

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Diverse leadership fuels organizational effectiveness and prosperity

DiverseCity Counts is a three-year research project being conducted by Ryerson University's Diversity Institute. It is part of DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project, an initiative of Maytree and the Toronto City Summit Alliance to promote diversity in leadership in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Ensuring that the leadership of the region reflects the population's diversity has important social and economic implications for the GTA, because diversity in leadership:

- Supports improved financial and organizational performance;
- Provides stronger links to domestic and global markets;
- Helps organizations attract and retain the best talent;
- Supports creativity in decision making; and
- Promotes social inclusion because leaders shape the aspirations of the population.

Change is slow but moving in the right direction

To determine whether the region's leadership reflects the diversity of its population, DiverseCity Counts measures on an annual basis the number of visible minorities in leadership positions in elected office, the public sector, the corporate sector, agencies, boards, and commissions, the voluntary sector, and the education sector. Last year the research found that 13.5% of the 3,256 leaders examined were visible minorities, compared with 49.5% of the general population in the area under study. This year the same institutions were examined and it was found that of a total of 3,348 leaders, just 469 (14%) are visible minorities. This represents a subtle if modest improvement. Here are a few notable differences:

- Among public servants, 9.4% are visible minorities, up from last year (8.1%);
- The proportion of visible minorities sitting on agencies, boards and commissions increased from 18.6% last year to 22.3%;
- Ontario agencies, boards and commissions show the largest one-year increase, from 10.6% to 14.5% visible minority leaders;
- City of Toronto agencies, boards and commissions demonstrate the best results overall with an impressive 33% visible minority leaders;
- Agencies, boards and commissions are the most diverse sector examined (the education sector led in 2009); and
- The corporate sector remains the least diverse.

There are organizational trailblazers and laggards in each sector

This year, the research dug deeper into the data to better understand the extent to which some organizations have made diversity a priority. DiverseCity Counts found that:

- 21.9% of all the organizations examined have more than 20% of their leadership who are visible minorities;
- 80% of university boards of governors and 83.3% of college boards of governors have more than 20% visible minorities; and
- Most municipalities are represented by at least one representative who is a visible minority.

However, in other sectors, a majority of organizations have no visible minority representation at all. For example, 76.9% of corporate boards and 69.2% of corporate sector executive teams have no visible minorities. In the voluntary sector, 61.5% of charities and 80% of foundations have executive teams without any visible minorities.

This gap between high and low performers is interesting because it reinforces the importance of examining the practices of successful organizations in each sector in order to promote learning between organizations.



Media leadership mirrors corporate sector leadership

This year, the study also took a special look at the news media that are most consumed by GTA residents. Media organizations are important institutions because they play a role in defining who is a leader in society and can shape the ambitions of those who wish to be leaders.

The study examined two aspects of the media: who makes decisions at major print and broadcast media organizations serving the GTA, and who gets represented in the news coverage.

As in the corporate sector generally, visible minorities are under-represented on boards and among senior executives of large media corporations. Of the 289 leaders examined, there are 14 or 4.8% visible minorities. In general, broadcast companies in this study had slightly higher levels of representation, likely because they are subject to the federal Employment Equity Act and because tracking diversity is a condition of their CRTC licenses.

Table 1. Summary data: visible minorities in leadership

	Visible minority sector average 2009	Visible minority sector average 2010
Elected officials	16.1%	15.4%
Public sector	8.1%	9.4%
Corporate sector	4.1%	4.1%
Voluntary sector	12.8%	12.5%
Education sector	19.8%	19.9%
Government agencies boards and commissions	18.6%	22.3%
Total	13.5%	14.0%

Table 2. Visible minority media decision makers

	Number analyzed	% Visible minority
Boards of directors	66	6.1%
Newsroom editors and producers	85	5.9%
Senior management	138	3.6%
Total	289	4.8%

Table 3. Visible minority representation in the media

	Total analyzed	Number visible minority appearances	% Visible minority appearances
Broadcast hosts and reporters	286	58	20.3%
Print columnists	471	16	3.4%
Expert speaking sources in broadcasts	343	57	16.6%
Everyday life story speaking sources	200	46	23.0%
Photos in print	2,036	476	23.4%
Total	3,336	653	19.6%

News coverage provides opportunity for media to diversify

To examine how leadership is represented in news coverage, local newspapers and news broadcasts were analyzed. It was revealed that visible minorities are under-represented among columnists, experts and even stock background photographs in newspapers. Visible minorities are also under-represented as hosts, experts and in the background of stories on the supper time broadcast news.

However, it is not all bad news. Online media and ethnic media, in particular, are providing new opportunities to broaden representation. The research also found that there are a number of simple and cost-effective ways that media can diversify their news content. These include for example updating stock photography, identifying experts from diverse backgrounds by using databases such as DiverseCity Voices, and recognizing how diversity can strengthen journalism.

The findings from this study reinforce the fact that organizations across sectors have an opportunity to increase diversity in leadership. It also provides insight into simple strategies to advance this goal.