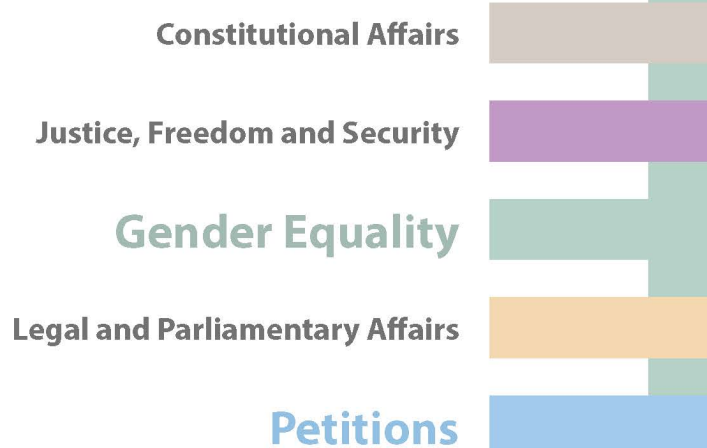


DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

**POLICY DEPARTMENT** **C**  
CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS



**Analysis of political parties' and independent candidates' policies for gender balance in the European Parliament after the elections of 2014**

STUDY FOR THE FEMM COMMITTEE





**DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES**  
**POLICY DEPARTMENT C: CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND**  
**CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

**WOMEN'S RIGHTS & GENDER EQUALITY**

**Analysis of political parties' and  
independent candidates' policies for  
gender balance in  
the European Parliament after  
the elections of 2014**

**STUDY**

**Abstract**

Upon request by the FEMM Committee, this study explores the results of the 2014 European Parliament elections in terms of gender balance of MEPs. The study uses case studies and statistical analyses of the election results to establish the main barriers to women being elected. The factors explored include the type of electoral system used, political parties' candidate list selection processes and strategies used by women political candidates. The study presents recommendations for improving gender balance in the European Parliament.

**DOCUMENT REQUESTED BY THE  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- ALDE** Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
- ECR** European Conservatives and Reformists
- EFDD** Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group
- EIGE** European Institute for Gender Equality
- ENF** Europe of Nations and Freedom
- EP** European Parliament
- EPP** Group of the European People's Party
- EU** European Union
- FEMM** Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee
- GEI** Gender Equality Index
- Greens/EFA** Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- GUE/NGL** Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left
- MEP** Member of the European Parliament
- NI** Non-attached Members/Members not belonging to any political group
- PR** Proportional Representation
- S&D** Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

## **ABBREVIATIONS OF NATIONAL PARTIES' NAMES USED IN THE STUDY**

### **FRANCE**

- SP** Socialist Party
- UMP** Union for a Popular Movement

## **BELGIUM**

**MR** Reformist Movement

**NV-A** New Flemish Alliance

## **HUNGARY**

**FIDESZ/KDNP** Hungarian Civic Alliance

**JOBBIK** Better Hungary

**MSZP** Hungarian Socialist Party

**LMP** Politics can be different party

**PM** Together-dialogue for Hungary

## **LITHUANIA**

**LSDP** Social Democratic Party

## **MALTA**

**MLP** Maltese Labour Party

**NP** Nationalist Party

## **POLAND**

**PO** Civic Platform

**PSL** Polish People's Party

**SLD** Democratic Left Alliance

**TR** Your Movement

## **SPAIN**

**ANOVA** Left Galician Alternative Coalition

**ICV** Initiative for Catalonia Greens

**IU** United Left

**PP** Spanish People's Party

**PSOE** Spanish Socialist Party

**UPyD** Union, Progress and Democracy

**SWEDEN**

**MP** Social Democrats

**S** Swedish Green Party

**V** Left Party

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**DUP** Democratic Unionist Party

**GP** Green Party

**LDP** Liberal Democrat Party

**SF** Sinn Fein

**UKIP** United Kingdom Independence Party

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### KEY FINDINGS

- The underrepresentation **of women in parliament is largely due to the underrepresentation of women in the** candidate base. This problem can be addressed by actions of political parties in constructing their party lists.
- Political parties are the main **enablers** as well as **barriers** to women being elected as MEPs.
- Women are frequently left out of party **candidate lists** and, even if they are included, are often given **low list positions**; this is a key barrier to gender balance in the European Parliament.
- Political parties often act to 'champion' certain candidates that are frequently male; this can **disadvantage** women candidates who have often garnered support over many years through grass roots organisations.
- Based on regression analyses of candidate data, **quotas appear to improve** women's probability of being elected.
- Based on regression analyses of candidate data, women who are given **first place in party lists** are slightly more likely than men to be elected, particularly where quotas are also used to construct those party lists.

### Introduction

This study was commissioned by the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) of the European Parliament to explore the results of the European Parliament election of 2014 in terms of the gender composition of elected MEPs. In particular, the study seeks to understand the different contexts and conditions that may help or hinder women's chances of being elected as MEP in order to develop recommendations for both EU and national level actors to improve gender balance in the European Parliament.

### Methods

The study involved **case studies** and **statistical analyses** of candidate characteristics and election results.

Nine in-depth case studies were conducted in **Belgium, France, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Spain, Sweden**, and the **United Kingdom**. This involved interviews with a range of respondents including women MEPs, political party officials who are involved with party selection processes, and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with expertise in electoral processes and gender balance.

### Overview of the European Parliament election results

After 2014, the total number of female MEPs is 277 out of 751 MEPs (37%), an increase of just 2% since 2009. The proportions of female MEPs vary considerably by Member State and by European political party affiliation. **Left leaning** parties returned the highest proportions of female MEPs overall. Parties within the Confederal Group of the European United Left returned the highest percentages of female MEPs (51%), followed closely by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (46%). Parties within the

European Conservatives and Reformist Group returned the lowest percentage of female MEPs (21%).

## **Review of literature: barriers and enablers for women entering representative politics**

Apart from recommendations or guidelines, there are **no provisions at the European level** to encourage parties to introduce quotas or other positive measures to ensure gender balance on their lists. Some Member States have introduced legislation which requests parties to have a certain quota for the underrepresented sex.

**Supply side** factors which are understood to affect gender balance in politics include: women's **perceptions** of risk in entering politics; lack of female **role models** in politics to encourage women to enter politics; male-dominated political **cultures** which may discourage women from wanting to be involved in politics; and negative **media** portrayals of women in politics which may deter women from running for office.

**Demand** side factors which are understood to increase gender balance in politics include: in closed list systems, parties must be willing to include sufficient women on **party lists** and provide them with **high list** positions; in open list systems women must appeal **directly** to voters to win seats; this may be more difficult in societies which are generally less supportive of women in politics or that have **traditional** views on gender roles. In open, closed and mixed systems, it is important to have sufficient numbers of women in the candidate base to ensure gender equality, however this alone is not a sufficient condition.

## **Analyses of the 2014 European Parliament election results in terms of gender**

In many countries, although women have similar or even higher probabilities of being elected compared to men, they are still underrepresented in parliament. This is largely due to underrepresentation of women in the candidate base as a whole. This would suggest that parties have a crucial role to play in encouraging women to become candidates in the first place. The use of quotas appears to have a beneficial effect on the probability of women being elected, as well as affecting the composition of the candidate base.

## **Actions taken at a pan-EU level to address gender balance in the European Parliament**

**European political parties (Europarties) are** influential in setting key manifesto commitments and priorities amongst its members. Europarties could use their influence to encourage members to adopt quotas or zipping. **Very few respondents in case studies were aware of the 50/50 campaign.**

## **Case study findings**

**Long held beliefs within political parties determine their overall attitude towards the use of positive action such as quotas.** In general, left and green-leaning parties are generally supportive of positive action such as quotas, whereas liberals and right-leaning parties are not. The effectiveness of strategies to improve gender balance is mediated by the **electoral system in place** in the country. Many respondents from NGOs and political

parties suggested that in systems that operate a closed list ballot, zipping is the only possible method of ensuring gender balance in politics.

Women face some **structural disadvantages** in campaigning and tend to have fewer financial resources compared to men.

## Summary and conclusions

Political parties are the main enablers as well as barriers to women being elected as MEPs. A number of recommendations flow from the research which will help political parties to act as enablers rather than barriers.

In order to increase the number of women in the EP, national political parties should seek to:

- Adopt gender **quotas** of 50% for all party election lists
- In closed list systems, adopt either **zipping** or a quota for women at the top of lists
- In recruiting and '**championing**' candidates, consider approaching women in equal measure to men
- Take action to ensure a **level playing field** for candidates as they campaign to win votes or support from local parties, for example, through assistance with publicity or introducing a cap on campaign expenditure (in particular for contests for list positions on party lists)
- Secure high level support for policies to improve gender balance across all levels of the party and all party activities, showing that **senior leaders** are serious about gender balance
- Research and understand the potential **electoral benefits** of increasing the number of female candidates.

EU level actors such as **European political parties** and the **European Women's Lobby** should:

- Take action to influence national political parties' candidate **selection processes** including lobbying for them to adopt quotas, rather than relying on strategies to alter public opinion
- Work with political parties at very **early stages** in election campaigns so that party lists may be developed with a balance between men and women
- Provide support and **training**, particularly around **media** relations, to women candidates and local parties so that they may gain coverage in the press that is favourable.

The European Commission could:

- Develop a robust and complete dataset of all candidates running for European Parliament election. The dataset should include information on country, constituency, gender, age, political party, position on list, type of system used to elect candidates, whether or not a quota is applicable to that candidate and if so, what is the nature of that quota, incumbency.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In May 2014, Member States of the European Union held elections for the European Parliament. This study was commissioned by the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) of the European Parliament to explore the results of the election in terms of the gender composition of elected MEPs. In particular, the study seeks to understand the different contexts and conditions that may help or hinder women's chances of being elected as MEP in order to develop recommendations for both EU and national level actors to improve gender balance in the European Parliament.

In this report findings are presented from case studies of nine different Member States' experiences of the 2014 elections (Belgium, France, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom). In-depth statistical analyses of MEP candidates and their election results are also presented. These analyse the impact of different voting systems and mechanisms of candidate list preparation on women's chances of being elected. Findings are also presented of qualitative research with EU level actors about their potential role in improving gender balance.

## 2. METHODS

**Various statistical analyses** were conducted on samples of all Member States' candidate lists and the election outcomes for each candidate. Multiple regression analyses explored the impact of specific conditions on the likelihood of women being elected as MEPs compared to men. These conditions included whether an open or closed list system was used to elect MEPs, whether a gender quota was used by the party, and rank positions on candidate lists and a country's score on the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Gender Equality Index (GEI). This provides entirely new analyses of the different contexts and conditions in which women are likely to be elected.

Case studies were conducted in 9 Member States to explore the influence of internal political party processes for candidate selection; female candidates' and MEPs' personal strategies and qualities in running election campaigns; electoral systems and parties' actions and rules for addressing gender balance. This involved in-depth interviews with a range of respondents including women MEPs, political party officials who are involved with or close to party selection processes and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with expertise in electoral processes and gender balance. Women MEPs and party officials from the three main political parties in each case study were approached to take part in the study. However, to ensure confidentiality, the party to which each respondent belongs is generally not stated. NGOs that are knowledgeable about gender and political representation were also asked to take part.

A **literature review** and analysis of the results of the European Parliament election by gender are also presented.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION RESULTS

#### KEY FINDINGS

- In 2014, the total number of **female MEPs is 277 out of 751** MEPs (37%), an **increase of just 2%** from 2009.
- The proportions of female MEPs **vary considerably** by Member State and by European political party.
- **Malta** has the highest percentage of female MEPs, however, only with 6 seats (67%).
- Lithuania returned the **lowest** percentage of female MEPs, 1 out of 11 seats (9%).
- **Left leaning** groups returned the **highest proportions** of female MEPs. The Confederal Group of the European United Left returned the highest percentage of female MEPs (51%), followed closely by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (46%).
- The European Conservatives and Reformist Group returned the **lowest percentage** of female MEPs (21%) of all political groups in the EP.

In May 2014, Member States of the European Union held elections for the European Parliament. In total, **751 members of the European Parliament were elected** by 28 Member States. All European Parliament (EP) seats are elected through a system of Proportional Representation (PR)<sup>1</sup>. Figure 1 below details the percentage change in the number of female MEPs for each Member State and the EU as a whole between 2009, when the last EP election was held, and 2014.

#### 3.1. Overall number and changes in proportions of female MEPs between 2009 and 2014

Figure 1 shows there was a **2% increase** in the number of women MEPs compared to the previous parliament. This will be disappointing to key players in the women's movement across Europe, for example, the **European Women's Lobby** which pursued a campaign to achieve 50% female MEPs.

The **largest proportions** of MEPs were returned for the Group of the European People's Party (EPP), 29.43% of seats – whose national party members are broadly from centre-right political parties; followed by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), whose members are left of centre parties – with 25.43% of seats. The next largest proportion was won for parties with the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group, whose members are, broadly, from conservative political parties -

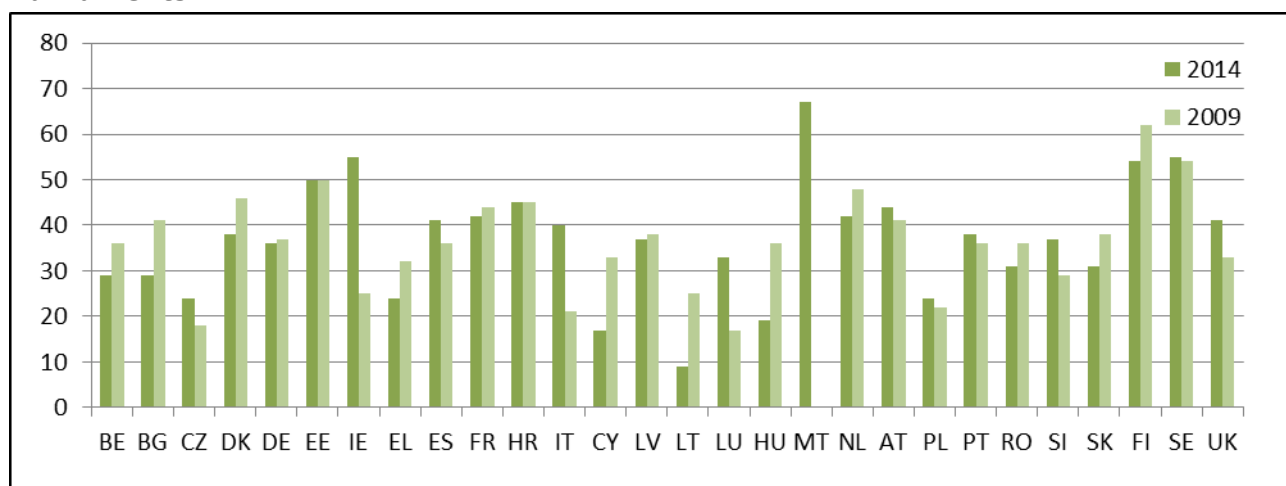
<sup>1</sup>The term **proportional representation** (PR) characterises electoral systems by which divisions in an electorate are reflected proportionately in the elected body. The essence of such systems is that *all* votes contribute to the result, not just a plurality, or a bare majority, of them. Proportional representation requires the use of multiple-member voting districts (also called super-districts), it is not possible using single-member districts alone.

9.32% of seats. Overall, **turnout** was 43%. The highest turnout occurred in Luxembourg (86%) and the lowest with 24% in Croatia. Political analysts noted a marked rise in parties expressing **anti-European** political views in the 2014 elections against a backdrop of declining support amongst voters for European institutions especially since the financial crisis of 2008<sup>2</sup>.

**37% of MEPs are now women.** Figures 1 and 2 below show the proportions and number of women for each Member State in 2014 and 2009. The percentage of women MEPs returned by each Member State **varies** considerably. For example, in 2014, Malta had the highest proportion of women MEPs (67%), albeit with only 6 seats; Ireland returned 55% of women MEPs (out of 11 seats) – a large percentage point increase from the previous election. By contrast, Lithuania returned only 9% of women MEPs (out of 11 seats). Member States with **larger numbers of seats** including Germany returned 36% of women MEPs (out of 96 seats); France: 42% women MEPs (out of 74 seats); UK: 41% Women MEPs (out of 73 seats); Italy returned 40% of women MEPs (out of 73 seats) and Spain: 41% women MEPs (out of 54 seats).

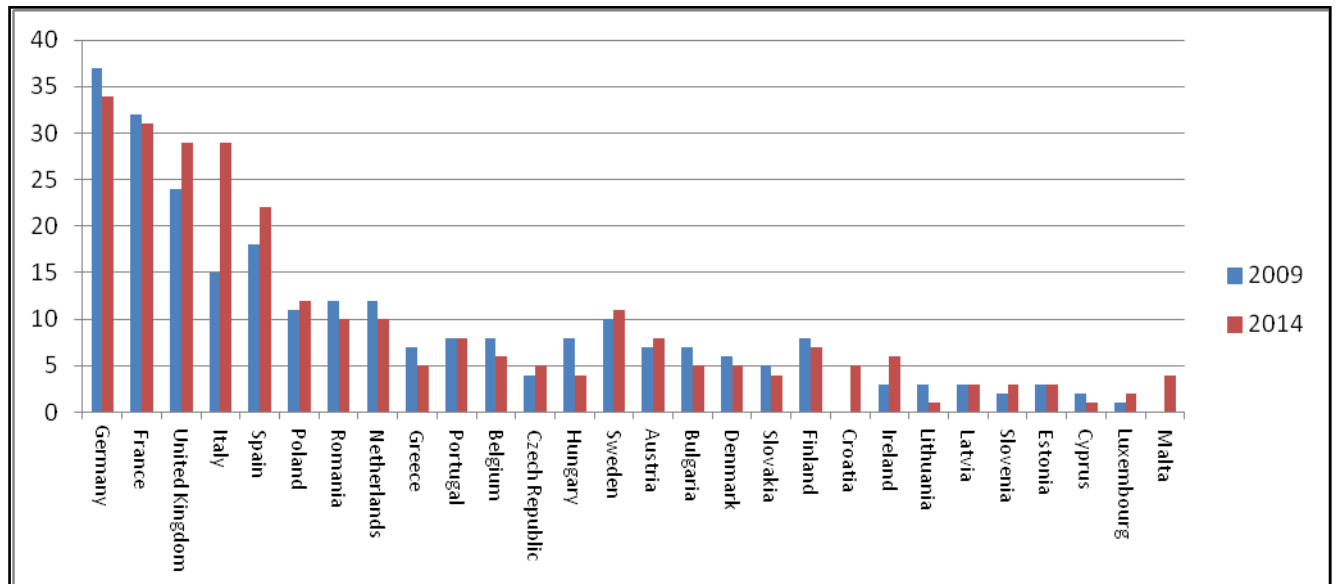
Figure 1 also shows the percentage of female MEPs in 2009 (where applicable) in comparison with 2014, revealing **changes** in proportions between the two Parliaments. The largest **increase** in female MEPS was for Ireland – an increase of 30 percentage points. Large increases were also observed in the UK and Italy. Decreases in the percentage of female MEPs were observed in Lithuania, Cyprus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Denmark and Greece. The largest **decrease** was observed in Lithuania (down by 29 percentage points). Whilst percentage changes should be considered in terms of the overall number of seats, which means that for Member States with smaller numbers of seats, larger percentage changes will be observable. Overall, there was only a small increase in the numbers of female MEPs and in some cases a notable change in the number of seats held by women.

