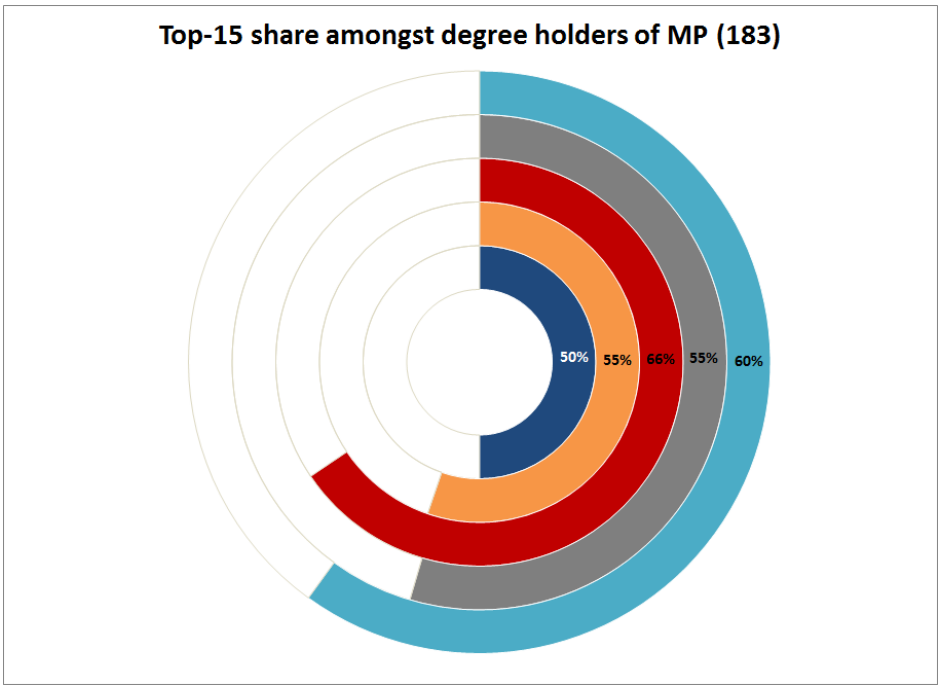

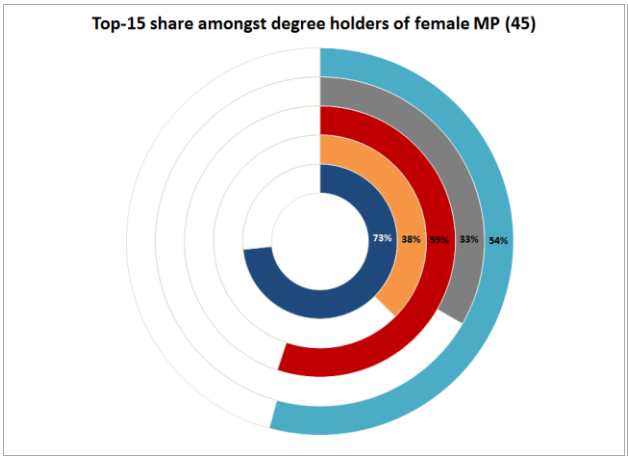

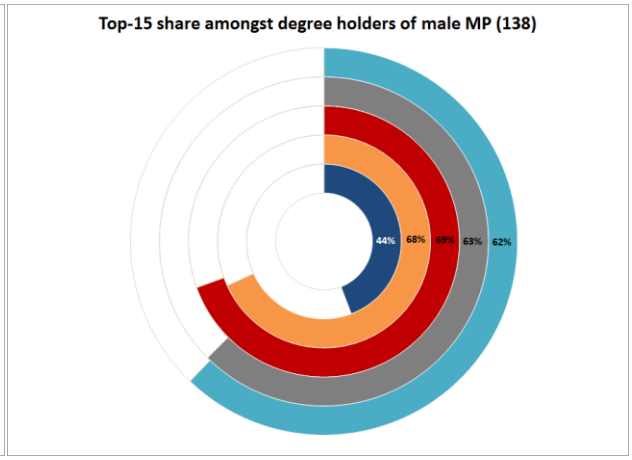

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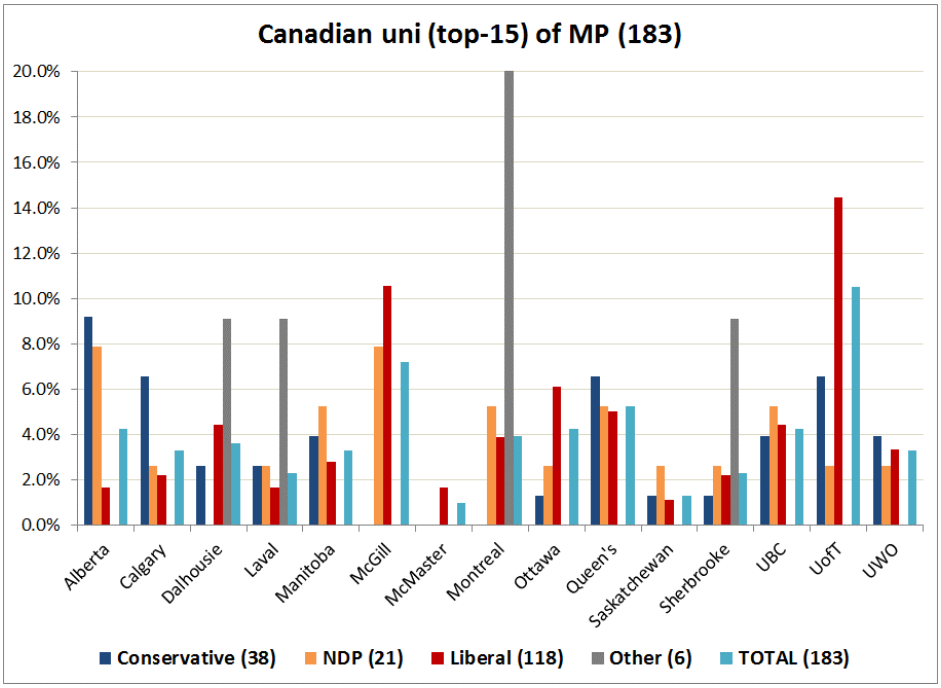

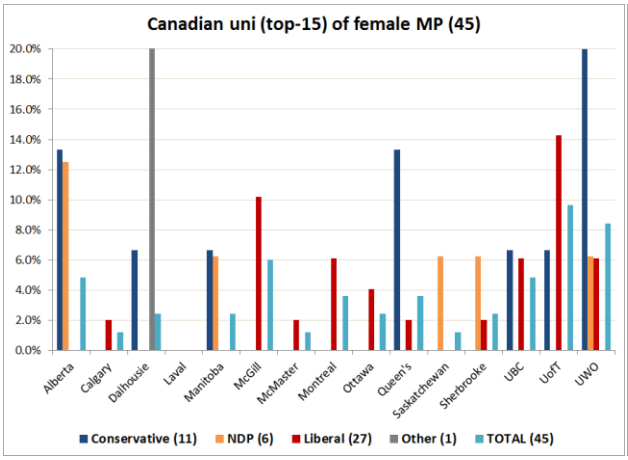

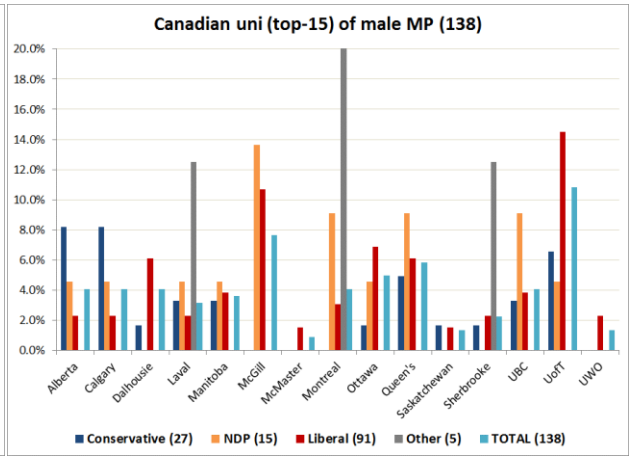

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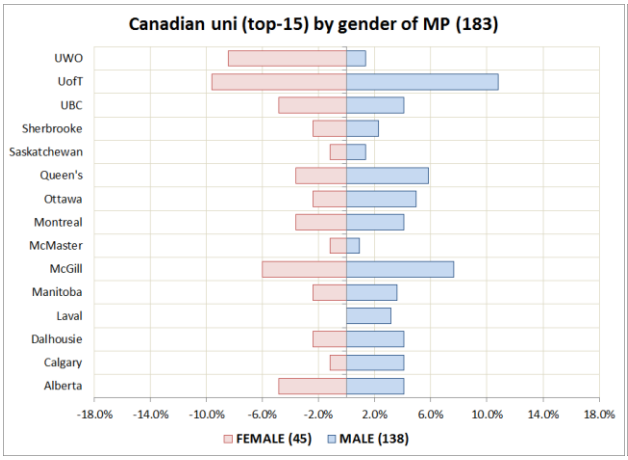

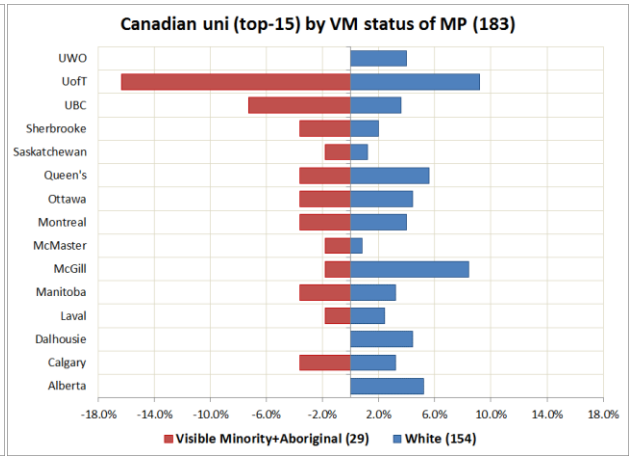

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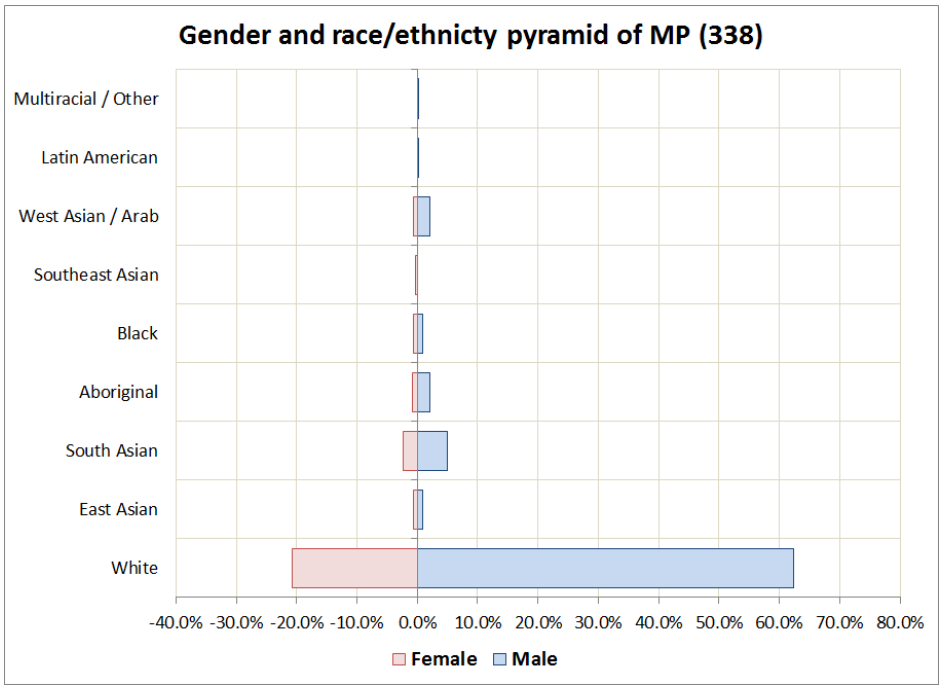

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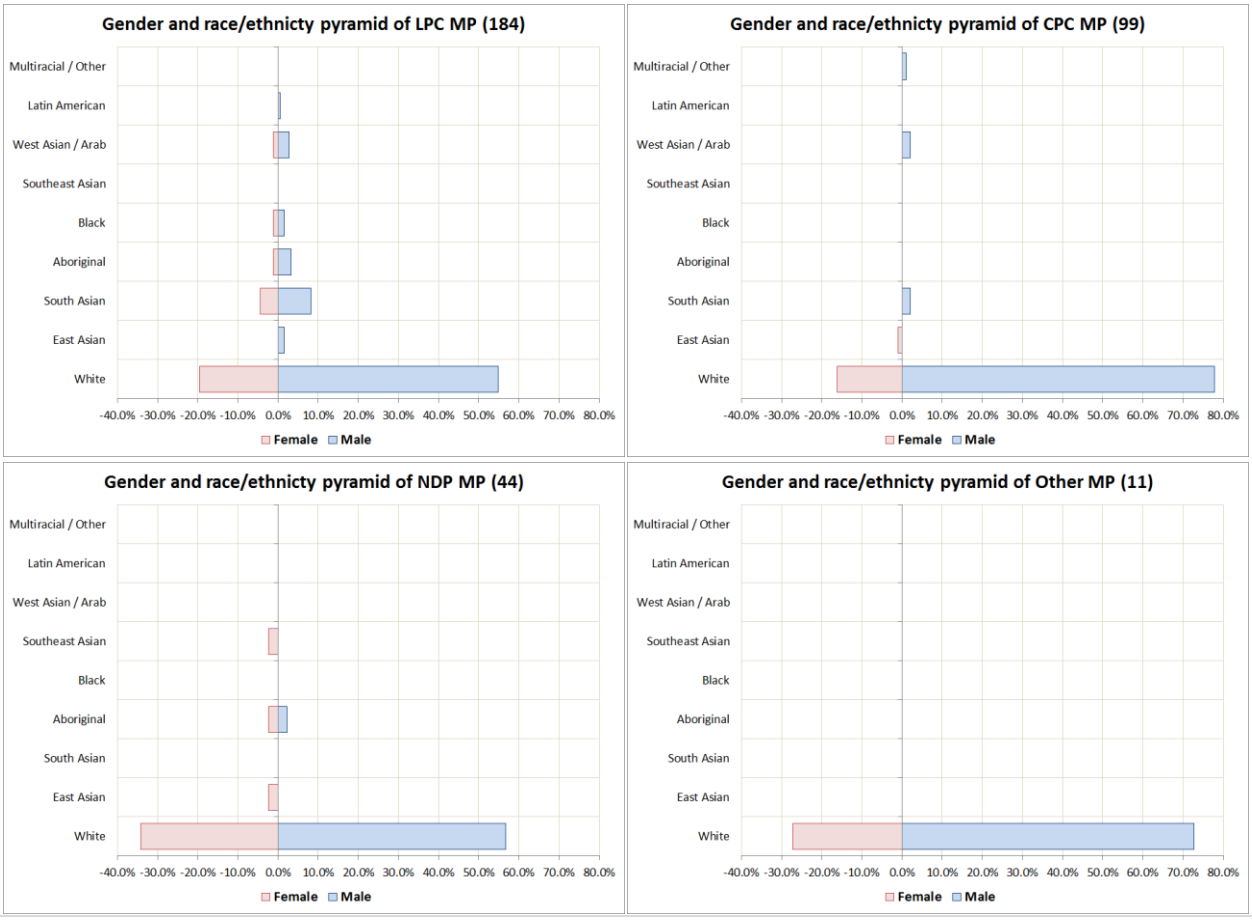

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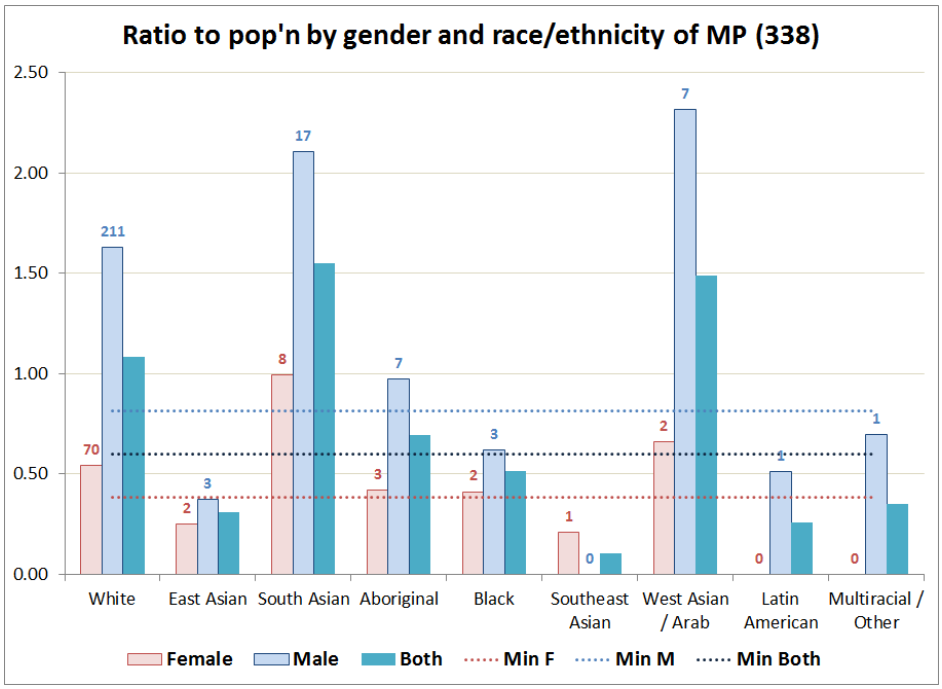
C.f. old Figure 27



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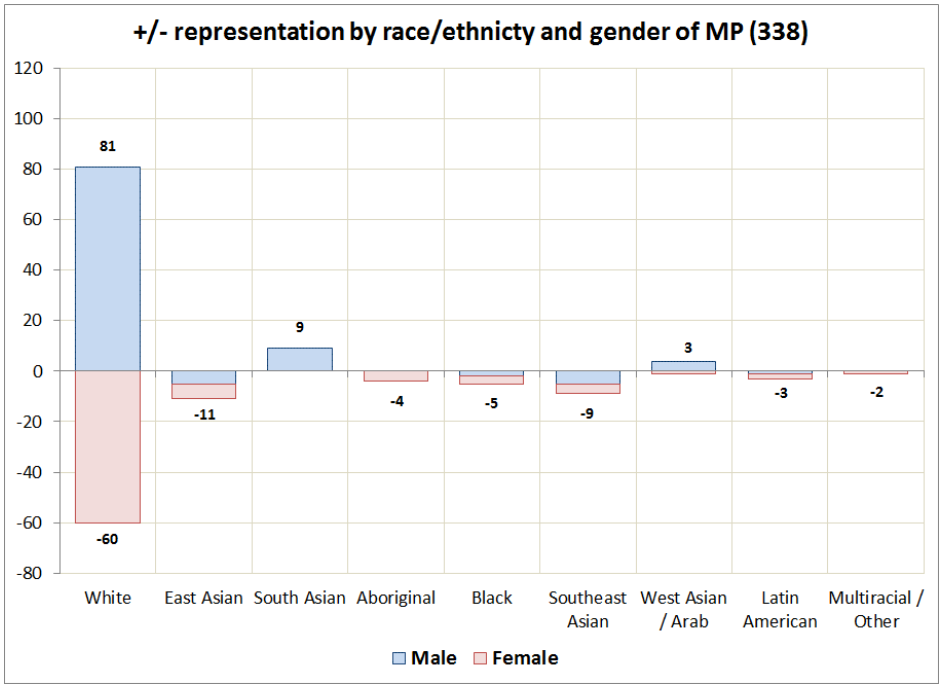

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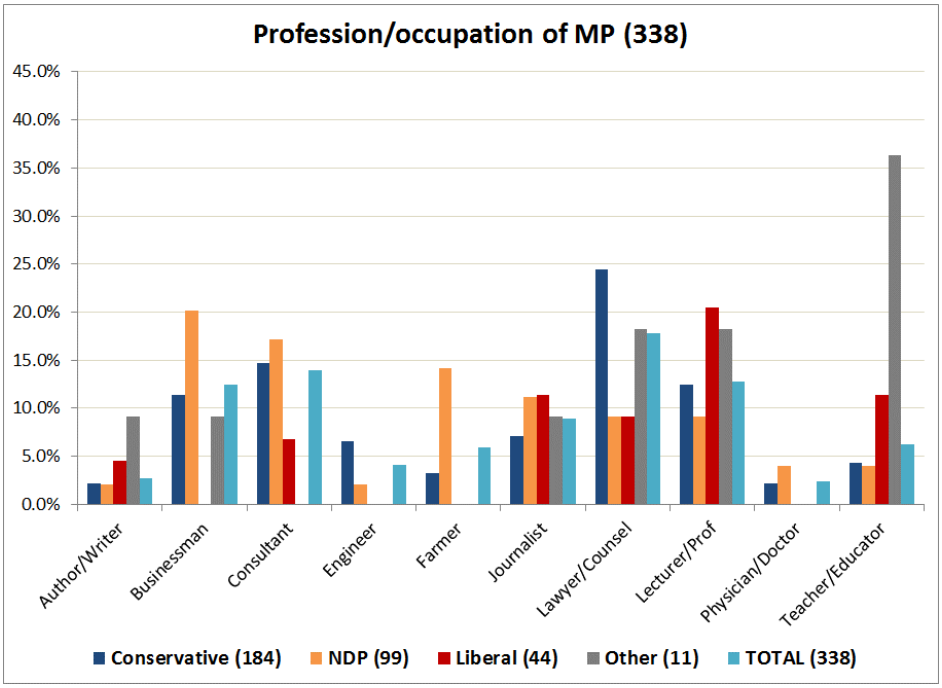

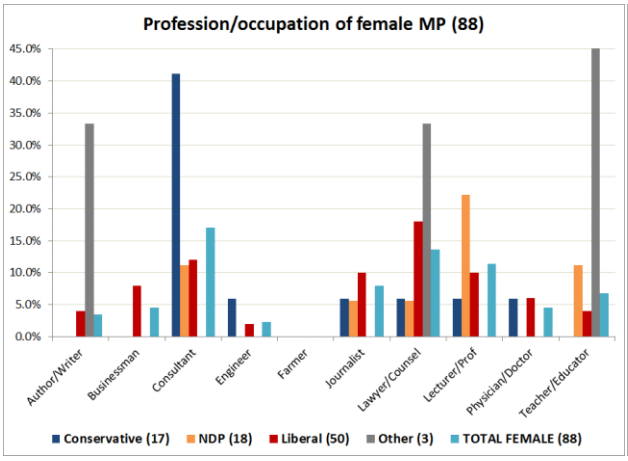

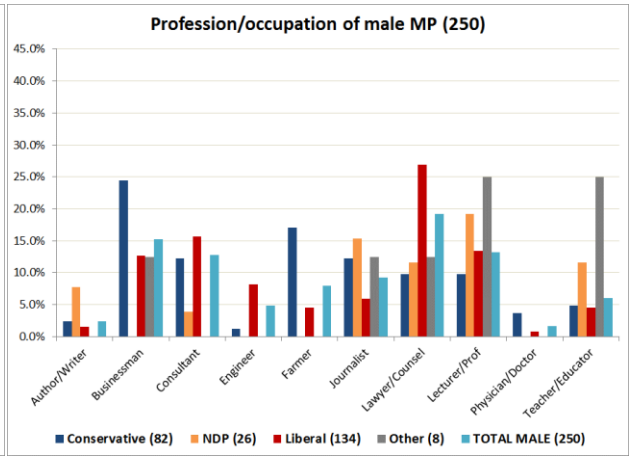

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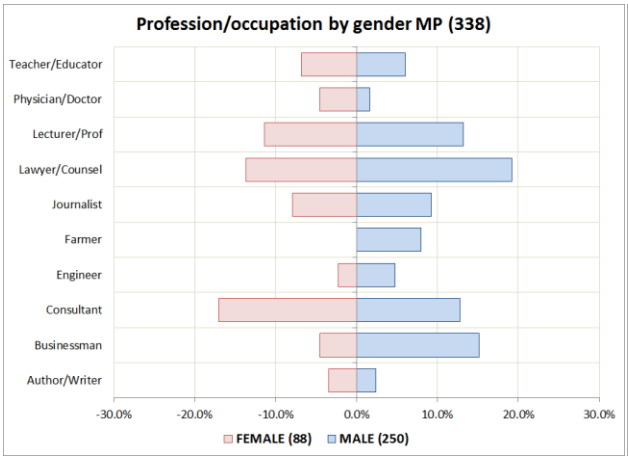

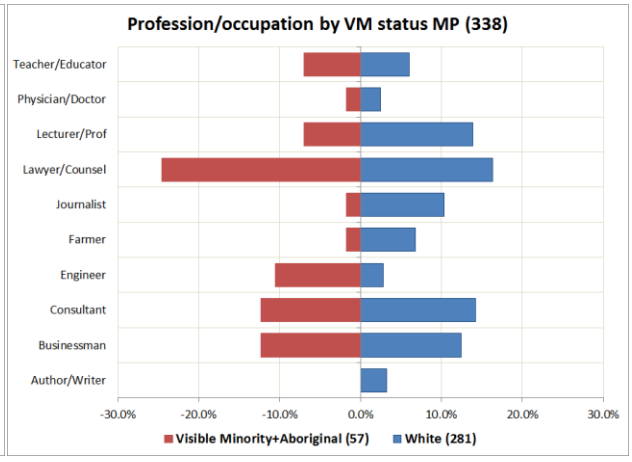

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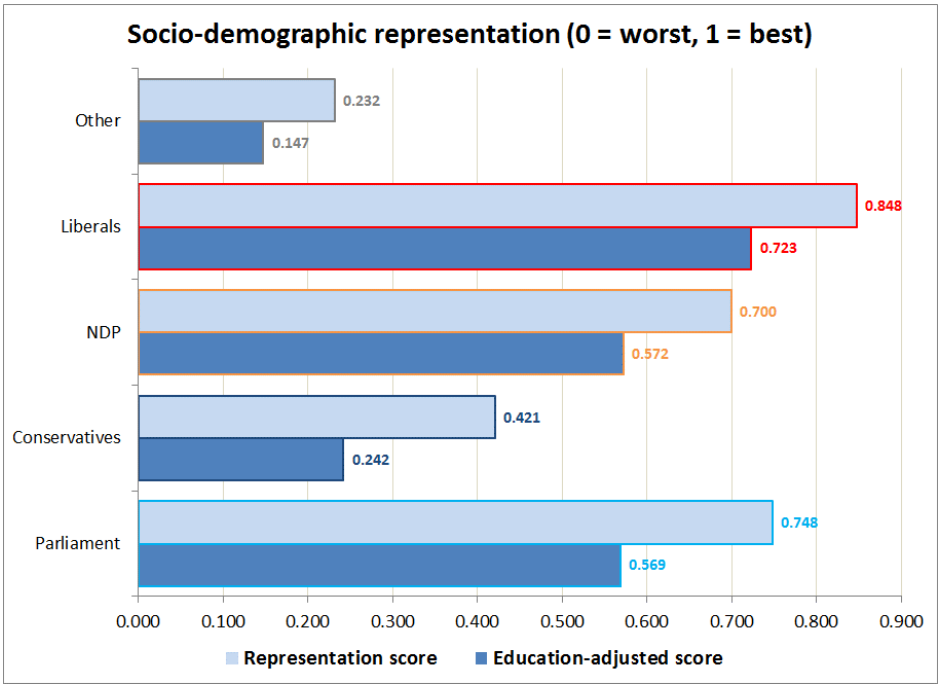
C.f. old Figure 31



NB: Sources are all identical to the original piece (i.e. House of Commons website; party and personal webpages; Statistics Canada; etc.).

