



Universal Periodic Review Report submitted by Engender, a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

Engender is a women's organisation based in Scotland, working on a feminist, anti-sexist agenda. Established in 1990, our aim is to make visible the impact of sexism on women, men, children, society and on our social, cultural, economic, and political development. We do this by making the causes and impact of women's inequality visible, promoting gender equality in policy and practice and increasing women's power and influence. Our policy priorities are women's poverty, violence against women and women's participation in public life.

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Engender has chosen to focus this report on two priority areas: women's participation in public life and women and children's poverty. We wish to reference, however, the submission of the UK Joint Committee on Women, which we attach here in an appendix, and whose recommendations we support. We also wish to add particular support for the following recommendations made by the Scottish Human Rights Commission in their UPR report, with some added comment:

Recommendation 2: That the UK ratify and incorporate all human rights treaties without reservation. ***Engender would add a recommendation that the Scottish government incorporate CEDAW and ICESCR commitments into Scottish law.***

Recommendation 4: That steps by the Scottish Government to introduce a duty to have "due regard" to the CRC be welcomed, that this should extend

to public authorities and the UK's other international human rights treaty obligations and is not an alternative to incorporation.

Recommendation 7: That the Scottish and UK Governments support the integration of human rights indicators into monitoring and accountability of public services and the development of equality and human rights impact assessment processes.

Recommendation 16: That the UK and Scottish Governments consider steps to ensure that the minimum wage is sufficient at least to secure an adequate standard of living. ***Engender recommends an additional commitment be made—that both governments commit to a gendered analysis of poverty policy and to publish action plans for addressing the disproportion of women and children living in poverty.***

And finally, Engender would add a recommendation to this list regarding the extent to which the private sector has human rights obligations (particularly but not exclusively with regard to employment). There is some evidence that the positive changes in the public sector in terms of flexible working practice actually reduced child poverty in Scotland. Although such progress is now under threat due to public sector job cuts, the progress made was notably not similarly reflected in the private sector.

Both Scots and UK legislation continue to be unclear about the extent to which private bodies providing public services have human rights obligations. The continued failure of the UK and Scottish government to hold the private sector to account to human rights obligations serves to undermine progress, particularly for women and children.

Recommendation: that UK and Scottish governments extend human rights obligations accountability to the private sector.

Women's access to power and participation in public life¹

As the Equality and Human Rights Commission states,

“The progress of women to positions of authority in Scotland, and in Britain, has been tortuously slow.... Women in this country are better educated than ever before. They are graduating from university in ever increasing numbers and achieve better degree results than men. Intelligent, competent women are flooding the junior ranks of law firms, accountancies and medical practices.

These women step on the career ladder and work hard, with the corner office firmly in sight. In their twenties they level peg with men and therefore we would expect them to enter the management ranks at the same rate as men. However, several years down the track a different picture emerges – one where many have disappeared from the paid workforce or remain trapped in the ‘marzipan layer’ below senior management, leaving the higher ranks to be dominated by men.”

The EHRC survey measured the number of women in positions of power or influence in Scotland and, more generally, in Britain in 2010-11. The Commission's conclusions were that there is no discernible upward trend, and that increases have been small. For example, women members of the Scottish Parliament increased from 34.1 percent to 34.9 percent, but the latter figure is still significantly less than the figure from 2003 (39.5 percent). The proportion of women ministers in the Scottish Government increased less than 1 percent.

¹ Data cited in this section come from the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 2011 report: Sex and Power Scotland 2011. We have attached a copy of the report as an appendix.

In local government, the percentage of women local authority council leaders halved since 2007-08. The proportion of women holding public appointments is now less than in 2003.

Voluntary and incremental mechanisms for improving women's access to power, participation and decision making are failing. At the existing pace, women will have equal representation in the Scottish Parliament by approximately 2055 and it would be even later at Westminster. This is not good enough. It is time for the Scottish and UK governments to take responsibility. It is clear that the political parties will not bring about the change needed, and we have the following recommendations:

- Quotas aimed at candidate selection should be compulsory and enshrined in law.²
- Candidate selection process should be 'gendered'.
- Quotas must be 'quotas plus' and include rules on where female candidates are placed. Training and mentoring programmes should also be continued
- We also need sanctions for noncompliance. These could be financial penalties or disqualification of candidates or deregistration of parties.

Recommendation: The UK and Scottish government should adopt legislation that would use special measures to redress the unequal balance of women and men in political processes, using a "Quotas +" approach.

² Engender held a debate on quotas and other special measures at the Scottish Parliament in August 2011 as part of the Edinburgh Festival of Politics. See www.engender.org.uk for details.