**Figure 1: Percentages of female MEPs by Member State, 2009 and 2014 Parliaments**



<sup>2</sup> See for example Professor Simon Hix's blog, London School of Economics. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2013/06/03/european-parliament-elections-2014/#Author>. Also The Economist (January issue, 2014)

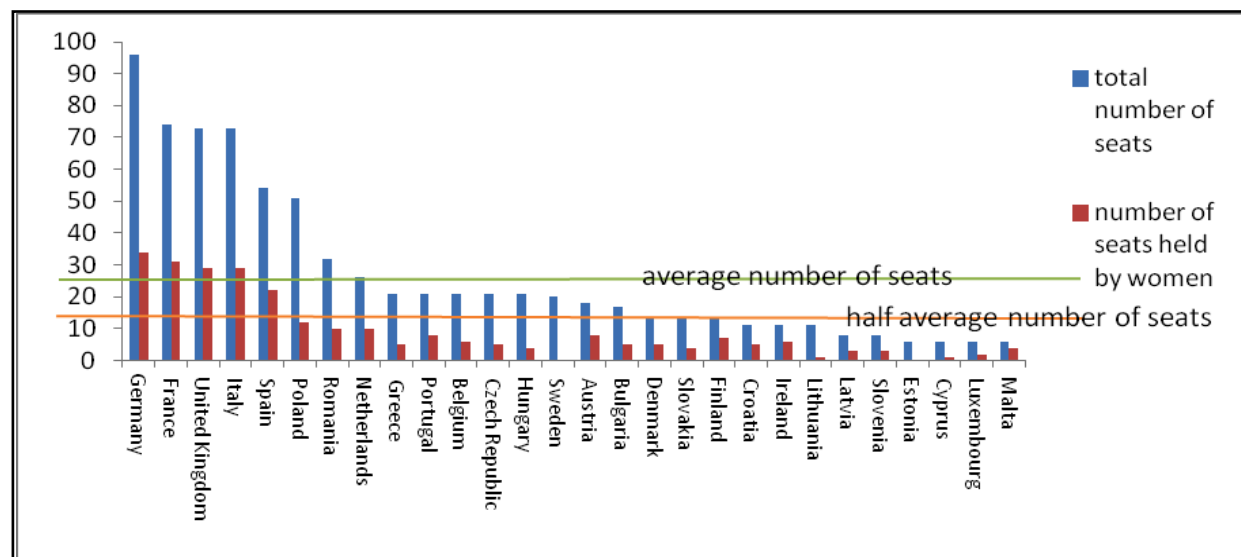
**Figure 2: Actual number of female MEPs by Member State, 2009 and 2014 Parliaments**



Changes in the **overall real number** of seats held by women varied considerably between Member States (figure 2). Countries contributing the most female MEPs, without surprise, are those with larger numbers of seats in general. Figure 2 shows that Italy's contribution of female MEPs to the Parliament grew significantly between 2009 and 2014 as did the UK's. Countries with **high percentages** of MEPs such as Malta, Sweden and Ireland, have relatively **low actual numbers** of female MEPs, owing to lower numbers of seats in the Parliament for those Member States overall.

Figure 3 shows the actual number of seats held by women MEPs compared to the overall number of seats per Member State, in 2014. The green and yellow lines indicate averages for the number of seats across all Member States. The graph shows that 20 (71%) Member States have **less than the average** number of seats per Member State. These Member States contribute 31% of the total number of female MEPs. There are 12 Member States with half or less than half the average number of seats. These Member States contribute 41 female MEPs, which is 16% of the total number of female MEPs.

**Figure 3: Total actual number of seats overall and actual number of seats held by**

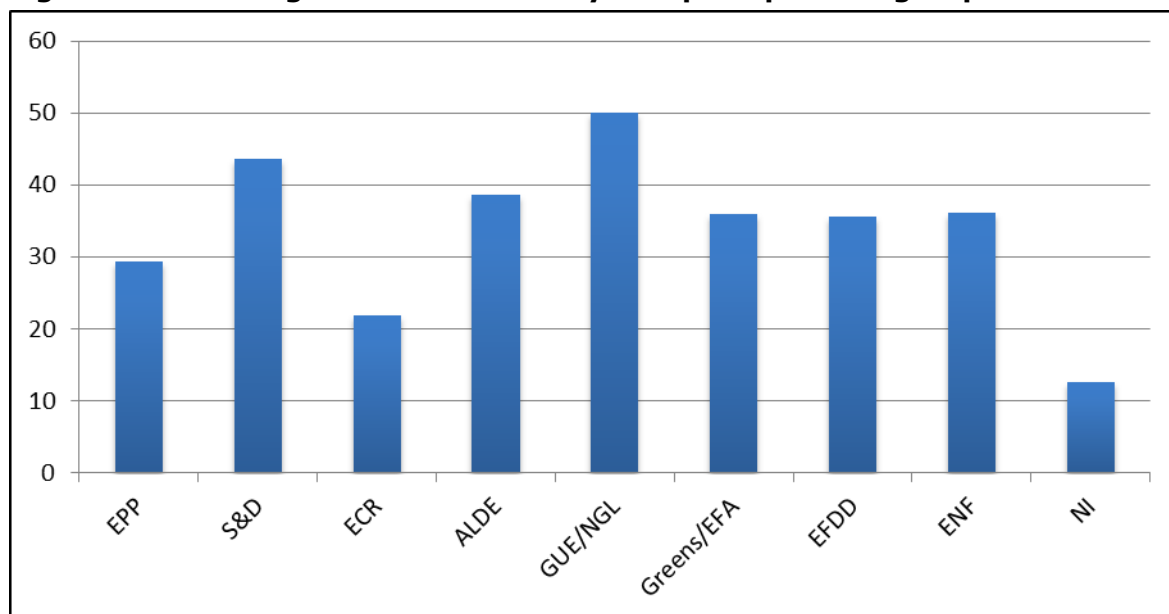


**female MEPs by Member State**

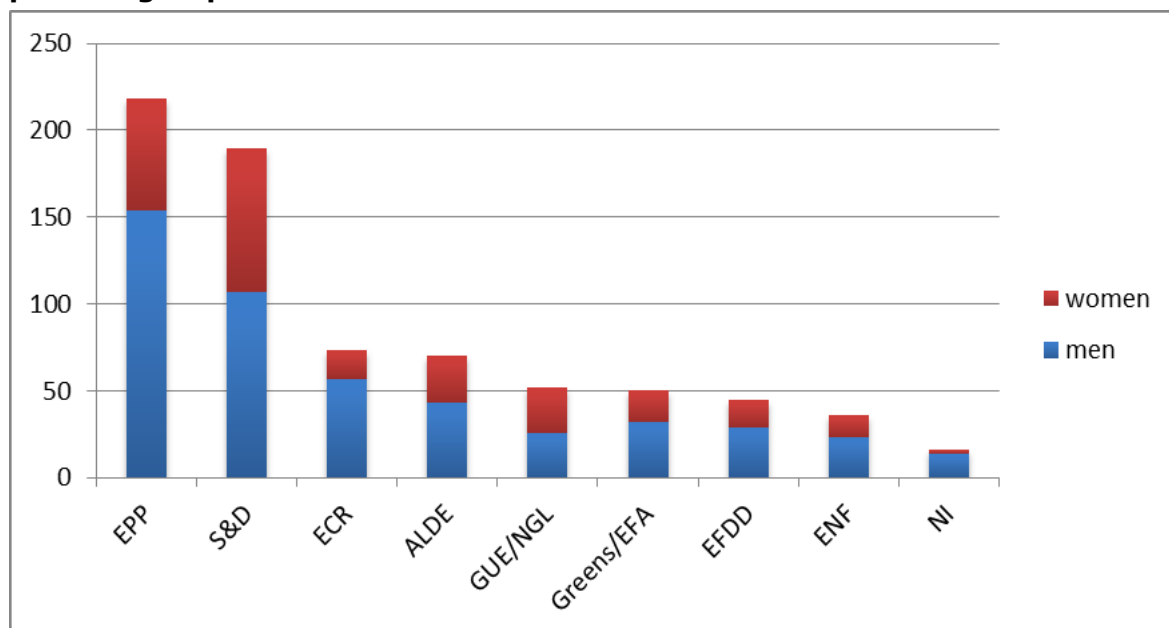
**3.2. Proportions of male and female MEPs by political group**

Figure 4 below shows the **percentages** of female MEPs in the 2014 Parliament, by **European political group**. Left of centre party groups returned the highest proportions of female MEPs. The Confederal Group of the European Left was the European group with the highest proportions of female MEPs, followed closely by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats.

**Figure 4: Percentage of female MEPs by European political group**



**Figure 5: Total number of seats held by female and male MEPs by European political group**



## 4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE: BARRIERS AND ENABLERS FOR WOMEN ENTERING REPRESENTATIVE POLITICS

### KEY FINDINGS

- Gender balance in **political decision-making** is a key priority for the European institutions.
- Apart from non-binding recommendations, there are **no provisions at the European level** to encourage parties to introduce quotas or other positive measures to ensure gender balance.
- **Supply factors** which are understood to affect gender balance in politics include: lack of female **role models** in politics, women's **lack of confidence in their ability** in **male-dominated** political cultures, and **negative media** which may discourage women from wanting to be involved in politics.
- **Demand factors** which are understood to affect gender balance in politics include:
  - *In closed list systems parties must be willing to include women on party lists and provide them with **high list positions***
  - *In open list systems women must appeal directly to voters to win seats, this may be more difficult in societies which are generally less **supportive** of women in politics or that have traditional views on gender*

### 4.1. Gender balance in politics is a priority of European gender equality politics

The European Commission (EC) strengthened its commitment to equality between women and men with the **Women's Charter** (2010) which included specific reference to '*gender balance in decision-making, in political and economic life and private sectors*'. The **Strategy for Equality** between Women and Men (2010-2015) provided an action plan to deliver on the Women's Charter. This reaffirms the Commission's commitment to increasing the number of women in political and economic **decision-making** roles. Encouraging women to take part in elections, particularly the European Parliament election of 2014 is part of the Commission's action plan, particularly through its Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme.

There are no provisions at the EU level to encourage Member States or political parties to ensure gender balance in drawing up electoral lists and it is down to each Member State and political parties to define their own rules for European Parliament elections (Greboval, 2004).

### 4.2. 'Supply' and 'demand' for female MEPs

Theoretical literature analyses various factors, which influence women's political participation. It addresses impacts of different **electoral systems**, as well as the 'supply' and 'demand' factors for female politicians. Literature on supply issues explores women's **capacity, experience** and **willingness** to put themselves forward as potential candidates. Whereas the 'demand' literature illustrates **institutional processes** and

cultures that either encourage or hinder the shift from being a candidate on party lists to actually being elected to political positions (Lovenduski, 2005, 2014; Paxton & Hughes, 2007). Typically, it is noted that women have much **lower ambitions** (lack of 'supply') to participate in political elections, which translates into poorer **representation** of women in various decision-making bodies. However, supply and demand factors are **intimately connected** and it is important to assess the institutional aspects of the political system and its impact on both supply and demand for female politicians (Hughes, 2009; Paxton and Kunovich, 2003).

A number of potential barriers present themselves in both the supply and demand for women candidates, which can be summarised from the literature as:

*'Supply side' issues:*

- Women's perception of **risk** of entering politics
- Cultural attitudes and **media** portrayals of female politicians which may deter women
- **Confidence** and **experience** of women politicians
- Ability of women to balance **family life** with the demands of political life

*'Demand side' issues:*

- Electoral **systems**
- General gender **equality levels** within the country
- The use and type of **quotas** for female candidates and/or legislators
- Political parties' perceptions of **voters'** willingness to vote for women
- Political parties' cultures and **willingness** to include women

#### 4.2.1. Women's experience, perceptions and characteristics

Politicians' own **experience**, **resources** and **incumbency** are also relevant. Luhiste (2012) finds an important consideration in a woman's chances of election is whether or not she is viewed as an experienced and **competent** politician. Thus, women who are already in politics, particularly in senior positions, are more likely to be (re)elected than those who are not.

The success of women in politics once they have been elected also makes a difference to other women's prospects for a political career by providing **role models** to other potential candidates (Dovi, 2007). A male-dominated political culture shapes female legislators' conduct as role models, as female MEPs reported in the 2013 study on the impact of new media on women in decision-making. Female MEPs felt they are 'expected' to act in a 'facilitating', **non-adversarial** manner towards their male colleagues (European Parliament 2013b).

#### 4.2.2. Social and cultural factors

In 2013, the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality convened a **workshop** to explore actions for improving gender balance in the European Parliament. Among other things, this considered the role of the media and the impact of the **European Women's Lobby** campaign for Parity Democracy. Evidence from a range of research projects consistently demonstrated the **negative impact of media**



representations of women in politics on women's participation in decision-making. Research funded by the EIGE finds that, on the whole, Member States, which have higher numbers of women representatives, are also those that have a '*better representation and visibility of women in the media*' (European Parliament, 2013a).

Matland (2005) identifies three crucial hurdles women must pass before entering a parliament: 1) they need to **select themselves**; 2) they need to be selected as candidates **by the parties**; and, 3) they need to be selected by the **voters**. Men outnumber women at each of these three stages. Research demonstrates that women are less likely to consider putting themselves forward for electoral politics, compared to men. The reasons for this are complex and various but a wide body of literature points to a vicious circle of **male-dominated** politics repelling women who are, in turn, less likely to engage in politics, perpetuating its male-centeredness (Lovenduski, 2005; Waylen et al. 2013). This, coupled with negative and disproportionate media coverage of women in politics serves to alienate potential female candidates further. However, whilst women may not engage in formal (e.g. party) politics in the same ways as men, this does not mean they are apolitical. Marien (2008) finds that '*men are far more likely than women to participate in a conventional sense that is joining a political party, working in a political organisation and contacting government officials*'. Women are more likely to engage in cause-oriented activism, compared to men for example.

### 4.3. Electoral systems

Research shows that the design of electoral and institutional **systems** affects the number of women elected into representative politics (Schmidt 2009; Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler 2005). All 28 Member States use a **Proportional Representation** system (PR) for electing MEPs, in line with the 2002 EU Council decision (European Parliament, 2014)<sup>3</sup>. However, PR systems vary in their nature and impact on gender balance. For example, systems that use proportional representation with **large district sizes** have been found to provide better gender balance compared to systems using First Past the Post<sup>4</sup> or 'majoritarian' systems with single member districts (Luhiste, 2012, EP, 2013a). However, further factors are at play. For example, within PR systems, the choice of '**open**' or '**closed**' list ballots are also found to affect women's chances of election. In 'closed lists' systems, voters vote only for a party and not for individual candidates. In this arrangement, the task of appointing individual candidates to seats won by the party is allocated to political parties. Political parties may choose list arrangements that are likely to boost the number of women elected for example, through **quotas** in different forms for example all female short lists, '**zipping**' (when males and females are placed on alternate places on a list) or '**twinning**' (when males and females alternately are placed at the top of neighbouring district lists). In **open list** systems, voters are able to vote directly for individual candidates. In these systems, the order of the list or position on the list is not relevant and seats are allocated on the basis of the quantity of votes won by individual candidates.

Many researchers argue that closed list systems, on balance, produce **better outcomes** for women politicians (Caul 2003; Htun 2005; Matland 2005). The reason frequently given is that it is easier to convince party 'gatekeepers' to champion women than it is for voters to

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on the Council Decision, see [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts\\_2004/1\\_3\\_4\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts_2004/1_3_4_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup>First-past-the-post voting methods can be used for single and multiple member elections. In a single member election the candidate with the highest number, not necessarily a majority, of votes is elected.

vote for them (Matland, 2005). However, this assertion is based on scant empirical evidence of how *actual mechanisms* involved in different systems affect the outcome. For example, in many European systems '**preference voting**' (whereby voters express a preference for individual candidates) is often undertaken in parallel with party ordered lists. Thus, both voter and party decisions affect the outcome for women politicians in these systems (Luhiste, 2012). Moreover, the **behaviour** of political parties in **arranging their lists** depends also on national attitudes towards gender equality and women in politics. Thus, in Member States that have **higher levels of gender equality** and public support for gender balance in politics, parties are more likely to favour women on their lists – reflecting public attitudes – and the effect of having a 'closed list' structure will be less felt. Conversely, the 'gender-balancing' effect of closed list systems in countries with lower levels of public support for gender balance will be stronger.

## 5. ANALYSES OF THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION RESULTS IN TERMS OF GENDER

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Underrepresentation** of women in parliament is largely due to the underrepresentation of women in the **candidate base**.
- The data suggest in some Member States that have **closed systems**, despite a low proportion of female candidates, women have a higher chance of being elected than men. This suggests that **political parties may be playing a strong role** in promoting certain female candidates, in particular by placing them on high positions on candidate lists.
- Low proportions of women candidates do not necessarily lead to lower probabilities of women being elected, suggesting that **political parties** have an influence over who gets elected.
- The use of **quotas**, overall, has a beneficial effect on the probability of women being elected.
- Around 59% of candidates were subject to quotas.
- Overall, **women (12.0%) were slightly less likely than men (13.9%)** to be elected, irrespective of the PR list system used.

### 5.1. Introduction

In this section, an analysis of the relationship between key factors within the electoral system, gender and the likelihood of election are presented. This is drawn from regression analyses of data on each candidate for the European elections, the ballot system used (e.g. open or closed list), general levels of gender equality within the candidates' country (as measured by the EIGE's GEI) and candidates' positions on the party lists (if applicable). The purpose of the analyses is to demonstrate the circumstances in which a candidate is more likely to be elected and whether this is associated with their gender, thereby presenting potential barriers and enablers to women being elected.

