

Diversity Committee Report

Winter Policy Council Meeting 2009

Submitted by Peter Hovmand

Executive Summary

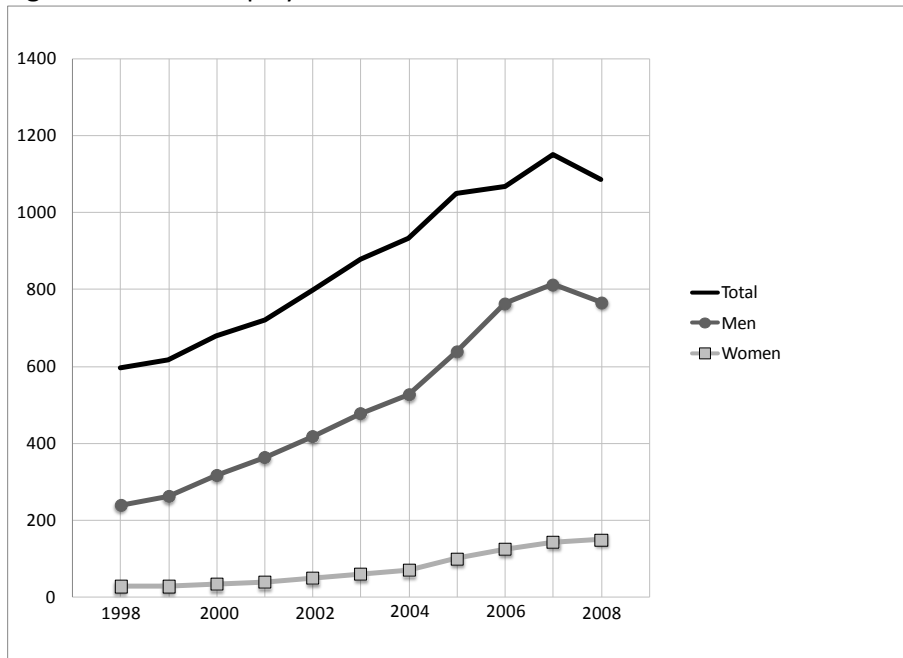
This report provides an overview of the System Dynamics Society demographics for 2008 and Diversity Committee. Total membership declined for the first time since 1998 from 1,152 members in 2007 to 1,087 in 2008. The decline was largest in the United States, among men, and members 50 and over. However, the number of women in the society continues increasing reaching 16% in 2008 while the number countries represented by members increased as well. Conference attendance also declined from 2007 to 2008, but appeared to have a larger proportion of women. Additionally, the Diversity Committee held a diversity forum and diversity workshop at the Athens Conference. One outcome from the diversity forum was a recommendation to have a gender issues thread at the conference, which has been proposed and accepted for the Albuquerque conference.

Overall Membership Demographics and Trends

Previous reports of diversity in the System Dynamics Society were based on mid-year data before the conference. This created a discrepancy between the Executive Director's report at the Winter Policy Council Meeting and the Diversity Committee report at the Summer Policy Council Meeting. This report represents a first step toward a more integrated and consistent reporting of membership statistics.

Total membership declined for the first time since 1998, dropping from 1,152 members in 2007 to 1,087 members in 2008, representing a drop of approximately 6% (see Figure 1). Members have the option of reporting their gender on the membership form. Based on available information, the number of men in the System Dynamics Society declined while the number of women continued to increase.

Figure 1 Membership by Year and Gender



Membership by Gender and Year

Figure 2 shows the composition of membership by gender and year using several estimates, including the 2004 report to the Policy Council, 2005 membership survey, and data from the membership forms. Both the numbers and percentage of women members continues to grow (see Figure 2 and Table 1), up from 14.9% in 2007 to 16.3% in 2008.