NEW CABINET STRATIFICATIONS

Justin Trudeau appointed a Cabinet (30 positions) that is half female as well as almost one quarter (23%) minority. Both these shares, *prima facie*, seem "fair" in the sense that they are representative of the population. (The Trudeau Cabinet also counts 7 French speakers, which works out to 23% of the Cabinet positions – a number also in line with the French-speaking share of the national population.) In fact, ethnic minorities – i.e. visible minorities plus Aboriginals – constitute slightly more than a quarter (26%) of the Canadian population (2015). East Asians and South Asians are the two most prominent ethnic minority groups, with each accounting for approximately 20% of the overall minority population.

The Trudeau Liberal government itself (184 MPs) is over one quarter (27%) female and almost one quarter (24%) minority. However, some ethnic communities are better represented than others. South Asians account for nearly half (45%) of the minority population of Liberal MPs, and West Asians / Arabs account for a quarter (25%). These shares are much higher than within the general population. On the other hand, East Asians are the largest ethnic minority group but are surpassed by almost all other ethnic groups in the Liberal caucus, while Southeast Asians are completely absent. Moreover, the East Asian, black, southeast Asian and Latin American communities collectively constitute 13% of the general population, yet are unrepresented in Cabinet.

Trudeau picked a Cabinet that is 50% women even though the pool of eligible MPs is just 27% female, presumably to align with the demographics of Canada. And a quarter of Cabinet is also of minority background — again aligned with demographics. Even the French-speaking share of Cabinet appears to

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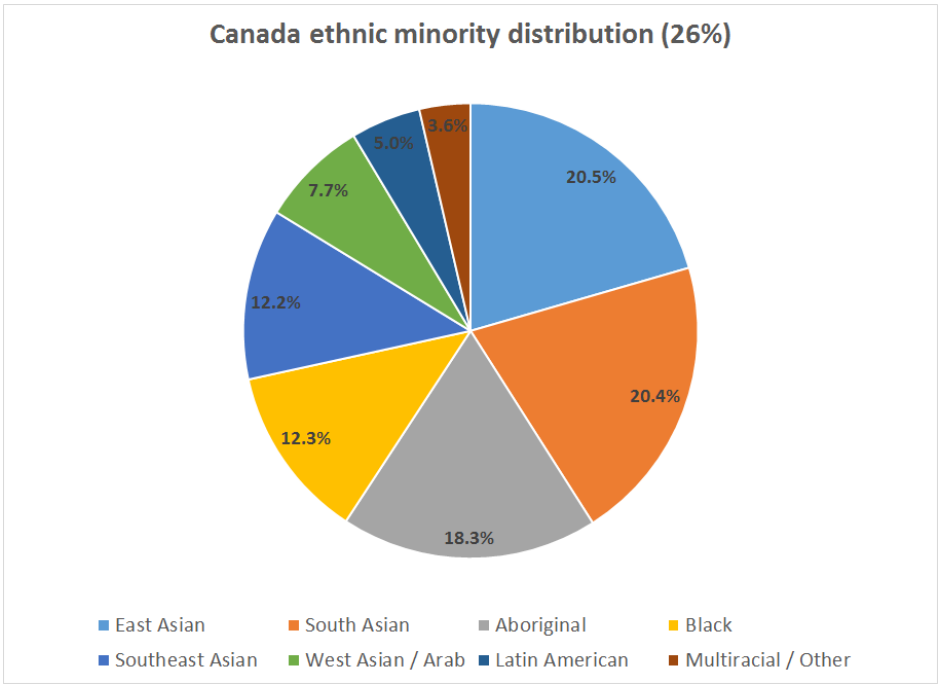
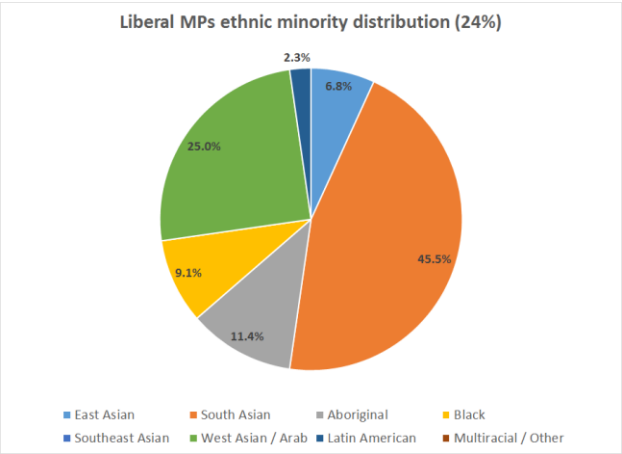
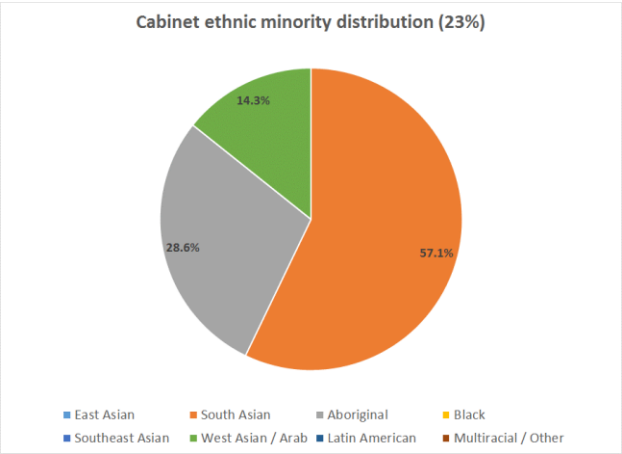
have been deliberately chosen to reflect their share of the population. However, the principle of demographics appears to have been applied at an aggregate level for minorities







Source: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada

This has led to a proportionate non-White representation within Cabinet, but the minorities of Cabinet are not necessarily reflective of the mosaic of Canada. Treating minorities as one homogeneous group is clearly wrong given the heterogeneity of minorities — even within each community there is a lot of diversity. Yet it would appear that the choice of minority Cabinet appointments did not take into account the diversity of that group.

Ultimately, the appointment of Cabinet positions is a zero-sum game as placements for one group are necessarily posts excluded for others. Thus the (obvious) omission of some groups — while others are (necessarily) over-represented (relative to the principle of demographics) — seems to be a negative byproduct of having a one-dimensional view of minorities in Canada.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1
TABLE OF CONTENTS 2
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES 19
INTRODUCTION 20
THE DATA 22
POLITICAL PARTY STRATIFICATION 22
GEOGRAPHY STRATIFICATION 25
LANGUAGE STRATIFICATION 29
RELIGION STRATIFICATION 31
AGE AND GENDER STRATIFICATION 33
EDUCATION STRATIFICATION 37
EDUCATION BY DEGREE TYPE 40
EDUCATION BY FIELDS OF STUDY 43
EDUCATION AT ELITE INSTITUTIONS 44
ETHNICITY STRATIFICATION 48
OCCUPATION STRATIFICATION 54
SUMMARY 56
INDEX OF REPRESENTATION 57
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS 59
BLIND NOMINATIONS 60
MANDATORY VOTER TURNOUT 61
MENTORSHIP 61
OFFICIAL PARTY STATUS 61
PROFICIENCY TESTING 62
PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION 62
QUOTAS 64
TARGETS 64
CONCLUSION 65
REFERENCES 66
ABOUT THE AUTHOR 67

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LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: The case of missing minorities, scientists and women in Parliament.....1
Figure 2: Ethnic composition of MPs vs senators.....21
Figure 3: Ethnic composition of political parties.....24
Figure 4: House of Commons representation vs minority population.....25
Figure 5: Hometown distribution of Parliament vs Canada.....26
Figure 6: Share of Parliament born in top-10 CMAs.....27
Figure 7: Representation of top-10 CMAs.....28
Figure 8: Preferred language of correspondence of Parliament.....30
Figure 9: Distribution of religion (and non-religion) in Canada.....31
Figure 10: Distribution of religion in Parliament.....32
Figure 11: Age pyramid of Parliament.....34
Figure 12: Age pyramid of political parties.....35
Figure 13: Average tenure of sitting parliamentarians.....36
Figure 14: Highest level of educational attainment and university degree fields in Canada.....37
Figure 15: Education pyramid by political affiliation.....38
Figure 16: Higher education by ethnicity of Parliament.....39
Figure 17: Degree type pyramids.....41
Figure 18: Degree type by political affiliation.....41
Figure 19: Education specialisations by political affiliation of Parliament.....43
Figure 20: Education specialisation pyramids.....44
Figure 21: Share of top-15 Canadian universities amongst degree holders in Parliament.....45
Figure 22: Top-15 alumni by political affiliation.....46
Figure 23: Top-15 universities pyramids.....47
Figure 24: Ethnicity pyramid of Canada vs Parliament.....49
Figure 25: Ethnicity pyramid of political parties of MPs.....50
Figure 26: Ethnicity pyramid of political parties of senators.....51
Figure 27: Ratio of representation by gender and ethnicity.....52
Figure 28: Representation by gender and ethnicity of Parliament.....53
Figure 29: Leading professions of Parliament by political affiliation.....54
Figure 30: Profession pyramids of Parliament.....55
Figure 31: The representativeness of Parliament.....58
Figure 32: Ethnic diversity of Canada vs Parliament.....66
Table 1: Demographics of Parliament.....20

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Table 2: Result of 2011 federal election……..23
Table 3: Parliament composition by gender and minority status……52
Table 4: PRS and E-PRS scores by political party……58
Table 5: 2011 federal election under proportional representation……63

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INTRODUCTION

Canada is a diverse country in terms of language, ethnic composition and geography. The country is officially multilingual with English and French enshrined as the official languages. Together they account for 86 percent of the languages spoken at home (65 percent English, 21 percent French). All told, 85 percent of Canadians report being able to speak in English and 30 percent in French. Less than 2 percent of the population has knowledge of neither of the official languages. (Some Aboriginal languages are also granted official or quasi-official status in some provinces, although their numbers are small and (typically) limited to remote communities.)

Table 1: Demographics of Parliament and Canada

	Female (%)	French (%)	Minority (%)
Conservatives	21.8	8.0	10.2
NDP	36.1	55.5	14.4
Liberals	31.3	17.3	13.4
Other	38.9	42.1	22.2
Parliament	27.6	22.7	12.3
Canada	**50.0**	**22.6**	**23.3**

Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

An immigrant country, Canada has a diverse ethnic mosaic,[5] where about one quarter of the population identifies as a visible minority or of Aboriginal descent.[6] (For the purpose of this paper, visible minorities and Aboriginals will be collectively referred to as "minorities", i.e. non-whites.) According to the most recent census statistics (2011), over 20 percent of the population is foreign born, and the majority of recent immigrants are of non-white background.[7]

The Parliament of Canada ("Parliament") is the political governing body of the country and is composed of three branches: (1) The Canadian monarch, as represented by the governor general (GG); (2) The lower house (House of Commons ("House")); and (3) The upper house (Senate).

In the House, members of parliament (MP) are elected in a first-past-the-post electoral system with 308 electoral ridings.[8] The Senate is an unelected body whose members (105 total vacancies) are appointed by the GG on the advice of the prime minister (PM) and is supposed to serve as a chamber of "sober second thought" for legislation introduced in the lower house. Nevertheless, the appointments are *de facto* made by the PM; the GG rarely opposes the PM's selections. In reality, the Senate acts more like a rubber stamp for legislations introduced by the lower house. (By constitutional construct, the House of Commons is the dominant branch of Parliament.) As of 1 September 2014 (after the June 2014 by-

[5] Canada is home to over 200 ethnic/national groups, 41 of which have populations of 100 thousand or more.
[6] Visible minorities in Canada are defined as persons of non-Aboriginal and non-white (European) descent. Aboriginals include First Nations, Inuit and Métis.
[7] In 2012 the 10 largest source countries for legal immigrants (permanent residents) were: China (33,018), Philippines (32,747), India (28,943), Pakistan (9,931), United States (9,414), France (8,138), Iran (6,463), the UK (6,365), Haiti (5,599) and South Korea (5,308).
[8] In the 2015 federal election (tentatively scheduled for 19 October 2015) the number of ridings will increase to 338, with 15 new seats for Ontario, 6 each for Alberta and British Columbia, and 3 for Quebec.

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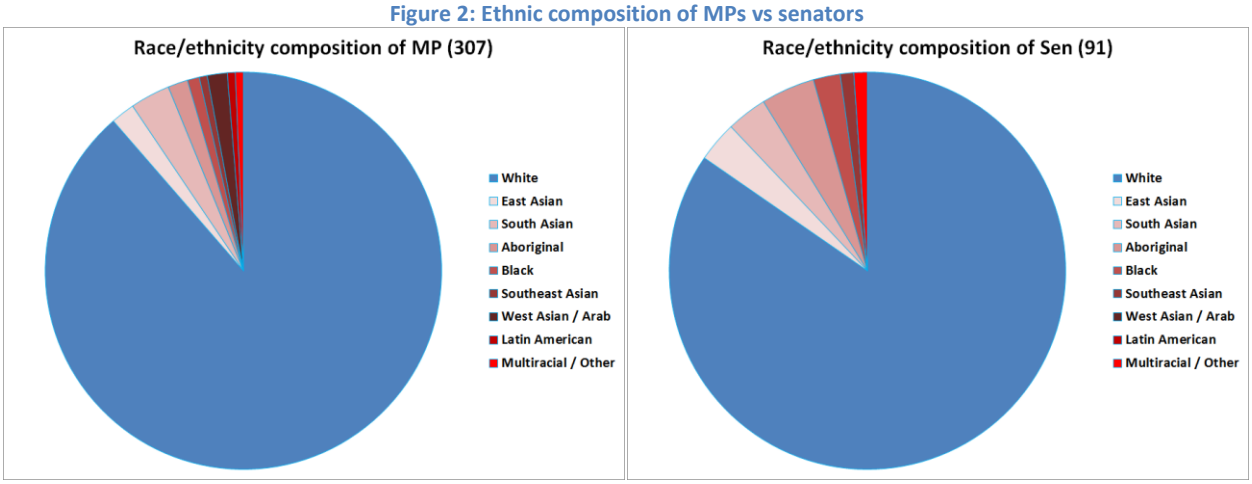
election), there are 1 vacancy in the House (i.e. 307 of 308 seats filled) and 14 vacancies in the Senate (i.e. 91 of 105 positions filled). The lone House seat unfilled being that of the Whitby-Oshawa riding, which has been vacant since Jim Flaherty's death (10 April 2014).[9] The official and working languages of Parliament are English and French.

There are only a few requirements of candidates to vie for a seat in Parliament. Aspirants for the House (MPs) need only satisfy the conditions that they are citizens of legal age (18+). Senators, on the other hand, must: (1) Be a citizen of Canada; (2) Be a minimum of 30 years of age; and (3) Own property with a net worth of at least C$4,000 in the province he or she is to represent.[10]

Given the diversity of the country and the important role of Parliament in the affairs of people, it is generally regarded that a balanced representation along various socio-demographic metrics is desirable. This is not always the case in other institutions (e.g. sports teams), where ethnic, geographic, linguistic, etc. composition are not of relevance. Nevertheless, the characteristics, skills and aptitude conducive to being a good politician might not necessarily be equally distributed across various stratifications of the population. But at the same time, it is likely the case that any significant subset of the population should be able to produce more than enough qualified/talented people for a parliamentarian position. Nevertheless, as the data in the following sections will show, Parliament is disproportionately dominated by white males with backgrounds in law and business, and overwhelmingly under-represented by minorities, those with scientific/ technical backgrounds ("scientists"), and women.

Figure 2: Ethnic composition of MPs vs senators



Source: Parliament of Canada.

What follows are various perspectives on the diversity and representation of Parliament, based on various socio-demographic characteristics. The purpose of this is to see what qualities are common for Canada's governing class. If the composition of Parliament does not adequately reflect the country, it is likely that the underrepresented groups (and society as a whole) will lose out in the democratic process and/or be negatively affected by (often misinformed) policies coming out of Parliament. An unbalanced representation within Parliament also likely means that the country is losing out on its human capital

[9] This vacancy was not contested in the federal by-election of 30 June 2014.
[10] There have been recent scandals in which senators have falsely claimed residency in a given province.

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potential, especially if persons from different backgrounds can bring more depth and diversity of views in tackling the (often complex) problems of the nation. The legitimacy of the government may also be questioned if its composition is highly different than those it governs. Likewise, if Parliament has a skew in its educational and vocational backgrounds, it is unlikely to be adequately equipped to make sound judgments on topics on which they are not well versed – hiring an adviser or a technical specialist is never a substitute for competence in a field. Some suggestions are given at the end on addressing some of the socio-demographic deficiencies in Parliament highlighted in this paper.

THE DATA

The Parliament of Canada website (http://www.parl.gc.ca/) offers a short biography of its members. This includes information such as age, date first elected or appointed, educational background, hometown, etc., as well as a link to members' party and/or private webpages. Many members also have Wikipedia entries and or other publicly searchable sources of data on their background (e.g. LinkedIn). It is from these platforms that the majority of information has been culled. Data on ethnicity, however, were assessed visually, and in some cases also through biographical sketches or name genealogies.

Without doubt data compiled in such a manner are imperfect. For one, there is likely to be some (or more likely a lot of) embellishment or outright dishonesty in some of the biographical sketches, especially with respect to educational credentials.[11] Some people may also self-identify with vocations for which they may not be qualified or are only tangentially aligned with (e.g. Stephen Harper identifies himself as an "economist" although he has never formally worked as one). Likewise, the data assembled are that which are publicly available. As such it is likely to be incomplete. And lastly, judging ethnicity visually (or by name genealogy) is fraught with problems, especially as some people may identify with a given group in spite of outward appearances or may have complex histories. But without direct knowledge of such information, visual classification was the only option available (where such information could not otherwise be inferred elsewhere).

The full database is available online at www.KaiLChan.ca/policy/politics. If errors are spotted, or more information found to expand the database, please email the author at Kai.Chan@INSEAD.edu to share the corrected/updated information.

POLITICAL PARTY STRATIFICATION

The three major national political parties of Canada are the Conservative Party of Canada ("CPC" or "Conservatives" or "Tories"), the New Democratic Party of Canada ("NDP" or "Dippers") and the Liberal Party of Canada ("LPC" or "Liberals" or "Grits"). The separatist Bloc Québécois ("BQ") and the Green Party of Canada ("GPC") also have significant political support in Canada, although the former is confined to within the borders of Quebec. Nevertheless, only the Conservatives, NDP and Liberals have "official party status",[12] a position that grants certain parliamentary privileges, including funding and time to ask questions during Question Period in Parliament.

[11] This paper counts only full-time completed degrees/diplomas when assessing educational attainment.
[12] Official party status in Parliament is given to parties that have at least 12 seats.

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The Conservatives have been the ruling party in Parliament since 2006, when they won a minority government with 124 seats in the House of Commons.[13] In the most recent federal general election (2011) the Canadian public gave the Conservatives a majority mandate, winning 166 seats in the House.[14]

A federal by-election was held on 30 June 2014, and as of 1 September 2014, the Tories hold 162 seats (government), the NDP 97 (official opposition) and the Liberals 37 (3rd party). The remaining positions (11) are filled by MPs affiliated with the BQ (4), GPC (2), and independents (5). The ascension of the NDP as the official opposition (the first time they have achieved this) in 2011 was a big upset and relegated the Liberals – who have governed Canada for much of its history – to the status of a 3rd party.[15]

Table 2: Result of 2011 federal election

Party	CPC	NDP	LPC	BQ	GPC
Seats	166	103	34	4	1
Change*	+23	+67	-43	-43	+1
Votes (%)	39.6	30.6	18.9	6.0	3.9

** Change in the number of seats held in the House from the 2008 federal election results.*
Source: Elections Canada.

The Senate, with a total of 105 seats, counts 54 Conservatives, 0 NDPs,[16] 30 Liberals, [17] and 7 independents for a total of 91 filled seats (and 14 vacancies). Once appointed, senators serve until they reach the mandatory retirement age (75). Senators may, however, resign their seat prior to that. On rare occasions they may even be expelled for committing a serious crime or otherwise deemed unfit to hold office.[18] However, as recent events have shown, even egregious misdeeds have little impact on removing senators (e.g. Patrick Brazeau, Mike Duffy and Pamela Wallin).

The major political parties not only occupy a niche within the political spectrum, but because of patterns in support of certain political ideals, also niches within the socio-demographic spectrum. The general perception is that the Conservatives are whiter, older, more religious, more western and less attuned with science. For the NDP, stereotypes include being less commercially oriented and more socially and environmentally active (hippies). The Liberals supposedly occupy the middle ground, but with a base that is more central Canadian (Ontario and Quebec). Some would also argue that they are more elitist

[13] The election was held 23 January 2006 with a 64.7% voter turnout. The Tories won with 36.3% of the popular vote. A minimum of 155 seats in the House is required for a majority government.
[14] The election was held 2 May 2011 with a 61.1% voter turnout. The Conservatives won with 39.6% of the popular vote.
[15] The Liberals won 34 seats in the 2011 general election but have since gained 3 extra seats.
[16] The NDP's official policy is to advocate for the abolition of the Senate. It has never had a sitting senator in the upper house. It has even gone as far as not recognising Lillian Dyck as a member of the party when she was appointed to the Senate by the then-Prime Minister Paul Martin in 2005.
[17] On 29 January 2014 Justin Trudeau (the leader of the LPC) announced all senators would be removed from the Liberal caucus and hence continue to sit as independents. In the analysis herein, such senators are still referred to as Liberals and most still do refer to themselves as Liberals in spite of the decree from Trudeau.
[18] This can include charges of treason, an indictable offence, or an "infamous crime".

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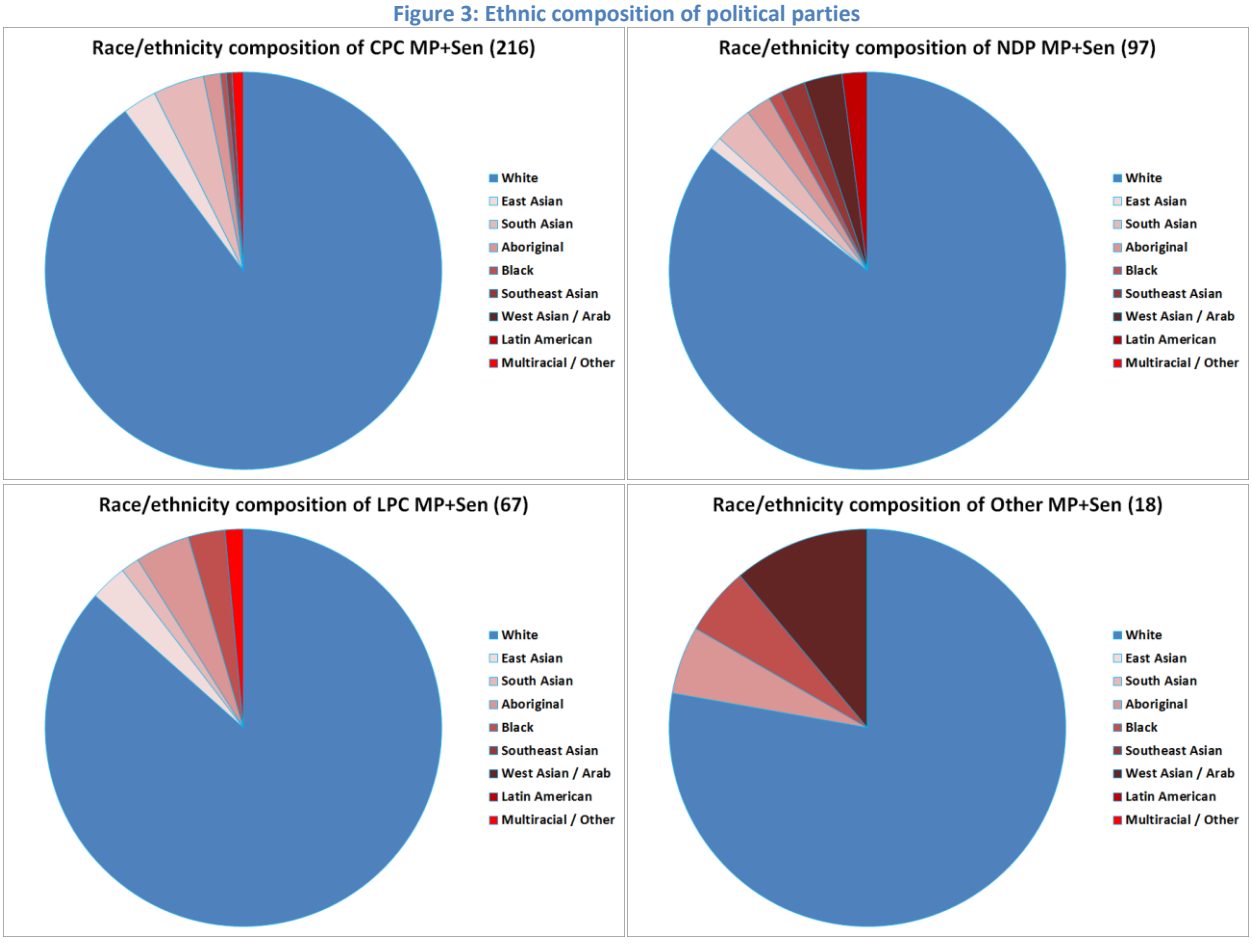
and academic. Thus it is intriguing to see if the data on the composition of the 41st session of Parliament align with these prejudices.