### 5.2. Data

The data analysed in this section come mainly from lists of candidates provided by previous research commissioned by the FEMM Committee<sup>5</sup>. Thus, data used for the following analyses did not include information on all candidates on party lists, but was limited to the first half of each party list, unless the total number of seats totalled 10 or fewer. As a result, there is a key assumption implicit in the analyses presented here: that the available data is representative of the party lists as a whole<sup>6</sup>. The lists were made available to the authors of the report in 'random' or alphabetical order. **Candidate data** were

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/509980/IPOL-FEMM\\_ET\(2014\)509980\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/509980/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)509980_EN.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> The party list data used in the previous report was presented in the same form that parties provided. Where lists were not organised into rank order of preferred candidate (as they are in 'closed list' systems), candidate names were randomly placed on the lists. Thus, it is assumed here that the available data is sufficiently representative of the whole set of candidates.

supplemented by identifying which candidates were elected in the 2014 election and the GEI score of each country.

The **variables** included in the final dataset were: candidate name; candidate gender; whether a candidate was an incumbent; party name; country; number of parliamentary seats allocated to the country; type of PR list system used (open, closed or mixture); whether a quota was used to select party list; the size of any quota used; whether zipping was used to compile the list; the position on the list (in closed systems); whether the candidate was elected in 2014; EIGE's GEI score for the country; and the number of candidates in the dataset for that country.

### 5.3. Methods

First, **descriptive statistics** were presented in order to provide an overview of the candidates' gender, how many were successful, and how countries organise their electoral systems. Countries were identified by the PR list system they use and whether the parties employ quotas to promote gender equality. The probability of being elected was then calculated for each gender by PR list system and quota use.

Following this, **regression analyses** were conducted to identify the **likelihood** of a candidate being elected. Through this process, it was possible to estimate the influence of elements of parties' and electoral systems' characteristics on this likelihood. **Logistic models** were specified separately for each gender. The relative influence of the list system, the use of quotas and zipping on election outcomes were explored<sup>7</sup>. Further results are included in the appendix.

### 5.4. Results of descriptive analyses

#### Legislative quotas

**Quotas** ensure that a predetermined proportion of female candidates are included on the list of candidates for elections. Some Member States have legislative (mandatory) quotas in place, which all parties must respect when putting forward candidates for election. There are three types of national quotas used by Member States to elect MEPs, in the dataset analysed. Member States have been categorised in terms of the type of national legislative quota they use<sup>8</sup>:

- **Zippering system of the whole list** - France. (When candidates of both genders are alternated throughout the entire list).
- **Zippering top of the list only** - e.g. Belgium<sup>9</sup>. (When candidates of both genders are alternated throughout the top proportion of a list).

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<sup>7</sup>In order to arrive at a parsimonious model, non-significant terms ( $p > 5\%$ ) were removed. Multilevel models were estimated which included random intercepts at the party and country levels. Predicted probabilities of being elected were then calculated using the final models under a variety of scenarios, and comparisons between the sexes made.

<sup>8</sup> Whilst the uses of quotas are sometimes mixed (for example, Belgium combines a 50% gender quota to the whole of lists with zippering at the top of the list), for the purposes of analyses the systems has been categorized according to the most robust or 'strongest' element of the quota. Thus, for example, whilst Belgium uses an overall gender quota, the 'zippering of the top of the list' component has most likelihood of affecting the gender composition of the MEPs finally elected.

<sup>9</sup> Belgium also applies a 50% gender quota to the whole of party lists.

- **A % of the whole list** - Greece, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain. (When a percentage quota is applied to the overall list but there are no rules to determine the gender composition of the top part of the list).
- **Other type** - Italy<sup>10</sup>.

**The following Member States do not have a national legislative quota** - Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

### Political party quotas

In addition, **parties** may also deploy their own gender quotas when creating lists of candidates for election. Parties in the dataset have been categorised according to the following types of party quota deployed, if applicable. Party quotas may be used in addition to or in the absence of national legislative quotas:

Party quotas have been categorised as:

- **Zippering system in whole list** (when candidates of both genders are alternated throughout the entire list)
- **Zippering top of the list** (when candidates of both genders are alternated throughout the top proportion of a list).
- **A percentage of the whole list** (when a percentage quota is applied to the overall list but there are no rules to determine the gender composition of the top part of the list)
- **Other type** (various other types of quotas are used by different member states and parties)

### Electoral system

The analyses examined the **impact of different systems** on election results by gender to explore whether particular approaches might be more likely to promote gender equality of elected MEPs.

There are three types of proportional representation (PR) list systems used by Member States to elect MEPs:

- **Open lists** - where parties do not control the allocation of votes; voters can vote for the candidate they prefer.
- **Closed lists** - where parties control the allocation of votes; voters choose a party rather than an individual candidate. The party then distributes votes to candidates in a predetermined order.

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<sup>10</sup> In Italy, there was a transitional provision on gender equality in the European elections of May 2014. The transitional rule applies only to those voters giving three preferences: the third must be of a gender different from the first two otherwise the vote is considered invalid. A fully legislated gender quota on candidate lists for European elections will be implemented, starting 2019. Its provisions therefore do not apply to candidate lists for the current election 2014 (See European Parliament, 2014).

- **Mixed systems** – a combination of the two previous systems, whereby voters have some influence over who is elected, but the party can still distribute votes to candidates preferentially.

There is considerable debate in the academic literature as to which PR list system promotes gender equality in the election of MEPs. One might expect the open system to be preferred, as it enables voters to have direct influence over who is elected. However, other researchers argue that closed lists allow parties to directly select successful candidates in order to actively promote gender equality.

Countries are listed below according to the PR list system they use. The number of parliamentary seats within the sample, allocated to each country is in parentheses:

- **Open list systems** – Bulgaria (17), Croatia (11), Cyprus (6), Czech Republic (21), Finland (13), Ireland (11), Italy (73), Malta (6), Netherlands (26), Latvia (8).
- **Closed list systems** – Estonia (6), France (74), Germany (96), Hungary (21), Romania (32), Slovakia (13), Spain (54), United Kingdom (73).
- **Mixed systems** – Austria (18), Belgium (22), Denmark (13), Greece (21), Lithuania (11), Luxembourg (6), Portugal (21), Slovenia (8), Sweden (20) Poland (51).

There is significant variation between Member States in whether and what type of quotas candidates are subject to in the dataset. Some candidates may be subject to both a national and party quota, others to a national or party quota alone. Other candidates are selected without the application of a quota at all.

#### 5.4.1. Probability of being elected by system type, country and gender

Table 1 below shows the proportion of female candidates in the dataset for each country, the probability of both male and female candidates being elected and the resulting ratio of probabilities. A probability ratio of one implies that male and female candidates are equally likely to be elected. Likewise, the last column shows the final ratio of elected MEPs. In almost all cases, there were fewer female than male candidates in the sample. The exceptions to this were France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Sweden.

**Table 1: Percentage female candidates and probabilities of being elected by system, country and gender**

System type	Country	Female candidates (%)	Female probability elected (%)	Male probability elected (%)	Female/Male probability ratio	Female/Male ratio of MEPs
Closed	Estonia	46.9	13.3	11.8	1.13	1.00
	France	50.0	7.5	10.5	0.72	0.72
	Germany	43.3	69.2	64.7	1.07	0.82
	Hungary	22.6	28.6	25.0	1.14	0.33
	Romania	24.3	41.2	22.6	1.82	0.58
	Slovakia	21.4	33.3	18.2	1.83	0.50
	Spain	45.4	15.3	17.8	0.86	0.71
	United Kingdom	35.3	15.3	11.2	1.36	0.74
Mixed	Austria	41.4	24.1	26.8	0.90	0.64
	Belgium	49.5	4.1	24.0	0.17	0.17
	Denmark	38.1	37.5	23.1	1.62	1.00
	Greece	33.8	4.2	4.3	0.98	0.50
	Lithuania	26.2	9.1	29.0	0.31	0.11
	Luxembourg	54.2	15.4	36.4	0.42	0.50
	Poland	42.6	3.0	6.7	0.45	0.33
	Portugal	47.3	23.1	37.9	0.61	0.55
	Slovenia	50.0	15.0	15.0	1.00	1.00
	Sweden	49.2	9.0	8.7	1.03	1.00
Open	Bulgaria	38.5	26.7	29.2	0.91	0.57
	Croatia	42.4	28.6	26.3	1.09	0.80
	Cyprus	25.0	16.7	16.7	1.00	0.33
	Czech Republic	25.0	27.3	27.3	1.00	0.33
	Finland	47.5	9.1	8.2	1.11	1.00
	Ireland	33.3	40.0	30.0	1.33	0.67
	Italy	33.5	13.1	14.1	0.93	0.47
	Latvia	44.7	17.7	14.3	1.24	1.00
	Malta	29.2	57.1	11.8	4.86	2.00
	Netherlands	28.3	25.0	18.3	1.37	0.54
Overall		41.0	12.0	13.9	0.86	0.60

Some countries had very low proportions of female candidates: Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Lithuania, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. The probability of being elected varied greatly by country, mainly due to the number of candidates per Member State in the sample also varying greatly. However, the ratio of probabilities comparing female candidates to male candidates showed how the genders compared within countries on their probability of being elected. An interesting pattern can be observed in closed systems. Amongst countries using closed systems (except for France and Spain) women were more likely than men to be elected. This is particularly true for Romania and Slovakia, **despite having low proportions of female candidates**. This suggests that, in closed systems, parties are promoting women in order to compensate for the low number

of female candidates on their lists. Nevertheless, women made up far fewer of the elected MEPs in these countries, because there were so few in the candidate base to begin with.

In mixed systems, the probability of women and men being elected varied between Member States. In Austria, Greece, Slovenia and Sweden, the probability was near equal for both men and women. In Denmark, women were more likely to be elected than men, but in the remaining countries in these systems, they were far less likely to be elected. In open systems, women were either equally or more likely to be elected than men. The two exceptions to this were Bulgaria and Italy. Again, however, the ratio of female to male elected MEPs was frequently less than one, showing that the **low proportion of female candidates** was affecting the resulting gender balance.

#### 5.4.2. Probability of being elected by gender, quota and electoral system type

A similar approach was taken in order to investigate the possible effects of **quota use** on the probability of election for men and women. In order to avoid comparing quota use in one country with non-quota use in another country, the sample was restricted to those 15 countries which had within-country variation in the use of quotas.

Table 2 shows the results. Quota use seemed to be associated with an equal probability of being elected for women and men in closed systems (1.01), but where no quota was used, women seemed to be more likely to be elected (1.26). In mixed systems, quota use seemed to have a beneficial effect on women's chances (0.91), with no quota use being associated with a much lower probability of election (0.47). There also seemed to be a positive effect of quota use for women in open systems, improving their chances of election from being greater than men's (1.17) to being much greater than men's (1.33).

**Table 2: Probabilities of being elected by system, quota use and gender (reduced sample)**

System type	Quota use	Female probability elected (%)	Male probability elected (%)	Female/Male probability ratio
Closed	none	16.1	12.7	1.26
	quota	35.2	34.9	1.01
	other	90.9	63.2	1.44
Mixed	none	8.3	17.6	0.47
	quota	16.7	18.4	0.91
Open	none	23.7	20.2	1.17
	quota	33.3	25.0	1.33
	other	16.7	20.0	0.83

Although table 2 accurately describes the overall probability of being elected by system and quota use in the data for these 15 countries in the European elections of 2014, it does not make any attempt at controlling for confounding factors (such as incumbency, list position, party and country characteristics, etc.). The following section details results of regression analyses that attempt to account for these factors, and so provide a more reliable representation of the association of system and quota use on the probability of election.



## 5.5. Results of regression analyses: Circumstances that are most likely to result in election of women

In order to identify whether there were any statistically significant associations of quota use with the probability of being elected, logistic regression models were estimated. The initial models contained terms controlling for system, candidates per seat, incumbency, list position, the equality index of the country, and party-specific and country-specific random intercepts. The variables of interest were the quota used, whether zipping was used, and the per cent of quota, if one was used (where no quota was used, this was set at 0%). An interaction of quota use by system was included in the models to account for differences in the effect of a quota for different systems. The models were estimated separately by gender. Consequently, the variables measuring per cent of quota used and the equality index were dropped from both the female and male models. However, although the indicator for zipping was also not statistically significant in the male model, it was retained so that the models were equivalent across the sexes.

To enhance the interpretation of the estimates from the models, a variety of scenarios were used to predict the probability of election for candidates. These are presented in Table 3. **For open systems, quota use seemed to have a positive effect on the probability of women being elected** (1.22, scenario 2). However, women were already more likely to be elected than men, even without a quota (1.18, scenario 1). **In closed systems, the quota was again associated with an increased probability of women being elected**, with women being more likely than men to be elected with a quota (1.19, scenario 4), and less likely without a quota (0.88, scenario 3). However, in this case, the probability of being elected for either gender differed greatly across scenarios, suggesting that the estimates were based on very different electoral situations. In mixed systems, quota use was associated with a reduction in the probability of women being elected (0.63, scenario 6), compared with no quota use (0.78, scenario 5). In both open and closed systems, **incumbent women were more likely to be elected than incumbent men** (1.23 and 1.21, scenarios 7 and 8). In closed systems with no quota, being high on the list (1st) improved the chances of women being elected beyond those of men (1.17, scenario 9), as compared to being 5th on the list (0.88, scenario 3). For those high on the list, the use of a quota resulted in a similar effect to incumbency (1.23, scenario 10).

**Table 3: Predicted probabilities of election by gender and resulting ratios from model incorporating an interaction between system and quota use under various scenarios**

Predicted probabilities		Ratio		Scenarios
Female	Male	Female/Male		
10.8%	9.1%	1.18		1 - open system, no quota
17.6%	14.4%	1.22		2 - open system, quota
2.9%	3.3%	0.88		3 - closed system, no quota, 5th on list
32.8%	27.6%	1.19		4 - closed system, quota, 5th on list
7.2%	9.3%	0.78		5 - mixed system, no quota
7.6%	12.1%	0.63		6 - mixed system, quota
68.1%	55.3%	1.23		7 - open system, no quota, incumbent
69.9%	57.5%	1.21		8 - closed system, no quota, incumbent, 1st on list
11.6%	9.9%	1.17		9 - closed system, no quota, 1st on list
68.5%	55.5%	1.23		10 - closed system, quota, 1st on list

Quota use was associated with higher probabilities of being elected in open and closed systems, regardless of the gender of the candidate. This suggests that quotas were being used in constituencies with a low number of candidates per seat. The **positive bias towards women in open systems is particularly striking**, as is the effect of incumbency on women’s electoral chances. This would suggest that the **voters in the countries using this type of system have a tendency to prefer female candidates**, especially those they know. Ultimately, it is difficult to disentangle which processes affected the probability of female candidates being elected using this dataset. This is mainly because the system and use of quotas is highly associated with specific situations; thus, any associations could be down to idiosyncratic characteristics of particular parties, countries, and systems, rather than quota use. Nevertheless, **the associations for open and closed systems suggest a positive impact of quota use** on women’s probability of being elected. It would be advantageous to undertake further research to investigate the impact of quotas on election outcomes using a complete dataset – i.e. one which includes all candidates and detailed, relevant information on constituencies, systems, quota use, lists, incumbency, etc. Presently, no such dataset exists.

**5.6. Summary**

This analysis has highlighted some important differences between the systems used for electing MEPs within the sample. The use of quotas varied widely between Member States and within Member States. This is because political parties may use quotas in addition to or in the absence of national legislative quotas.

A striking feature of the data is that there are fewer women in the candidate base overall compared to men. Whilst this is based on a sample (which has limitations – see below), descriptive analyses suggested that **in many Member States individual women have a higher probability of being elected compared to men**. This suggests that political parties (in closed systems) may be promoting certain female candidates so that their probability of election is higher than other candidates. Notwithstanding this, as there continue to be low proportions of women in the candidate base in many countries, women continue to be underrepresented as MEPs. The role of political parties in promoting

candidates may be particularly important in elections for the European Parliament, compared to national elections, because there are far fewer seats to be won. Thus, being placed on high list position is particularly important, in closed systems. Again political parties are instrumental in deciding this.

In open list PR systems, the regression analyses suggested that women were more likely to be elected than men regardless of whether candidates were selected under a quota rule or not. An overriding lesson from this is that women are popular with the electorate - where voters are able to express a preference for individual candidates, they appear more likely to select women.

Whilst findings were nuanced concerning the impact of quotas, it would appear that their use has a positive effect on women's chances of being elected.

## 5.7. Limitations and future research

The analysis presented in this section has several limitations that should be noted. Firstly, the dataset was very unbalanced and incomplete. The dataset did not include all of the candidates campaigning to be elected in 2014 and there was significant variation in the number of candidates and seats in the dataset between Member States. This means that the power of statistical analyses would depend heavily on those countries with large numbers of candidates. An assumption had to be made that the dataset was representative of the complete dataset containing all candidates, despite being partial. Secondly, many of the variables used were not ideal. Many candidates will have been put forward for constituencies within countries, but information was not available at the constituency level. Third, the wide variety of quota and PR list system type within the dataset make the data challenging to analyse in order to identify the effect of a quota on the probability of women being elected. There was relatively low variation of quota arrangements within countries, which means that within-country effects of quota use would only be observable in those countries where some candidates are selected for lists using quotas and others are not (15 countries). Also, the zipping was only used in four Member States. Of these four, two did not use additional arrangements, meaning that within-country effects would rely on only two countries' data. Also, the systems within the 'other' category of quota arrangements contained considerable nuance and could not be adequately defined, and so was of little practical use.

These limitations introduce measurement error and reduce the power of the analyses. For example, if candidates were in an open system in a particular constituency, it would be useful to identify the constituency and the position on the ballot paper for each candidate. These elements could then be controlled for in the models, isolating the effect of ballot position from the overall effect of the quota, zipping, etc., whilst allowing unmeasured heterogeneity at the constituency level to be incorporated into the model. This would increase the precision with which the effect of quota/zipping/etc. could be estimated. Limitations notwithstanding, **the analyses presented here provide compelling evidence of the underlying causes of the lower proportion of MEPs who are women.**

Future research in this area would benefit from developing a **complete and comprehensive dataset on candidates, electoral systems, gender, and age of candidate, quota or zipping system used.** A variety of well-specified variables could be included which comprehensively characterise the voting systems at the candidate, party, constituency and country level. This would provide a **rich resource** on which to develop robust analyses of the different elements that affect women's chances of election in future.

## 6. ACTIONS TAKEN AT A PAN-EU LEVEL TO ADDRESS GENDER BALANCE IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Europarties** could use their influence to encourage member parties to adopt quotas or zipping.
- Women's NGOs and other advocates of quotas and zipping should **demonstrate the benefits** of using these systems for electoral success.
- Very few respondents were aware of the **50/50 campaign**.
- The 50/50 campaign's focus on shaping public opinion to support gender balance and quotas is likely to take a **long time** to have an impact.

