

CONGRESS AND US

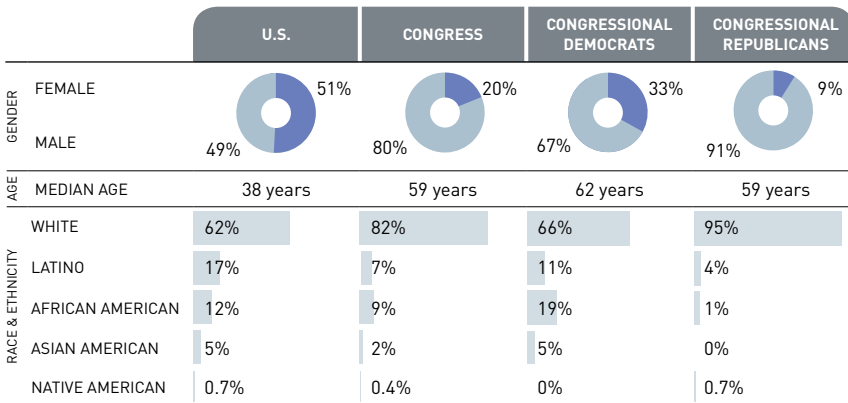
How Representative Are Our Representatives?

As members of the 114th Congress took their seats on January 6, 2015, there were more women among them than at any time in U.S. history. In addition, this group of lawmakers is one of the most racially diverse Congresses.

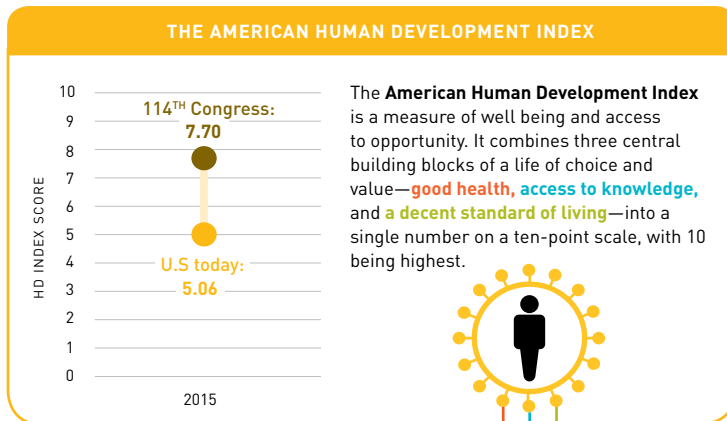
Yet despite this progress, today's Congress is still a far cry from representing the diversity of all Americans. Members of the 114th Congress are significantly more likely to be male, white, and over 65 than other Americans.

Women make up more than half of the U.S. population, but only 19.5 percent of Congress.

Whites make up 62.4 percent of the total U.S. population, but 82.1 percent of the 114th Congress. The Democratic delegation looks a bit more like the U.S. population in terms of race and ethnicity than the Republican side.



Note: Data are accurate as of April 2015, which includes three vacant House seats.



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Members of the 114th Congress score much better on the Human Development Index than the United States as a whole, thanks mainly to their very high incomes and educational levels. But while they are far ahead of the rest of the United States when it comes to education and income, they lag in life expectancy.

HEALTH: The disproportionate number of men (women live longer) and dearth of Asian Americans and Latinos (groups that have relatively long life expectancies) result in Congress having a **lower life expectancy** than the U.S. average by 1.5 years.

EDUCATION: Over 95 percent of Congress has completed a bachelor's degree or higher; only 30 percent of the general population has. Everyone in Congress has completed high school—**27 million Americans have not**.

EARNINGS: Members of Congress earn a base salary of \$174,000 a year; they earn in nine weeks what the typical American makes in a year, \$30,454.

What would the U.S. look like if members of Congress were to support earnings and education outcomes like theirs for all Americans? Write your representative to ask!

Measure of America, a nonpartisan project of the Social Science Research Council, provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding the distribution of well-being and opportunity in America and seeks to foster greater awareness of our shared challenges.

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Data sources: <http://www.measureofamerica.org/congressional-districts-2015/methodological-note/>
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