



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Beyond numbers: the participation of indigenous peoples in parliament

Survey report



U
1.7
SID

September 2014

Contents

Introduction	4
Part 1: The representation of indigenous peoples in parliament	5
Without legal recognition, the number of indigenous parliamentarians is difficult to establish	5
Several parliaments can claim proportional representation of indigenous peoples	6
Few parliaments have adopted special measures to ensure a minimum level of representation for indigenous peoples	7
The electoral system may be a factor in the number of indigenous peoples who gain access to parliament	7
Indigenous women remain underrepresented in parliament	7
The way in which indigenous parliamentarians gain access to office influences their mandate as representatives of indigenous peoples	8
Proportional representation of indigenous peoples in parliament may not be sufficient to make representation meaningful	8
Dedicated parliamentary bodies can strengthen the representation of indigenous interests	9
The existence of internal decision-making structures is likely to affect participation in external decision-making structures	9
Part 2: Parliamentary action for the implementation of indigenous rights	10
The principle of free, prior and informed consent is not consistently applied or understood in actual practice	10
Conclusion	11
Recommendations	11
Appendix I: Questionnaire	12
Appendix II: Data overview	13
Appendix III: Parliaments included in study	15
End notes	16