The **opportunities and challenges** for addressing gender balance in the European Parliament were explored through case studies conducted in 9 different Member States, interviews with representatives from non-governmental organisations and European political parties and desk research to explore the main strategies deployed by a variety of pan EU actors and their potential impact on gender balance.

### 6.1. The European Women's Lobby's 50/50 campaign

Since 2009, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) has been running the **50/50 Campaign** for Democracy to increase the number of women MEPs in the European Parliament with the stated goal of achieving parity between men and women. A number of MEPs and high profile political actors within the European Commission have endorsed the campaign. The Campaign urges voters, national political parties, European governments and high-level European decision-makers to act in order to achieve gender balance.

The EWL based in Brussels worked with their national partner organisations across the EU to implement the 50/50 campaign. Through these networks **information, support and advice** was provided both to local party volunteers and to individual women MEP candidates with the purpose of raising the profile of the gender balance issue. A 'toolkit' was developed by the EWL which provided advice on which influential people to approach and how and within political parties to influence them to take action.

In addition to providing support for **lobbying** on gender quotas or greater gender balance on party lists, the EWL also provided advice and information to national EWL organisations on how to raise the profile of gender balance within the local and national **media**. This was felt necessary to create a climate of support amongst the general population for gender balance, including the use of quotas or other direct measures to achieve this.

Another measure taken as part of the 50/50 campaign was to establish a **mentoring** network, which paired existing women MEPs and young women who were active in European politics and eligible and interested in running for election in 2014. The purpose was to encourage and support women – in particular young women and women from ethnic minority backgrounds - to consider running for European Parliament elections.

A pilot project was also started as part of the 50/50 project to assist female MEPs and candidates to gain **media attention** and to raise their profile in other ways including finding slots for them to speak at relevant conferences or other events.

## 6.2. European political parties

European political parties (Europarties) are political parties that operate at the pan-EU level and are formed by members of national political parties with similar political standpoints and manifestos. Europarties campaign during European Parliament elections and form their own **manifestos**, which national parties affiliated to them, are encouraged to adopt. Europarties have significant power within the European Parliament and the European Council. However only 2 of the 6 largest Europarties specifically mention gender equality in their election manifesto for 2014 and only one of these specifically calls for gender equality as a democratic issue. **None** call specifically for gender quotas in politics.

## 6.3. Challenges for influencing policy at the EU level

A key challenge for the 50/50 campaign is influencing national political **party processes** which are felt by the EWL and other NGO respondents interviewed throughout this research to be important barriers to gender balance. In particular, the EWL and other women's NGOs working at national level believe that it is important for political parties to use **quotas or zipping** to achieve gender balance on their party lists. However, the capacity to influence parties' actions on this front is limited from a European level. It is the political parties only who can make the decisions about direct measures they might use to achieve greater gender balance and thus, EWL and its national networks can only encourage parties in this direction. Where political parties have little commitment to implement direct measures to increase gender balance on their lists, actions by NGOs are even more limited. There was little evidence that NGO actors were able to engage directly with **internal political party** organisations to begin to influence them in this way.

EWL-, NGO-, national political party and European political party respondents suggested that the Left, Green and Social Democratic parties are more amenable to using quotas or zipping in their party lists. According to both NGO and Europarty respondents, conservative parties are generally more **resistant** to positive measures for securing gender balance, owing to long held beliefs within those parties that identify positive action on equality as being anti-meritocratic and anti-democratic (see also Krook et al, 2004). Views such as these within political parties were seen as a **key barrier** to the 50/50 campaign.

In view of the **limited capacity** to influence political parties' candidate selection processes, the main strategy adopted by the EWL was to attempt to **influence the public** debate on gender balance, according to respondents. It was felt necessary to create a public climate of support for gender balance, including quotas or other means of securing this, in order to persuade parties to adopt measures such as quotas or zipping. This process, however, was felt by a number of respondents to be unlikely to yield results in the short term.

A number of respondents from both NGO and national political parties reported that Europarties have **missed opportunities** to improve gender balance within the European Parliament. Europarties are able to influence national parties in developing campaign manifestos for example. Women's groups within Europarties are also active in ensuring that issues that are important to women are included in national manifestos. These ways

demonstrate that Europarties could have a degree of influence over national parties; however they have not used such influence to encourage gender balance on party lists, so this is not tested. Europarties have not directly encouraged parties to adopt quotas or use zipping for example. It was the view of NGO as well as Europarty respondents that Europarties tend to consider party lists as being the domain of national and regional parties only and **should not be interfered** with by external actors. Furthermore, the influence of Europarties on national party actions and policies, generally, is disputed within research literature (for example, Homes and Lightfoot, 2010).

#### 6.4. Opportunities for action at the EU level

Whilst NGO respondents suggested that Europarties are reluctant to encourage national parties to adopt rules such as quotas, it was also noted that they **miss opportunities** to send a message to parties about which strategies work to improve gender balance. To an extent, this is because both Europarties and national parties are **unconvinced** about which strategies work to achieve gender balance: '*Parties still feel that quotas aren't necessary*' (Europarty respondent). Thus, Europarties have been unable to **lead** their parties on the best strategies to adopt. An opportunity exists therefore for Europarties to provide such leadership but this may only happen if they have convincing information and knowledge about the effectiveness of gender quotas or other mechanisms.

There was very **little evidence** from case study respondents that the EWL 50/50 campaign had much of an influence at the national level. Very few respondents had significant awareness of the actions of the campaign. However, this does not mean that there were no impacts, necessarily. The 50/50 strategy is designed to work over the long-term in that it intends to influence public feeling and awareness. During election campaigns when there is great demand for **media attention**, raising the profile of the gender balance issue at this time is likely to prove challenging. Many political party respondents reported that election preparation work commences at a very early stage prior to elections – even only a few weeks after elections have taken place. There is, therefore, **potential** for actors such as the EWL and their national membership to start work at these early stages and to work closely with political parties, regional selection committees, potential women candidates and party volunteers, to influence how many women are a) placed on good positions on party lists and b) supported to run their campaign. These actions, however, would require **significant coordination** and **resources**, according to NGO respondents. Based on findings from both case studies and conversations with NGOs, priorities for action should include providing **credible evidence** about public support for gender balance and the likely electoral benefits of boosting women candidates and using these arguments to persuade political parties to adopt some form of quota system.

#### 6.5. Summary

Actions by Europarties and also Europe-wide NGOs have had **little effect** on the uptake of measures to improve gender balance, in particular the use of quotas. This is due to EU level actors being **reluctant** and feeling unable to intervene in national political party decisions.

## 7. SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES

### KEY FINDINGS

- Long held **beliefs** within political parties determine their overall attitude towards the use of positive action such as quotas.
- Left and green leaning parties are generally more **supportive** of **positive measures**.
- Conservative and right leaning parties are generally **resistant** to positive measures such as quotas.
- There is a **wide variety** of approaches to how party lists are compiled, some parties use quotas whilst other do not.
- In some cases where legal quotas are in place for party lists, parties strive to achieve only the **minimum** required.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve gender balance is mediated by the **electoral system** in place in that country.
- Many respondents from NGOs and political parties suggested that in systems that operate a closed list ballot, **zipping** is the only possible method of ensuring gender balance in politics.
- Even where there is gender balance on party lists, if the electoral system is an open list one, women have to work harder than men to achieve support of the **electorate** and face some **structural disadvantages** in campaigning.
- Key structural disadvantages for campaigning in open list elections for women include the need for **finance** and other personal resources.
- Examples of where **direct support** may be provided to women (or other) candidates include support through Trade Unions or individual sponsors; however, access to such support is not guaranteed to be equal for both genders.
- Women candidates and MEPs frequently face questions within their party about how they will 'cope' with **family caring responsibilities**; this was felt not to be the case for male MEPs or candidates.
- The general tendency to reselect **incumbents** as candidates at the top of party lists was felt to reduce women's chances of being placed at the top of lists.

This section summarises the key findings from 9 case studies that were conducted in **Belgium, France, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom**. The case studies involved in-depth interviews with women MEPs and candidates, representatives of NGOs and people from political parties who had close involvement in developing party lists.



## 7.1. Party beliefs connected with gender equality measures

Across countries and parties within those countries, the equal representation of women as MEPs was considered, at face value, to be an **important consideration** and the majority of party respondents stated that the party has some level of commitment to gender equality amongst its European politicians. However, despite this, there remain a **variety of challenges** that are both attitudinal and procedural in nature. Even where gender quotas exist, subtle cultures of sexism and structural barriers still act to prevent gender parity; it was widely reported across Member States and respondent groups.

Political parties typically have **long histories** and traditions and are generally large and complex organisations involving central coordinating offices and dense networks of regional volunteers and party members. Within these systems, cultures and beliefs are replicated through **generations** of party supporters. The different approaches to gender equality in political representation, particularly which mechanisms to adopt to achieve this, were strongly influenced by these organisational beliefs. Generally speaking, it is apparent that **Green and Left** of centre parties are more amenable to adopting positive measures for example, whilst conservative and liberal parties are not. For Left and Green-leaning parties, the use of quotas or zipping, is generally identified as an extension of their broader **commitment to gender equality**, even if that means controversy within the party over which individuals should be included on lists. For example, whilst the Socialist Party (SP) in Belgium has a long standing commitment to egalitarian principles within its party mechanism, statutory quotas are seen as a necessity, to 'get things done' in a field rather resistant to change: 'Nobody wanted to give up his seat voluntarily, it was necessary to act and force things a bit' (party respondent, Belgium). In Spain, the Socialist Party (PSOE) has pioneered using different gender balance policies since the late 1980's. Commitment to equality has been part of their political culture to the extent that they aim for total parity not only in the candidate lists but also in other bodies of the party such as Committees and the federal organisations. Liberal Democrats in the UK have used zipping in past European Parliament elections, which had achieved benefits for female political representation but their use is strongly resisted on **party-philosophical** grounds which sees quotas as anathema to deeply held beliefs in **meritocracy**.

Similarly, within the Belgian Reformist Movement (MR), the issue of whether to adopt positive measures has long **divided its members**, and the legitimacy of quotas is still sometimes raised within the party ranks, some arguing that forcing greater representation of women in politics **weakens female politicians' legitimacy** and that **competence** should remain the sole criterion for selection. These debates continue despite stated recognition by party respondents in the case studies that legislative interventions such as quotas are necessary to improve gender balance.

The conservative party in Spain (PP) adopts a more a passive attitude towards gender balance in politics, which means that it resists formal action such as quotas. This is similar to the Conservative Party in the UK, which frequently identifies quotas or similar measures as somehow undermining of the overall **'quality'** of a candidate. These arguments are usually expressed in terms of quantity (of women candidates) verses 'quality', whereby quotas may achieve technical equality between women and men but that the overall quality of politicians would decline as a result. Similarly, respondents from a Spanish party that does use quotas also expressed negative sentiments towards the mechanism, which they felt can lead to a **devaluing** of female politicians.



By contrast, in Sweden, quotas were unused in some parties not because they were fundamentally undesirable but because they were deemed **unnecessary**: *'In Sweden, we generally have greater acceptance of gender equality throughout our society so quotas are not really needed for women, if anything, they are used to make sure there are enough men'* (political party respondent).

In other contexts, there exists strong resistance to the use of positive measures and even to the principles of gender equality in general, which have shaped parties' responses to the use of specific measures. For example, the majority of parties in **Lithuania** do not apply gender quotas. According to NGO respondents, this policy may be grounded on a fundamentally different attitude towards gender equality.

## 7.2. The use of structural measures by political parties

A number of parties across case study countries deploy the use of **structural measures** such as **quotas or zipping**, to increase the number of women candidates and MEPs or to achieve actual parity. To achieve the goal of gender parity in party lists, political parties use either zipping or a 50% gender quota. Quotas may be implemented in different ways and different methods are used by different parties within each country. For example, only three political parties in Sweden, where no legal quota is in place, deploy a party-originated quota. This is the Social Democrats (SAP), which use a zipping system to secure parity on their list. The Swedish Green Party (MP) has a gender parity quota and the Swedish Left Party (V) also has a gender parity quota.

In France, all parties without exception presented either balanced or zipped lists to fulfil requirements under **French law**, which requires parties to present 50% of candidates of each gender otherwise the lists are declared **inadmissible**. The Spanish socialist party (PSOE) uses a zipping system to achieve parity. Similarly, Spain's Podemos uses a parity zipping system in their candidates list.

Since 2002 in Belgium, legal quotas require an equal number of male and female candidates on party lists as well as male and female candidates for the first two to three places on those lists. In Lithuania the only party to adopt quotas is the Social Democratic Party (LSDP), which applies a 40% gender quota for its candidate lists. The party is also considering implementing a 50/50 quota and zipping for future elections.

Other parties use quotas levels which are **below 50%**. The Spanish Plural left Party (IP) applies the principle of parity for the electoral list – women have to take all the even or odd places, and at least 40% of women have to be achieved in the final composition of the Parliamentary groups – either national or European. Similarly, Spanish parties such as PP, Union, Progress and Democracy Party (UPyD) or Citizens (C), which do not have quotas in their **statutes** implement structural measures in order to fulfil the minimum quotas of 40%. In that regard, PP uses a system by which 3 male and 2 female candidates are placed for every 5 candidates on their list; in order not exceed 60% for either gender.

### 7.3. Influence of the electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

The effectiveness of strategies to improve gender balance is mediated by the **electoral system** in place in that country.

The presence of quotas does not guarantee that women will be better represented in the final result of the European Parliament election. In countries where statutory quotas exist, it was reported that some parties undertake to achieve only the **minimum** required to meet the quotas thus treating the obligation as a **'tick the box' exercise** through which it has no intention of delivering change in terms of gender balance. For example, in Poland, where the statutory quota level is 35% of women on candidate lists, some parties have 'fulfilled' these criteria by placing women on lists in districts in which they are unlikely to be successful. This means that female candidates have to fight very hard for a good place on a list, according to a wide range of respondents. MEP and party respondents across case studies repeatedly suggested that the **internal party selection** process is the main 'battleground' on which women have to fight harder than men for political success.

Many respondents from NGOs and political parties across case studies suggested that in systems that operate a closed list ballot, **zipping** is the only possible effective remedy to ensure that women have an equal chance of eventually being elected. This is seen as the only way to ensure that women are given places at the top of party lists. However, even the effectiveness of zipped lists may be undermined by **organisational principles** of the electoral system and is not a guarantee of gender balance. For example, the UK is divided into multiple constituencies that have only a small number of seats. Parties' chances of electoral success vary according to the region, which have historical loyalties to different parties. This means, in some cases, only the candidate at the top of the list has a chance of winning a seat in that constituency as only one MEP from that party is likely to be returned. Unless a woman heads that list, it is unlikely therefore, that a woman will be returned. Party, MEP and NGO respondents from a number of case study countries suggested not only that zipping is the most likely effective way to guarantee gender balance, but that women should be given the **first place on zipped lists**.

According to French MEP respondents, one of the main obstacles to placing women in winnable seats is the problem of **incumbency**. Parties have good reasons for reselecting their incumbents. One reason is a concern that de-selected incumbents could decide to stand against their own party in order to maintain his/her seat. As the vast majority of incumbents are male, this reduces opportunities for women who may be able to contest only those seats where there is no incumbent. In most cases, this means unwinnable seats.

An analysis of the French lists for the 2014 European elections shows that on the eight lists submitted by each party, the top position was occupied by a female candidate in 2 lists for the UPM, 3 lists for the PS, 4 for IDUs / Modem, 5 for the Greens, 3 women for the Front de Gauche and 2 women for the FN. A similar challenge is faced in the UK for the Labour Party. When the incumbent MEP is running for election again, the Labour Party automatically places them at the top of the list. If incumbents are male, in constituencies where only one seat is likely to be won by that party, there will be extremely little chance that a woman will win a seat there.

In Belgium, party respondents noted that top of the list positions are generally given to candidates who already have **extensive political experience** and who are known to the

public and have an existing strong support base at the local level. Given the historic underrepresentation of women as candidates and elected representatives, women are less likely than men to possess these characteristics. In Lithuania it was observed that political parties rarely list women at the top of their lists. Even when gender quota is used to construct lists, in the case of the LSDP party, which included 40% of women on its list, a woman has never been placed at the top of the list.

In open list systems, in which the electorate vote for individual candidates rather than for whole party lists, challenges for women candidates are slightly different. In theory, candidates on an 'open list' have an equal chance of being elected. Gender quotas may still be deployed within open list systems, in which case there may be some guarantee that women and men have de facto similar chances for election. However, women candidates will still face a number of challenges in getting elected, according to a range of respondents. These challenges are illustrated in Malta. Although neither political party in Malta uses a gender quota to construct their candidate list, a number of women (fewer than men) were represented on the lists. Political party and NGO respondents reported that parties are able to identify and promote '**favourite**' candidates from their party list. This means providing these candidates with support to gain more media coverage or providing senior leader support in public, so that the public have the impression that the candidate is the 'real' choice of the party. This is likely, it was felt by a number of respondents, to influence the chances of being elected. Whilst in the last election in Malta, the perceived 'favoured' candidates were women in a number of cases, this situation may easily be reversed. Another challenge for women, as illustrated by the Maltese case, is that when parties construct their lists, in the absence of gender quotas, there is intense pressure on the selection committee to **reward loyal party members** who are, most often, male, with a candidacy. This system encourages party insiders to be selected on lists and discourages 'new talent' including women, who have traditionally not been party insiders, from being selected as candidates.

Once placed on a party list, in an open list system, candidates must then execute election campaigns in order to be successful. In Malta, candidates reported the necessity of having **large networks** of support at the local and regional level in order to be elected. For this, it is helpful to have a long **history of party involvement** that was felt to hinder women as their power bases, which are often newer, are not as developed as men's.

Similar barriers were expressed by MEP and political party respondents in Sweden, Belgium and Lithuania, which use a mixture of open and closed lists. Although in Sweden, for example, it was reported, that women have a fairly strong tradition of political party involvement, particularly through working with community organisations or campaigning on specific issues. However, it was felt that male candidates may be '**championed**' by the central party and thereby given a higher profile. This can overshadow the efforts made by women candidates campaigning at the local level.

#### **7.4. Gender balance within political parties**

Even when active measures concerning candidate lists are used, there remain ways that gender balance in political power more generally remains challenged. For example, although the French Socialist Party has a long tradition in statutory quotas, the representation of women **within the party** is so far not gender-balanced: the National Bureau responsible for administration and party leadership has 50 men to 22 women and among the 62 national secretaries, there are 36 men and only 26 women.