The charts below (Figure 3) show that the Tories display the least amount of ethnic diversity amongst the three official political parties,[19] while the NDP comes the closest to matching the ethnic makeup of the country. The NDP perform best not just in the share of minorities in its ranks, but also the diversity of its minorities. The charts seem to confirm the prejudice that the Tories are not as inclusive. However, the share of minorities in the CPC is not much different than that of the LPC, who generally enjoy a more favourable image as a party open to minorities. The attraction of some minorities to the Tories may be a function of the more socially conservative values of the CPC, for which certain recent immigrant groups (e.g. South Asians) have a more natural affinity (though such values may wane over time).

Figure 3: Ethnic composition of political parties



Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

Going forward, political affiliation (belonging to one of the 3 major political parties or as "other") will be a common dimension of the stratifications on the characteristics of Canada's ruling class. Some

[19] There are not enough data points for the non-status parties to justify any sensible discussion.

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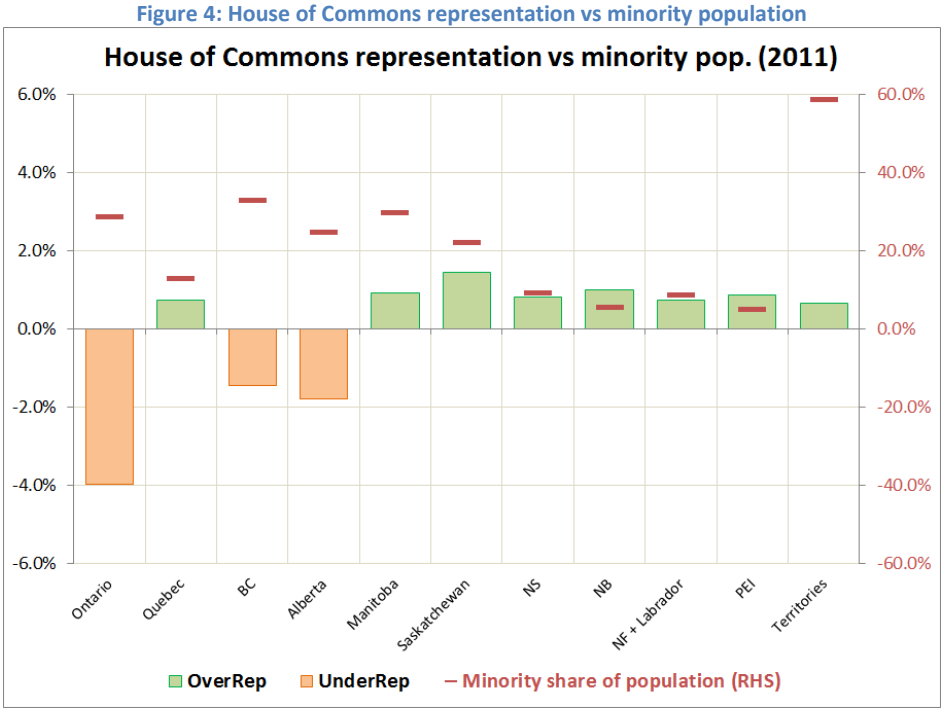
intriguing results ensue with interesting ramifications for bringing broader accountability and representation to Parliament.

GEOGRAPHY STRATIFICATION

At nearly 10 million square kilometres, Canada trails just Russia in land size and borders three oceans (Pacific, Atlantic and Artic). According to the most recent census data (2011), about one third of Canada's 33.5 million[20] residents live in the three largest census metropolitan areas (CMAs) – namely, Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver; yet from coast to coast to coast people can be found inhabiting all parts of the country. But Canada is definitely an urban nation in spite of its expansive size – the ten largest census metropolitan areas (CMAs) account for 54 percent of the country's population.

The House is composed of 308 electoral districts spread across 10 provinces and 3 territories. But the seats are not distributed consistently. Although the average riding size is 109 thousand, the mean number of constituents in ridings in Alberta is 130 thousand, while it is 35 thousand in PEI. In general, the smaller regions (by population) have an overrepresentation of seats, while the people-rich provinces of Ontario, BC and Alberta have fewer seats than relative to their shares of the national population. Quebec is a people-rich province that is an exception, having a small overrepresentation of seats.

Figure 4: House of Commons representation vs minority population



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

The underrepresentation of the heavily-populated provinces will be addressed (though not fully corrected) in the upcoming federal election (scheduled 19 October 2015), where additional seats are to

[20] The 2011 census population count (1 July 2011) was 33.5 million while the National Household Survey (2011) counts 32.9 million. In the analysis herein, the census value is taken and data from the NHS is scaled up to calibrate with the census figure. Estimates of the 2014 population are on the order of 35 million.

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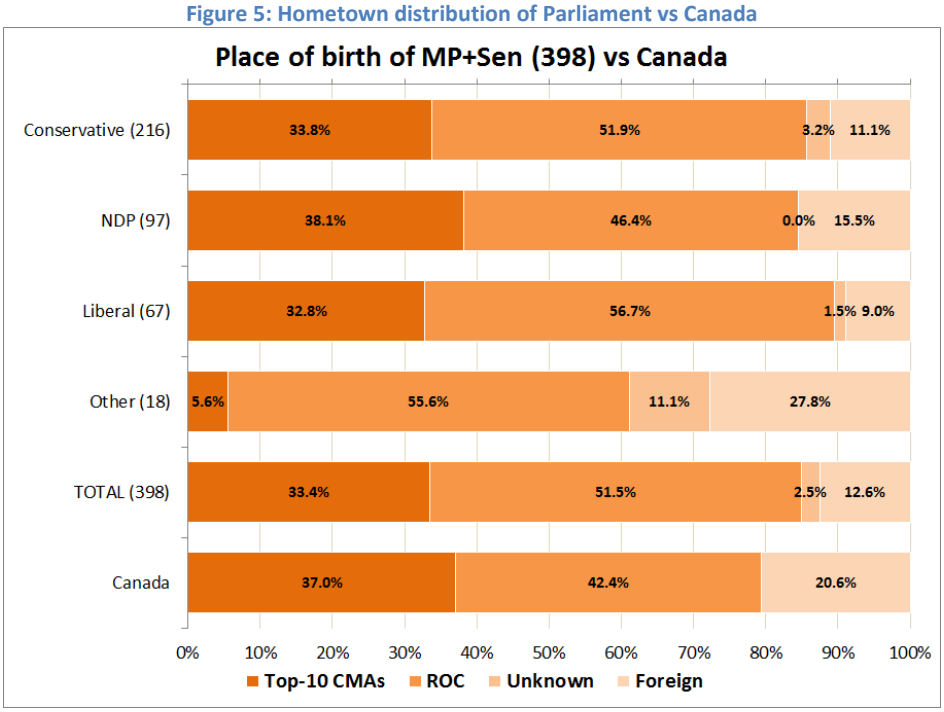
be added to Ontario (15), BC (6), Alberta (6) and Quebec (3), which will raise the total number of seats in the House to 338. But this will still leave Ontario, BC and Alberta with fewer seats than commiserate with their populations. It will also turn Quebec into a deficit province even with the addition of seats there because of the new relative weights for the other provinces. However, reconciling seat allocations is not simply a matter of population (e.g. the Constitution guarantees that PEI has at least as many MPs as it does senators (4) and that each province has at least as many seats in the House as it did in 1985).

The heavily-populated provinces also happen to be home to the majority of immigrants and minorities with over half (52.4%) of immigrants and close to half (46.7%) of minorities in Ontario alone. Thus it seems logical that that the under-allocation of seats to Ontario in the House is at least one factor in the under-representation of minorities Parliament (

Figure 32). This bias is likely amplified when considering that BC and Alberta – two other underrepresented provinces – are also magnets for minorities and immigrants. The territories, on the other hand, are exceptional in that the majority of the population in those regions is minorities (Aboriginals). Nevertheless, the dynamics of Parliament will be largely driven by Ontario and Quebec given the high population counts there.

Figure 5: Hometown distribution of Parliament vs Canada



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

The distribution of Senate seats is even more offside with the population of Canada. Ontario and Quebec collectively hold just 47 percent of the (total) vacancies, yet account for 62 percent of the

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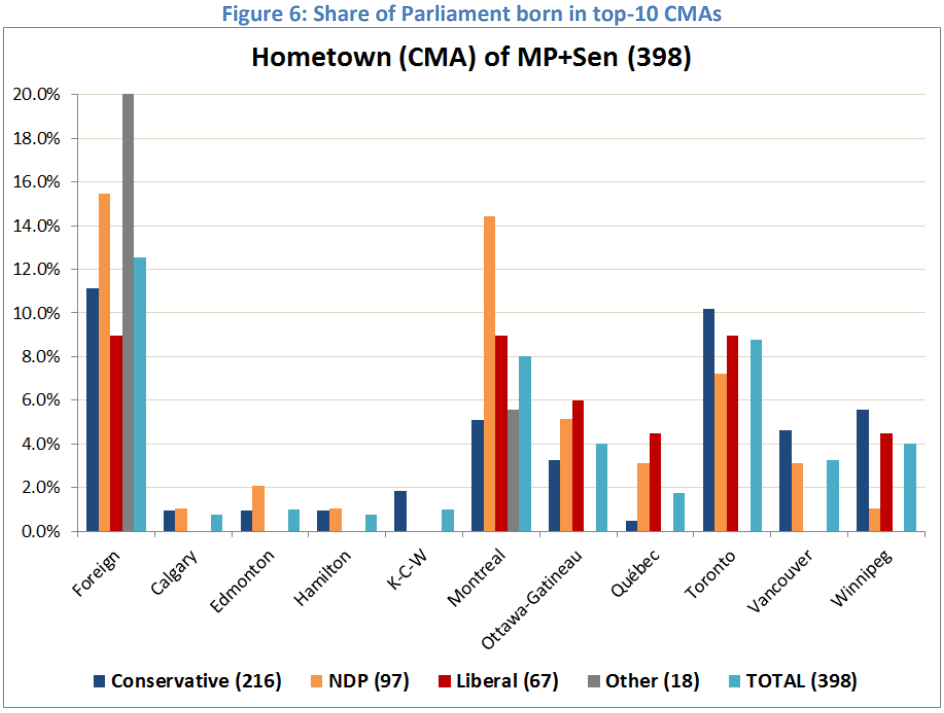
population. On the other hand, PEI – with just 0.4 percent of the national population – is allocated 4 Senate positions (3.8 percent of seats). Again, the allocation of Senate seats is calculated on a formula not wholly dependent on population and where any change would require a Constitutional amendment – which has a toxic history in the country. For this and other reasons, governments have been reluctant to touch the matter, even as the Senate (and its perceived problems of accountability and usefulness) has become a hot issue with the public.

Noting the inherent geographical biases of Parliament, it is natural to expect that it will translate into such dimensions as the hometowns (birthplace) of federal politicians. Although place of birth does not tie one down in future life, it does shape experiences and values. Indeed, rural residents tend to be more conservative than their urban counterparts (e.g. Wasko and O'Neill (2007)), while intuitively foreign-born Canadians should be more likely to be hold positive views on, say, immigration. Such values picked up in younger years are also likely to persist in later life, even if a person moves to a different environment.

Over 20 percent – or 1 in 5 – of Canada's population is foreign born. The vast majority (91.0%) of foreign-born residents (i.e. immigrants) resides in one of the 33 Canadian CMAs; 81.7 percent live within the ten largest CMAs.[21] An even larger number of visible minorities (88.7%) live in the top-10 CMAs. In sum, about 37 percent of Canadians were born in one of the top-10 CMAs, while 42 percent were born elsewhere in Canada and 21 percent were born abroad.

Figure 6: Share of Parliament born in top-10 CMAs



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

[21] Toronto, Montréal, Vancouver, Ottawa-Gatineau, Calgary, Edmonton, Québec, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (K-C-W).

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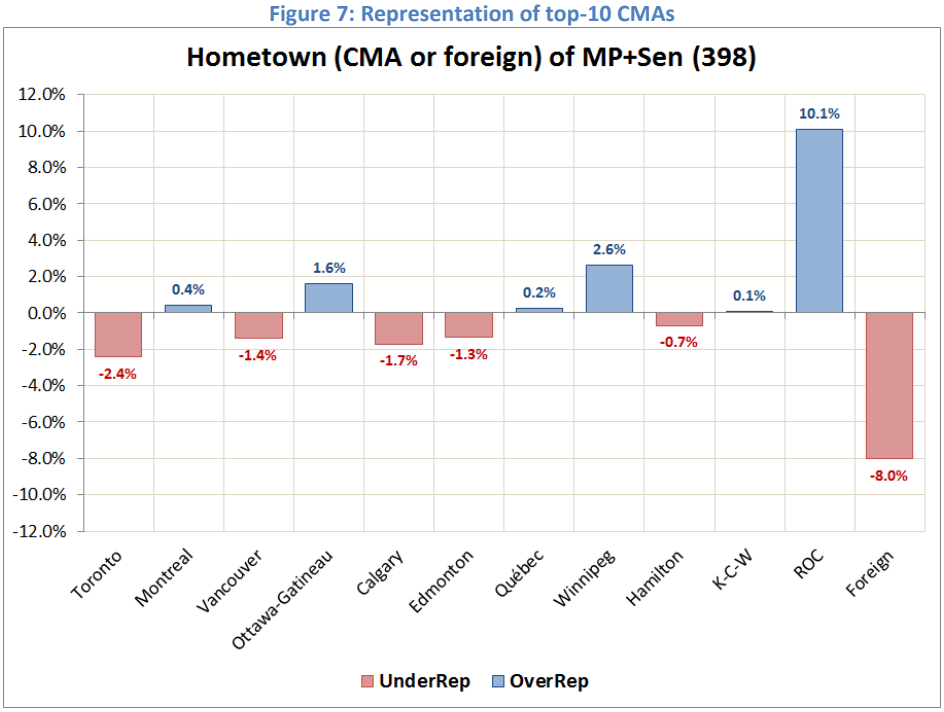
Figure 6 above shows the hometowns of parliamentarians according to the top-10 CMAs[22] as defined by Statistics Canada ("StatsCan"), as well as those who are foreign-born. About 1/3 of Canada's federal politicians call the 10 largest CMAs their hometowns (although many no longer live in the place of their birth). About 1 in 8 (13.0%) politicians (or 50 in total) are foreign born.

The data above suggest a mild underrepresentation of persons from urban areas (or conversely an overrepresentation of rural regions) and those born outside the country. However, these two results are mainly a phenomenon of the fact that: (1) Electoral ridings are drawn up in a way that gives more weight to rural voters (the number of constituents in rural ridings is generally lower vis-à-vis urban ridings; likewise, smaller provinces versus larger provinces (by population)); and (2) The fact that foreign-born Canadians have less tenure in the country than their Canadian-born counterparts at any given age level and so are less likely to be citizens and/or have yet to establish themselves in Canada (as politics is rarely a pursuit of newcomers).

In terms of the distribution of hometowns of political parties (both MPs and senators), the NDP most closely aligns with the national figure for immigrants and also counts a much higher share of members who call Montréal their hometown. Both the Conservatives and Liberals count a much smaller share of immigrants (foreign-born Canadians), at about half the national level.

Figure 7: Representation of top-10 CMAs



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

Surprisingly, a greater share of NDP members in Parliament calls Calgary and Edmonton their hometowns than compared with the Conservatives. Similarly, 10.2 percent of the Tories' parliamentary

[22] K-C-W is an abbreviation for the CMA of Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo.

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group has roots in Toronto (its single biggest base, in spite of being a "western party"), greater than the share for the Liberals (9.0%), whom some would argue is a Toronto-centric party.

One point that is illuminating is that foreign-born is the single biggest source of parliamentarians as compared with any single CMA. Another quirk is that in spite of its much larger size, Toronto-born politicians are nearly identical in number to Montréal-born ones. On the other hand, native Vancouverites are outnumbered by native Winnipeggers in Parliament in spite of Lotusland's much larger population. This might be a reflection of the large number of foreign-born Canadians who settle in Toronto vs Montréal and Vancouver vs Winnipeg.

Figure 7 above shows the under- and over-representations of hometowns of Canadian federal politicians (controlled for foreign-born residents). Although the Toronto CMA is home to 1 in 6 Canadians (though many there are not natives of the city), Parliament counts only 10 politicians who call "Hogtown" their hometown. Even when accounting for the foreign-born population, Torontonians are rarer than its population would suggest. Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton also have fewer parliamentarians than their populations would justify.

Of note is that among the 10 largest CMAs, two show significant overrepresentation in Parliament (relative to its shares of national population): (1) Ottawa-Gatineau and (2) Winnipeg. It is conceivable that those who were born and/or raised in Ottawa-Gatineau may have "politics in their blood", while the higher-than-expected representation of "Peggers" is not as intuitive. (Although some may argue that Louis Riel had a lasting effect on the political activeness of the people from Manitoba.) Regardless, there is an underrepresentation of parliamentarians from major urban centres and consequently a positive bias for those in the "rest of Canada" (ROC).[23]

LANGUAGE STRATIFICATION

The single biggest fault line that exists in Canada is probably linguistic. English is the dominant language in Canada with about 2/3 of the country claiming it as their mother tongue or language spoken at home, but close to 1/4 of the population are native French speakers. (The remaining share is referred to "allophones" in Canada – people whose mother tongue (or language spoken at home) is neither English nor French.) In total, 85 percent of Canadians are able to speak English, while 30 percent can speak French. Approximately 1 in 6 (17.6%) Canadian reports being able to speak both official languages. However, bilingualism is far more prevalent in Quebec (40%) than in the other provinces (10%).

The English and French linguistic groups have often been described as "two solitudes" and a reason for a separatist movement within the province of Quebec, where the majority (85%) of Canada's French-speaking population live. Quebec is also the only province whose sole official language is French. New Brunswick, on the other hand, is the lone province that is officially bilingual. However, some provinces provide government services in French where the numbers justify them (e.g. Ontario). But the reality is that west of Manitoba the French language is rare and a sore point for some westerners (and others)

[23] "ROC" is often used in Quebec to denote Canada beyond the borders of Quebec. Herein it takes the role of representing the Canada beyond the 10 largest CMAs.

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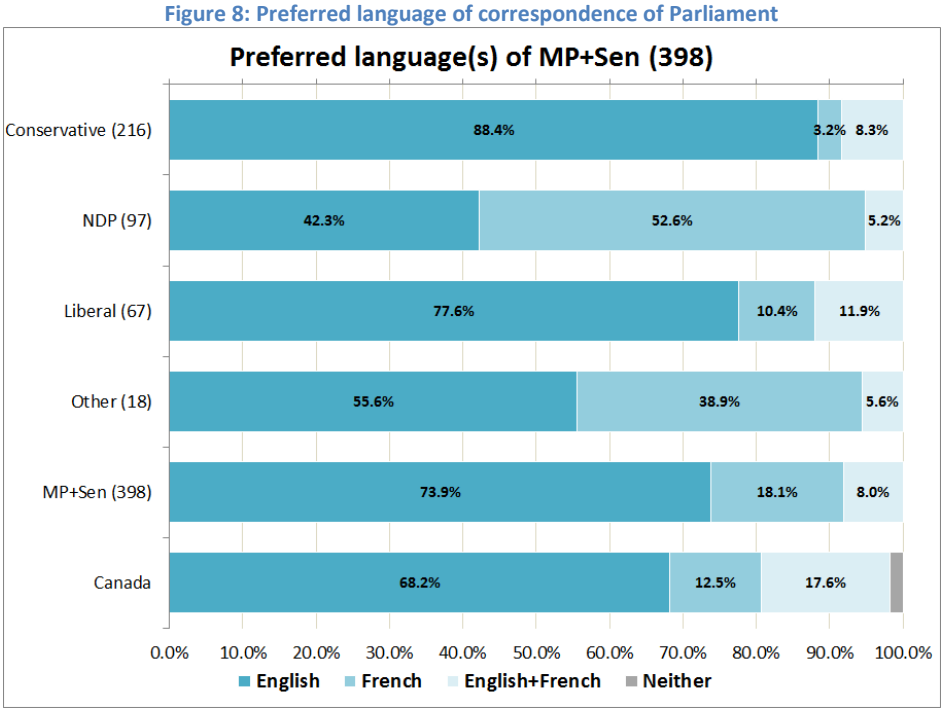
who feel that French has an undue influence over their lives. Nevertheless, the federal government of Canada is officially bilingual with English and French of equal primacy in Parliament.

A supposed (or perceived) overrepresentation of French-speaking Canadians (or Quebeckers) in the government is a source of contention by some members of English Canada. For sure, between the first election of Trudeau in 1968 and the Harper's rise in 2006 (13,798 days), 24 Sussex Drive was occupied by a non-Quebecker on just 481 days (3.5% of the time).[24] However, since Confederation, only 7 of the 22 Canadian prime ministers have hailed from Quebec, a level commiserate with the population of *la belle province* relative to the whole of Canada. Indeed, the first Quebecker to be prime minister was Sir Wilfred Laurier, 29 years after the founding of Canada.

The current (41st) session of Parliament does not support the notion of a French-bias. This is not surprising given that the Tories won a majority government with only marginal support from Quebec. The preferred language(s) of communication for 1/4 (26.1%) of Parliament is French, while English is the choice for 82.1 percent – a small share (8.2%) of members declare both official languages as their preferred language of communication. By contrast, StatsCan reports that 17.6 percent of Canadians are bilingual, but that English is the dominant language[25] for 75.7 percent of Canadians, while French is the dominant language of 22.6 percent of the population.[26]

Figure 8: Preferred language of correspondence of Parliament



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada, MP and senator personal webpages

[24] The prime ministers of that era were: Trudeau* (1968-79; 1980-84), Clark (1979-80), Turner (1984), Mulroney* (1984-93), Campbell (1993), Chretien* (1993-2003), and Martin* (2003-06). (Asterisk (*) denotes Quebeckers.)
[25] Defined as the language most comfortable for a person.
[26] A small percentage have knowledge of neither English nor French.

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Not surprisingly, there are clear tendencies towards a preference for English or French based on political affiliation. The Tories count the fewest members who declare French as their preferred language (or languages) of correspondence, while the NDP – who swept Quebec in the 2011 election – are the *de facto* party of Quebec and by extension French Canada (at least for the current session of Parliament). However, the Liberals have the largest share of its members who are comfortable corresponding in either of the official languages. And of course, all 4 BQ representatives profess French (only) as their preferred language of correspondence.

Preferred language of communication is different than a person's mother tongue or language spoken at home. When adjusting to count those whose native or first language is French,[27] its share of the population of Parliament is 22.6%, which mirrors exactly the national figure. So the (native) French-speaking representation is exactly commiserate with its population. Moreover, the disparity in the distribution of language facilities likely owes to how the variables are defined. The Parliament of Canada website lists the politicians' *preferred* language, whereas the national data on second-official-language capabilities by StatsCan only asks if the person is able to converse in the second language. So the StatsCan definition of bilingualism is much less stringent. Moreover, there are clearly examples of politicians who are completely bilingual but who declare a preference for just one of the languages (e.g. Justin Trudeau lists his preferred language as French (only), even though he is completely capable of conversing and functioning (at a native fluency level) in English). Such declarations for a sole preferred language are likely to be political in nature, especially for some of the parliamentarians from primarily French-speaking ridings or regions.

RELIGION STRATIFICATION

The dominant religion in Canada is Christianity (Catholicism, Protestant, etc.) where 2/3 of the population professes to adhere to it. In spite of its overwhelming number, the country has no official religion and there is a separation of church and state. Given the multicultural nature of Canada, other religions are also well represented, including Islam (3.2%), Hinduism (1.5%), Sikhism (1.4%), Buddhism (1.1%) and Judaism (1.0%). But absence of formal religion is also a hallmark of Canadian society, with almost 1/4 (23.9%) declaring no religious affiliation or some form of atheism/secularism.