Figure 2 Composition of Membership by Gender and Year as Percentage

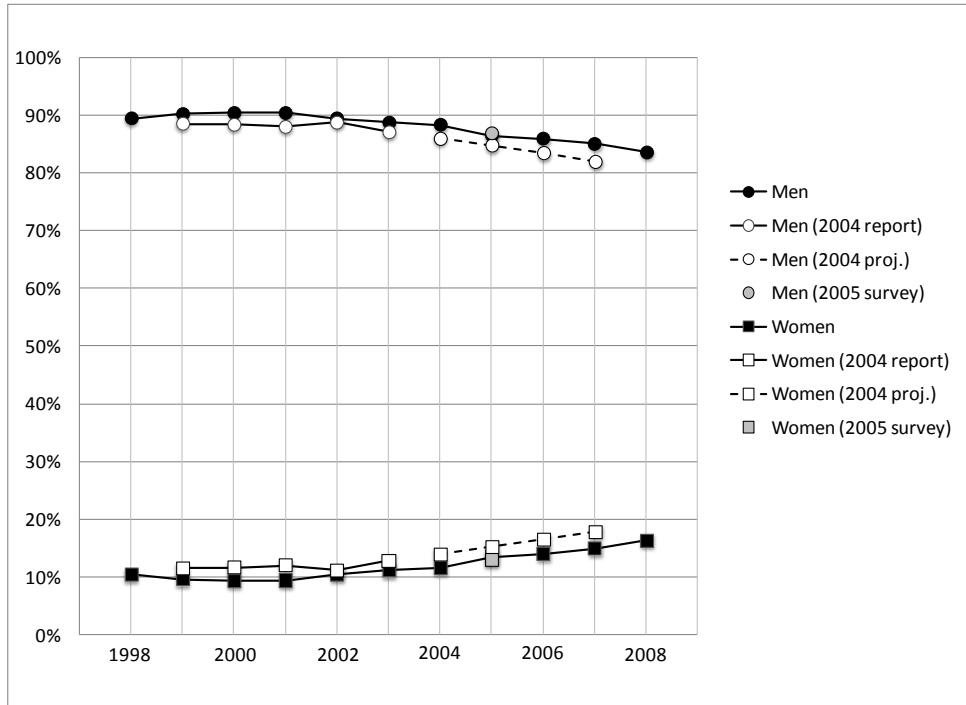


Table 1 Membership by Gender and Year

Gender	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Women ¹	28 10.5%	28 9.7%	33 9.4%	38 9.5%	49 10.5%	60 11.2%	69 11.6%	99 13.4%	124 14.0%	142 14.9%	149 16.3%
Men ¹	239 89.5%	261 90.3%	317 90.6%	363 90.5%	417 89.5%	478 88.8%	526 88.4%	638 86.6%	763 86.0%	813 85.1%	766 83.7%
Unknown ²	328 55.1%	326 53.0%	327 48.3%	318 44.2%	332 41.6%	342 38.9%	339 36.3%	313 29.8%	183 17.1%	197 17.1%	172 15.8%
Total	595	615	677	719	798	880	934	1050	1070	1152	1087

¹ Reported by frequency and as a percent of known gender.

² Reported by frequency and as a percent of total membership.

Membership by Age

The new membership information includes information about the age groups of members. Membership tends to be evenly distributed between ages 30 and 59, but lagging in the under 30 groups. Membership declined the most among members 50 or older.

Conference Attendance by Gender

Overall conference attendance declined from 557 in 2007 to 385 in 2008. However, the proportion of women attending the conference appeared to increase from 20.2% in 2007 to 23.4% in 2008. These figures should be interpreted with some caution since the proportion of conference attendees not reporting their gender is relatively high and increased from 2007 to 2008.

Membership by Country of Residence

The most complete demographic information about members comes from their country of residence. Table 4 on the next page shows the membership breakdown for countries with five or more members by year from 1999 to 2008. Also shown are countries with a country or regional chapter, and recent or upcoming conferences.

The diversity of membership by country increased in 2008, from 65 countries in 2007 to 70 countries in 2008. Membership continues to be concentrated in the countries with the most members. The fourteen countries with the highest membership represent 75% of the total membership: United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, Japan, Norway, Italy, Spain, Brazil, China, and Croatia (see Table 4).

Although membership decreased overall from 2007 to 2008, membership remained the same or increased for approximately for 7 out of 10 countries. The decline in membership was largest for the United States, which lost 66 members from 2007 to 2008.