Even where quotas are used, it is important that **women's groups** and female politicians maintain pressure throughout the party to challenge latent sexism and attitudes that may still bar women from important power bases, female MEPs reported. For example in Sweden, case study respondents gave the example of one party that has adopted within its constitution formal quotas for gender balance on official party committees and other official decision-making bodies. However, even with these measures in place important decisions are frequently made **informally** and behind closed doors without women, some MEP respondents reported. Thus, it is important to maintain pressure within the party hierarchy to include women at all levels and in all discussions it was suggested.

## 7.5. Additional means of improving gender balance

A number of parties deploy measures other than gender quotas for party lists to address gender equality within politics and were mentioned as **good practice** by both MEP and party respondents. Examples included parties using quotas for **internal party** organisations and committees. For example, in Belgium, the Socialist Party has included quotas in its statutes for internal bodies and executives. The statutes impose a quota of 33% of women participating in all formal party bodies and an obligation to appoint at least one woman as vice president of the party. Similarly, the Belgium NV-A party imposes 25% of women participation in their internal organs<sup>11</sup>.

The Belgian Socialist Party seeks to build gender equality through its **training** programme. The parties' 'political school' is obliged to select students of different genders in the same proportion. The party has also established a Committee for Equality between men and women, whose function is primarily to issue opinions at the request of the party president and officers.

The Belgian Reformist Movement deploys the 'Reformist Women of the MR' - an association whose purpose is to **promote the participation** of women in social, economic and political life. The association organizes training courses for women in or aspiring to political roles.

The Lithuanian Social Democrat Party implements special measures to encourage **women's networking**. The party has a quota of at least one-third of either gender to be involved in the parties' internal organisations.

The Socialist Party in Spain has also a 'gender equality secretary' that oversees gender issues. It also implements the principle of **gender mainstreaming** in order to address the inequality between men and women at any level of the party.

In Sweden, the Green party ensures that central party officials work closely with local selection committee members to share knowledge and **advice** about how to improve gender representation. It also places a restriction on the amount of time politicians can spend in office. MEPs may serve **2 terms in office as a maximum**. This avoids the problem of incumbents skewing gender balance in candidates.

Hungarian Socialist Party respondents noted that a key mechanism for pursuing gender equality is the **Women's Section** of the party. This has initiated several training and networking activities for women in the party and continuously works to put the gender question on the party agenda.

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<sup>11</sup><http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/seats-member-state-absolut.html>

## 7.6. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

Across case study respondents, there was very little awareness of the activities of the European Women's Lobby 50/50 campaign.

According to one NGO respondent in Lithuania, for example, the 50/50 campaign '**lacked publicity**'. Similarly, in Hungary it was observed by party respondents that EU level campaigns aimed at gender equality had low visibility. In Sweden, the low awareness of the campaign was felt by both NGO and MEP respondents to be due to a perception that Sweden is largely successful in terms of gender balance and not in need of much external assistance.

In Belgium only one Reformist Movement respondent had heard of the 50/50 campaign but did not know exactly what it was. In France and Poland, none of the MEP respondents acknowledged being aware of the 50/50 campaign of the European Women's Lobby.

## 7.7. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

### 7.7.1. Recruitment and sponsorship

Women MEP respondents described the various ways that they had arrived at being a candidate. Broadly, there appears to be two types of **routes into candidacy**. The first way is through joining political parties early, in many cases as student politicians or even in adolescence. Women MEP respondents frequently described **volunteering** much of their time to assist with local party meetings and campaigns. Early careers as volunteers commonly led to more formal involvement. For example being nominated and elected as local councillor was a route into election at a national level in the UK. Many women MEP respondents who had followed the first journey type suggested that the ability to **communicate effectively** with a wide range of people was of key importance both in their selection as candidate and also during their election campaign.

Women may face particular challenges through this route, however, as it may be difficult to break through entrenched local party loyalties that typically favour established and male local candidates, MEP respondents suggested. Candidacy through this route was felt to be vulnerable, also, to the central party bringing in '**celebrity**' or high prestige candidates who might overshadow their work. Such 'celebrity' candidates are usually existing high profile politicians who are most commonly male. For this reason, it was felt important that **regional parties** are able to maintain their ability to construct local party lists.

The second type of journey reported in the case studies, is when a candidate is asked directly by **senior party officials** to run as a candidate, often when they had no prior involvement with party politics. In these cases, the party will deploy specific mechanisms to identify and recruit talent. MEPs recruited through this route tend to have a strong **track record** and high degree of success in **professional careers**, in particular media, law or business. They may also be recruited because they have expertise in a particular area. For example, one Spanish MEP claimed that the party recruited her as a candidate for the European Parliament because she had specific knowledge in a subject the party was lacking expertise on. In another example, a high profile business leader was asked to run because of her strong connections and national profile across the country. Whilst the second type of journey has been a route for many female MEP respondents, the route also indicates a **potential risk** for women. Selection in this way is dependent on **central party wishes**

and, unless there is a genuine wish to pursue gender balance within the party establishment, it may be more likely that men are drawn from professional fields in which they traditionally dominate. This route into politics has both advantages and disadvantages for gender balance. Party-imposed candidates may be either male or female and the route may be a useful way of securing a greater number of women. However, this is dependent on the party having a strong will towards getting more women elected. Furthermore, there may be **strong resistance** to party-imposed candidates who may be seen to **unfairly displace potential candidates** who have developed local support over years. This may benefit or disadvantage men and women equally.

### 7.7.2. Reconciliation of politics and personal life

Many female MEP respondents across case studies described the difficulties and pressure of combining **personal life** with the demands of campaigning and working as an MEP, even with the support of their husbands or partners. In particular, both MEP and party respondents reported having concerns about how they would have time to care for their children as well as hold political office. This concern had almost **deterred** some women MEP respondents from running as candidate. It was frequently pointed out, across case studies that **men did not face similar** pressure, even though they were as likely to have children as women. There was felt to be inadequate **childcare provision** available either in Member States (with the exception of Malta and Sweden where child care provision was reported to be good) or in Brussels.

Moreover, the **disproportionate** share of caring responsibilities taken on by women also perpetuates **structural disadvantages**. Caring duties often means that women are more likely to take career breaks or work part time, compared to men. Whilst men are also disadvantaged in this situation as it means they are unable to spend as much time with their children, it means that women are less likely to build up **financial and social capital** often needed to participate in politics<sup>12</sup>.

### 7.7.3. Self belief

A number of party respondents, particularly those involved in the selection of candidates, suggested that women were far less likely than men to 'put themselves forward' or, even after they have been asked to run as a candidate, to **believe** that they have the ability to do a good job. *'Men are much more likely to rate themselves highly or to ask for a higher position within the party'* (Political party respondent, Sweden). It was often expressed by both MEPs and party respondents that women frequently have to **prove themselves** as capable more than men do, as there is a greater reluctance with parties to believe in **women's capabilities**. One party respondent in Spain explained: *'Equality will be reached the day that an ignorant woman could take the place of an ignorant man'*.

Women MEP respondents from the UK, Sweden and Malta suggested that one remedy for the subtle sexism that they perceive within parties is for women politicians to encourage and support other women to run for office and also, once elected, put themselves forward for senior roles within the party. This would create **role models** for other women to run as MEP also.

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<sup>12</sup> See for example

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2013/130549/LDM\\_BRI\(2013\)130549\\_REV1\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2013/130549/LDM_BRI(2013)130549_REV1_EN.pdf)



#### 7.7.4. Role of the media

A number of MEP and political party respondents from across the case studies highlighted the **pernicious** effect that the **media** can have on women in politics<sup>13</sup>. It was frequently noted that the media is disproportionately critical of women candidates and politicians, in particular focusing more on personal characteristics and appearance, compared to men. Even in a country with a purportedly high degree of gender equality, Sweden, it was noted that male politicians are more often given coverage in the press. In Spain and Poland it was noted that women are given **disproportionately negative** media coverage. The negative, often aggressive, approach of the media towards women MEPs had almost deterred a number of women MEP respondents in the case study countries included in this study.

These findings support another report by the EIGE, which describes how media coverage often disadvantages women politicians and prospective candidates. This finds that women candidates or politicians are either underrepresented or if represented are portrayed in a more negative manner compared to males<sup>1415</sup>.

A remedy to this problem was felt to be boosting **support networks of women** politicians and those involved in politics, according to a range of both MEPs and NGO respondents.

### 7.8. Summary

The case studies revealed a number of **enablers and barriers** to women being elected as MEPS. The main enabler identified is the use of the **zipped list**. Many respondents suggested that this was the most efficient way of securing gender balance. In addition, particularly for small constituencies, women should be placed at the top of the list until gender parity is achieved, it was suggested. However, zipped lists are only successfully applicable in countries that elect MEPs with a closed list system. Only a minority of Member States uses a closed list system. The effectiveness of zipping or zipped lists was **not demonstrable** in the statistical analyses of election results in chapter 5 (due to only a small number of candidates in the sample being subject to such a system), so it is not possible to corroborate respondents' suggestions in this regard. Furthermore, as in the case of France, when **electoral constituencies are divided** and made smaller, it is even more important to place women at the top of lists, even if there is a zipping system in place, as the smaller number of seats results in fewer chances of women being elected for each constituency.

Case study respondents highlighted a number of common challenges for achieving greater gender balance in European Politics. These challenges are summarised as:

On the **demand side** for women candidates:

- There are **insufficient numbers** of women on party **lists**.
- In closed lists, **insufficient numbers** of women are given **high places** on lists.
- Once on a party list, **central party support** is not always given equally to male and female candidates.

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<sup>13</sup>See the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) study on Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations (2013) for a discussion of women's representation in the media organisations

<sup>14</sup> [http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/MH0213843ENC\\_PDF\\_Web\\_.pdf](http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/MH0213843ENC_PDF_Web_.pdf)

<sup>15</sup>See also Simon and Hoyt (2013) for their study on the impact of negative media portrayals on women's confidence leadership self-belief. Simon S. and Hoyt C. (2013) Exploring the effect of media images on women's leadership self-perceptions and aspirations, Social Psychology

On the **supply side** for women candidates:

- The **media** has a negative impact on women's inclination to run.
- Women politicians experience more than men the insufficient support to combine **work and family** commitments.
- There is an assumption within political parties, reflecting wider social norms that women have greater **responsibility for caring** than men and that work life balance is a 'problem' for women politicians but not for men.



## 8. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Political parties** are the main enablers as well as barriers to women being elected as MEPs.
- Women are frequently **left out of party candidate lists** and even if they are included, are often given **low list positions**. This is a key barrier to gender balance in the European Parliament.
- Political parties may '**champion**' male candidates even in open list systems, which can often disadvantage women.
- By introducing **robust quotas** such as zipping (in closed lists) or gender parity on lists (in open lists) gender balance will be greatly advanced.
- The problem for gender balance appears to be the **low numbers of women presented as candidates**; this problem can be addressed by actions of political parties in constructing their party lists.

This study presented original evidence on the various **barriers and enablers** to women being elected as Members of the European Parliament (MEP). The study identified a number of supply side and demand side factors that, although distinct in character, have an influence on each other.

**Demand side** factors relate to the demand for women candidates and MEPs both from political parties and from the electorate. In terms of the electorate, demand for candidates is generated through forging a profile and winning trust and confidence from voters. The mechanisms for achieving this are different according to the different electoral systems. In systems which have only one national or a few **large regional constituencies**, candidates must appeal to a very broad electorate, usually where they have no local or regional connection. Candidates competing for votes from large constituencies are at an advantage if they have an existing high profile. Interviewees frequently suggested that '**celebrity candidates**' might be encouraged by political parties in these contexts because they are more likely to appeal to a large number of people. Within large constituencies, it is apparent that women may face particular disadvantages. Whilst the possibility of being directly recruited and 'championed' by a political party may provide some **high profile women** with a chance of being elected, women may also be structurally disadvantaged in this system because they are traditionally not associated with professions that attract the status needed - such as business or media. There were examples from case studies where high profile women had been 'brought in' by the party and championed but, equally, many women MEP respondents felt that their efforts at campaigning could easily be undermined by high profile candidates who are favoured by the party and who are often men.

In systems where there are smaller local constituencies, candidates must attract support not only of local voters but also the local party networks that will be instrumental in supporting their campaign. The research found many examples of successful **networking and campaigning** by women to achieve such local support, however, there were also reports of how local political parties may be resistant to change and prefer to reward long standing loyalties from local members who, in many cases, are likely to be men who have been involved in the local party for some time.

Demand for women candidates is influenced greatly by the type of electoral lists used in each Member State. Lists may be open, closed or a mixture of the two. In open lists, candidates must **appeal directly to voters** to attract votes as the electorate expresses a preference for individual candidates. In closed list systems, it is the party who **allocates seats** to candidates based on the number of votes the party receives. In the latter case, voters vote for parties and not individuals. Both systems have advantages and disadvantages for women seeking election. **A critically important demand-side factor is the party candidate selection process.** In closed lists, this is even more important because the party decides not only on whether an individual is included on the list at all, but also the position on the list, which strongly determines that candidate's chances of winning. This research shows that unless parties have **robust systems** in place not only to ensure gender balance for the list as a whole, but that women are placed in high list positions, women are unlikely to be elected. Regression analyses undertaken in this study revealed that in closed list systems, having a woman first on the party list is the situation most likely to ensure women are elected.

Regression analyses revealed that, overall, the situations most likely to benefit women, in terms of the relative chances of being elected as compared to men, are **open systems and closed systems in which a quota is used.** These findings suggest that if women are given an equal chance to campaign before the electorate, they are often successful at winning the support of voters. It seems that the **electorate are generally supportive of female politicians.** This provides ballast to women's organisations and others who are advocating for the greater use of quotas to achieve gender balance. **If women are popular with voters, which this research seems to demonstrate, then parties should encourage them to run.**

Statistical analyses of the candidate data and election results suggest that women have only a slightly lower probability of being elected compared to men across all electoral systems. Regardless of this, there are significantly fewer women in the European Parliament than men. This finding suggests that the **problem for gender balance is strongly connected with the availability of candidates on party lists,** rather than demand from the electorate. It is further evidence that **political parties are crucial actors** for improving the number of women candidates on their lists.

**Supply side factors** that have acted as barriers to women are an important consideration. A number of barriers were indicated in the research. A chief concern for many women MEPs and candidates interviewed was how they would be able to reconcile political life with **family responsibilities.** Women MEPs frequently pointed to the importance of having a supportive close family to take on caring responsibilities. It was noted that male politicians do not appear to have the same concern even though they are as likely to have children as the women MEPs. This was felt to reflect a deeper structural disadvantage that women face, which is that they are disproportionately expected to take on caring responsibilities, compared to men.

The **media** was also found to play an important role in dissuading women from being MEP candidates. It was felt by a number of MEPs, NGOs and political party representatives that the media disproportionately provides female politicians with negative press and will more often focus on appearance or personal matters, compared to male politicians. This **perceived hostility** was a deterrent for many women MEPs who took part in this research and suggests that other women who might otherwise consider a career in politics may be put off also.

A number of **recommendations** flow from the research. These are set out for different actors as follows:

**National political parties could:**

- Adopt **gender quotas** of 50% for all party election lists
- In closed list systems, adopt either zipping or a quota for women at **the top of lists**
- In recruiting and 'championing' candidates, consider **approaching women** in equal measure to men
- Take action to ensure a level playing field for candidates as they campaign to win votes or support from local parties. Examples of this kind of strategy might include assistance with **publicity** or introducing a **cap on campaign expenditure** (in particular, in contests for party list positions)
- Secure **high level support** for policies to improve gender balance across all levels of the party and all party activities, showing that senior leaders are serious about gender balance
- Research and understand the potential **electoral benefits** of increasing the number of female candidates.

**EU level actors such as European political parties and the European Women's Lobby could:**

- Take action to influence political parties' candidate **selection processes**, including lobbying them to adopt quotas
- Work with political parties at very **early stages** in election campaigns so that party lists may be developed with a balance between men and women
- Provide **support and training**, particularly around media relations, to female candidates and local parties so that they may improve the amount of media coverage and also support them through difficult media coverage.

**The European Commission could:**

- Take action to **encourage more young women to consider entering politics**; this could be promoted through the new Strategy for Equality between women and men. Actions might include support for women's groups to build confidence, mentor potential candidates and provide training to women to encourage more female candidates.
- Bolster action to **address disproportionately negative media coverage** of women politicians and candidates. This could be promoted through the new Strategy for Equality between women and men.
- Develop a **robust and complete dataset of all candidates** running for European Parliament elections. The dataset should include information on gender, age, political party, position on list, type of system used to elect candidates, whether or not a quota is applicable to that candidate and if so, what is the nature of that quota, incumbency, etc.

## 9. CASE STUDIES

### 9.1. Belgium

#### 9.1.1. Overview: results of the EP election from the perspective of gender balance

The 2014 European elections (held simultaneously with federal and regional elections) took place according to the **law on parity** of 18 July 2002, which stipulates that on party election lists the gap between the numbers of candidates of each sex cannot be greater than one, and that the first two candidates on each list must be of different sexes. In Belgium the European elections are organized on the basis of **three constituencies**: the French Electoral College, the Flemish Electoral College and the German-speaking Electoral College. The number of MEPs to be elected in Belgium was 21 in 2014, compared with 22 in 2009 (25 in 1999 and 2004)<sup>16</sup>.

Of the 21 Belgium MEPs in 2014, **six are female (28.5%)**. In 2009, of the 22 available seats, 7 were won by women (31.8%) and 8 women were able to sit in the EP after the substitutions took effect (i.e. 36.4% of the Belgian contingent). Belgium scored 59.6% on the EIGE's Gender Equality Index, compared to 54% for the EU as a whole.

#### 9.1.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

The issue of parity on electoral lists and quotas is **no longer strongly debated** in Belgian political parties as Belgium law now addresses the issue. Parties either comply with the law or risk seeing their lists rejected. Nevertheless, MEP respondents in this case study have different opinions about the usefulness of the legislation. For example, one MEP respondent suggested that quotas are necessary to push change, '*Nobody wanted to give up his seat voluntarily, it was necessary to act and force things a bit.*' However, another MEP suggested that the issue of quotas had long divided the members with some arguing that forcing greater representation of women in politics weakens women's political legitimacy.

Many respondents in this case study were **in principle against quotas**, judging them as not necessarily helpful for women. For example, an MEP and a political party respondent from different parties stated that **quotas alone were not sufficient** because they might eventually lead to the emergence of incompetent women on the lists, which could undermine the credibility of female politicians overall. In the same sense, respondents from one party rejected narratives about gendered-differences in terms of political opportunities, instead suggesting that **competence alone** ensures whether a politician is successful. However, respondents from a different party were more accepting that women may face additional challenges as politicians compared to men and that quotas are a necessary remedy for this at the present time. In addition, it was respondents who were more accepting of quotas considered that the mechanism must be accompanied by additional **support** for women candidates as the best way to ensure they have the right person in the right place to fulfil the quotas.