Figure 9: Distribution of religion (and non-religion) in Canada

[27] Persons whose native language is neither English nor French, but speak English or French as their primary language at a level equal or better to their mother tongue are classified as either Anglophone or Francophone, respectively. People who claim English and French as their preferred language are bifurcated into English of French based on known distributions of bilingualism between English and French Canada.

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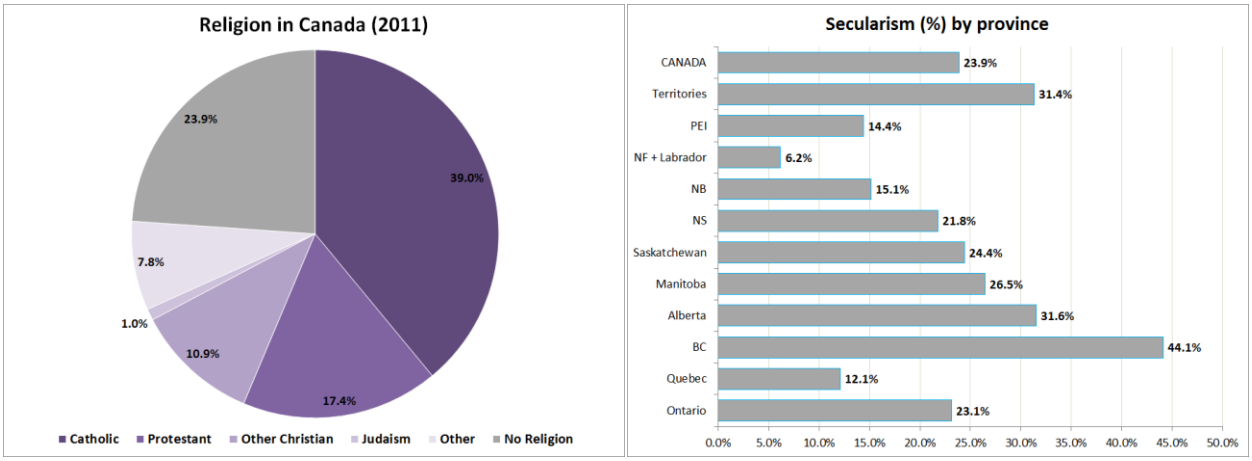

Source: Statistics Canada.

In spite of the fact that 3/4 of Canadians listed a religious affiliation in the 2011 Census, religion is not highly visible and takes a secondary role in public discourse, especially in comparison to a country such as the United States. Indeed, regular church attendance in Canada (20%) is less than half the level of the country's southern neighbour (43%) according to a 2004 Gallup survey, and Canadian politicians often keep their religious beliefs private. Moreover, people who profess a religion are often not devout or actively engaged: The same survey found that 38 percent of Canadians do not or only rarely attend religious services. More importantly, the share of non-religious persons in Canada is growing over time as religion's role in the country wanes.

Notwithstanding the secular nature of Canada's political institutions and its people, the current Conservative government is generally perceived to be more religious than previous regimes. Indeed, Stephen Harper, the leader of the Conservative party (and thus also the PM) is an evangelical Christian (Alliance), though he mostly tries to keep it private, though some would argue that it drives his policies.[28] Some have pointed out, however, that other members of his party have not been as shy about their religious beliefs in the formulation of policy (especially with respect to abortion).

Figure 10: Distribution of religion in Parliament

[28] "Harperland" by Lawrence Martin (2011) is one author's account of how Harper's religious views affect national policy.

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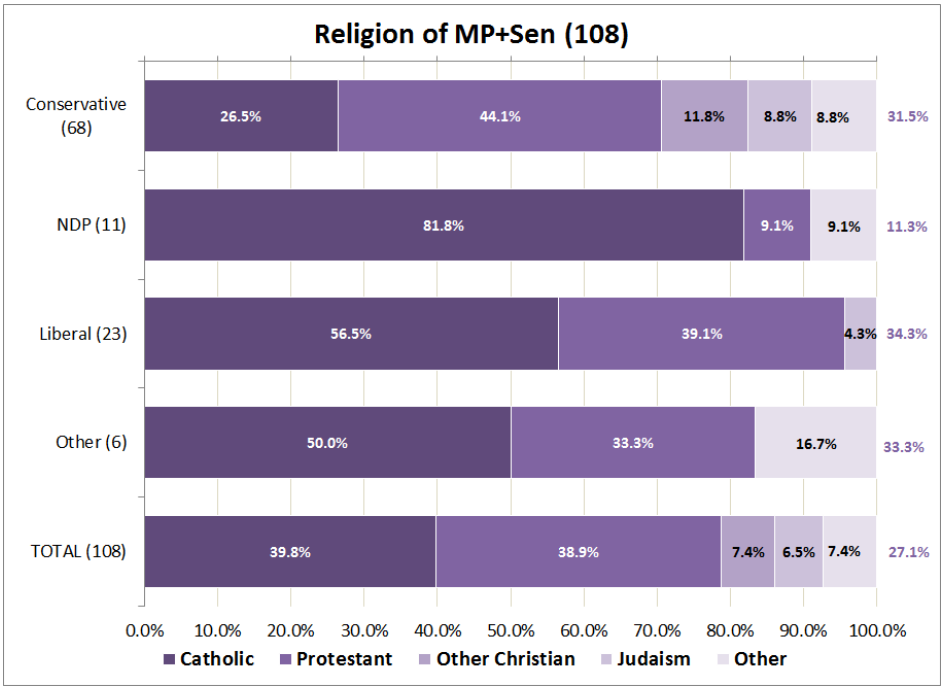

Source: MP and senator websites.

According the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) by StatsCan, the province with the highest share of people with no declared religion is BC (44.1%) followed by Alberta (31.6%), while "secular" Quebec (12.1%) is passed only by Newfoundland (6.2%) with the lowest share of secular or non-religious people. *Prima facie* this may seem counterintuitive given the reputation of Alberta as being a religious province, while Quebec is said to be secular. But in Quebec belonging to a religious group – the vast majority has Roman Catholic roots – does not imply adherence or devoutness to religious practices.

In the sample of parliamentarians, the data are ambiguous on the prejudices of religion and politics. Only 108 (out of 398) politicians publicly espouse their religion or for which their beliefs are discoverable. This works out to about 1 in 4 persons, which probably has a big overlap with the 20 percent of Canadians who regularly attend religious services (Gallup (2004)).

The rate of public disclosure about religion is actually higher for the Liberals (34.3%) than for the Conservatives (31.5%). The NDP's rate of religious expression is the lowest (11.3%). The data, however, do suggest that the Conservatives are the party favoured by religious groups insomuch that its share of members from non-traditional religions (e.g. Judaism, Islam, evangelical Christians, etc.) is higher. And for sure the policy platform of the Conservatives can be said to be more driven by religion than the other parties, where there is a movement by some to re-examine issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage. Finally, the public expression of religion – or absence of it – may be a policy chosen by the Tories in an attempt to appeal to the broader more secular Canadian.

AGE AND GENDER STRATIFICATION

Politics is often taken on by persons who have already previously worked, and sometimes by those looking for a closure in their career. It is also a profession where experience and connections matter,

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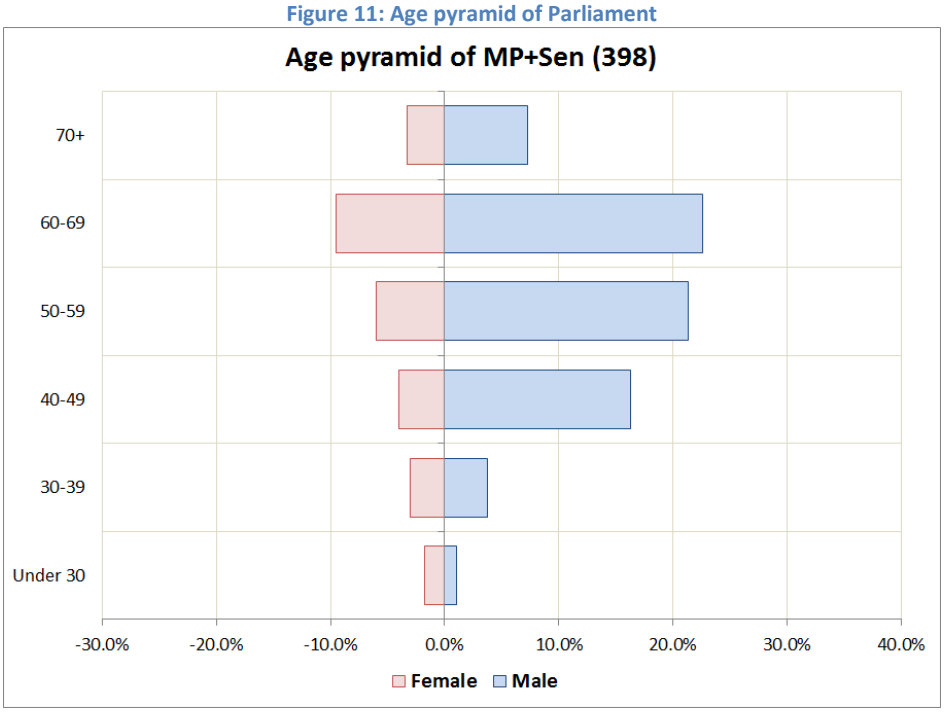
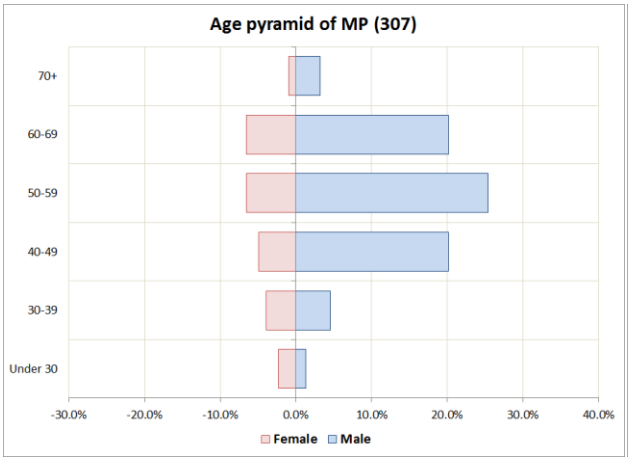
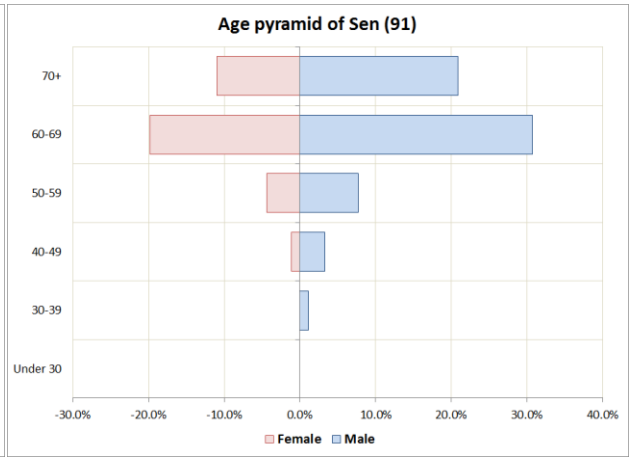
especially as networks grow with age. Nevertheless, it still does draw young people (even if their chances of electability are smaller). In fact, the federal election of 2011 saw an "orange wave" of young NDP candidates (some still post-secondary students) get elected in Quebec.

Figure 11: Age pyramid of Parliament







Source: Parliament of Canada.

In spite of the results in Quebec, the median age of the 41st session of Parliament is 57 compared with a national median age of adults of 40.6.[29] The age pyramids above (Figure 11) show that the lion's share of parliamentarians fall into 50-69 age bucket, significantly older than the active labour force. It is also apparent that the pyramid is asymmetrical: Just 1/4 of MPs and 38 percent of Senators are female. The shunning of the upper chamber by the NDP (an official platform is to abolish the Senate) is also a likely

[29] The national median age of adults is approximately 46.5.

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factor in the underrepresentation of females and minorities as the party – at least in the current session of Parliament – is one that better mirrors the demographics of Canada.

Age profiles of politicians are also likely to differ according to their status as either MPs (younger) or senators (older) as the latter is often a sinecure for party loyalists. Indeed, the median age of senators is 67, while that of MPs is 54. And the adage that "a person is liberal when young and a conservative when old" holds up true (in the aggregate) in the dataset when comparing the relative youth of the NDP (48.8) versus the seniority of the Tory MPs (54.1). Of course this is likely just a result of the NDP having run a young slate of candidates, rather than any evolution of political beliefs with age. However, the oldest group in Parliament is actually the Liberals (56.4). The seniority of Liberals also holds up in the Senate, with Liberal senators (68.1) almost 5 years more senior their Conservative counterparts (63.4).

With respect to gender, there are 110 female parliamentarians out of 398 filled seats. This implies 89 "missing" women with a representation ratio (RR)[30] of (110/398)/(1/2) = 0.553. That is, women are represented at 55 percent of their national level, meaning there are about only half as many as expected if Parliament was perfectly reflective of the gender profile of the country.

The distribution of women across the political parties is not uniform. Amongst the major political parties, the Conservatives have the lowest share of female MPs (17.9%), while the NDP has the highest (36.1%) – a rate that is more than double the laggard party. The Liberal's share of female MPs (24.3%) aligns closely with the national average (25.1%). However, when senators – who are appointed, rather than voted into office – are taken into consideration, the strong bias for males is partially ameliorated, likely due (in part) to an active choice by PMs who recognise the demographic deficiencies in the House. Of the 91 Senate seats filled, 36.3 percent are female, a value almost identical to the female share of MPs amongst NDP parliamentarians. Amongst its senators, the female share in the Tories is 33.3 percent while that of the Grits is 40.0 percent. There are no NDP senators (a party choice/platform), and a handful (7) who are not affiliated with either of the traditional parties.

Figure 12: Age pyramid of political parties

[30] The share of a group in Parliament relative to its share in the general population. Mathematically this can be expressed as *RR*(*i*) = [*Group*(*i*)/*Parliament]*/[*Group*(*i*)/*Population]*, where *i* denotes some particular group.

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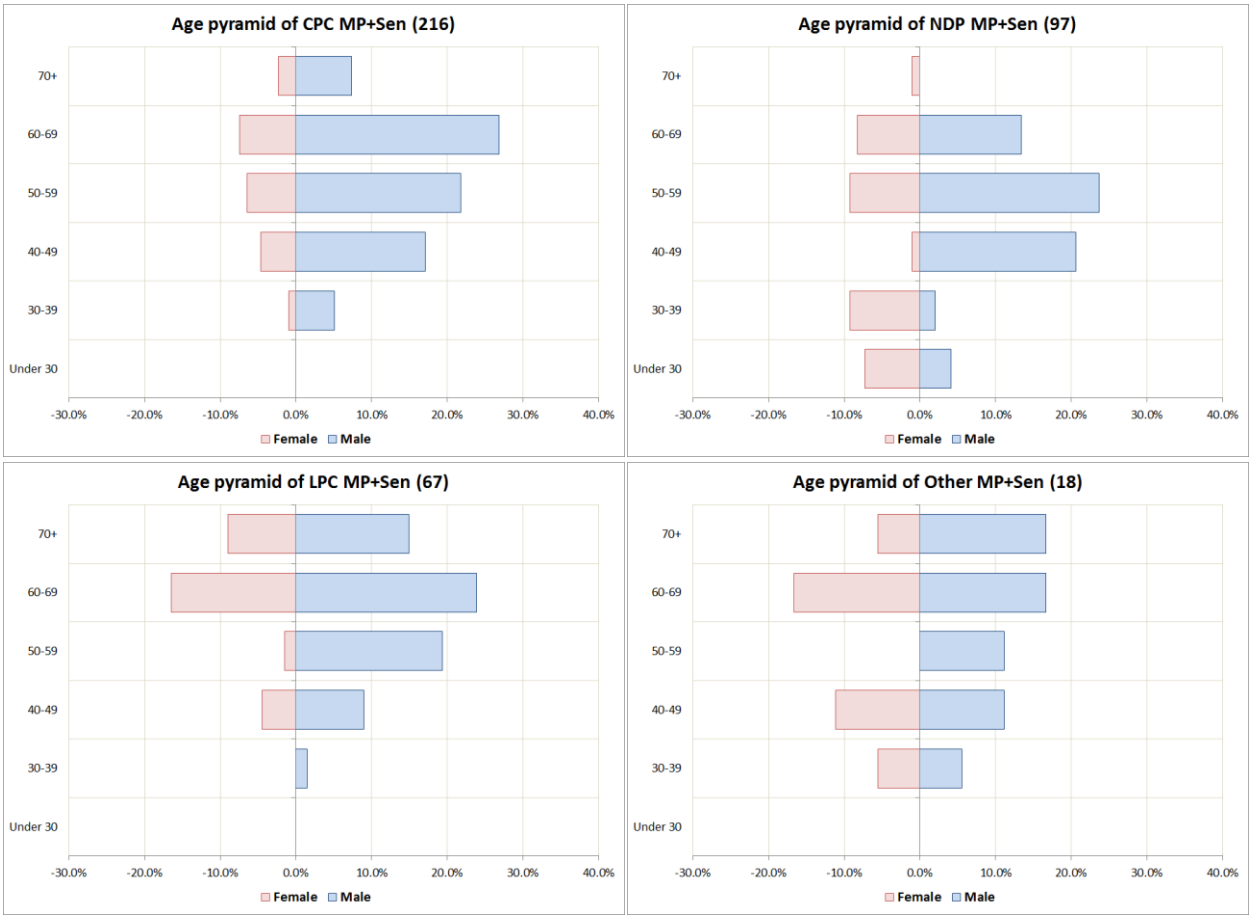

Source: Parliament of Canada.

The average tenure of parliamentarians (as of September 2014) is 7.6 years. This number is slightly lower (7.2) for MPs and higher (8.7) for senators. (There is a mandatory age of retirement for senators set at 75.) Given the fact that the majority of NDP politicians were elected for the first time in 2011, the tenure for NDP politicians (5.0 years) is, not surprisingly, the lowest among the major political parties. The relative youth of its members in Parliament is also reinforced by the fact that it has no members in the Senate, who generally tend to be a more senior bunch. The average tenure of the Liberals is the highest, both for MPs (10.9) and senators (11.7), though the majority of occupied seats (54) of the Senate is now affiliated by Conservatives. (The Grits count 30 members in Senate.) Going forward, the average age and tenure of Tory senators is likely to age with time, while Liberal senators may actually become more youthful with the retirement of its more elderly members.

Figure 13: Average tenure of sitting parliamentarians

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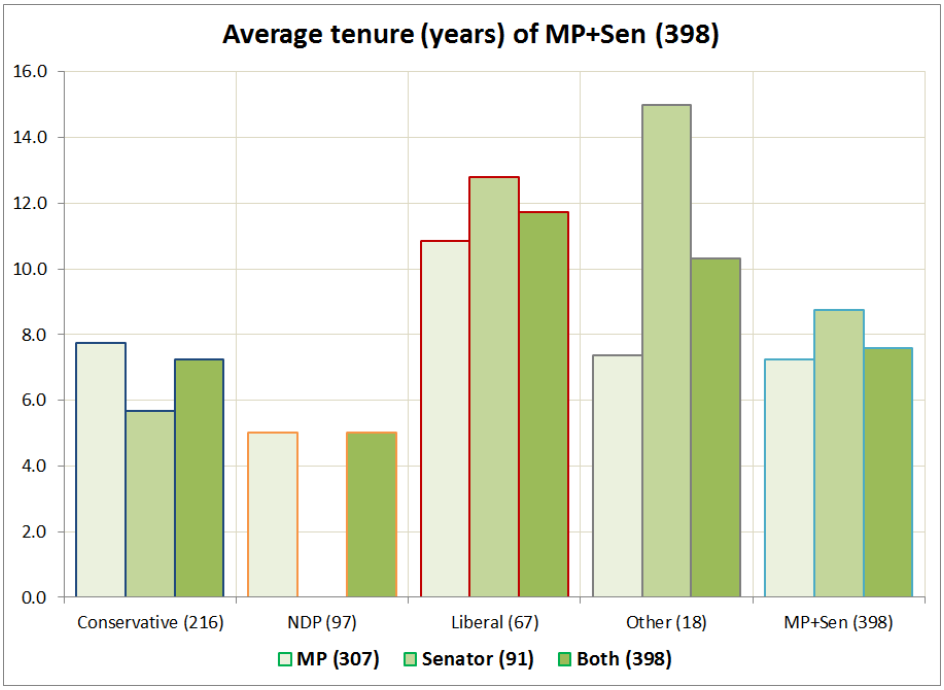
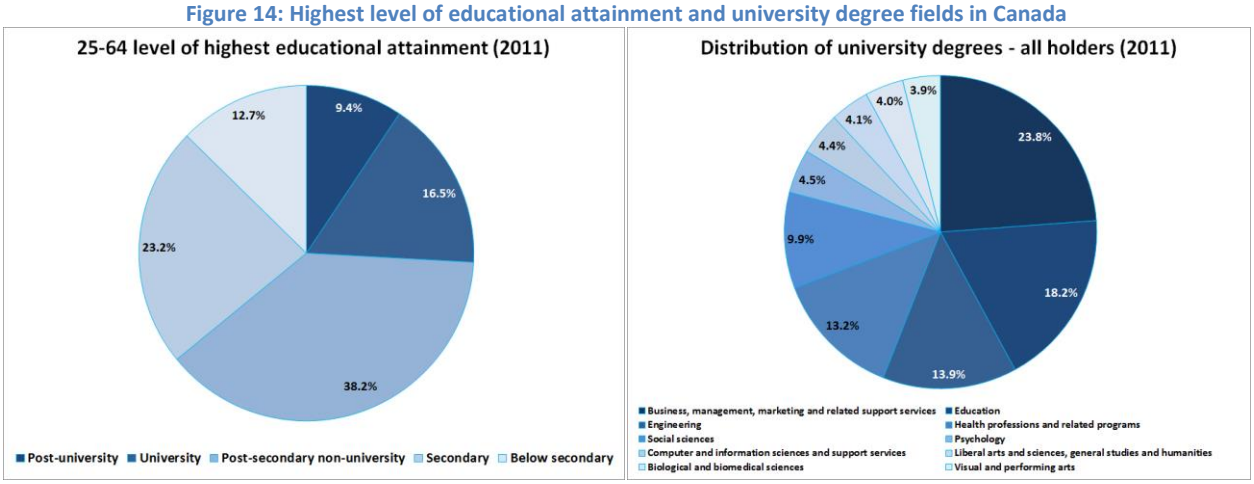


Source: Parliament of Canada.

EDUCATION STRATIFICATION

MPs are highly-remunerated persons. The base salary of an MP is C$163,700 with top-ups for various titles, the highest of which is an additional C$163,700 for the prime minister. The base salary ranks MPs in the top 5 percent of the income distribution in Canada. Senators enjoy a salary of C$138,700 with various top-ups, the highest of which is an additional C$78,300 for holding the position of "leader of the government in the Senate". These posts are thus likely to appeal to highly educated persons, or to those otherwise with highly remunerative careers or options. (Senators are appointed so do not actively seek office, thus monetary considerations would only enter (if at all) after securing appointment, though most nominees would certainly come from well-established professional track record.)

Figure 14: Highest level of educational attainment and university degree fields in Canada



Source: Statistics Canada.

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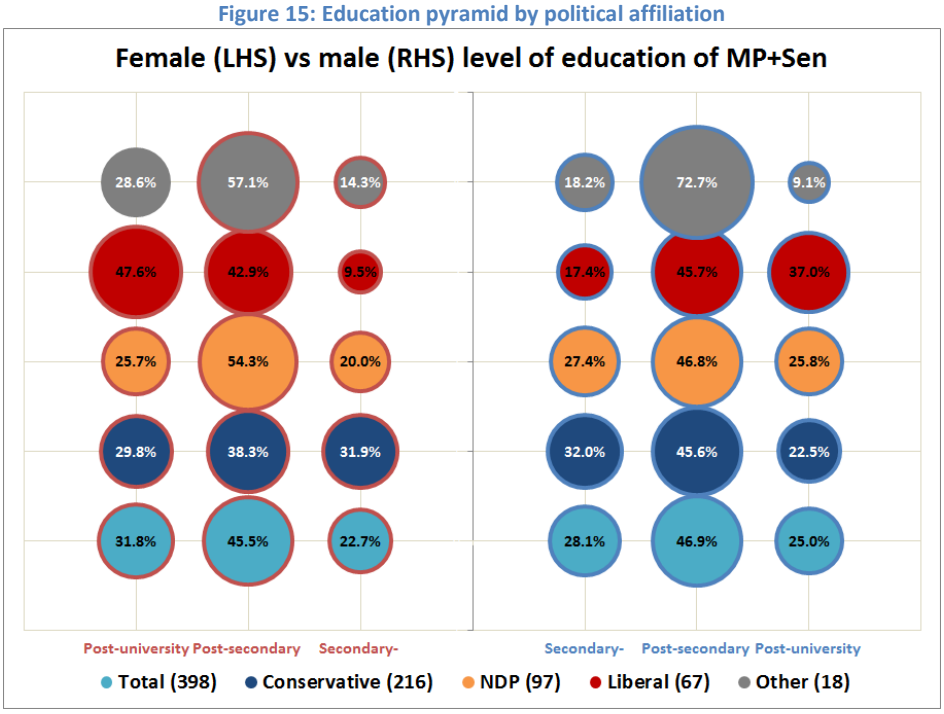
On a national level, men (45.9%) have a higher uptake of higher education amongst the older generation (65+) as compared with women (35.4%); however, the pattern is reversed for the younger generation (25-44) with women (73.2%) outpacing men (65.1%) in obtaining post-secondary education.[31] Given this phenomenon, and the fact that the average age of Parliament is 55.5 years, it would suggest that male parliamentarians are a more educated lot. Just as much, the 12.4 year seniority of senators versus MPs might suggest a difference in the level of higher education between the lower and upper chambers.

