

# Gender-sensitive Parliaments

## Area 2: Women and men have equal opportunities to INFLUENCE the parliament's working procedures

### Influencing the procedures

---

#### **Women's experience in parliament – UK: A study in the House of Commons**

The Administration Committee of the House of Commons commissioned a qualitative study on women MP's experience of being in the parliament. Participants explained that being a Member of Parliament and working into the Houses is not so easy and pose some challenges. Some of these challenges were felt to be more difficult for women or minority groups, either directly or indirectly, because of the roles or responsibilities that women were more likely to hold (such as caring for young children or elderly relatives). Participants reported that progress had been made in terms of the experience of being a woman MP, associated with an increasing number of women MPs in the House of Commons, as well as initiatives such as the nursery, and allowing children into the division lobbies, that are the corridors that run along either side of the Chamber in both Houses. Even so, participants described a model of service provision that assumes a male MP with a supportive partner in the constituency. Elements of the culture at Westminster remain challenging and those mentioned in the report included a general lack of diversity among Members and staff, behaviour in the Chamber during Prime Minister Questionings (MPQs), and networking in bars, both internal and external to the parliament.

Source: [Benger, J. \(2015\) Report for the House of Commons Administration Committee on the findings](#)

---

#### **Gender Assessment of the Constituent Assembly – Tunisia: women's role after the revolution**

In order to systematically collect perspectives on women's experiences as elected representatives in Tunisia's first democratically elected legislature, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) carried out an assessment of opportunities for and barriers against women members of the National Constituent Assembly, also referred to herein as deputies or members of parliament (MPs). The assessment, consisting of in-depth interviews, helped NDI collect basic information from women deputies, their male counterparts, and members of the Assembly administrative staff. Based on these interviews and on its global experience in implementing women's and governance programming, NDI offers a series of recommendations to women MPs, their male counterparts in parliament and political parties, and parliamentary administration.

Source: [NDI \(2013\). Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly. Gender Assessment](#)

---

### **The Good Parliament - report on the UK House of Commons**

A report on the UK House of Commons by Professor Sarah Childs from the University of Bristol, that makes recommendations on how the House of Commons can meet the Inter-Parliamentary Union's globally influential "Gender Sensitive Parliaments" framework.

Source: [Childs, S. 2016. The Good Parliament](#)

---

### **Codes of conduct for staff – European Parliament: A guide for personnel working in the EP**

The staff regulation includes details about rights and obligation of staff, working conditions, emoluments and social security benefits.

Source: [www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu)

---

## **Gender balance in leading roles**

---

### **Top positions for women staff member – the Netherlands: Engagement to the "Talent to the top" initiative**

The Dutch Parliament voluntarily committed itself to foster gender equality for staff members by signing in 2011 the “Talent to the Top” Charter, which is a public code with clear agreements regarding the realisation of gender diversity on top and sub-top management levels. It therefore had to assess the initial situation, set objectives and a strategy regarding gender diversity. The administration of the Chamber has to report on an annual basis on progress and results. The Talent to the Top Monitoring Commission provides feedback and advice in the form of a report.

Source: [EP High-Level Group on Gender Equality and diversity \(2012\)](#)

---