For political parties, formal quotas were introduced in different ways in Belgium, with some quotas applicable across party structures as well as in candidate lists. For example, the Socialist Party (SP) and the New Flemish Alliance (NV-A) have included gender quotas in their **statutes**, which relate primarily to **internal posts**.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/seats-member-state-absolut.html>

In terms of **non-formal** measures to support gender balance, SP respondents pointed to their **training programme** for future party executives in which students from both genders are equally selected.

All party respondents suggested that women are specifically **targeted** for recruitment into their party. Candidates with an **attractive profile in terms of skills and influence** will be approached by senior members of the party and asked to be placed on the party list. These candidates are not necessarily offered an **electable seat**, but their participation in a first election can be seen as a way of gaining experience necessary for a political career in the medium to long term, according to one party respondent. Moreover, as an MEP respondent suggested, candidates can benefit from the **substitution system** and be offered a seat if an elected candidate leaves his/hers at a later date. This approach allows candidates who are seen as having **high potential**, to emerge, even if they are unknown and lacking in political experience.

The inclusion of women in a party can also be achieved by establishing a **specific section for women**. A Reformist Movement (MR) respondent highlighted the 'Reformist Women of the MR', an association whose purpose is to promote the participation of women in social, economic and political life, for example. The association organizes **training courses** for women in or aspiring to political roles. In addition to these training programmes, there is a mentoring system, by which women (preferably) or men exercising a parliamentary function or in an executive post accompany and coach women candidates before the election campaign. However, the Reformist Women of the MR is not institutionalized in the party organisation and is not mentioned in the statutes. It also has no influence within the party or when it comes to **drawing up the electoral lists**.

The SP (S&D) has established a Committee for Equality between men and women, whose function is primarily to **issue opinions** at the request of the party president and officers. NV-A (ECR) party respondents suggested that women are as well represented as other groups (such as senior citizens or young people) in current party structures.

#### 9.1.3. [The role of individual MEPs'/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies for improving gender balance](#)

Female MEP respondents gave their reasons for becoming involved in politics. These were **diverse** and unique to the personal and professional background of each one. One MEP respondent reported that entry into politics was **not an obvious choice**. For her, membership of a political party was initially not seen in a positive light. She would not have joined the party on her own initiative and her membership was the result only of **direct approaches** by a leading member. Her level of expertise in a specific field had brought her to the party's attention. Afterwards, she became interested in politics and the party. It was once again at the **request of the party hierarchy** that, four years later, she agreed to be on the list for the European elections as a second alternate. A similar trajectory also was reported by another MEP respondent.

A woman's **self-image and self-efficacy** emerges as an important factor in their deciding to enter politics. One MEP respondent reported that she had taken considerable time to consider whether or not to run as a candidate. She reported her **concerns** as follows: '*Most women ask how they will take on this new activity, how they will handle it in terms of time and whether they will have enough time to do it well.*' The respondent suggested that a lack of **self-confidence** and perfectionism, which had made her feel as if she might not be capable of the job made her reluctant at first to take on a political career. Many

respondents suggested that **men appear to have fewer problems with self-confidence** in this sense.

On the other hand, another MEP respondent reported that she did not face problems of self-confidence but instead felt **compelled** to join politics precisely because there are too few women involved. She reported that having **strong personal courage** and **strong convictions** led her to take up the challenge. She also pointed out that women often question their political potential because the women who succeed are **not as visible as male politicians**. She went on to call for *'a **better representation of women in executive bodies and substantial posts as ministers. This will help to get the public used to seeing women in politics, and they will act as role models**'*.

MEP respondents mentioned specific challenges and how these were overcome. These focused on the reconciliation of **work and family life**. Many reported that political life requires a huge investment in terms of time and that European Politics is not especially **'family-friendly'**. It was suggested that meetings were often arranged at times that are inconvenient for those with parenting responsibilities and that informal meetings would often take place after office hours. Such practices were said not to be popular with women as these can be difficult to coordinate with childcare. One MEP respondent pointed to the importance of having an understanding and supportive **husband or partner** who is willing and able to take on equal if not more amounts of childcare in order for MEPs who have young children to be able to work.

MEP respondents also indicated their perception that it is **necessary for women to work harder than men** in order to prove their added value and **demonstrate their legitimacy** within the party. MEPs also expressed regret that there was not more **solidarity** and support between women MEPs to be able to address the challenges that women politicians encounter.

#### 9.1.4. Influence of the electoral system on the parties' and candidates' strategies to improve gender balance

Belgium electoral lists are 'semi-open': the order in which candidates appear on the list is not the sole factor which determines who is elected. However, the order of the candidates on the list influences their chances of being elected because those at the **top of the list** are favoured by the votes for the list as a whole.

Since 2002, gender quotas require an equal number of male and female candidates on the lists as well as male and female candidates for the first three or two places (the so-called **'zipper' system**). An interesting feature of the Belgian legislation on quotas is the mechanism of **sanctions and enforcement**. Unlike other countries, the Belgian provisions do not allow parties to ignore quotas, for example by accepting to pay a fine. Electoral lists that do not meet the quota provisions are **rejected**. Since this measure would deprive some parties from participating in elections, they are strongly compelled to comply with the provisions on the matter.

The number of eligible positions is limited; strategic places are therefore particularly important. Thus position on the list and the appointment of heads of lists are important factors determining the chances of a candidate being elected. Candidates that already have extensive **political experience** and who are known to the public are generally **favoured** for high list positions, it was noted across respondent groups. The choice must also take into account geographical representation, technical expertise and size and influence of the



**candidate's network.** The latter was highlighted as a key factor by respondents, who suggested that men are still currently more **advantaged** in terms of developing such networks.

Some MEPs and party official respondents suggested that the introduction of **zipping throughout the entire list**, rather than the top three places, would improve gender balance in both candidate lists as well as in the final election result.

#### 9.1.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

Only one political party respondent had heard of the 50/50 campaign of the European Women's Lobby, without knowing exactly what it was. The campaigns conducted at the European level, as well as the work of the FEMM Committee of the European Parliament do not seem to arouse any particular interest and are not specifically seen as likely to have an impact at a national level. **National contexts** must be taken into account more fully when developing communications for gender equality campaigns, a number of respondents suggested.

#### 9.1.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

A number of MEP respondents expressed concern over the **poor image of politics** amongst the public and considered this one of the reasons why so few women get involved or intend to get involved in politics (although this would apply equally to men). Respondents suggested that the **media** is partly to blame for the persistence of this negative image, through its emphasis on quarrels and its negligence of the substantive work done by politicians. However, respondents were more **reticent on the issue of whether women politicians are disadvantaged** in the media compared to male colleagues. Nevertheless, several examples of '**gendered' media treatment** were given by MEP and political party respondents. For example, when referring to a controversy over a former minister who installed a shower in her office, one respondent recalled that *'preferring to install a shower instead of a large meeting table in order not to smell bad at the end of the day was not a serious issue, should we talk about the fancy cars of some of the other (male) ministers'*? Another example cited was controversy surrounding the physical appearance of a female politician, who was criticised for her weight and yet male colleagues of a similar size were not.

#### 9.1.7. Summary

Since the legislative intervention imposing parity for electoral lists and mandatory rotation for the first two places, the question of gender balance amongst elected representatives is no longer debated seriously in Belgium, although some party members question its validity. Further progress towards gender balance would be to establish zipping throughout the **entire list**, a number of respondents suggested. Whilst the Belgium electoral system favours equality, the order of candidates on lists and preference votes are both important factors. In this sense, selections made by **political parties** remain **decisive**.

**Self-exclusion** appears to be a major obstacle to the representation of women in politics, according to a range of respondents. Solutions were suggested that involved improving the visibility of women in politics and also strengthen the presence of women in the **party leadership**. The weight of **family** responsibilities and the difficulty of reconciling family life and political life are also not insignificant obstacles, according to a range of respondents.

## 9.2. France

### 9.2.1. Overview: results of the EP election from the perspective of gender balance

The 2014 European elections took place according to the **law on parity** of 6 June 2000 that required all parties to present an equal number of female and male candidates on the party lists for elections conducted under proportional representation (PR). Parity law requires party lists to alternate men and women with a **zipped system**. In France, since 2003, the European elections have been organised on the basis of eight interregional constituencies (instead of having one national vote): North-West, West, East, South-West, South-East, Massif Central Centre Region, Île-de-France Region and Overseas.

MEPs are elected in a single ballot. Voters choose a list on which they cannot cross out any name nor change the order. The lists must have received at least 5% of the votes to be included in the distribution of seats.

Of the 74 members elected to the European Parliament, France has 32 female MEPs, i.e. **42%** of all MEPs while in 2009, of the 72 available seats, 44 % were occupied by a woman. France scored 57.1% on the EIGE's Gender Equality Index.

### 9.2.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

The law of 6 June 2000 on parity requires parties to present 50% of candidates of each sex on their lists, otherwise the lists are declared inadmissible. For the European elections, the law also requires a strict alternation between men and women, from the top to the bottom of the list (zipping). The binding nature, or otherwise, of the applicable legislation (depending on the type of election) largely determines the approach adopted by political parties towards women. Thus, in 2014, since parity and alternation are **mandatory** (under penalty of list rejection) for the European elections, all parties without exception presented equal and alternated lists. However, if the provisions are not strictly binding, as in the case of national elections, **parties are significantly less anxious** to ensure parity. For example, for the 2012 parliamentary elections, the major **parties preferred to pay fines** rather than presenting women candidates: only 40% of the candidates for these elections were female (and only 25.7% of UMP candidates).

A number of respondents from across parties spoke out **strongly against** the principle of **compulsory parity**, which, according to them, can lead to an **undervaluing of female politicians** who may be mistrusted if they are considered to be present as a result of an imposed quota. However, at the same time, the same respondents also recognise that the existing law proved to be essential in making progress in the field of women's representation in politics, given the low levels of commitment of the political parties on the subject.

Political parties address gender balance in different ways within their own party structures, which reflects a diversity of opinion over whether specific action should be taken to improve balance. These opinions appear to be dichotomised between those who believe that **women 'don't need help'** and those who believe that specific interventions are a **'necessary evil'** in order to challenge structures that would otherwise disadvantage women.

In terms of specific party regulations, some parties include **internal quotas**. For example, the Socialist Party (SP) reformed its statutes in 1974 to include a quota for women in its



governing bodies. The quota system was also applied to the European list-based ballots in 1994. Only in 1996 did the SP vote for a quota of 30 % of candidates in general elections. In their current form, the statutes (2012) do not refer to a quota, but repeatedly mention parity. The 2013 statutes of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) mention parity once only.

No respondent from any party mentioned **informal measures** ensuring gender balance within their respective parties. For example, no party has put in place a women's section within the party even though, according to one party respondent, this would be useful to increase women's visibility within the party.

Some political party respondents questioned the need to organize training that specifically targeted women. For example, according to one: *'Why should we need specific training? Women are not more stupid than men!'* However, other respondents disagreed with this view, arguing instead that women would benefit from specific support, for example, on how to communicate with the media.

### 9.2.3. The role of individual MEPs'/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in improving gender balance

MEP respondents reported a diverse range of experiences, personal characteristics and situations that led them to being an MEP.

One respondent noted that her political career is rooted in **family tradition** of political involvement as well as years of work in community projects. Being involved in formal politics was felt to be a logical continuation of her existing work that had allowed her to amass political experience at different levels (municipal, regional etc.). However, the decision to run as a candidate followed a **direct intervention** from the party hierarchy that encouraged her to run. This intervention was felt to be an important factor in her decision to become a candidate. Moreover, developing a **network of influence** was also felt to be an essential condition for progress within the party, the MEP reported and, in this regard, male colleagues tend to do better than women, it was noted.

The role of direct encouragement by the party hierarchy was raised by another MEP respondent who was similarly encouraged to run by a **top executive** of a political party. Nevertheless, being recruited does not guarantee longevity within the party, it was observed. Once selected, it is important to demonstrate one's capability in order to remain within politics. In this sense, one MEP respondent suggested, women seem to have to **work harder than men to prove** that they are competent enough.

The issue of reconciling **family life** and professional life was mentioned by a number of MEP respondents across parties. It was reported to be difficult to balance childcare responsibilities with the demands of political life and that having **supportive partners or husbands** is essential in this regard. There is, in this respect, a greater need to develop **childcare facilities** in the national and regional assemblies to enable women with children to exercise their mandate, MEPs reported.

### 9.2.4. Influence of the electoral system on the parties' and candidates' strategies for improving the gender balance

Besides personal and situational characteristics that have a bearing on women's electoral chances, the issue of **position on electoral lists** was seen as very important by all MEP respondents. Several factors were highlighted. The first is the desire of incumbents to

renew their mandate, which limits the opportunities for new female candidates, as most of these parliamentarians are men. The second is that '**celebrity**' politicians, who are usually male, are often 'parachuted' into eligible list positions in European politics if they are sidelined from national politics, even if this means relegating an existing MEP on the list.

In 2003, the government initiated a series of **electoral reforms** that had indirect consequences on parity reform according to one MEP respondent. Before these reforms, elections to the European Parliament were conducted by proportional representation with the entire nation as the sole constituency, with national party lists. Since 2003, there have been eight regional districts with distinct party lists of EP candidates in each district. **This change can reduce the chances of female candidates being elected.** Where a party receives only one or an uneven number of seats in a district, there is a risk of an imbalance in the number of male and female candidates who actually fill the winnable seats at the disadvantage of women. The potential for such bias against female candidates increases as the number of districts increases.

As for the possibility of reforming the current electoral system, no respondent reported the need to do so. It was felt that the proportional system is most favourable to parity, and the zipper system already applies to the EP elections. The effort must therefore be made primarily by the **political parties** themselves to give full meaning to the parity law, it was reported widely.

#### 9.2.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance (50/50 and FEMM committee work)

None of the interviewees acknowledges having heard of the 50/50 campaign of the European Women's Lobby. The debate to increase the number of women in decision-making does not seem to arouse any particular interest and is not specifically seen as likely to have an impact at a national level.

#### 9.2.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

MEPs reported negative attitudes within the **press and public towards women** politicians, recalling a recent incident widely reported in the press when a male politician humiliated a female politician.

MEP respondents were concerned about the **poor image of politics** in general among the public and consider it one of the reasons why so few women get involved in politics. **The media** was partly blamed by respondents for the persistence of this negative image and its **sexist comments** about female politicians. A number of respondents pointed to the presidential campaign between Royal and Sarkozy during which it was felt that the media systematically described Royal as a mother while Sarkozy was portrayed as a man of action. This kind of **differentiated treatment** weakens the image of women and helps to perpetuate male dominance of politics, according to respondents.

#### 9.2.7. Summary

42% of French MEPs are female which represents a decline of 2% since 2009. This may be a result of reductions in the size of constituencies but further research would need to explore if this is the case.

The binding nature, or otherwise, of the applicable legislation (depending on the type of election) largely reflects the overall attitude adopted by political parties towards gender

equality. If the provisions are not **binding** (as for general elections), parties are significantly less anxious to ensure parity and prefer to pay fines rather than to present female candidates. Respondents across parties spoke out quite strongly against the principle of **compulsory parity**, which according to them, can lead to a devaluing of female politicians.

Regardless of formal systems for ensuring gender balance, a number of respondents highlighted particular challenges that women face as politicians. Chief amongst these are difficulties in **balancing childcare** and political responsibilities as well as a press and public which is somewhat sexist in its treatment of female politicians.

## 9.3. Hungary

### 9.3.1. Overview: results of the EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Hungarian elections are regulated by Act CXIII of 2003<sup>17</sup>. In the 2014 European Parliament election the number of women MEPs **decreased from 36%** in 2009 (8 female MEPs) to 19% (4 female MEPs). The main losses of women MEPs came from the left side of the political spectrum: in 2009 the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) had three women candidates winning seats (out of its four MEPs) while in 2014 three different left-wing parties have members in the EP but none of them are women. Most of these parties had female candidates on their lists but none of them were **placed in winning (first or second) list positions**. On the right side of the political spectrum the Hungarian Civic Alliance (FIDESZ-KDNP) increased the presence of women in the EP (22% and 27%) as well as the far-right Movement for a Better Hungary (JOBBIK), which has one female MEP among its three politicians. Whilst the drop in female representation at the European level is significant, there is still a greater proportion of women politicians compared to the national parliament, in which 9.5% of MPs are women. Hungary scored 41.4% on the EIGE's Gender Equality Index.

### 9.3.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

In terms of gender balance **comparison** between European and the national parliament shows a number of different outcomes. Whilst in the European Parliament the right-wing parties bring more women to politics compared to left leaning parties, in the national arena FIDESZ-KDNP and JOBBIK with 6% and 8% female MEPs respectively fall behind the Socialists where 13% of MEPs are women.

The formal rules of recruitment do not offer an explanation for these differences. FIDESZ-KDNP does not apply any type of quota to ensure the representation of women; moreover the party has repeatedly voted against the introduction of quota in 2007 and in 2011. The party's recruitment and nomination process is closed and centralized. MEP and party respondents suggested that the **centralised** nature of recruitment might make it more difficult for female candidates to assess their chances of getting nominated and elected. The JOBBIK also opposes the introduction of a gender-quota overall.

The MSZP was the first party in Hungary to introduce a quota of 20% for female and young candidates on the party list in 2000. Due to its voluntary nature and the lack of direction

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<sup>17</sup> See : <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/5326> and [http://valasztas.hu/en/ovi/241/241\\_1\\_13.html](http://valasztas.hu/en/ovi/241/241_1_13.html)

for **ranking order**, the **quota** has not resulted in a significant rise of female politicians but rather plays a **symbolic role only**, according to MEP and party respondents. MSZP statutes also prescribe the creation of an Election committee concerning the EP elections. Despite the strong formal institutionalization of the selection process, respondents suggest that the central **party hierarchy** plays a strong role in drawing up the list and in assigning the first few places on the list.

**Informal rules and practices** play a critical role in promoting gender balance within the parties. Among the three main parties it is the MSZP who appears to have put forward the softest measures to promote female politicians. The main driving force behind this is the strong **Women's Section** of the party that has initiated several training and networking activities for women within the party and has continuously struggled to put the gender question on the party agenda. According to former leaders of the Women's Section one of the main strengths of the organization is its strong international and European network which supports cooperation among other national chapters and also enables politicians to access training organised by different agencies and NGOs working on the European level. Despite these measures however, a number of respondents within the MSZP expressed discontent with the party's efforts to promote women and considered that the Socialists are **losing ownership** of the gender question in the Hungarian political arena.