Diversity Committee Activities at the Athens Conference

The Diversity Committee hosted a roundtable to solicit feedback from members. One suggestion that came out of the roundtable was to have a thread dedicated to gender issues as this would provide an opportunity for presenters to exchange ideas on gender issues. A temporary thread on Gender Issues has been proposed and accepted for the Albuquerque conference in 2009. The Diversity Committee also piloted the "Sharpening Soft Skills for Modeling Workshop" which was well attended and included diverse representation. There was significant interest in the workshop being more focused on advanced skills that might be used in group model building. A workshop is planned for the 2009 conference.

Table 2 Membership by Age Group and Year

Age	2006	2007	2008
Under 25 ¹	1.4%	1.7%	1.7%
25 to 29 ¹	4.9%	6.2%	5.5%
30 to 39 ¹	24.7%	23.9%	24.7%
40 to 49 ¹	25.5%	25.9%	26.5%
50 to 59 ¹	26.1%	25.5%	24.8%
60 or older ¹	17.4%	16.8%	16.7%
Unknown ²	18.5%	18.6%	18.5%

¹ As percent of known ages.

² As percent of total membership.

Table 3 Conference Attendance by Gender and Year

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Women	52	56	71	49
% ¹	17.8%	21.6%	20.2%	23.4%
Men	240	203	280	160
% ¹	82.2%	78.4%	79.8%	76.6%
Unknown	193	178	206	176
% ²	39.8%	40.7%	37.0%	45.7%
Total	485	437	557	385

¹ As percent of known gender.

² As percent of total membership

Table 4 **Distribution of Membership by Country and Year**¹

Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Recent conferences
United States	255	277	306	306	357	362	448	422	482	416	Atlanta, 2001; New York, 2003; Boston 2005, 2007; Albuquerque 2009
United Kingdom	55	60	64	75	77	92	85	80	78	77	* Oxford 2004
Germany	21	23	25	30	37	42	49	54	59	54	*
Netherlands	17	21	22	24	30	34	35	40	44	35	Nijmegen 2006
Australia	26	28	27	26	26	31	34	34	41	33	*
Canada	20	19	21	24	27	28	26	24	25	30	Québec City 1998
Switzerland	14	19	20	26	27	34	32	34	31	29	*
Japan	32	32	34	31	34	31	29	27	28	24	*
Norway	13	18	17	18	21	26	25	26	24	24	Bergen 2000
Italy	18	20	18	24	22	20	21	22	21	23	* Palermo 2002
Spain	16	17	15	19	13	17	17	22	20	22	
Brazil	6	5	5	9	15	15	21	21	18	17	*
China	5	5				5	6	19	16	16	*
Croatia							8	13	11	14	
Greece		5	6	9	13	13	8	7	6	14	* Athens 2008
Sweden			7	12	14	15	12	10	11	14	
India					6	5	6	11	14	13	
New Zealand	7	7	7	5	5	7	10	11	12	13	Wellington 1999
Mexico	5	6	9	10	9	10	11	13	12	12	**
Iran									7	11	
Korea	8	8	8	10	9	11	8	12	10	11	
Belgium	5	5	6	8	8	10	11	14	9	10	
Colombia				5	6	5	6	7	12	10	**
Russia							9	7	10	10	*
France	5	7	7	12	12	10	10	8	9	9	
Egypt				17	12	8	9	8	9	8	*
Pakistan							10	9	9	8	*
Poland							6	7	7	8	
South Africa					6	5	6	6	8	8	
Turkey	12	7	7		5	6	7	6	7	8	Istanbul 1997
Indonesia	10	8			7	7	8	9	10	7	
Taiwan	7	8	6	8	7	6	11	11	9	7	
Austria										6	
Czech Republic							5			6	
Malaysia						10		5	8	6	
Chile									6	5	**
Portugal		6	7	8	7	7	9	6	6	5	
Denmark			5	5	5	5	5	5			
Finland		5		5	6	6	5	6	5		
Singapore					5	5		5			
Argentina	7	6	5								**

¹ Cells or countries with less than 5 members have been removed, * = country chapter, ** = regional chapter