Figure 15: Education pyramid by political affiliation



Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

Overall, almost 3 out of 4 (73.4%) Canadian politicians hold some form of post-secondary (college or university) degree(s) or diploma(s). On average, parliamentarians have more formal higher education than the population as a whole (64.1%).[32] This result is both expected and probably a good phenomenon, as it is generally deemed a good trait that national decision makers come from highly qualified (or at least formally educated) backgrounds. So although a broad and diverse set of politicians is generally viewed in a positive manner, most would concur that that diversity in talent or aptitude is not desirable.[33] Nevertheless, there are also valid arguments for having a broad set of voices in Parliament, including from those with less formal education. This is especially true if politics is – or perceived to be – an elite game for the benefit of the elites.

In terms of the gender split, female parliamentarians (77.3%) are more likely to have completed post-secondary education than their male counterparts (71.9%): See Figure 16 on page 39. The superior rate of higher education for women is mildly surprising given the average seniority of Parliament and

[31] StatsCan (2012): Indicators of well-being in Canada; learning – educational attainment.
[32] For those aged 25-64 (StatsCan).
[33] Under the assumption that education is a proxy for (or highly correlated with) talent.

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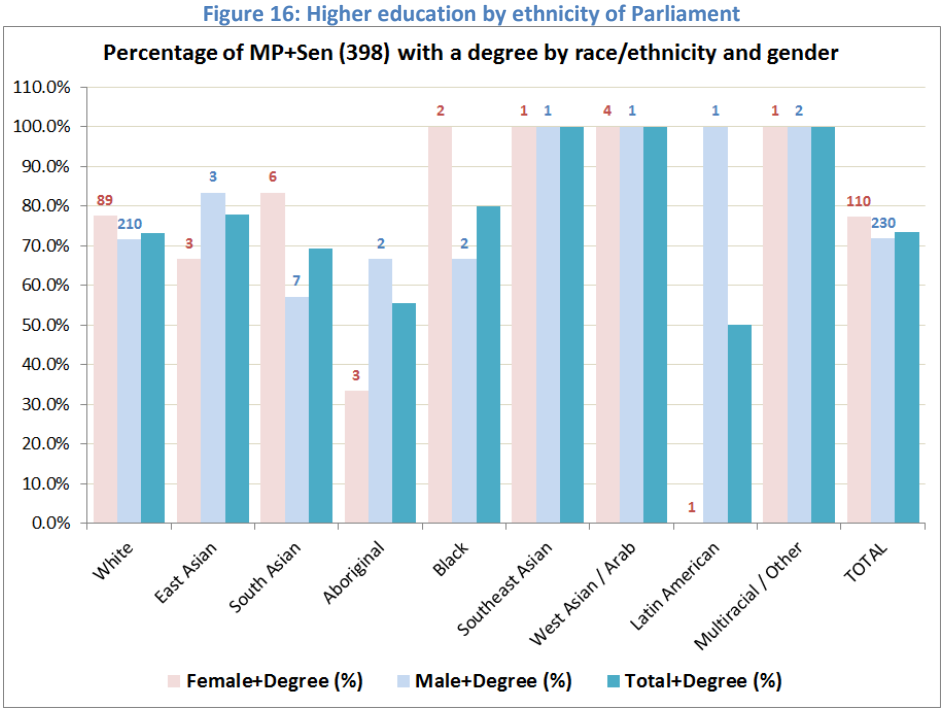
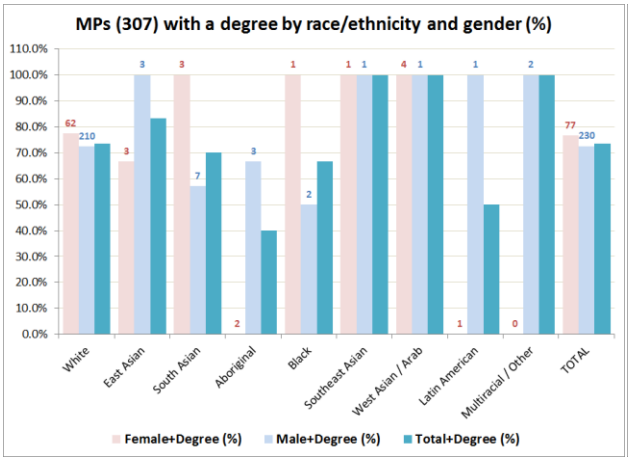
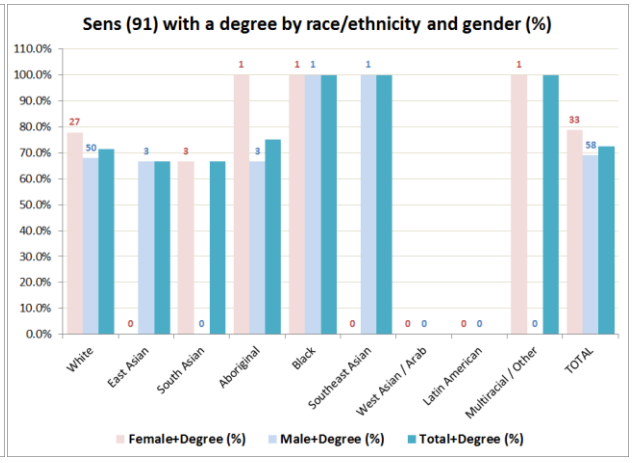
knowing that amongst the older generation that higher education is more prevalent for men as noted above

Figure 15 above presents a "bubble pyramid" chart of highest educational attainment by gender and political affiliation. The columns closest to the midline represent the share of each group (left of midline are female; right of midline are male) whose highest level of education is secondary or lower. The two columns second from the midline represent the share of each group that completed post-secondary education (college or university). The outermost columns are the shares of each group that attained post-university qualifications. Thus each 3-set of bubbles (same colour) sum to 100%. For a party where its female and male members are equally distributed across the three education levels the bubbles are identical in size. For a group with a relatively high level of post-university education the outermost bubbles are larger than the inner ones.

Figure 16: Higher education by ethnicity of Parliament







Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

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The largest bubble in most cases is for post-secondary education. Of note, however, is the considerable number (26.9%) of parliamentarians who have advance (Master's, PhD, etc.) degrees compared with just 21 percent of the general population who possess a *university* degree. Moreover, the rate of higher education between MPs and senators is also nearly identical, in spite of a 12.3-year age gap between senators (65.0) and MPs (52.7). *Prima facie* this may seem surprising, but the rise in prevalence of higher education enrolment has been a phenomenon of more recent vintage. (The typical MP was last in school 30 years ago, while the average senator was last in school 40 years ago.)

Along party lines the Liberals are the most highly educated with less than 15 percent of its members without post-secondary qualifications. Conservatives, on the other hand, have the lowest incidence of higher education – almost 1/3 of its members are without post-secondary qualifications. Nevertheless, its members still have a greater penetration of higher education (68.1%) than the population at large. Finally, the junior profile of the NDP may be skewing its numbers as some of its members were students at the time of their election and/or have yet to finish their tertiary schooling.[34] The data thus suggest a strong delineation in educational uptake across political parties and between genders.

The charts above (Figure 16) cut the data on higher education uptake along the dimensions of gender and ethnicity. As a group, minorities have a marginally higher rate of higher education attainment (79.5%) compared with whites (73.1%). This aligns with the general population where foreign-born Canadians have a greater incidence of higher education as compared with those born in the country.[35] (There is likely considerable overlap between the two groups.) Although there are reasons to believe that there are likely differences in the uptake of higher education across the ethnic communities, it is hard to make inferences owing to the small sample sizes for each group. The only groups that some kind of inference can be made (albeit weak) for uptake in higher education might be for East Asians (77.8%) and South Asians (69.2%), who count 9 and 13 members, respectively, in Parliament.[36]

EDUCATION BY DEGREE TYPE

More important than the act of seeking higher education, however, is what people studied while in school. The below charts show the degrees earned by the governing class according to broad degree types (e.g. arts, business, education, science & engineering, law) as well as the level of higher education (masters and equivalent and doctoral and equivalent degrees).

Although the Conservatives are thought by some as the "anti-science party" (e.g. Tory MP Gary Goodyear, minister of state for science and technology, is widely believed to be a Creationist), the party actually has a higher share of its members (19.0%) who have degree(s) in sciences and engineering. However, it is worth noting that the science uptake by Tory members is often in the non-science-intensive fields and in less prestigious schools (see section on education at elite institutions below). Nevertheless, the CPC counts more engineers than the other parties. On the other hand, the Liberals

[34] Only fully-accredited completed degrees/diplomas are counted.
[35] According to StatsCan (2006), 51 percent of recent immigrants (aged 25-64) to Canada hold a university degree, compared with 19 percent of the overall Canada average (aged 25-64).
[36] However, there is a possibility that MPs and senators with educational credentials earned outside of Canada may prefer to decline including this detail in their biographies.

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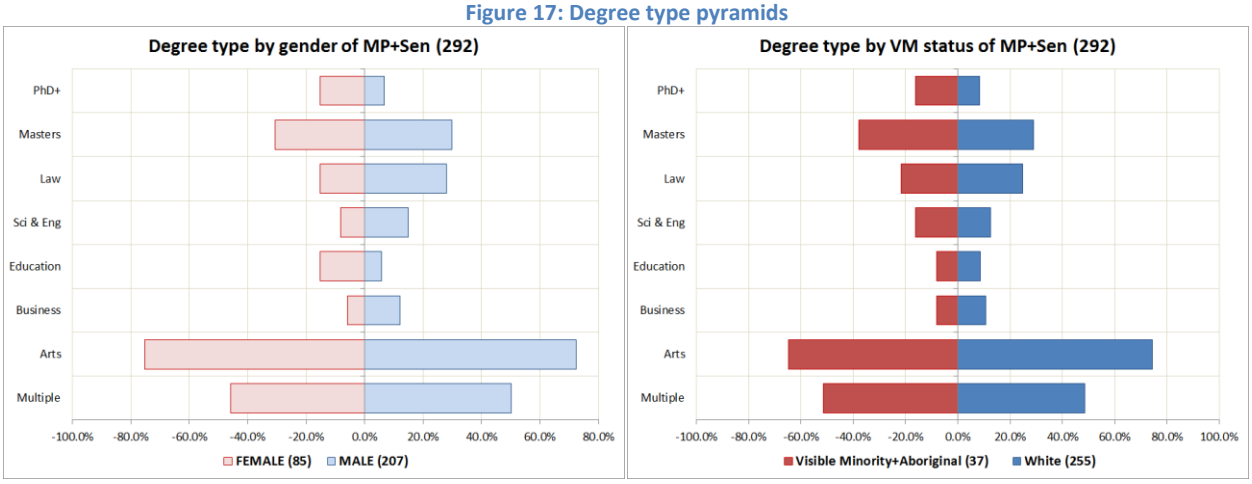
have the highest uptake in law (33.3%) and doctoral-level degrees (17.5%), but there are no Liberal females with science backgrounds (outside of medicine).

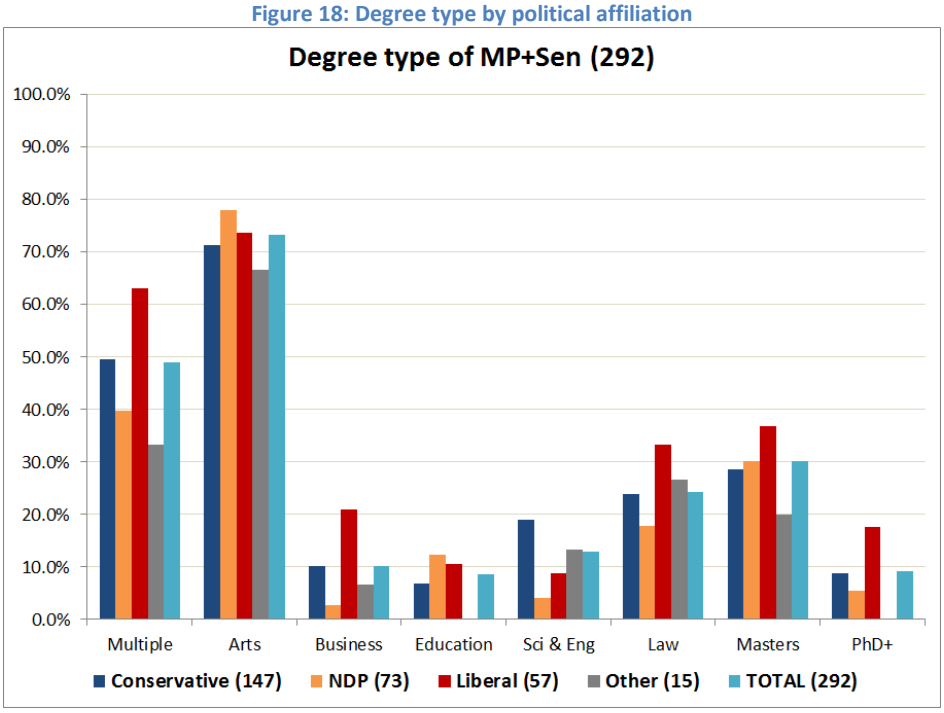
Figure 17: Degree type pyramids



Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

One insight is that there is not a significant difference in the uptake of science and engineering degrees between men and women –in contrast to *a priori* prejudices. Women in Parliament are also more likely than men to possess doctoral (or equivalent) degrees (15.3% vs 6.8%), especially within the Liberal Party. Men, however, show higher uptake in law degrees (28.0%) as compared with women (15.3%). Male parliamentarians are also more likely to have business degrees (12.1%) than women (5.9%).

Figure 18: Degree type by political affiliation



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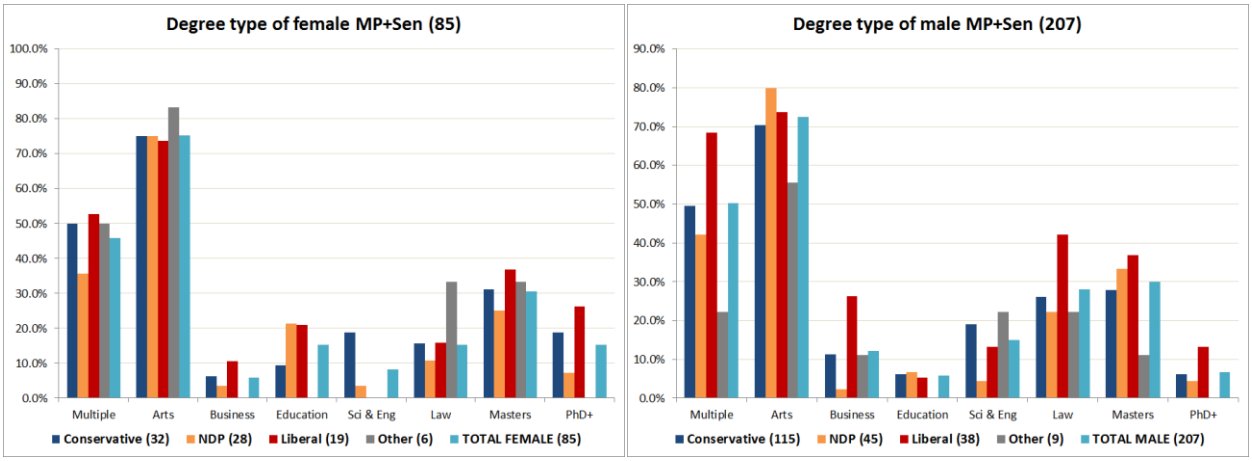

Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

As a whole, the number of parliamentarians with science and engineering degrees is abysmally low (13.0%) across all stages of higher education for those with post-secondary degrees. This translates into less than 1 in 10 parliamentarians as a whole. On the other hand, there is no shortage of persons with arts degrees (73.3%) in Parliament. Likewise, business (10.3%) and education (8.6%) have a high uptake amongst the governing class. (Some persons may hold multiple degrees.)

Nationally, science and engineering degrees account for about a quarter of university degrees (see Figure 14). So people from STEM backgrounds are represented in Parliament at only about 1/2 of their national level. [37] That is, scientists are relatively just as rare among the governing class as minorities or women (see also Table 3 page 52), and in absolute terms wholly underrepresented in Parliament.

As a G7 country, science, technology, innovation (STI) and R&D are essential to the sustained (and sustainable) growth of the country. The most recent figures (2011) from the OECD show that R&D (as a share of GDP) in the country measures 1.8 percent, well below the OECD average of 2.2 percent. Notwithstanding structural factors to the Canadian economy (i.e. low R&D intensities for some of the leading sectors in the country), a valid question is whether low R&D spending in the country – and hence a lagging innovation culture/infrastructure[38] – is a function of the absence of leading decision makers having science and engineering backgrounds, thus making it a low priority for the country.

In terms of the differences in the degrees undertaken by whites versus minorities (Figure 17), the data confirm that the national pattern – half of all STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) degrees in Canada are held by foreign-born Canadians – also prevails within Parliament. Minorities in Parliament are also more likely to possess PhDs, while whites are more likely to have studied arts and law. However, caution should be taken on the data for minorities as it includes just 37 persons spread across 8 buckets. (*NB*: A person can be counted in more than one bucket.)

[37] The representation ratio is approximately 13.0%/25.0% = 0.520 if we ignore the share of parliamentarians without post-secondary qualifications.

[38] A Globe & Mail report (02/09/2014) cites Canada's slipping competitiveness (as measured by the WEF) as due to "underinvestment in innovation and technology".

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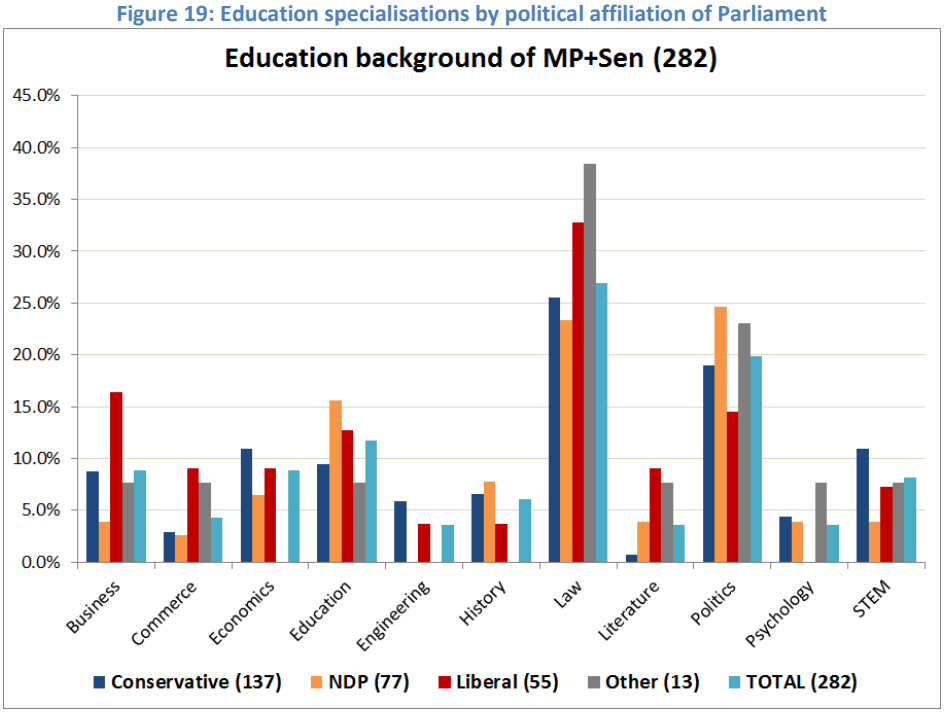
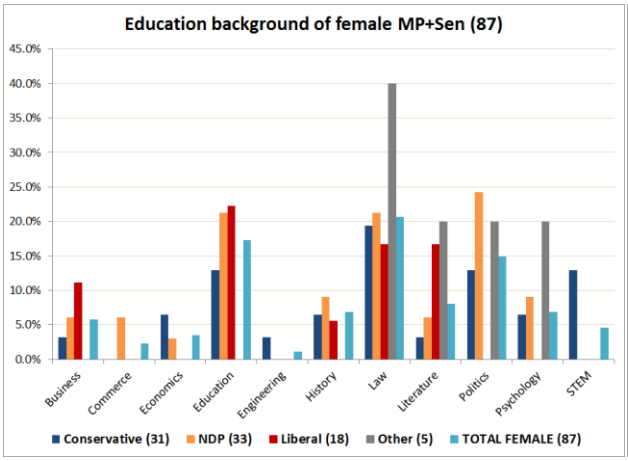
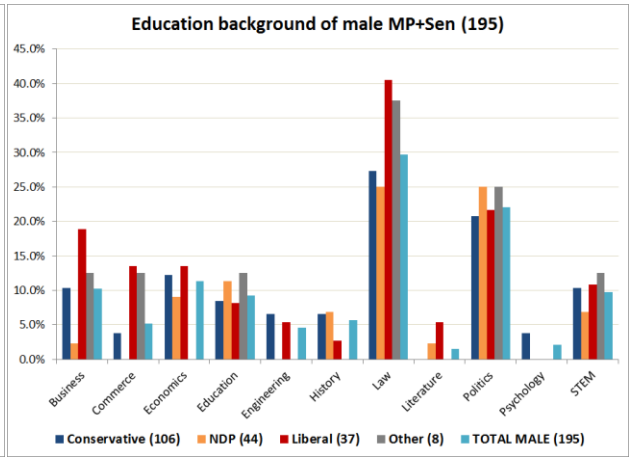
EDUCATION BY FIELDS OF STUDY

In addition to choice of degree it is possible to be even more granular and look at the field(s) of specialisation. The charts in this section look at the uptake of the 10 most popular fields.[39] *A priori*, one might expect biases in both gender and minority status. For example, certain fields are traditionally dominated by a given gender (e.g. engineering by men, nursing by women); likewise, there are fields where certain minority groups may gravitate towards (e.g. computer science by Asians). Similarly, a more market-oriented party such as the Tories would likely draw persons from areas such as business, whereas the socially progressive NDP is more likely to be a magnet for those from social studies

Figure 19: Education specialisations by political affiliation of Parliament







Source: MP and senator personal webpages.

[39] These are the 10 most listed fields by the politicians. Some disciplines may have been grouped together if they are highly similar (e.g. politics and political science) or to obtain critical mass (e.g. STEM).

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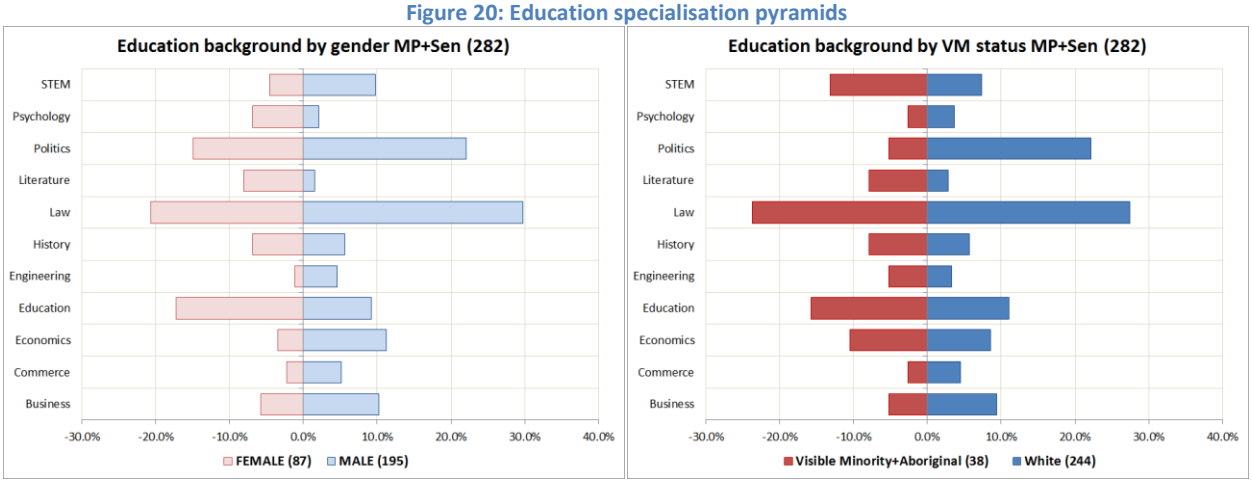
Figure 20: Education specialisation pyramids



Source: MP and senator personal webpages.

What do the data show? Perhaps a little surprising is that the Liberals have a higher rate of uptake in business and commerce than the Conservatives. The Grits are also more likely to have specialised in law. And perhaps confirming certain stereotypes, the Dippers have the highest rate of uptake in "idealistic" soft disciplines such as education and politics, and count zero members with an engineering background. The Conservatives have the highest rate of uptake in STEM fields (with a given caveat), although as a whole the number is still very low. And within the Tories, women are more likely to have a STEM background than compared with their male counterparts. So some of the data confirm *a priori* beliefs, while others actually are actually directionally opposite.

There is also significant variation between men and women (Figure 20), with men much more likely to have enrolled in business, economics, law, and politics. Women, on the other hand, have a higher uptake in psychology and education.

When it comes to variation between whites and minorities there are several notable differences (Figure 20). First, politics is the second-most popular field for whites, while it has a low uptake amongst minorities. Whites are also more likely than minorities to have enrolled in business. Minorities, on the other hand, had a higher uptake in education, engineering and STEM fields. Once again, caution must be taken in looking at the results since there are only 37 minority parliamentarians with data on their higher education fields. Secondly, the minority groups are diverse and there are likely to be significant differences in the patterns of one group vis-à-vis other groups within the minority umbrella.