In the FIDESZ, the gender question is not in focus and informal structures seem to hinder female representation at the national level. **Sexism** is a reoccurring theme surfacing in **national parliamentary debates**, according to a number of respondents. While there is a Women's Section within the party, female politicians do not show signs of unity concerning policy issues or political activities and even lack the capacity of structured action, according to both MEP and party respondents.

FIDESZ women are more present at the European political level, which can be attributed to various factors, according to a range of respondents. First, the dominant position of the party enables **diversification of the list** and the party applies a conscious strategy of presenting a heterogeneous party list that appeals to a diverse range of voters. This also opens opportunities for women politicians, it was reported. Respondents also suggested that women tend to consider the **European** and international arena **less hostile and less male-dominated**, compared to national politics.

**Smaller and newer parties** appear to have stronger and more formal support for gender balance in politics, according to a number of respondents across parties. For example, the Politics Can Be Different party (LMP) emerged in 2009 and first gained seats in the European Parliament in 2010. LMP applies a strict gender quota at all type of elections including zipping the first 1 to 3 places on a list. The party has also developed a **gender equality program** and it has an ongoing workshop dedicated to empowering women politicians through training, development plans and legislative action. Together-Dialogue for Hungary (PM) is also a left-wing party which promotes gender-equality projects although it currently only applies a 33% quota on the election of its Presidium.

### 9.3.3. [The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections](#)

A number of factors were reported to assist women in their candidacy and political careers. **Expertise and experience** were mentioned most in the interviews. All women MEPs think that it is crucial to build a **strong policy profile** and excel in a policy field. Becoming a well-known and respected politician in the European level can be used as political capital

although some mentioned the difficulties of communicating European achievements in the national political arena and in their respective national parties. **Networking** was also mentioned as a supporting factor. However, a number of respondents noted that the **lack of transparent** process in politics make political careers a risky path to take and this limits the **supply** of women candidates who choose not to run in the first place. **Networking** is a potential remedy as social capital accumulated in this way can support further careers it was reported. Networking can also support the creation of a strong policy profile since it offers a good knowledge base in which to tap. Training, mentoring, and capacity building were listed as potential remedies to increase the number of women in European (and national) politics many MEP respondents reported.

All MEP respondents mentioned difficulties of balancing **family and career** responsibilities. Most of these politicians have developed strategies to address the double-burden of care and employment, by **relying on family** or enlisting **professional help**, but they all stated that being an elected politician puts too much **spotlight on their personal life** which most women prefer to avoid for the sake of children.

#### 9.3.4. Influence of the electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

At the time of the 2014 elections, Hungary had 21 seats in the European Parliament (reduced from 24 in 2009), distributed using a proportional system according to the D'Hondt method. The voters can vote on national party list, thus the country is regarded as one constituency. There is no preferential voting and lists are closed. For winning a mandate on a party list the number of votes registered for the list should exceed 5%. If a given party is only expecting to win one (or two) seats, being placed on the **top of the list** becomes paramount in order to secure a seat in the EP.

However, a number of respondents suggested that **central party hierarchies** often 'parachute in' a high profile candidate to ensure that it wins in European elections. Such 'parachuting' often results in the deselection of women.

Finally, along with electoral rules, campaign **financing rules** and practices were highlighted by a number of respondents. The lack of transparency and effective regulation can result in blurred financing practices within political parties that can have a negative effect on female candidates. Most women interviewed agreed on the lack of resources available to women: the strong **interdependence of business and politics** is observed to be disadvantageous to women who have different types of social networks compared to men.

#### 9.3.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

EU level campaigns aiming at gender equality had a rather **low visibility** in Hungary. The message of the EWL 50/50 campaign got lost or rather isolated in the political sphere due to several reasons, according to a range of respondents. First, Hungarian political life was dominated by the national parliamentary elections which took place at a similar time to the EP elections. As a consequence there was little attention by either parties or in the **media** given to European elections. The message of promoting gender-balance at the EP level could barely be heard in this context.

Furthermore, the 50/50 campaign was actively promoted by one MEP in Hungary, which meant that it was regarded as a party political issue, according to MEP and NGO respondents. The highly **polarised political climate** paired with the unwillingness of right-

wing parties to promote gender-equality reduced the ability of right-wing dominated media to profile the issue. A third factor, mentioned by NGO respondents is the lack of capacity and resources in the NGO sector in Hungary to address the issues of political representation.

### 9.3.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

A number of respondents pointed out that there is generally very **little support or discussion about gender equality** issues within Hungarian society and the issue of gender balance in politics, for this reason, gains very little attention. The **media** is similarly uninterested in gender equality issues and media distribution is currently dominated by a small number of organisations that tend to be **socially conservative** in their approach. This, coupled with an **undercapacity in the women's NGO** sector to push the gender equality debate, means that there is little public awareness of the issue. Hungarian society remains, overall, social conservative in its attitude towards women and its opinion of their role in society.

### 9.3.7. Summary

The main challenges to gender balance in the European Parliament and some potential remedial actions can be summarised as follows:

- *The lack of **political will** to endorse the idea of gender balance in political life*  
There is a general lack of awareness in political parties regarding the capacities and potential of women within their own parties.
- *The **reluctance of women** to become engaged in politics more generally*  
This is partly due to a press that is unsupportive of women politicians as well as the disproportionate burden of family responsibilities placed on women, which make balancing family with political life difficult.
- *The lack of a **policy support** networks such as NGOs, policy experts and think tanks*  
Civil society organisations should be further encouraged to engage in gender issues and raise the importance of women's political participation in Hungary. The emerging cooperation should be strengthened and NGOs should be invited to develop long-term goals and strategies to promote women's inclusion in politics.
- *The lack of wider public support for the **gender equality*** Public awareness of the gender question should be raised in order to make the gender question an attractive and politically rewarding policy to promote.

## 9.4. Lithuania

### 9.4.1. Overview: results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Lithuania elects MEPs through a combination of open list **preference voting** and a closed party list system. It has one constituency. Lithuania scored 43.6% on EIGE's Gender Equality Index, compared to 54% for the EU as a whole. Lithuania was a part of the former Soviet Union and transitioned from a planned to a market economy in the early 1990s. There was a **decrease** in the number of women MEPs from Lithuania in the 2014 European Parliament election from 2009. In 2009, 4 out of 11 MEPs (38%) were women, this fell to **1 out of 11 MEPs** in 2014 (8%). The only female MEP returned for Lithuania is part of the



Social Democratic Party.

In 2014, the number of **women candidates was 40.5%** of all candidates running for election out of a total of 215 candidates.

#### 9.4.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

Only one party in Lithuania, the Social Democratic Party (LSDP) applies a **gender quota** of 40% to its party list. The quota level has been raised gradually, from its initial quota level of 25%. This was the result of consistent pressure, lobbying and gathering support, particularly from male members of the party, on the part of the Union of Women Social Democrats, a women's lobby established within the LSDP (S&D). Currently, the LSDP is considering implementing a 50/50 quota and the zipper principle in election lists, according to party respondents.

The other main political parties do not apply gender quotas to their lists. This can be explained by broader **social attitudes** reflected in political culture, which is generally hostile to women holding public office, according to multiple respondents. Generally, respondents reported, women's role in public life is acceptable mainly in administrative functions or to work as assistants but not as decision makers. Thus, NGO and party respondents suggest that progress in the area of gender balance in the European Parliament and other institutions and structures of Lithuanian politics will come from progress in gender equality in Lithuanian **society more generally**. Changes in social attitudes, which will then lead to changes to the cultures and arrangements within political parties are required in order for change to be seen at the political level.

Among the six most influential political parties, only the LSDP implements special measures to **encourage women's political participation** and **networking**. It is the only party to include gender equality and non-discrimination principles in its **statutes**. It also applies gender quotas. The LSDP has established the Union of Women Social Democrats. The union organises women's clubs in every large city or town of Lithuania and undertakes a number of specific activities. These include: networking within the party and with women social democrats from other countries; **training and education** activities for female members; **lobbying and opening public debate** on issues relating to women's rights and gender equality; monitoring of implementation of the principles of gender equality within the party.

However, non-party political organizations have been active in trying to improve gender balance in politics. For example, Lithuania has a continuous programme of work, funded by the government and run by **women's NGOs** to address gender equality. These national programmes are accompanied by an Action Plan. The third National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2010–2014 included funding for a **network of Women in Politics**. The purpose of the programme was to encourage and support women candidates from all political parties in their campaigns for the European Parliament 2014 election. The campaign was managed by Kaunas Women's Employment Information Centre. The project involved specific campaigns to encourage voters to vote for women in Kaunas, Vilnius, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Ignalina and Marijampolė.

The Women in Politics campaign was, however, the only specific example of NGO effort to increase gender balance in politics from NGOs indicated by respondents.

#### 9.4.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

Respondents highlighted a number of **personal characteristics** and strategies that were necessary for women, as well as men, to succeed in the European elections. These include 1) to have strong **personal motivation** and interest in working at the European Parliament; 2) a high degree of **trust** and appeal to voters, in particular the ability to explain and convince voters about the significance of European politics for their own national interests; 3) to have **experience and competence** in particular fields, for example employment or women's rights and gender equality, and to have worked in these fields for a number of years before running for election; 4) the ability to **communicate** in a convincing, knowledgeable way with voters about issues connected to European politics; 5) the capacity to **work extremely hard** and to be committed in the long term to **build up trust in voters** which, it was felt, takes great time and effort.

One political party respondent also suggested that **personal charisma** is very important to succeed as an MEP. It is difficult to predict and define whom voters will find most charismatic. The quality of 'voter appeal' may be more difficult to achieve for women if the electorate has traditional views about women's roles and is resistant to female politicians.

In order for women MEPs to rise through party ranks and eventually to succeed in elections, it was noted by party respondents that male politicians and party leaders may be **resistant to women** who are experts in the social welfare policy field in particular as this is an area that women are often better versed in compared to men. Thus women politicians have to tread a careful line between demonstrating sufficient ability to act as an MEP, yet also to avoid competing with men from within the political hierarchy.

MEP respondents noted the large demands on time and resources necessary to build up a power base within the country, which is necessary to become elected. This work is **intense and demanding** involving regular journeys to different parts of the country, issuing publications and campaign materials, for example. Political parties provide very **little support** for this work either in time nor money terms. Thus, having one's **own money** to contribute was reported to be an important pre-requisite. This situation can easily preclude people on low incomes from running for office and, given that women are traditionally in weaker economic positions compared to men, may affect women **disproportionately**.

The importance of **direct communication** between voters and candidates was underlined by one NGO respondent as an important factor determining the success of a politician. Voters are attracted to politicians through direct connection and demonstration of empathy with their needs and issues. Women may be advantaged in this respect as they are not part of traditional hierarchies and may, in some senses, be closer to the voters they appeal to. However, cultivating this **direct appeal** takes a great amount of **time and effort**, according to party respondents.

Women face additional challenges in being a candidate and MEP, which are connected with how they are able to reconcile **family and political life**. According to a party respondent, women who have children struggle to find adequate support for **childcare** and need to rely on a supportive and close family.



#### 9.4.4. Influence of ballot/electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

Lithuania elects its MEPs through one constituency whereby the country's 11 MEPs represent the total population, rather than specific regions. Seats are divided according to the number of votes each individual receives.

It was reported by a number of respondents that the ballot system in Lithuania whereby voters are able to vote for the party as well as individual candidates by providing them with priority votes is **less favourable** to women in two ways. Firstly, the 'open' or preference vote element of the system means that candidates must appeal directly to voters. However, the population, overall, holds very **traditional views on gender** and has a low tolerance of women as public figures. Moreover, male politicians are likely to have higher profiles than women because they are more likely to be involved in **high profile professions** or networks already. Thus, men will typically have a better starting position than women when they commence their campaign, according to one party respondent. It will therefore take more campaigning activity for women to increase their profile sufficiently to gain the attention of voters.

The second way that the electoral system may disadvantage women candidates relates to the 'closed' element of the system in which the party allocates seats. Respondents suggested that senior politicians within parties are able to express **preferences** over where candidates should be placed on party lists. In addition, **media** commentators and public analysts also share and discuss their preferences in public, which in turn influences parties' decisions over list composition. In Lithuania, both the media and political parties are **dominated by men** and consequently have a tendency to prefer male candidates or, at least, are likely to favour people who share their networks and peer groups, who are likely to be men also. In this way, systems of patronage, loyalty and reward drive many of the decisions that affect how politicians are selected and elected, to the exclusion of women who are not, usually, part of such hierarchies. The impact of this is, according to a range of respondents, that **women are rarely at the top of party candidate lists**. This **severely limits the chance for a woman** to be elected to the European Parliament.

However, whilst this system produces challenges for women, it could also provide opportunities, according to one party respondent. As it is possible for candidates to obtain votes directly from voters and, thereby, raise their list position (and chance of a seat) there is an avenue for women to **break through party hierarchies** and practices. However, the barriers in this route are considerable. Success depends on women having a **very strong direct appeal** to voters, which may only be secured through **intense campaigning and networking**, all of which demand time and money. It was noted by a number of respondents that candidates must rely on their **own funds** or attract sponsors. **Individual sponsors** most frequently support men, not women. In these ways, the lack of women MEPs is a result of a cycle whereby women have lower public and political profiles, therefore, they are not championed by the party, and therefore, they are not elected and continue to have lower profiles.

#### 9.4.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

There was a generally **low level of awareness** of the EWL 50/50 campaign across respondents.

It was noted by NGO respondents that the 50/50 campaign may have lacked impact because it did not receive sufficient publicity and therefore, arguments to convince voters

to support women candidates were not heard. If these arguments had attracted more attention, then political parties may have allocated more women to higher list positions.

It was recommended by NGO respondents that the 50/50 campaign should work directly with **political parties** to convince them to include women on higher list positions.

#### 9.4.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

Lithuania is still far from achieving gender equality and social attitudes towards gender remain **traditional**, according to a number of respondents. The general public has low awareness of issues affecting women and women's rights and there is very little public discourse within the media about gender equality. Within the **media**, women politicians are depicted using negative gender stereotypes, according to a number of respondents. This means that women are perceived as 'not belonging' in politics.

Cultures within political parties reflect these attitudes in wider society. Some respondents suggest that women politicians have to **work harder** than men to convince party peers of their abilities.

Moreover, gender equality and women's rights were **not significant issues** within parties' European election campaigns.

Gender equality is a generally '**unattractive**' topic to be associated with in politics in Lithuania, according to a range of respondents. Women who have achieved high positions (especially politicians and journalists) are choosing not to identify themselves with gender issues because these are thought to be unpopular amongst voters.

#### 9.4.7. Summary

The key challenges for women candidates in Lithuania stem from a **legacy of low levels of women's involvement** in public life and low acceptance amongst the public of women politicians. This, coupled with the electoral system in which **parties** play a strong role in determining the likelihood of being elected, means that women are unlikely to be favoured candidates.

There is very little public debate about gender equality or women's rights more generally in Lithuanian society. This means that the task of **raising support** for gender balance in public life is a long and intense process.

However, systems of **patronage, loyalty and reward** that seem to affect the way that candidates are selected which typically favours men may be challenged. As the Lithuanian system for European elections include an element of preferential voters, women have some possibility of directly appealing to voters and raising their profile at the same time among the party elites. Whilst this will be a difficult challenge to address as the problem is self-perpetuating, once women begin to be elected (which may be the case if parties introduce quotas and zipping), public opinion and, therefore, party decisions may start to change.

## 9.5. Malta

### 9.5.1. Overview: results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Malta acceded to the European Union in 2004. Thus, it has experienced two European Parliament elections including in 2014. Malta scores overall 41.6 out of 100 on EIGE's

Gender Equality Index (GEI), compared to 54 for the EU overall. There are just two political parties in Malta. The Nationalist Party, a broadly centre-right party, and the Labour party which is broadly left of centre.

Malta has **6 seats** in the European Parliament, which are elected from one national constituency. MEPs are elected using an open list form of proportional representation, whereby voters are able to express a preference for individual candidates rather than parties as a whole. Seats are then allocated using a single transferable vote method. National gender quotas for the selection of party candidates for European elections do not exist.

In 2014, 4 elected MEPs out of the 6 seats were female, thus Malta has some of the **highest proportions** of female MEPs compared to males, albeit based on a small number of seats.

### 9.5.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

Respondents from both of the political parties maintained that some form of fair representation between male and female candidates and politicians is important for their party. However, neither party uses a **formal system** or process for ensuring that this happens and both MEP and party representatives interviewed, from both parties, acknowledged that more could be done by parties to ensure the stated commitment to gender balance is realised. However, there was **widespread resistance** towards formal quotas from both MEP and party officials. In a sense, this resistance was based on rather subjective, emotional grounds rather than from in-depth analyses of the potential results of using quotas: *'I think it sends the wrong message about what is fair and what is not' (party official)*. All respondents from both parties felt that informal, **'natural' processes** from within the party would bring about greater gender balance within their party. In particular, party respondents from both parties perceived that there is a remarkable shift in wider **Maltese society** towards greater gender equality and that women are already high achievers in business and professions. Finally, this would 'naturally' be reflected in politics.

The experience of some high profile candidates who are considered to have national celebrity and high degrees of success in **business or professional life** helped to underpin this view – that women are able to achieve high status in the party because they are successful and high profile in daily life. The view was also supported, in the view of respondents, by the de facto success of female candidates elected to the European Parliament in 2014, despite having fewer female candidates than males. This was felt to demonstrate that **women 'don't need help'** to be successful in politics. However, this view is somewhat undermined by the low proportions of women in the Maltese national parliament. Nine of the 69 (13%) Members of National Parliament in Malta are women.

Neither the Maltese Labour Party (MLP) nor the Nationalist Party (NP) deploys a quota in its selection of candidates. All MEP and political party representative respondents appeared resistant to the use of quotas. Political party respondents indicated a number of ways that women are encouraged to be involved in party politics, in ways that do not involve quotas. It was claimed, in one party, that there was a **high level commitment** from the party leaders to get more women on the European Parliament candidate list. This commitment was passed down through the party ranks and encouraged the selection committee to deliberately ensure there were significant numbers of women on the final selection list, however, no specific proportion or numbers of women on the list were requested. The selection committee followed this direction insofar as it gave careful consideration to female

applicants for the position of MEP candidate. *'We were particularly keen to put women on the list when choosing the final selections'*. However, two problems were encountered during this process, according to respondents from the selection committee. The first was that there were **fewer women** compared to men who had submitted an application to the committee. It was reported that this was the result of fewer female party members feeling confident enough in their abilities and therefore willing to be considered as candidates. Some party officials reported that this led to a smaller **'pool of talent'** to choose from. However, other respondents within the party did not agree that there was a 'pool of talent' problem and that the more important consideration, in their view, was how the party was able to **identify and encourage** women who, otherwise, would not put themselves forward for consideration. In order to counter this perceived problem, members of the selection committee took active steps to **recruit potential candidates** who, they felt, would make viable candidates, even if they were not already party members. This process involved direct approaches and private conversations with individual women.