Women's and children's poverty

In the first session of the UPR, the UK accepted to “*provide further information with regard to efforts to reduce poverty among children in half by 2010.*” However, there has been no progress in reducing the number of children living in severe poverty since 2004/05.ⁱ

In March 2011, the Scottish Government produced the first *Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland*ⁱⁱ to set out its commitment to tackling poverty and the socio-economic disadvantage of children. Engender welcome the first evidence of a gendered approach in government child poverty policy evidenced in the references to the gender pay gap and to the fact that the vast majority of ‘lone parents’ are in fact single mothers. However, the analysis fails to extend to concrete plans for lifting children out of poverty through directly addressing the poverty of their mothers.

Recommendation: The Scottish and UK governments integrate the child and women's poverty policy areas and commit to reducing women's poverty as fundamental to reducing children's poverty.

Appendix 1

Sex and Power Scotland 2011, Equality and Human Rights Commission

Missing women

The progress of women to positions of authority in Scotland, and in Britain, has been tortuously slow. This year's Sex and Power Report - an index of women in positions of power and influence - shows a trend which is not abating; while women make progress in some sectors, that progress regularly stalls or even reverses in other sectors. It is a trend of waxing and waning; not one of constant upward movement.

Women in this country are better educated than ever before. They are graduating from university in ever increasing numbers and achieve better degree results than menⁱⁱⁱ. Intelligent, competent women are flooding the junior ranks of law firms, accountancies and medical practices.

These women step on the career ladder and work hard, with the corner office firmly in sight. In their twenties they level peg with men and therefore we would expect them to enter the management ranks at the same rate as men. However, several years down the track a different picture emerges – one where many have disappeared from the paid workforce or remain trapped in the 'marzipan layer' below senior management, leaving the higher ranks to be dominated by men^{iv}.

These talented women are missing from the top jobs.

If women were to achieve equal representation among Britain's 26,000 top positions of power, the Commission estimates that 5,400 'missing' women would rise through the ranks to positions of real influence.

Findings

This survey measures the number of women in positions of power or influence in Scotland and, more generally, in Britain in 2010/11.

For the Scottish study this year, 14 occupation categories were reviewed. The results show that there were more women in top posts in 10 of the 14 categories compared to 2007/08. These include:

- local authority chief executives
- senior police officers
- university principals, and
- health service chief executives.

However, increases have been small in most areas and in many cases the increases are attributable to just one or two women joining senior posts. For example, while there has been an increase in the proportion of members of the Scottish Parliament that are women - from 34.1 per cent to 34.9 per cent – this is still significantly less than the figure from 2003 (39.5 per cent). Similarly, for Scottish trade union general secretaries, the proportion of women in these posts rose from 20.6 per cent to just 25.7 per cent. For ministers in the Scottish Government, the increase is less than one percentage point.

There have been drops in women's participation in four sectors compared to 2007/08 figures:

- Scottish local authority council leaders
- public appointments
- Scottish MEPs, and
- further education college principals.

The fall was most substantial with local authority council leaders. Since 2007/8, the percentage of council leaders who are women has halved, falling from 18.8 per cent to 9.4 per cent – from six female council leaders to only three.

There was also a reduction in the proportion of women holding public appointments. Even more worrying is that the proportion of women is less than it was in 2003.

Across Britain, the survey was wider, with 27 occupational categories being reviewed. The results show there were more women in top posts in 17 of the 27 categories in Britain compared to 2007/08. These include:

- members of the senior judiciary
- heads of professional bodies
- chief executives of national sports bodies
- senior police officers, and
- trade union general secretaries.

Again, increases have been small in many areas and in many cases the increases are attributable to just one or two women joining senior posts. For example, for senior managers in the civil service the increase is from 26.6 per cent to 29.2 per cent. For senior ranks of the armed forces, the increase of three women brought the percentage to only one per cent.

There have been drops in women's participation in 10 sectors, including:

- members of Cabinet (except Scotland)
- National Assembly for Wales
- local authority council leaders
- public appointments
- editors of national newspapers
- chairs of national arts bodies, and
- health service chief executives.

In three of these cases, falls have been substantial. The number of female chairs of arts companies had reached four in 2007/8. This year, that figure has fallen to one - Zoë van Zwanenberg at the Scottish Ballet.

The proportion of women Cabinet ministers is currently 17.4 per cent - effectively four women. The number of female editors of national newspapers has declined from a peak of four to two in 2011 - Dawn Neesom at the *Daily Star* and Tina Weaver at the *Sunday Mirror*.

The results of this year's survey indicate that it will take another 70 years to achieve an equal number of women directors in the FTSE 100 and another 45 years to achieve an equal number of women in the senior judiciary. It will take another

14 general elections – that is, up to 70 years - to achieve an equal number of women MPs in the UK parliament.

ⁱ Save the Children (2011). Severe Child Poverty in Scotland

ⁱⁱ The Scottish Government (2011) Child Poverty Strategy

ⁱⁱⁱ Thompson, J et al (2009) Male and Female Participation and Progression in Higher Education.

^{iv} Davies, EM (2011) Women on Boards