EDUCATION AT ELITE INSTITUTIONS

What matters is not only the type of degree or field of study politicians pursued while in school, but also where they went to school. The Canadian university system is amongst the world's finest. The University of Toronto (U of T), University of British Columbia (UBC) and McGill University (McGill) rank amongst the world's leading research universities.[40] Many other Canadian universities also rank highly in global rankings. So it is worthwhile to see which institutions trained Canada's governing class. If a high share of

[40] The 2013 QS World University Rankings placed McGill (21), UBC (49) and U of T (17) all in the global top-50.

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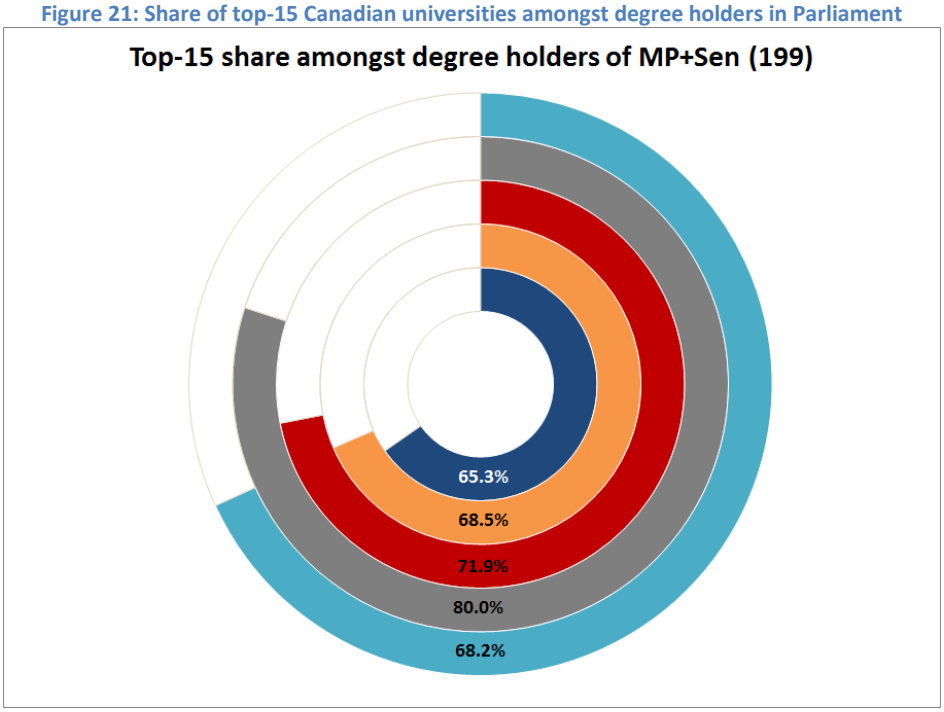
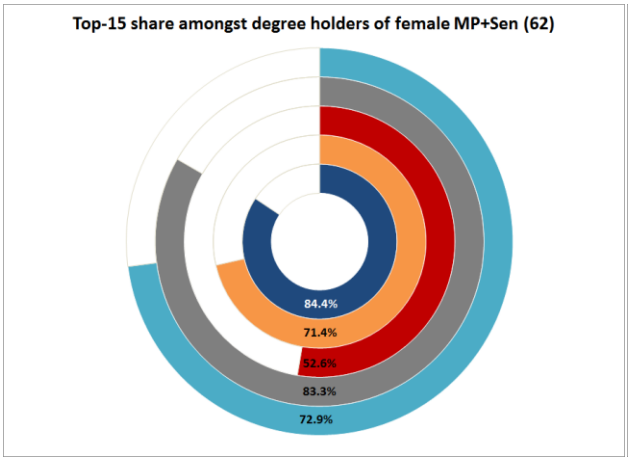
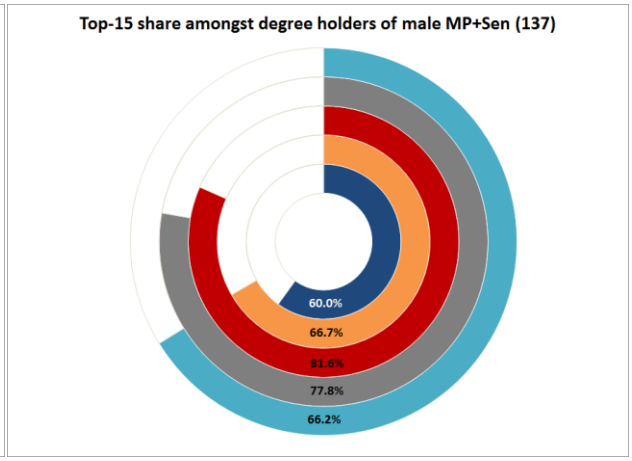
parliamentarians are alumni of the nation's elite schools there is possibly a double-edged take on it: (1) On the positive side, these schools would generally suggest or signal high aptitude or ambition on their part; but (2) The governing class could also be perceived to be elitist and out of touch with the general population. Nevertheless, *ceteris paribus*, it would be a good quality that the governing class of Canada comes from highly educated and ambitious backgrounds. An additional perspective is that time spent at these schools may forge certain characteristics that may shed insight into the personality of the national leaders, as each campus has its own distinct set of cultures and subcultures.

Figure 21: Share of top-15 Canadian universities amongst degree holders in Parliament







Source: MP and senator personal webpages.

Macleans magazine, a national weekly circulation, publishes an annual ranking of the leading universities in Canada. Amongst them is a list of the top-15 schools that have doctoral and medical programmes. This group can be taken to be synonymous with research universities and is a prestigious lot (as are other schools in the Macleans report or those not part of the medical/doctoral school

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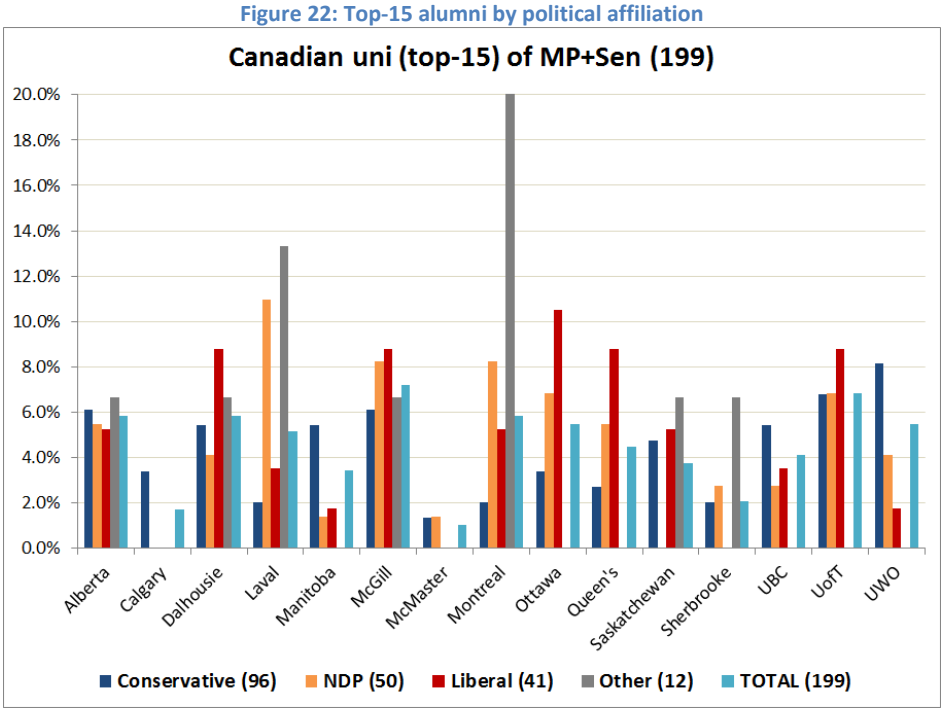
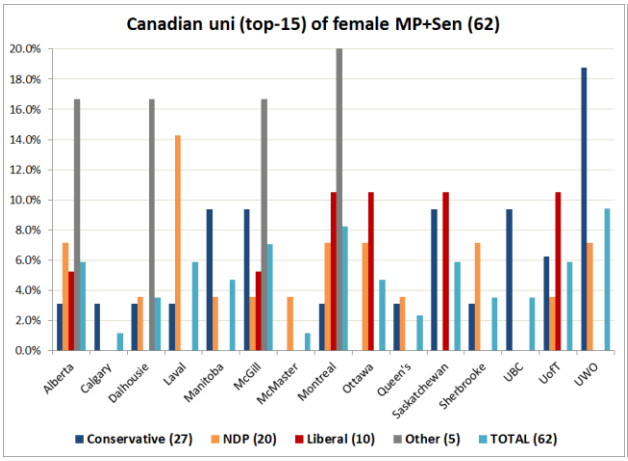
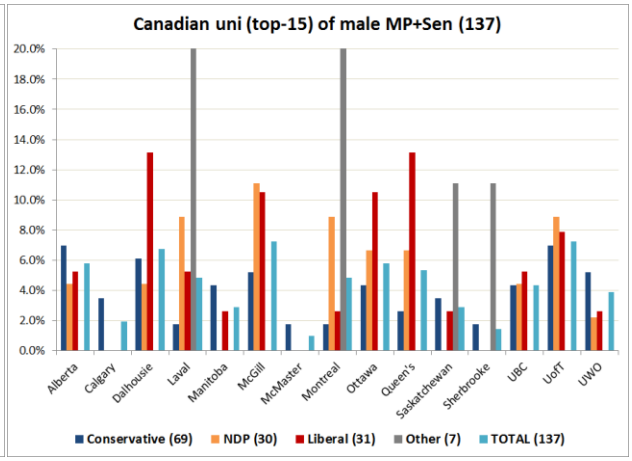
grouping), so it seems natural to use this group of 15 as a proxy for elite higher education.[41] Of course, there are downfalls with this method as it overlooks many great institutions of higher learning (e.g. the University of Waterloo).[42] Nevertheless, the proxy is meaningful as it captures a large share of the prestigious institutes of higher learning in the country, as well as a large swathe of Parliament: About 2/3 of the 41st session of Parliament with higher degrees studied at one of Canada's top-15 research universities (see Figure 21 above). Alternatively, about half of all the governing class are alumni of the top-15 schools.

Figure 22: Top-15 alumni by political affiliation







Source: MP and senator personal webpages.

[41] The Macleans medical doctoral top-15 are (in alphabetical order): University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, Dalhousie University, Université de Laval, University of Manitoba, McMaster University, McGill University, Université de Montréal, University of Ottawa, Queen's University, University of Saskatchewan, Université de Sherbrooke, University of Toronto and University of Western Ontario.

[42] There are just 4 parliamentarians with degrees from Waterloo.

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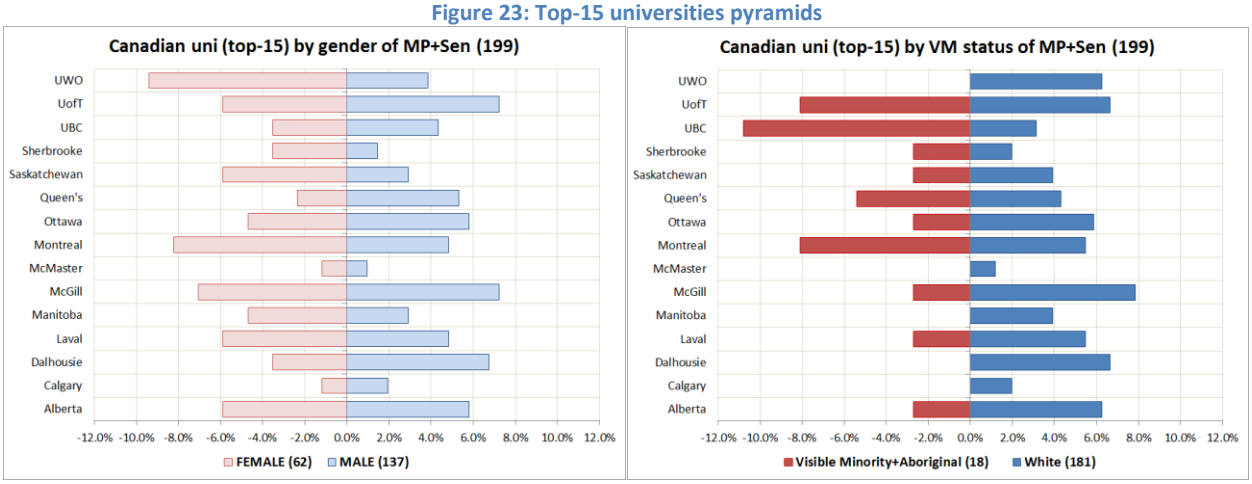
When stratified by political parties there are a few interesting patterns: (1) Tories are less likely to have attended an elite university; however, when gender is also entered into the picture, the low level of attendance by Conservatives at the top-15 universities is driven by its male members (60.0%). Female Tory members have the highest incidence (84.4%) of being alumni of the top-15. A reversal in this pattern is seen in the Liberals, where male members (81.6%) are much more likely to come from elite educational backgrounds versus female Liberals (52.6%). There is not as stark a difference between men (66.7%) and women (71.4%) within the NDP with regards to likelihood of having attended an elite university.

So which schools exactly are favoured by Canada's ruling class? McGill (21) counts the most number of alumni in Parliament. At number two is the U of T (20), followed by Alberta, Dalhousie and Montreal (17, tied).[43] Liberals are more likely than the other parties to include alumni of Dalhousie, Ottawa and Queen's, while UWO has produced more Conservative politicians than those of other stripes. Not surprisingly, the French-language universities count many more NDP parliamentarians. Of note, however, is that the University of Alberta and the U of T (and to a lesser extent McGill) have produced (proportionately) just as many politicians of any political affiliation, in spite of perceived political leanings in Edmonton and Toronto (and Montréal). However, the University of Calgary counts only Conservative alumni in Parliament.

Figure 23: Top-15 universities pyramids



Source: MP and senator personal webpages.

Another question that arises is, "Are there any differences in the schools that politicians choose by gender or minority status?" For example, it would seem natural that schools in urban areas with diverse populations are more likely to have been attended by minorities. Just as much, certain schools might be perceived as being more/less appealing to certain groups, with implications on how such graduates might perceive and interact with others. Indeed, Macleans caused an uproar in 2010 with an article claiming certain schools to be "too Asian" (e.g. the UBC, U of T and Waterloo) resulting in some white students, who do want to compete with Asians, to flee to "white" (less academically focused) schools

[43] Note that politicians can have multiple affiliations.

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(e.g. McGill, Queen's and UWO).[44] But given that this phenomenon (if indeed true) is recent, it likely has little bearing on the outcome of today's Parliament, but rather that in 2050. What matters for the interactions of today's Parliament is the campus culture that prevailed in the 1980s.

First, examining the question of gender, the data (see Figure 23 above) show a bias of women towards UWO, while Calgary counts more male alumni in Parliament. As a whole, campuses are generally balanced in terms of the female-male split (with slightly more females than males nowadays in most universities). Still, it would seem natural that more men might be alumni of schools with faculties or departments in traditionally male-dominated disciplines (e.g. engineering, law, etc.), and vice-versa, but the data do not bear this out.

On the other hand, enrolment patterns between minority and white parliamentarians do indeed display sharp differences. In spite of their large number of alumni in Parliament, Calgary, Dalhousie, Manitoba and UWO count no minority alumni who are currently in Parliament. The result might not be surprising for Manitoba given the small minority population there and on its campus in Winnipeg; likewise for Dalhousie, which is located in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Yet Calgary and UWO (London, Ontario) have ethnically diverse campuses, yet count no minority alumni in Parliament. Such results might lend credence to the notion that certain schools are "more white". On the other hand Queen's and McGill are also perceived by some as schools favoured by upper class whites, yet they still count minority alumni in Parliament. Anyhow, trying to relate current campus dynamics to today's Parliament commits a time-dimension error as what matters for the composition of today's governing class are the campuses of the 1980s – a time when the country was much more homogenous.

Finally, caution should be applied in reading these results as there are just 18 minority parliamentarians who attended the top-15 schools (out of 37 with higher education out of 49 in the total sample). With such a small number of minorities spread across 15 schools none of the individual school ratios are meaningful. Even the aggregate figure (48.6% of minority parliamentarians with degrees are alumni of the top-15) has little meaning because: (1) The sample is small; and (2) A significant share was not residents/citizens of Canada at the time of their post-secondary studies.

ETHNICITY STRATIFICATION

It is well known that women and minorities are underrepresented relative to their share of the population in politics. A corollary is that men, and particularly, white males are overrepresented relative to their numbers. (And as the data has shown thus far, it is not because the qualifications between men and women are highly different – at least not divergent in ways that are likely to impact the quality of their candidacy.) But what are the magnitudes of the biases and how do they compare? Do women or minorities face higher barriers to entry (i.e. are white females less/more represented compared to their population than minorities)?[45] And are the barriers additive (i.e. are female minorities "penalised" for

[44] Findlay, Stephanie & Nicholas Köhler (2010). "The enrolment controversy.*" *Macleans*, November 2010. (*Original title was "Too Asian?" but was changed – as well as its content – on account of the perceived racist undertones of the article.)

[45] That "barrier" can also include a low willingness to engage in politics.

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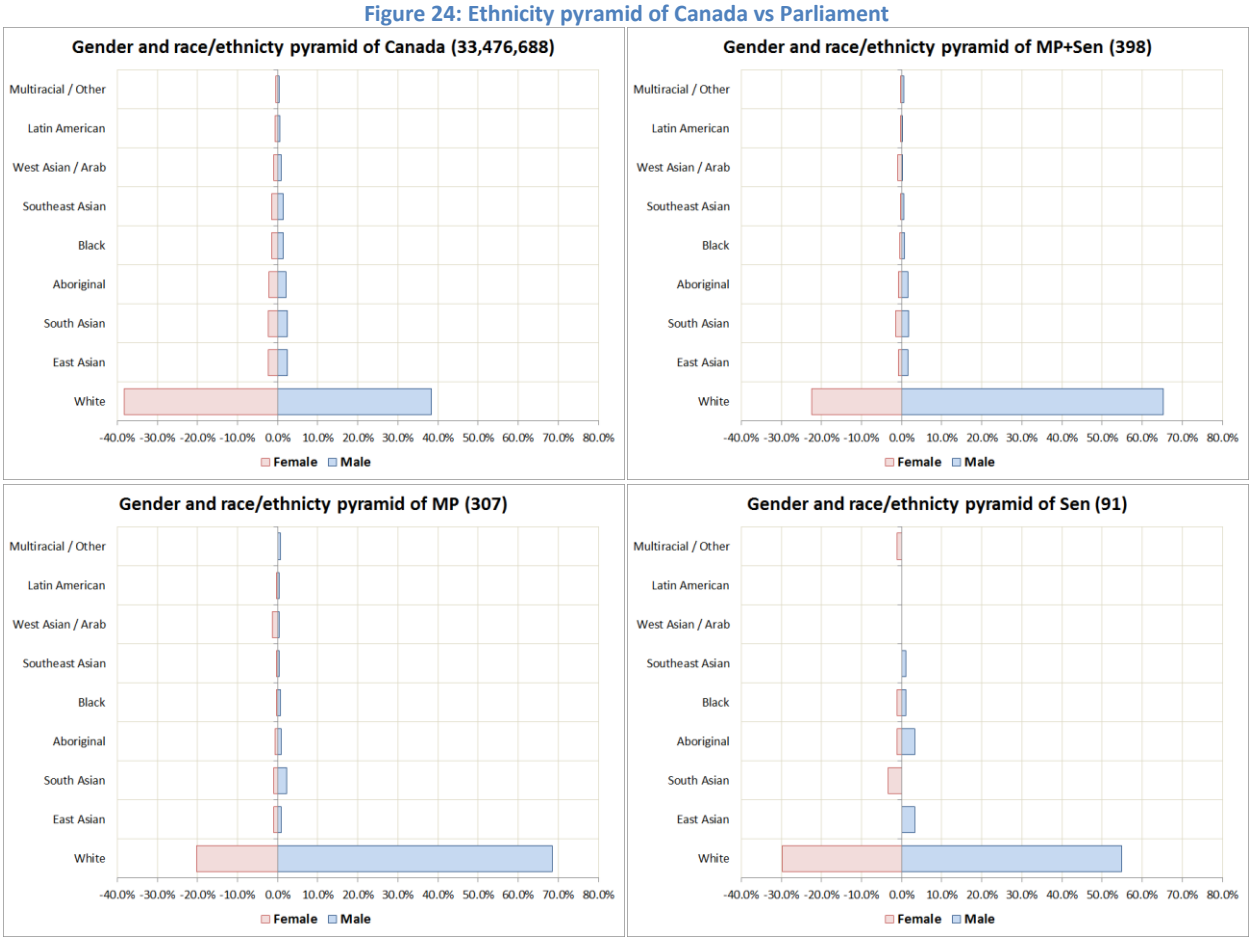
being both female *and* minority)? Are the disparities between females and males the same within the white and minority groups?

The below (Figure 24) are "ethnicity pyramids" with the broad minority groups covered by StatsCan.[46] The pyramid is based on the demographic patterns of Canada so that that the group size is decreasing going upward on the *y*-axis. Clearly within Canada the largest group is whites,[47] but minority groups account for 1 in 4 Canadians – an almost identical split exist for immigrants versus native born (1 in 5) and for French vs English (1 in 4). Indeed, although for much of Canada's history the dividing line was mother tongue, ethnicity and/or immigrant status are now also points that might stress the unity of the country. So although language may be the first bifurcation (with the vast majority of French speakers living in Quebec), the second schism might boil down to minority status, especially in areas with diverse populations.

Figure 24: Ethnicity pyramid of Canada vs Parliament



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

[46] StatsCan covers 12 minority groups. Here some classifications are grouped together (e.g. East Asians cover Chinese, Japanese and Korean; West Asians and Arabs are lumped together; Southeast Asians are taken to include Filipinos; etc.).

[47] Ideally it would be nice to further break down whites into their various ethnicities/ancestries (e.g. Irish, German, etc.), but such details are not available and likely difficult to capture given the high level of cross marriages amongst people of European ancestry in recent times in Canada.

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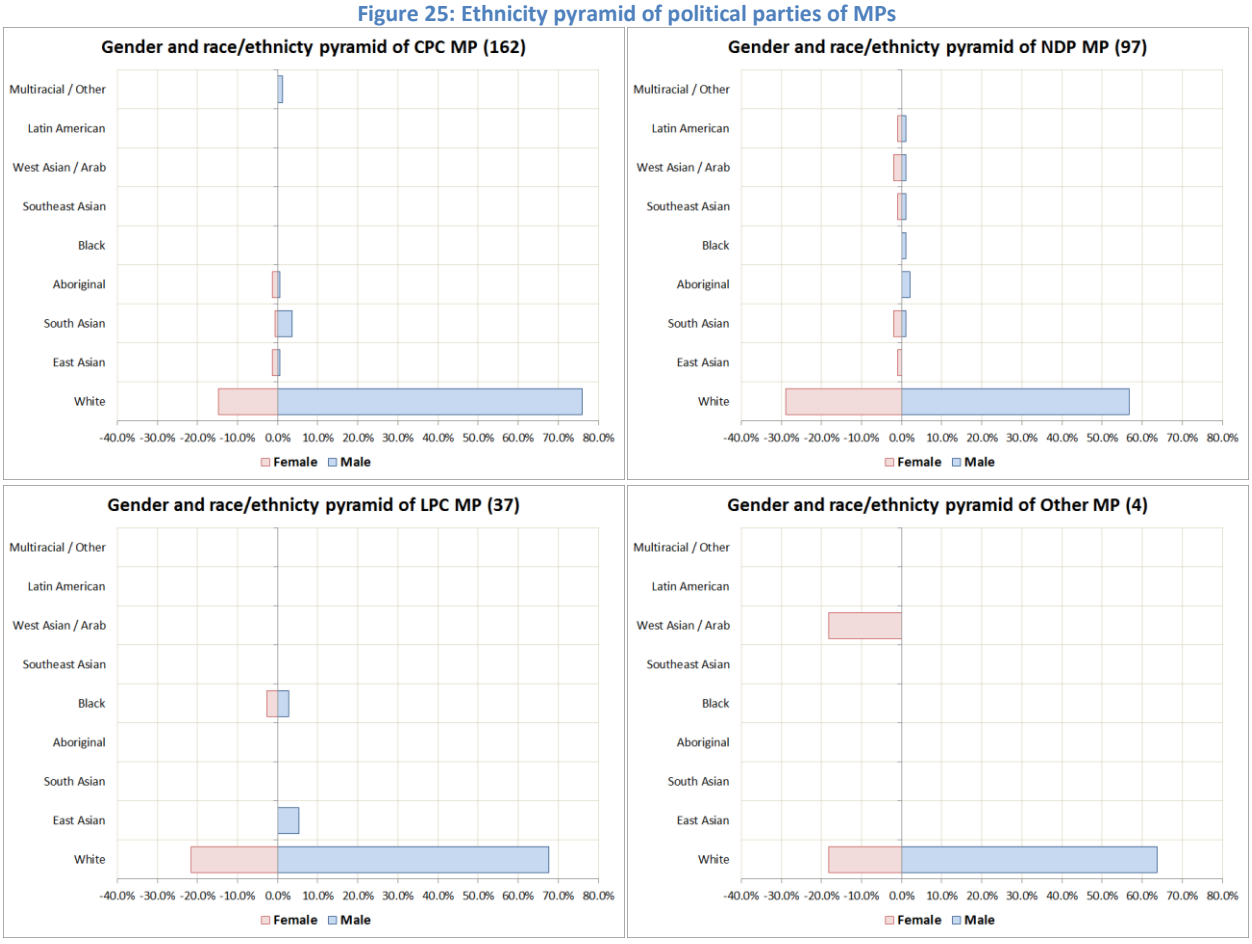
The ethnicity pyramids above show a clear underrepresentation of women (left-hand side of the *y*-axis and in soft red). It also demonstrates that that the Senate (bottom right-hand corner ofFigure 24) looks more balanced than the House of Commons (bottom left-hand corner of Figure 24) in terms of gender. As previously noted, it appears that prime ministers of the country have used the Senate (either implicitly or explicitly) as a means to address the gender imbalance in Parliament. However, the minority deficiency in the Senate is not much different (though slightly more balanced) than in the House. This suggests that on the diversity front that the gender issue has greater priority than the minority issue. (Even as the minority population has surged only in recent years, it would seem unusual not to be able to find a handful or so of minorities with backgrounds/qualifications on par with the current set of mostly white appointees.)

Figure 25: Ethnicity pyramid of political parties of MPs



Source: Parliament of Canada.

In terms of gender and visible minority representation by political party, the data confirm perceived biases. First, with respect to just the MPs (who are elected), the Tories have the fewest number of women as a share of its MPs, while they are most numerous in the NDP. The NDP also counts many more minorities and its split between females and males is relatively balanced, both within the white and minority groups. The Liberals, on the other hand, count only 4 elected members that are not white (2 black and 2 East Asian). However, the Conservatives have strong representation amongst South

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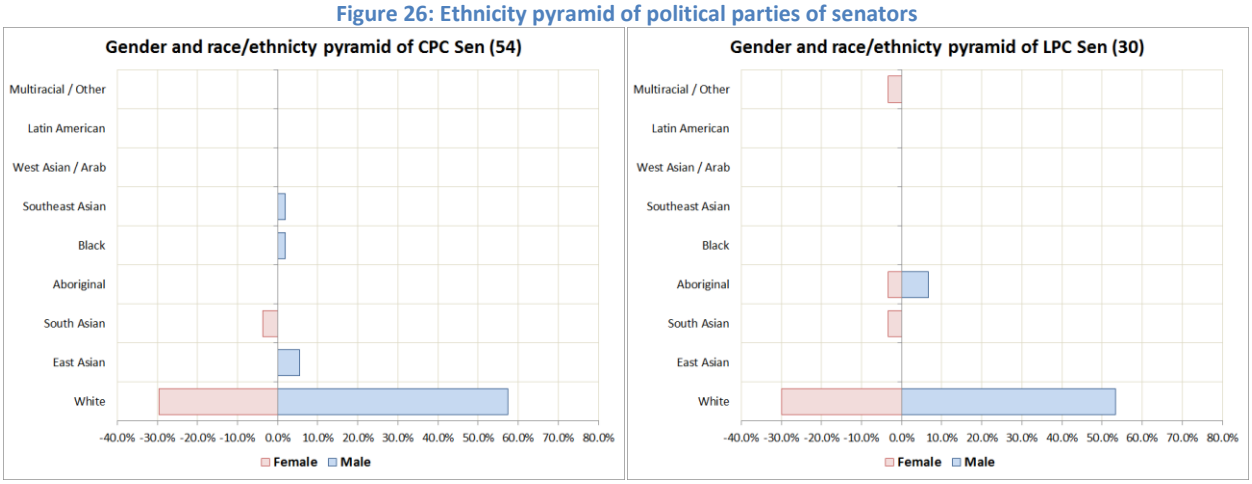
Asians (7). This is likely a result of the fact that traditional South Asian values are conservative (e.g. fiscally prudent and opposition to non-traditional unions).

One caveat to keep in mind is that the ethnicity pyramids of the MPs are representations of those that are elected by the people. A party's slate of candidates may be quite different than which subset is victorious at the polls. (And of course, there are nuances as to which ridings are represented by which candidates as some ridings are considered "safe" for certain parties, while others may field a candidate with no chance of winning in a riding just so that the party can have a pan-national platform.)

The group of senators is aligned primarily with either the Conservatives (left-hand side of Figure 26) or Liberals (right-hand side of Figure 26) – again with the note about Justin Trudeau's decree to expel Liberal senators from the LPC caucus. There are no senators affiliated with the NDP as one of their platforms is the abolition of the Senate. A handful of senators (7) are independent or otherwise not affiliated with the Tories or Grits, including several who were expelled from the Conservative Party because of recent scandals.[48]

Figure 26: Ethnicity pyramid of political parties of senators



Source: Parliament of Canada.

Clearly Canada's governing class does not reflect the ethnic mosaic of the country. The below charts (Figure 27) show the ratio of a group's share in Parliament versus its national level, for both MPs and the Parliament as a whole. If a group's share in Parliament is equal to its share in the national population the ratio is 1. Groups over (under) represented have a ratio higher (lower) than 1.

At about 1.8x and 1.7x for MPs and the Parliament as a whole, respectively, white males have the highest representation in Canada's governing class relative to their national share. Indeed, white males are the only group – with the exception of West Asian/Arab females – that have a ratio greater than 1. All other groups are underrepresented with white males the benefactors. The below diagrams also suggest that there may be a gender effect interacting with minorities. That is, the "penalty" that a

[48] Three CPC senators who have since become independent in the wake of expense scandals are Patrick Brazeau, Michael Duffy and Pamela Wallin.

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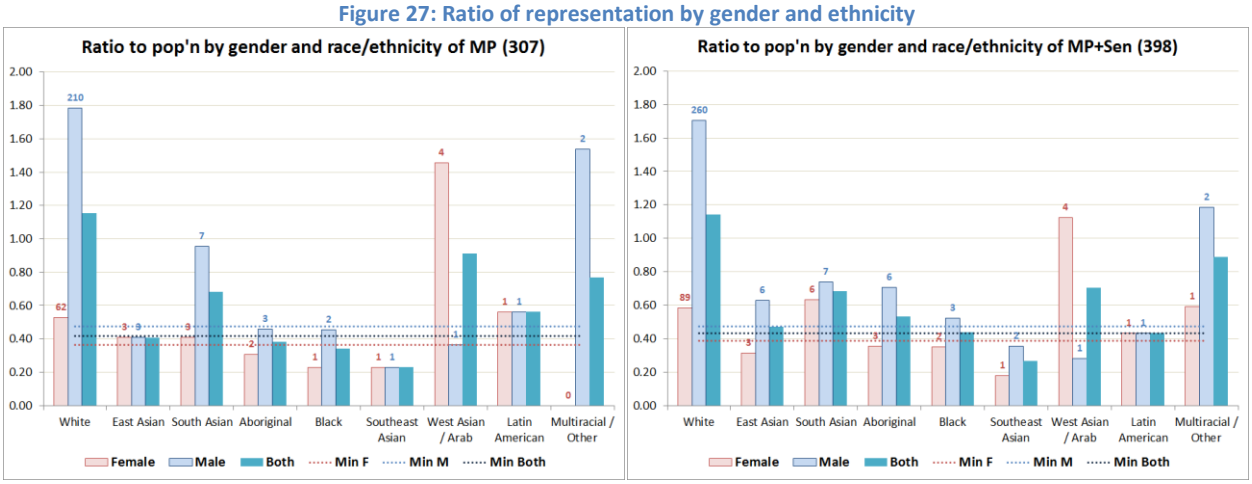
minority group faces may depend on the gender in question (e.g. South Asian males and West Asian/Arab females seem to have better chances than their corresponding counterparts, respectively.)

In total there are 49 Parliamentarians who are minorities. Given that minorities account for 23.3% of the population, under random sampling there should be 93 seats filled by them. Thus there are 45 "missing" minorities. The representation ratio (RR) for minorities is then: (49/398)/(23.3%) = 0.528.[49] For whites, the RR is (349/398)/(76.4%) = 1.15. So, on a whole, there are only about half as many minorities in Parliament as expected given its population, while whites are overrepresented by a factor of 1.15x.[50]

Figure 27: Ratio of representation by gender and ethnicity



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

But these statistics may mask the differences across gender. On the question of whether there are differences between the sexes within minorities, the RR for female minorities is: (21/398)/(11.7%) = 0.452. For male minorities the ratio is: (28/398)/(11.7%) = 0.603. On the other hand, the RR for white females is: (89/398)/(38.3%) = 0.583; for white males it is: (260/398)/(38.3%) = 1.70. The female/male ratio amongst whites is 89/260 = 0.342 while it is 21/28 = 0.750 for minorities. This suggests that there is a double barrier for female minorities (as a whole), though the female-to-male handicap within the minorities group is much less severe than within whites.

Table 3: Parliament composition by gender and minority status

Group	White Female	White Male	Minority Female	Minority Male
Total	89	260	21	28
Share (%)	22.4	65.3	5.3	7.0
RR	0.584	1.71	0.451	0.601
Representation*	-64	+107	-26	-19

** Values might not sum to zero due to rounding to whole numbers.*

Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

In summary, women are highly underrepresented in Parliament, but within the female group there are strong differences between white females and minority females, with minority females even more rare

[49] Recall that the RR for women is: (110/398)/(50%) = 0.553.
[50] The maximum RR for whites is 100%/76.6% = 1.31.

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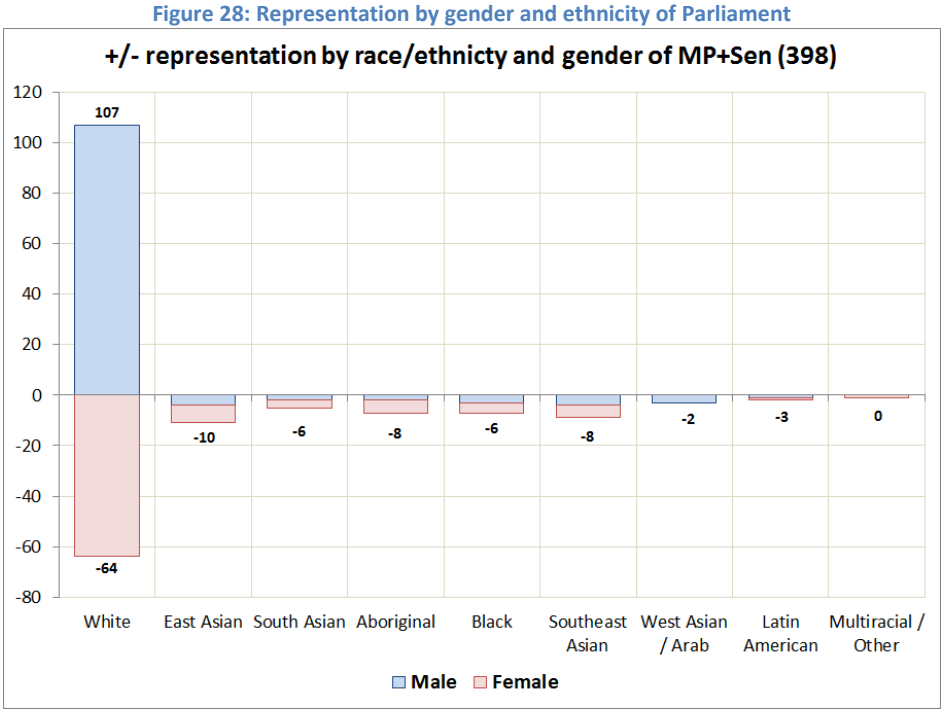
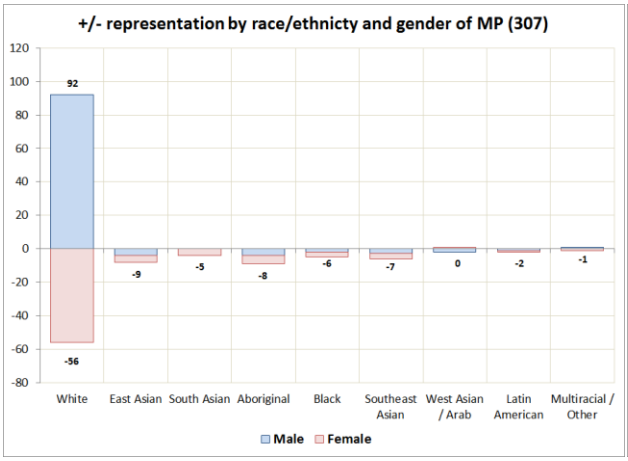
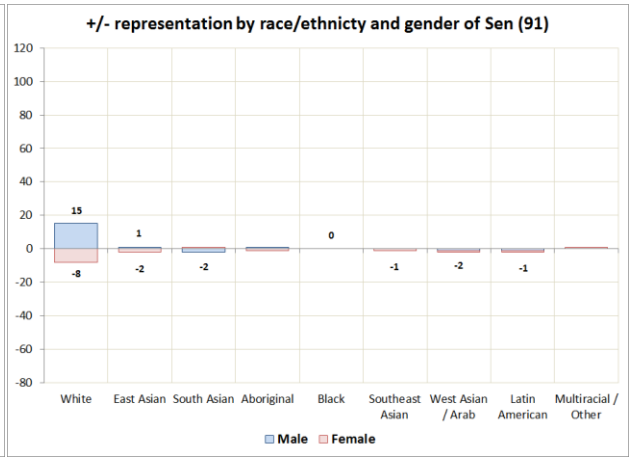
than their white counterparts (relative to their national populations). Similarly, minority males are just as rare as white females in Parliament. If the gender and ethnic composition of Parliament mirrored the demographics of Canada the Parliament would count an extra 64 white females and 45 minorities.

Inferences on individual minority groups (see Figure 27) need to be taken carefully because of the relatively small numbers in each group. Adding or subtracting even just one person from a group can drastically alter the dynamics for a given group, especially for the smaller groups. Nevertheless, there are some intriguing results when examining the underrepresentation of minorities by their various groups crossed with gender.

Figure 28: Representation by gender and ethnicity of Parliament







Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

** Values might not sum across or within the three graphs above due to rounding to whole numbers.*

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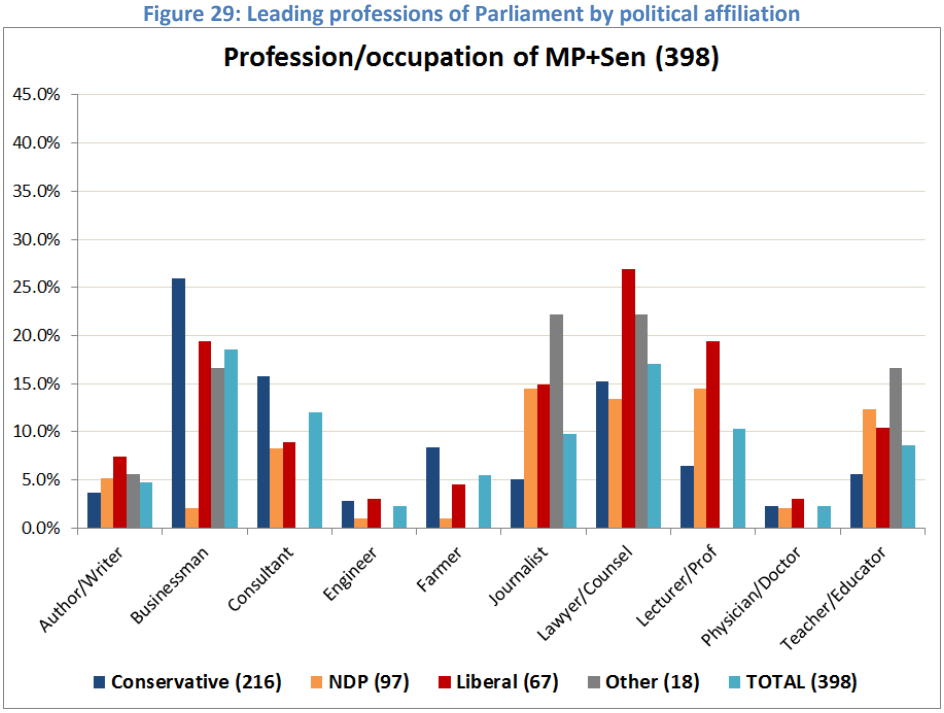
The diagrams above (Figure 28) show the phenomenon of the "extra" and "missing" parliamentarians by gender and ethnicity. Political representation in Parliament is not uniform across the various ethnic groups. In absolute terms East Asians have the highest number of "missing" representatives (10) in Parliament. But Southeast Asians count 8 missing representatives in spite of their already small share of the population (i.e. there are very few Southeast Asians in Parliament, even when considering their small population). Both groups count large shares that have only recently arrived in Canada,[51] so the underrepresentation may be, in part, due to the short duration of these groups within the country. But many other community groups also have large shares of recent arrivals, so this suggests that there may be other barriers within these communities preventing them from greater political participation. On the other hand, despite there being 6 "missing" parliamentarians of South Asian background, it does appear that this community is relatively more actively engaged than other ethnic communities.

OCCUPATION STRATIFICATION

The most popular vocational route towards a career as a politician in Canada is through the legal profession or as a "businessman" or "businesswoman". Another popular background is as a journalist, giving credence to the idea that name recognition matters a lot in seeking (and winning) office. And if professor/lecturer is grouped with teacher/educator the education field actually surpasses the legal field as a breeding ground for politicians. The below charts (Figure 29) list the 10 most commonly self-cited professional backgrounds of parliamentarians.[52] All 398 parliamentarians listed their profession/ occupational in their parliamentary biography (or whose information were otherwise available).

Figure 29: Leading professions of Parliament by political affiliation



[51] At the same time a good share of East Asians have long histories in Canada, including the Chinese, who were instrumental in the building of the Canadian railroad network.

[52] Some classifications are grouped together (e.g. teacher and educator), while others are not included because of the vagueness of the term (e.g. "activist" (27) or "adviser" (13) or "entrepreneur" (15)). Likewise, "public servant" (24) is excluded as often it is in reference to their current position as a parliamentarian.

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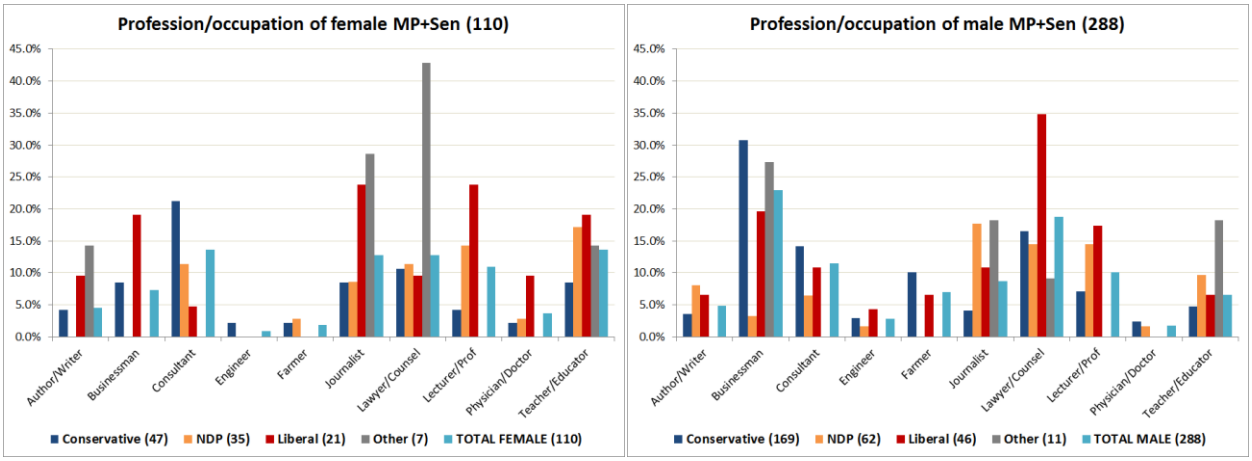

Sources: Parliament of Canada, MP and senator personal webpages.

Amongst the top-10 vocations there is only one technical occupation (engineering). Indeed, engineering does not actually qualify in the top-10 based on its frequency. Rather it was added since it was the most frequently cited technical profession. This is part of a wider phenomenon in Parliament where there is a dearth of experience in technical/scientific fields by its members. Just 4 people identified themselves or their professional specialisation as "scientist", while 74 identify as businessmen and 68 as lawyers. This begs the question, "Why are people who gravitate towards the sciences so disinclined to enter politics?" (At a rate very similar to that of women and minorities.)

Some may suggest that those who prefer sciences are more comfortable to work alone on technical matters, while much of politics relies on personal interactions. But such arguments seem wide of the net when considering the political leaders of other countries (e.g. Germany's Angela Merkel (physical chemistry), Singapore's Lee Hsien Loong (mathematics), China's Hu Jintao (hydraulic engineer)). Herein no speculation is given on the reasons for the deficiency of scientists. Rather, only the severity of this shortcoming is noted.

Some interesting patterns in vocational backgrounds are evident. First when stratifying by political affiliation, Conservatives are most likely to have been business people prior to joining Parliament. And they are more likely than Liberals or the NDP to have been farmers. Tories are also much less likely to be lecturers/professors or teachers/educators as compared with the NDP and Liberals. Not surprisingly, very few NDP members cite business as a previous vocation, while Liberals – who some would argue are supposed to be less commercially-minded – are almost as likely as the Conservatives to have been businessmen prior to entering politics.

The below (Figure 30) is an examination of biases of occupation by gender. Women are far more likely to come from backgrounds as teachers/educators and journalist; conversely lawyer/counsel, farmer, engineer and business are professions with a much higher share of male parliamentarians. The patterns seen in Parliament mostly mirror that of society at large, although the higher share of women versus men in Parliament with backgrounds in medicine (physician/doctor) is not the case on a national level.

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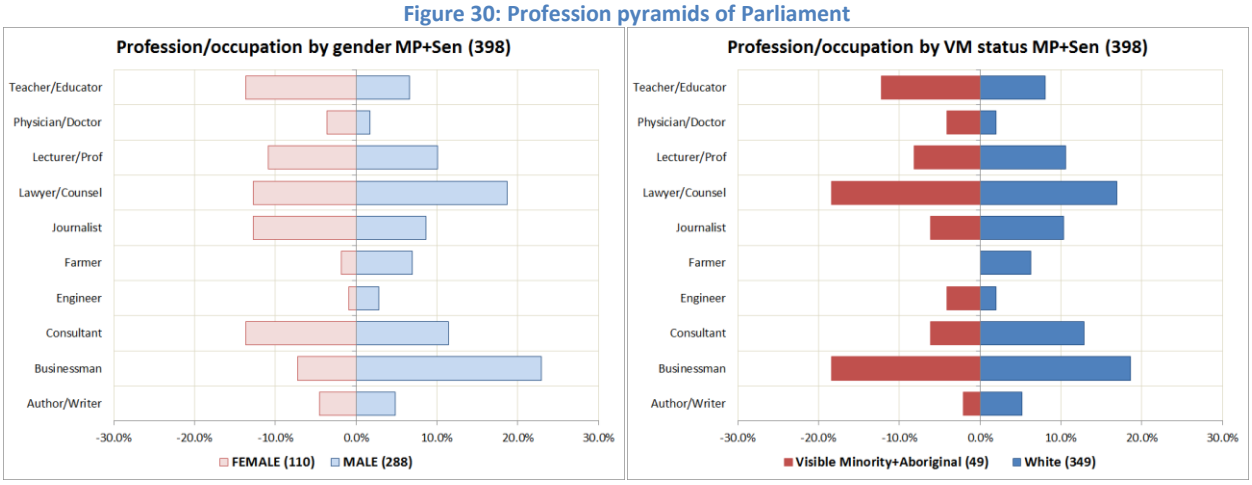
Figure 30: Profession pyramids of Parliament



Source: Parliament of Canada.

Profession/occupation background between minorities and whites (

Figure 30) also show some sharp differences. Whites are more likely to have backgrounds as lawyers, journalists and farmers, whereas minorities are more likely to have previously worked as teachers/educators, physicians/doctors and engineers. Inferences on differences in the uptake of professions by minorities, however, should be made with caution. With just 49 observations spread across 11 professions (i.e. the top-10 plus the catch-all "other" grouping), the results for minorities are not robust, especially in trying to compare the frequencies of occupation uptake against whites. Nevertheless, the results are likely to be directionally correct.

SUMMARY

How well would Canada perform if Parliament were to be graded on how representative it is of its population (and values)? Canada has a diverse population and its governing class count a good number of minority groups (linguistic, ethnic, etc.) in its ranks. Similarly, women fill more than 1 in every 4 position. These numbers are good by global standards, even if they are low in absolute terms. Most importantly, the values are well below the national demographic levels and ideals. Namely, females are represented at only 55 percent of their population level and minorities at 53 percent of their level (60 percent for minority males and 45 percent for minority females).[53] And a less-often looked at aspect of diversity is the overwhelming underrepresentation of scientists in Canada's ruling class.

Canada's parliamentarians are also, as a whole, an educated lot – 3 out of 4 possess post-secondary degrees/diplomas – with many having attended the nation's top schools. Some have even degrees from some of the world's most prestigious schools.[54] However, the brainpower of Parliament is concentrated

[53] If the share of a group within Parliament is equivalent to its share in the population this ratio would be 100 percent (or a ratio of 1.000).
[54] The Parliament counts alumni from: Cambridge (1), Harvard (5), LSE (5), Oxford (3) and Princeton (1).

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in the arts, business and law (i.e. Parliament has few technocrats) with likely deleterious consequences for a nation such as Canada. In the following, the degree of the underrepresentation is quantified into simple metrics that can be used to benchmark and gauge the diversity of Parliament.

INDEX OF REPRESENTATION

A simple measure of the socio-demographic representation of the Parliament can be taken from the unweighted average of the following 3 measures: (1) Ratio of female representatives relative to its population; (2) Ratio of French-speaking representatives relative to its population; and (3) Ratio of minorities relative to its population. The resulting score then ranges from 0 (worst) to 100 (best).[55] An extra dimension of education ("quality adjustment") can be added by considering also the share of parliament with tertiary education.

For Canada's Parliament the numbers are below:

Parliament representation score = AVG {0.553, 1.000, 0.528} = 0.694 (PRS)

Education-adjusted PRS = 0.734 x AVG {0.553, 1.000, 0.528} = 0.509 (E-PRS)

(One could further add the dimension of representation of scientists in Parliament. After all, if scientists are not part of the governing class, then policies are not likely to be informed on their technical merits (amongst other shortcomings). However, the appropriate number of scientists is difficult to assess. For one, the number is probably not the same level as the share of persons graduating with STEM degrees since the share of STEM graduates within a country and across nations change over time. Secondly, if a country's educational system is graduating a small number of STEM graduates this should not be an excuse for its governing class to also include a similarly low number of scientists within its ranks. Because of this ambiguity, the science representation is set aside, but surely the current value for Parliament – at just 13.0 percent of the share of the governing class with post-secondary degrees, or less than 10 percent of the total number of parliamentarians – is much lower than would be ideal, especially as many of the drivers of future growth or Canada are attached to the knowledge-based economy.)

If PRS and E-PRS scores are tabulated by political party (see Table 4 below) the Conservatives are the party that least resembles Canada from a socio-demographic perspective, while the NDP and Liberals better reflect the demographic diversity of the country.[56] (The NDP situation is unusual in the sense that it has an overrepresentation of French speakers.) When adjusting the PRS by educational attainment the rank orderings are preserved, but the Conservatives fall even farther behind since they have the lowest share of its members (68.1%) who have completed post-secondary education, while the Liberals benefit from having the highest share of its parliamentarians with post-secondary education (85.1%). And if for the NDP the French ratio were instead replaced by the English ratio (as its French share is well above the

[55] Under the assumption that the minority group is more likely to face hurdles, then ratios above 100% in the individual components can then be truncated at 1.000. Nevertheless, there are actually minority groups that perform better than the majority (e.g. Jews in the United States and ethnic Chinese in Indonesia). In such case, scores above 1.000 imply a dominance/advantage of a minority group relative to the majority.

[56] The NDP actually has an overrepresentation of French speakers within its party, with more than half its representatives (56.4%) native or first-language French-language speakers. Thus a more appropriate metric would be to use its English ratio.

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national level), its PRS would fall below the Liberals' and likewise for its education-adjusted PRS. In sum, the party that most looks like Canada is the Liberals (using the PRS metric), while the Conservatives least match the diversity of the nation.

Table 4: PRS and E-PRS scores by political party

Political party	PRS	E-PRS
Conservatives	AVG {0.435, 0.355, 0.437} = 0.409	68.1% × PRS = 0.278
NDP*	AVG {0.722, 0.587, 0.619} = 0.642	75.3% × PRS = 0.484
Liberals	AVG {0.627, 0.766, 0.576} = 0.656	85.1% × PRS = 0.558

** Calculated using the English ratio since it has a significant overrepresentation of French speakers.*

Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada, MP and senator webpages.

The underrepresentation of minorities within Canada's institutions of power and influence is not unique. Even the liberal multicultural Mecca of Toronto – where half the population is visible minorities and diversity is lauded – counts far fewer minorities relative to their size in positions of power, such as government (e.g. only 6 of 45 (i.e. 13.3%) positions in City Council are filled by minorities) and other spheres of influence.

Anyhow, the scores tabulated above are not calibrated against other countries. If that were the case, Canada would probably perform well given the generally high level of underrepresentation of minorities in governments elsewhere. (Cross countries comparisons may be very illustrative!) Nevertheless, the scores computed here show that, with the exception of language, there remain large gaps in having Parliament reflect the socio-demographics of the country.

The PRS and E-PRS can also be used in policymaking insomuch that policies or changes to the political process that increase the score should be encouraged. The political institutions or the political parties themselves can set certain target scores and milestones. Some ideas are explored in the next section on how to elevate the level of representation of underrepresented groups within the governing class.

Figure 31: The representativeness of Parliament

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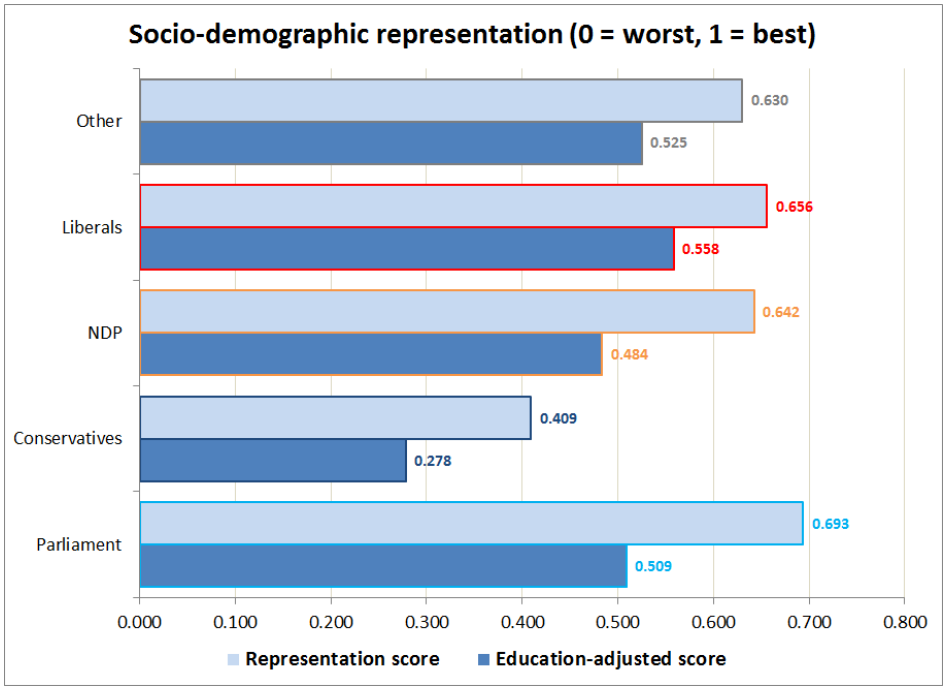

Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

With a federal election due in 2015, the face of Parliament will likely experience a significant change. Current polls suggest that the majority government enjoyed by the Tories might not survive. But given the fact that women, minorities and scientists are largely absent in all the political parties, any change in government will not (fully) correct the socio-demographic imbalances of the governing class. However, it is clear that the current 2nd and 3rd parties (NDP and Liberals) show better measures of socio-demographic diversity. So, if current patterns in the parties carry over to the next election, a change in the balance of seats held by the parties – with seats transferred from the Tories to the other parties – would likely result in better balances for the 42nd session of Parliament, even if the outcome remains distant from a mosaic mirroring the country.

Nevertheless, extrapolating the current makeup of each party and scaling them up (or down) to determine the composition of the future Parliament is fraught with problems. For one, the Conservatives may have won ridings that lean more white and male, and any gains that the other parties make might have to be made with candidates fitting those profiles. Secondly, the patterns seen in this report are not necessarily static. Indeed, the underrepresentation of certain groups (e.g. women and minorities) should ameliorate over time as the country progresses socially and as minorities/immigrants establish track records in the country. Finally, the natural variation from year to year (or election to election) – especially in small samples – means that minute changes in electoral outcomes might swing the observed patterns in very different directions. For this, and other reasons, drawing inferences out of sample need to be done with caution.

Discussions of bringing greater representation into Parliament are not an academic as the Senate has seen in recent times the resignation of JoAnne Buth (Conservative), Catherine Callbeck (Liberal), Andrée

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Champange (Conservative), Romeo Dallaire (Liberal), and Hugh Segal (Conservative). Indeed, with 14 vacancies in the Senate, and given the well-documented underrepresentation of groups such as minority, scientists and women, it would behoove the prime minister of the country (present and future) to select qualified candidates for the posts that would help ameliorate the negative biases in Parliament for the aforementioned groups.

A more balanced socio-demographic representation of the governing class of Canada most would agree is a desirable outcome. In that regard, it is hoped that there exists a political will to spur changes in the political institutions, processes and culture to both: (1) Encourage more minorities, scientists, and women to enter politics; and (2) Reform the institutional structures of politics that may be limiting the participation of highly qualified persons from underrepresented groups.

Clearly an absolutely representative Parliament along every dimension is not desirable. For one, most would probably agree that given the gravity of the position and how decisions in Parliament affect the cultural, economic and social fabric of society, that it is best to attract the most abled persons for the role. Likewise, honesty, integrity, affability and empathy are traits that are also thought to be desirable. Thus, the Parliament should not simply be a mirror of society (the general population counts criminals and other undesirables); rather it should be a mirror of the ideals of the country and which gives a voice to all the communities and groups that want to constructively contribute to the country. As such, the question arises on how to increase broader participation in the political process (as manifested by vying for and representing the country in federal politics) from all the communities and groups that make the mosaic of Canada, while at the same time ensuring that the governing class is highly qualified for the role.

The below sections highlight a handful of policies/initiatives that would help move the country in the right direction for improving the representation of Parliament. Ultimately, this would also lead to a better engagement of the political process between citizens and governments, thus giving greater legitimacy to the ruling class. The list includes: (1) blind nominations; (2) mandatory voter turnout; (3) mentorship; (4) official-party status; (5) proficiency testing; (6) proportional representation; (7) quotas; and (8) targets. The aforementioned is not an exhaustive list. Rather, they are part of a larger discussion on reforming the political process (with one of its principal aims being greater engagement of politics by the citizenry).

BLIND NOMINATIONS

Homophily (i.e. in-group preferences) is a well-documented phenomenon in friendships, mating and association, including hiring practices at organisations (e.g. Wimmer and Lewis (2010)). That is, people have an affinity to befriend, hire and vote for people that are like them or from the same/similar group. It is also well documented that some people judge character – and especially leadership – on superficial qualities such as height (e.g. Murray and Schmitz (2011), and Case and Paxson (2006)). Indeed, in the US presidential elections the taller candidate has won far more often than the shorter candidate. Likewise, the more attractive candidate in a debate is more likely to be assessed as the winner (e.g. the Kennedy-Nixon1960 debate). Because of these and other known (and unknown) biases, orchestras typically conduct "blind" interviews – after all, the only thing that should matter is the music.

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Politics may benefit from applying the blind interview principle. Of course, given the nature of politics – a highly public and visual position – it is not possible to fully emulate the practices of orchestras. However, it is likely to be helpful if in the nomination process (within each party) that the candidates could be vetted by their CVs or by way of a proficiency test (see below) or by other means without those shortlisting the slate of candidates to know the person's age, gender, ethnicity, etc. Of course, picking the candidate to represent the party would require an open process, but eliminating homophily and beauty-over-brains preferences at the first stage of winnowing would help minority candidates overcome some of the innate human biases in choosing leaders.

MANDATORY VOTER TURNOUT

Some of the countries that have mandatory voting include Australia and Belgium. Such a law has obvious merits, including giving greater legitimacy to the election result.[57] Mandatory voting is likely to lead to better representation within the governing class because parties are then more inclined to offer a slate that is more aligned with the demographics of their constituencies. Moreover, the level of political participation (as measured by seeking office or volunteering for a cause or voting in an election) is often lower for minority groups and immigrants. Thus efforts that increase the political participation of the electorate should be lauded.

Of course, making voting an obligation has to be done hand in glove with making the process easier. With the level of technology today the traditional voting process – going to a bricks and mortar location to check a box on a piece of paper – seems anachronistic. Allowing people to vote from home or with their personal mobile devices should not be an issue in this day and age. Of course, bringing the voting process to the 21st century will require that safeguards are put in place to preserve the integrity of the voting system against fraud, etc.

MENTORSHIP

Mentorship programmes, either within the political parties or done at a non-party level, to encourage greater political participation (in the form of seeking office) would help in bridging the divide between the governing class and the general population. Such programmes should be targeted to groups that are currently underrepresented (e.g. minorities, scientists, and women). The need for programmes to help mentor underrepresented groups takes on greater urgency in light of recent research which shows that women and minorities are less likely to receive mentorship (see Milkman et al. (2014) regarding the phenomenon in academia).[58]

OFFICIAL PARTY STATUS

There are currently 3 recognised "official status" political parties in Parliament: CPC (government), NDP (opposition) and LPC (3rd party). "Official party status" is currently granted to those parties with 12 or more seats in the House of Commons, and it confers certain privileges (e.g. time to ask questions during

[57] The Conservatives won a majority government in 2011 with 39.6% of the popular based on a voter turnout of 61.4%, which equates to 24.3 percent of the electoral population. In general, with an average voter turnout of about 70% and parties rarely winning more than half of the popular vote, most governments – even ones with "majority mandates – have less than a third of the support (votes) of the electorate.

[58] Their research also shows that bias against mentorship may exist within persons from the same communities.

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question period). But given the first-past-the-post electoral system, it is possible (and has been the case in the past) where a party can gain a good share of popular support yet count few if any seats in Parliament (e.g. the Conservative party had just 3 seats after the 1993 federal election even though they had 16 percent of the national vote).

Extending official party status to parties that garner a certain threshold of national support would be in line with the ideals of proportional representation[59] (see below). Likewise, official party status could be made contingent on running an election with a minimum number of candidates from certain groups. For example, having at least 15 percent (or whatever would be the appropriate level) of a party's slate of candidates be minorities (or women or scientists).

PROFICIENCY TESTING

Currently there are no barriers to entry into Parliament other than to be elected/appointed and to be a citizen of legal age (MP) or additionally to be 30+ years old and owning property in given region of representation (senator). Other than hoping that each party or its membership does an adequate job of vetting candidates, there is no assurance to the voting public of the quality of the candidate.

Requiring that candidates (either at the party nomination level or at the stage of taking office) pass a proficiency test,[60] would raise the bar on the quality of the governing class. Such a test should span basic civics (including knowledge of Canadian history and politics), numeracy, economics and science. The level of difficulty could be set as appropriate, but at least at a level commiserate with the responsibilities for a parliamentarian. Additional tests can be required for certain posts (e.g. minister for science, minister of finance, etc.). It would seem odd, for example, to allow a member to take on economic or scientific decisions if they have limited knowledge in the area.

Introducing proficiency testing would raise the quality of the applicant field as well as encourage greater participation of people from technical backgrounds, especially if the economics and sciences sections of the test were set appropriately high. An elevated level on technical knowledge required for serving in the governing class would also act as a signal to society that such skills are valued within Parliament.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Canada's MPs are elected in a first-past-the-post ballot. Such a system inherently favours large groups (assuming that voting patterns are correlated with group status/identification). [61] It may even lead to perverse results where a majority government can be elected with far less than a majority of the popular vote. In the case of Canada, where there are 3 major national political parties, even a 35 percent share of the popular vote can lead (and has led) to an absolute majority of seats in an election.[62]

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[59] A very natural and logical threshold would be 5 or 10 percent.

[60] Administered by a neutral party but who otherwise have an interest in the political process – e.g. Elections Canada.

[61] In the case where voting patterns are completely determined by group identity and under a FPTP voting system, the majority (absolute or relative) group always wins the election; whereas with PR, the each group is allocated a share, α,of seats in government equal to its share (α) of the population.

[62] The Conservatives were elected into a majority government in the 2011 federal election with 39.1 percent of the popular vote. The lowest popular vote count to win a majority government was by the Conservatives under John A.

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Conversely, a party may enjoy a sizeable level of support but finish with zero or virtually zero seats. (Refer again to the 1993 federal election.)

Under proportional representation (PR) votes are not "wasted" as each vote counts towards the eventual share of seats allocated to a given party. Under the first-past-the-post voting system, all votes in excess of the next highest candidate are wasted.

Table 5: 2011 federal election under proportional representation

Party	CPC	NDP	LPC	BQ	Green
Seats	166	103	34	4	1
Vote (%)*	39.62	30.63	18.91	6.04	3.91
PR Seats*	122	94	58	19	12
Impact	-44	-9	+24	+15	+11

Sources: Elections Canada, Parliament of Canada.

** Vote (%) total does not sum to 100% as some votes went to fringe parties, so PR seat total will not sum to 308.*

PR is one way to address the negative bias against minority groups (if implemented correctly). It ensures that the seats are allocated in proportion to the popular vote of each party. Thus, if a party wins 20 percent of the popular vote it would be allocated 20 percent of the seats. (It would then be the responsibility of the party to fill the seats based on any metrics/rules it has in place, or as deemed by the political process/institutions, so there is no guarantee that PR, *per se*, will necessarily result in broader representation.) In the case of the 1993 federal election in which the Conservative were reduced to just 2 seats, it would have under PR been allocated 16.0% x 295 = 47 seats.[63] Likewise, in the 2011 federal election the BQ and GPC would have been awarded 19 and 12 seats, respectively.[64] The Conservatives, however, would have seen their seat count fall from 166 to 122 (i.e. a decrease of 44). The impacts are summarized in Table 5 above.

PR is especially relevant in the Senate as it filled by appointments. As such the prime minister[65] has much leeway in choosing (hopefully qualified) candidates from groups that are underrepresented. Being an unelected body, there is even greater responsibility to ensure that the appointments fairly reflect the socio-demographics of the country. As such, allotting the Senate seats based on PR has even greater impetus. As there are no fixed dates/events for appointing senators – it is usually done when a seat avails – this would require a set of rules on which party has priority when a vacancy opens.[66]

MacDonald in 1867. In theory, a candidate can win with as little as 1/*N* % + 1 of the votes, where *N* is the number of candidates for a riding.

[63] At the time of the 1993 Federal Election there were 295 parliamentary seats.

[64] Of course, seats might only be allocated to officially recognised parties ("official party status" parties), in which case one cut-off might be only to allocate seats to parties with 5% or more of the popular vote (15 seats under the 308 seats structure)

[65] Technically the governor general appoints Senators on the advice of the prime minister, but it is a *de facto* decision of the prime minister.

[66] For example, a lottery where the odds of a party being given the right to nominate/appoint a candidate are proportional to the popular vote of the party adjusted for some duration factor.

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PR can be applied in various ways. It can be applied in the House or the Senate, or partially in either house. For example, the House can be directly elected while the Senate could be filled according to PR. Or the 308 seats in the current Parliament could remain as they are, but all seats added thereafter are allocated on PR. Regardless, PR is an institution practiced by many other developed democracies, so its application to Canada should not be too onerous or out of line with the nation's political culture.

QUOTAS

Some countries (e.g. Norway) have imposed quotas to ensure more balanced representation in politics (and other spheres of power). Reserving a certain number of seats – either in the lower or upper chambers – for underrepresented groups would help elevate their representation (assuming that the quota is binding (i.e. the floor threshold is higher than the *laissez-faire* outcome)). Or a quota could be applied at the party level, for each nationally-recognised party – e.g. that each party reserve a threshold of nominations from the favoured group. Although quotas are more commonly associated with gender or ethnicity, it could just as likely be applied to other traits, such as geography or profession.

A possible downside of a quota would be to diminish the quality of the candidates for the position or other potential unintended consequences (e.g. rent seeking and tokenism). It may also be unfair to exclude or diminish the representation of qualified persons who do not belong to the favoured group. Quotas often engender fierce debate: Positive discrimination for one group is necessarily negative discrimination against another in a zero-sum game (the total number of seats in Parliament being fixed). They are also sometimes set without proper context (e.g. imposing a threshold level not aligned with the number of qualified persons from the favoured group) and may not coincide with ideals of fairness or are not anchored to reality. Thus much caution should be taken if quotas are to be a tool in addressing the shortcomings of Parliament.

TARGETS

Targets prescribe a desired value or range of values to achieve. Unlike quotas (which are rigid), targets are voluntary and only state an ideal outcome or set of outcomes; they are *de facto* soft quotas.[67] Incentives are often placed on targets and increase the likelihood of achievement. With respect to achieving better balance in the Parliament, political parties could/would enjoy the positive publicity of being an inclusive party. Extra funding might also be given to parties that achieve certain targets for better representation. For example, parties are allocated a per-vote subsidy (a cash amount) for each vote received in elections as a means of funding political parties that removes the influence of donors. (Nevertheless, the Conservatives plan to eliminate the programme in 2015.) Such funding programmes, or their like, can be made contingent or their levels commiserate with achieving certain targets.

Targets, just like quotas, need to be set intelligently. For example, if a given field/occupation is favoured by certain subsets of the population, it would be unrealistic (and unfair) to companies operating in that field/occupation to have a workforce that is a reflection of national demographics. Rather, the

[67] The PRS or E-PRS score could be targeted at the national and/or party level.

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demographics of such companies should hopefully reflect the demographics of the qualified applicants into that sector.

CONCLUSION

Though Canada is a diverse country on many facets (ethnic, geographic, linguistic, etc.) and adheres to the principles of inclusion and meritocracy, its highest institution of political power (Parliament) is much more homogenous than its socio-demographics: Minorities, scientists and women are highly underrepresented in Parliament relative to their national shares. Just as much, there are intrinsic geographical biases that do not adhere to the principle of "one person, one vote". Rather, rural constituents have a greater voice (as represented by size of ridings). Notwithstanding the stickiness of legacy, or clauses within the Constitution granting certain privileges, moves to increase the democratic voice of voters should be on the political agenda, especially if such gestures improve the quality of the governing class or make the political institutions more effective tools for running the country. Moreover, the literature on subjective well-being ("happiness") shows that people are happier when they are engaged in the political process (e.g. Sachs et al. (2013)), so achieving broader political participation has benefits that extend beyond politics.

Not only are existing biases not aligned with broader democratic ideals, but they may also lead to a non-fulfillment of Canada's human capital in its political institutions, especially with respect the absence of scientists contributing at the highest echelons of politics. Missing the perspectives of certain groups may also hinder the ability of the government to tackle (sometimes and especially sensitive) issues that impact certain communities. And certainly a diversity of perspectives is often helpful when trying to tackle problems that do not have a straightforward solutions. And most importantly, without a broad representation, the governing class of Canada may lose its legitimacy, being seen as an insular group not representative of the nation.

The data herein has shown the strong tendency for the governing class to be drawn from an unrepresentative subset of the population (mostly white males with law and business backgrounds), while minorities, scientists, and women are represented at about half of their national shares. Likewise, there are institutional factors that are biased in favour of rural voters, which may partially explain the homogeneity of the governing class of Canada.

Trying to attract more persons from underrepresented groups may require a change in the nature of politics (or the Constitution with regards to the urban-rural issue), which some claim are inherently biased against the groups identified in this paper. For example, inappropriate (racist, sexist, etc.) remarks are still hurled in the House during Question Period,[68] especially by backbenchers.

The lack of representation of minorities, scientists and women in Parliament is surely a shortcoming with negative consequences for the country. Additionally, many people have a tendency to find role models within their own community (be it ethnic or professional), so the current outcome with low

[68] Conservative MP Michael Chong (Wellington – Halton Hills) has been a voice for bringing back greater civility into Parliament, especially with respect to the decorum in Question Period.

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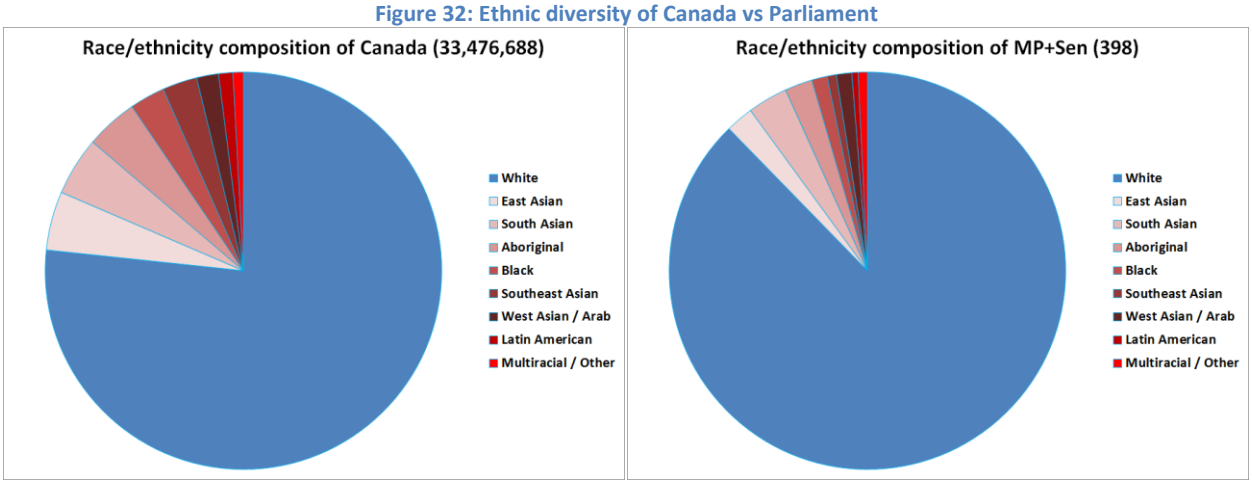
levels of representation may be self-reinforcing. If this is the case, there is an impetus for activist policies to help the system reach an equilibrium with a more balanced representation.

Some ideas were explored here on how to ameliorate (and hopefully correct) the negative socio-demographic imbalances seen in Canada's governing class. These included blind nominations, mandatory voter turnout, mentorship, official party status designation, proficiency testing, proportional representation, quotas, and targets. Which are the appropriate measures (if any) is a political decision. But with just 61.4 percent of voters turning out in 2011, and 58.8 percent in 2008 (the lowest in history),[69] there is clearly a disconnect between politics (and the politicians) and voters (and the general public). Part of that disconnect is almost certainly a consequence of the gap between the governing class and the general population. This is due in part to the system of democracy practiced in Canada that does not empower voters and gives certain groups a weakened voice on the political stage. Effort should be extended – both within the political parties and at a higher level by the institutions of politics and power in Canada – to make Parliament an institution that is more representative of the country.

Figure 32: Ethnic diversity of Canada vs Parliament



Sources: Parliament of Canada, Statistics Canada

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[69] The median voter turnout since 1867 is 70.3 percent and has fallen to 61.4 percent since 2000.

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