### 9.5.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

Given the open list system that is used in Malta for the election of MEPs, in which voters cast votes for individual candidates rather than for parties, having direct **'voter appeal'** is considered by all respondents to be particularly important. Candidates who were felt to be professionally successful, charismatic and high profile, were considered to be highly desirable by the parties, particularly those with **national or celebrity status**. This was felt by a number of both party and NGO respondents to be an influence in the success of a number of MEPs, particularly so for women who had not necessarily risen through **party ranks** to be selected for candidate.

Women MEPs themselves reported a number of **characteristics** that they felt were important for securing a position on the list and for being elected. All MEP respondents reported that having a **successful career** and being well respected in their professional field was an important reason for their being selected by the party to run as candidate. MEP respondents all had high profile careers in different sectors including law, business and media. It was important, respondents said, to be **confident** with speaking in public and to be **analytical** in their approach to policy issues. Importantly, the MEPs reported, the support and agreement of close family members was a key prerequisite for running for office. *'Without my husband supporting me, it would be impossible to run'*. Two MEP respondents suggested that they had initially rejected the idea of running when they were asked by party officials because they were concerned about the demands that would be placed on their time, in particular that they might struggle to balance life in politics and the time needed to run campaigns with raising a family. This was particularly the problem with MEPs with **young children**. It was noted by all respondents that male MEPs do not tend to have concerns about this to the same degree. The support of family to assist with childcare was felt to be critical in allowing women to run and function as an MEP.

Respondents from both political party and MEPs themselves suggested that having a **strong network** of professional contacts and good reputation in their field allowed them both to gain the support of the central party and also in their campaigning. *'It helps that I was quite well known and respected in my field so I have a lot of contacts and interest in the media'* (female MEP). It was also reported by female MEP respondents that having the ability to connect on a personal level with voters and interest groups and being open and **communicative** was an essential skill. It was felt that, perhaps, this was a particularly strong skill in women.

#### 9.5.4. Influence of electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

The Maltese system deploys what appears to be, in some levels, a contradictory set of systems – an open list with a large single constituency. This means that candidates must **appeal to voters as individuals** but yet, they are unlikely to have **regional influence** or networks that might allow them to be known by voters. This system places a premium, many respondents reported, on candidates who are recognised by a broad number of voters and those with some **celebrity or national profile** are desired by the party.

The open list, large constituency model also shapes party strategies in selecting and supporting their candidates. Parties appeared to select and invest in candidates who have a high chance of yielding results. Thus, **'favoured' candidates** are selected. Many MEP and party respondents suggested that despite the open list system in which the position of the candidate on the list should not be a significant factor (as it is the candidates with the most number of votes from the electorate at large who then obtain seats), that not all candidates are supported in the same way by their political party. Moreover, it was felt, by these respondents, that certain candidates are 'championed' by the central party. This means, for example, that the favoured candidate will receive more **media attention** at the direction of the central party, will receive more support to tap into important local and national support networks and voters will have the impression that the candidate is the chosen representative of the party. Such 'favoured' candidates were identified by various respondents as being both male and female however, it was also noted that in order to qualify as 'favoured' the candidate must have a high public profile or a significant existing power base – both of which factors could advantage men over women in future elections.

Conversely, it was also suggested by some MEP and party respondents that the open list system presented an **opportunity** for successful women to **'break through'** party establishment patronage and win votes on the basis of having direct, national appeal. This was felt to be responsible for the high number of female candidates being finally elected, despite there being more men than women candidates in both parties.

There is a high degree of interest in European politics generally in Malta and competition for MEP roles was reported by all respondents to be high. The role of MEP is of particularly **high status and desirable**, certainly compared to national or regional politics, which are generally unpaid. Thus, party respondents reported that there is an abundance of applicants for inclusion on party lists. The introduction of female candidates by senior party officials was therefore a fractious and delicate task. It was felt by political party respondents that offering a candidacy to an applicant was a way of **'rewarding' loyal service** to the party, so that by including more women on the party list could mean denying candidacy to others. This was a difficult process to manage and an indication of the challenge associated with bringing in 'new' talent into party politics. The challenge was tackled for the 2014 elections, it was felt, because of a perceived mandate from the electorate following the defeat of the previous government, without which, it would not have been possible.

#### 9.5.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

There was only **minimal awareness** of specific actions taken at the European level, or by pan-European agencies to increase the number of female MEPs. However, a number of respondents from across different groups suggested that since Malta joined the EU on 2004, a motivation to improve gender balance, at least in European politics has arisen: *'There was an awareness that gender equality in politics is important and it would have*

*been embarrassing to have a low number of female MEPs so that helped to galvanize opinion and action towards getting more women on the list'* (political party respondent).

#### 9.5.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

All respondents reported that Malta has, generally, a traditional and **socially conservative electorate**, which was felt to be **resistant to women** functioning as political representatives. This was felt to account for the low proportions of women in the national parliament. The social conservatism is also reflected in the long number of years that Malta had the NP in government. The NP (EPP) is a socially conservative political party, which upholds many of the values of the Catholic Church. However, at the last general election in 2013, the NP did not obtain the majority and Malta returned a left leaning government of the MLP (S&D), with a large majority. It was felt that the general election results reflected a **new mood in Malta**, particularly shaped by young people, which challenges social conservatism and seeks to put in place a more inclusive society. NP respondents suggested that the results of the 2013 elections provided a clear signal to increase representation within their party of women and other candidates not traditionally represented. Thus, the 'new mood' within the country was felt to be a boost to women for the 2014 European Parliament elections.

Political party and NGO respondents suggested that despite a long tradition of social conservatism within the country, **women have also played a strong role** within Maltese society and have maintained strong influence in both families and communities. *'Maltese women, at least traditionally, tend to be matriarchs and also strong in business and the community'* (political party respondent). This role was felt to play out within political parties, in that women are very active as **volunteers** and organisers working in 'the background' of party activities but they are traditionally not found in the 'front' of the party as public politicians. This was felt by party respondents to be reflected in the low number of women in national politics. However, women's role in this sense was felt to be changing due to the results of the previous national election, which was felt to indicate the electorate wanted a change to traditional power structures. It was also felt across respondents groups that as women's role in Maltese society is changing more generally, for example, more women are entering the **labour market** and there are high numbers of female graduates. Consequently, women would become a stronger force within political parties.

MEP and NGO respondents suggested that the **media** had a powerful role to play in influencing women's willingness to enter into politics. It was felt that the media disproportionately focus on women politician's appearance and family responsibilities when reporting on campaigns. This perception directly discouraged women from agreeing to put themselves forward for election. Indeed, MEP respondents suggested that the media's approach to women in particular had **discouraged** them from running.

#### 9.5.7. Summary

Malta returned 4 women out of a total of 6 MEPs, which was felt to be a result of **changes to the political establishment** within the country following the defeat of the previous government in the last national elections. Thus, Malta had an opportunity to change some of the dynamics of internal party politics. However, the fact that it took such events to provide this opportunity is indicative of the strong challenge Malta's political parties faced in increasing the number of women candidates. Political party respondents spoke of cultural and attitudinal shifts within their party as being responsible for the increase in women MEPs.



Although there is a consensus across case study respondents that Maltese society is changing to become more socially liberal and inclusive, women still face a number of barriers in politics. These include sexist unfavourable **media coverage** of female politicians and constraints on women's time needed to run campaigns or to network within the party. The high number of female MEPs returned in 2014 was felt to be an encouraging result in that voters had given a sign that they are supportive of women politicians. However, it was also suggested across respondent groups that the result was not due to particular activities of the parties. Unless there is continued pressure within the parties to maintain the number of female MEPs, the result could easily be reversed, it was felt.

## 9.6. Poland

### 9.6.1. Overview: Results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Since Poland joined the EU in 2004, the percentage of female Polish MEPs has been **consistently lower** than the EU-wide average. After the first European elections after the accession, only 15% of MEPs from Poland were women, in 2009 this share increased to 22%, which was still below the European average. In 2014, for the first time, electoral lists to the EP had to meet a **35% gender quota**. As a result, the number of female candidates almost doubled compared to previous elections. In 2014, 44% of all candidates were women, while in 2009 electoral committees put up only 23% of female candidates. Even parties with less favourable attitudes towards women's presence on the electoral lists achieved a level of 40% female candidates in the EP 2014 elections. Moreover, the ultra-conservative parties, (including one whose leader claims that women should not have voting rights), had 42% of women on their lists. However, the share of women in first positions on the lists (20%) was much lower than the overall number of female candidates. The proportion of women on the first three list positions was a little greater but still much lower than proportions of men, (36% of women and 64% of men).

Polish women are significantly **underrepresented**, not only at the EU level, but also at the **national level** – only 24% of MPs are women in the Polish Sejm.<sup>18</sup> In this respect, it is interesting to note that Poland is one of only five EU Member States that currently sends a *smaller* percentage of women to the EP than to their respective national parliaments (23% compared to 24%). This situation stands in contrast to the EU-wide trend in which women tend to be more present at the European level than at the national level. Poland scores overall 44.1% out of 100 on EIGE's Gender Equality Index, below the EU-27 average of 54%.

### 9.6.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

According to opinion poll estimations, only 5 parties had a **chance to win** seats in the European Parliament in 2014. These were the governing Civic Platform (PO), which is a centre-right party with a liberal economic program, its main opponent PiS (ECR), which is a right-wing and conservative party, the Polish People's Party (PSL) which is a member of the governing coalition and a representative of agrarian interests, and two left-wing parties Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and relatively new on the political scene the TR.

Polish electoral law requires 35% of any underrepresented sex to be included on party lists otherwise the list is rejected. This **severe sanction** means that all parties applying the mechanism. However, parties are still able to fulfill the requirement yet still reject gender

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<sup>18</sup> Data: National Electoral Committee, 2011.

balance in reality. Thus, parties tend to place women on list positions that have lowest chances of success – either in districts that do not support that party or in the middle of the list.

The **quota** is the only formal action taken towards achieving gender balance by most of the Polish parties. In case of Your Movement (TR), which ran as a part of the coalition Europe Plus TR, formal parity was part of the coalition agreement. *'There was no such issue as the one that had been raised in the debate before introducing quotas to Polish electoral law, that women are not interested in running for office. We didn't have any problems with finding good female candidates in the EP elections'* (political party respondent). Consequently, the lists of TR to the European Parliament were composed of 50% of women and 50% of men. However, TR did not gain any seat in the European Parliament. In the case of the second left-wing party, the SLD (S&D), the coalition agreement on women's representation on the lists did not go further than the **Polish Electoral Code**, which requires 35% of female candidates. These were the only formal actions towards gender balance taken by 5 parties having chances to gain seats in the EP in 2014.

The governing party PO (EPP) has informal rules of putting at least one woman among the first three candidates on the list and two female candidates on first five positions. However, as this was only an **informal recommendation** of the executive board, it wasn't fully respected in all electoral districts. The other two main right wing parties PiS and PSL did not apply any special rules regarding gender balance.

**The lack of formal rules** does not mean that a party cannot act in favour of equal representation of women and men. The SLD, having no special rules in terms of position of women on the list, **reserved 50% of the so-called winnable seats** for women, for example. The **winnable positions** were estimated on the basis of the opinion polls in certain districts, which indicated the number of seats to be winnable by the party. The number of top positions on the list in this region corresponded to the number of estimated seats to be won by the party. The PO party also used an informal rule to place one woman in first three places and 2 women in first five places. POs female candidates obtained over 40% of all winnable positions. On the lists of PiS, women occupied only one fifth of the winnable positions. There were two parties that did not give any winnable positions to women. The first of them was the one with the smallest number of female candidates (PSL) and the second one had parity on its lists (TR). This shows that even progressive formal rules may not secure gender balance, if the party itself has no meaningful commitment to promote women in a **systemic way**.

MEP respondents were well aware of the role of parties even when formal rules are in place. Respondents repeatedly suggested that the **party-internal** selection process is the main battleground on which women have to fight for political success. The **position on the party list** is particularly important for securing a seat, particularly so at the EP election level because there are fewer seats to be won, compared to national elections.

No specific 'soft measures' taken by political parties in order to improve women's performance in the 2014 European elections were reported. However, it was reported that **women's sections** within political parties do initiate such activities. Of the five main Polish parties, only those on the political Left have established women groups: *Forum of Equal Chances and Women's Rights* in the SLD and *Women's Move* in TR. The latter have gained success by introducing parity on the electoral lists however it did not supervise the **implementation** of this rule. The *Forum* within SLD systematically makes effort to enact



parity and zipper mechanisms on electoral lists of SLD, yet without success so far. It also supports women to head the lists in certain districts, however in many cases these efforts are not supported by **party leaders** who tend to be male, according to party respondents.

An additional factor that seems to impact the position of female candidates from right-wing parties is the wish of the **party leadership** to appear inclusive towards women. However, the manner in which this is done was reported by one respondent to be less than inclusive. One respondent reported that a woman candidate was offered a position on a party list because the leadership decided that it would be good to have at least one 'attractive' woman on the list. Despite this, she was only allowed to run at the third list position because the first and second positions were already reserved for two well-known male politicians.

### 9.6.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

According to a number of respondents, the most important personal characteristic for a MEP candidate is the ability to make **alliances and connections** with already established, mostly male, networks within the party. While some parties have clearly regulated and made transparent the candidate selection process, others rely rather on informal and **ad-hoc methods** in order to establish their electoral lists. For example, one interviewee from a right-leaning party explained that, '*The party leaders decided who was going to be where on the list.*' However, most of the time it is not very clear to outsiders (and even some candidates themselves) how **decision-making power** is distributed within the selection boards.

Overall, respondents observed that the more regulated and transparent the party-internal candidate selection is, the less prone it will be to gender-based discrimination. Without such **formal and transparent** structures, it is possible for '**celebrity**' or high profile politicians, including those who have financial sway within a party, are able to replace another candidate on a list, which can disadvantage women who tend not to have networks of influence as strong as male colleagues.

Moreover, **subtle cultures** within political parties have an influence on women's political trajectories. According to one party respondent for example, women's political careers are perceived as a '**hobby**', while for men, it is considered as a professional job. Thus, according to this respondent, '*Investing financial resources for a man's political career is completely justified and reasonable, while putting money into women's electoral campaigns seem to be even more wasteful than spending money on clothes and jewellery.*'

The majority of respondents agreed that securing sufficient **financial support** for the election campaign is a crucial ingredient for electoral success. However, campaign financing – like the candidate selection process – typically exhibits a strong '**incumbency bias**'. For example, one interviewee observed that, '*as a candidate you have to invest a lot of time and money in your political career. This is a big obstacle for new politicians, since incumbents can use their working hours and administrative staff for campaigning activities.*' Another MEP respondent noted that in some Polish parties there are unofficial rules requiring new candidates to 'buy' their positions on the electoral list: '*If you are a new politician you often have to 'invest' in the party by bringing a certain amount of money or safe votes to the table; only then will you get a 'winnable' position on the party list.*' Another party respondent indicated that around 80% of campaign **financing comes from the candidates themselves**, or from their relatives and friends.

Providing campaign finance may be a **particular barrier** for women. According to one party respondent for example: *'In every country in the European Union there is a gender pay gap and a gender wealth gap. This gap is especially big for women of older generations because of the shorter time spent in the labour market'*.

Respondents stressed the importance of **party-internal quotas** and ranking regulations for overcoming a systematic bias against female candidates in the selection process. One party respondent argued that without regulations the selection process would *'always be to the disadvantage of women'* due to the fact that candidate selectors *'favour incumbents and these incumbents tend to be men'*.

Other respondents highlighted **'personal abilities'** and **'support bases'** were the decisive factors in candidates' success and, in some cases, respondents suggested that personal ability was the only real consideration, thus minimising the impact of gender-discrimination. Nevertheless, these same respondents also often mentioned a good relationship with a (male) party leader as a decisive factor in the candidate selection process. Indeed, the existence of a male **'mentor' or 'patron'** in the party leadership is often an important determinant of how well female candidates will be positioned on the party list.

**Courage and trust** were highlighted as important factors for candidates. One party respondent suggested that some **younger women** *'do not have enough courage and trust in their own abilities to fight for a winnable list position'* and that, *'fear of failure prevents many female candidates from putting themselves forward'*. In the same line, an MEP respondent suggested that women politicians need to overcome their own ingrained **'mental barriers'** if they want to be successful. With reference to her positioning on the electoral list, she reported that, *'a man would have had higher expectations and demanded more for himself. We limit ourselves.'*

The unwillingness of many Polish women to engage in politics means that political parties sometimes **struggle to fulfill the requirements** of their own gender quotas. For example, one party respondent suggested that, *'for progressive parties it can become difficult to find enough willing female candidates from within the party to meet the requirements of the high quota and the zipper system'*. She suggested that the reason for this is that progressive political parties have generally **failed to train and recruit** enough new female politicians. As a result, her party had to turn to civil society activists, particularly from the Polish women's movement, in order to **fill the gap**. Similarly, another party respondent admitted that her party had to *'find, court and convince women'* to run in the EU elections so that her party would meet the legislated quota requirement of 35%.

#### 9.6.4. Influence of ballot/electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

The proportional electoral system in the Polish law requires electoral committees to ensure at least 35% of candidates of underrepresented sex on the electoral lists. It affects to a great extent parties' strategies for improving gender balance. Most parties are **convinced that the 35% quota is enough** and they do not need to apply any additional measures. Even when such measures are applied, their implementation is not fully realised in many cases.

#### 9.6.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

No respondent reported an impact from the EU level campaigns towards gender balance in the 2014 EP elections. In the 50/50 campaign there was no implementing or associate partner based in Poland, so the campaign was **not visible** in the Polish public sphere.

#### 9.6.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

In terms of the influence of social attitude towards women politicians, MEP respondents reported a perception that the **media tends to be hostile** towards female candidates more than male. For example MEP respondents reported that a fear of smear campaigning is an important factor that may deter women from running for office. For example, one MEP respondent reported that, during her campaign for the EU elections, she was **subject to rumours about her personal life**. She felt that this type of targeting is **not experienced by male politicians**.

Overall, MEP respondents **did not consider the media as an ally** and were not interested in developing their campaign through media channels. Whilst this could be interpreted as an opportunity lost, these respondents calculated that as there is low coverage of European elections anyway, it is not worth the effort of courting a media that is perceived to be hostile.

#### 9.6.7. Summary

In Poland female MEP candidates not only have to overcome their individual barriers such as lack of **self-confidence** in their political abilities, they are also confronted with significant gender-specific obstacles when it comes to campaign financing and the candidate selection process. The lack of resources becomes a key challenge for women, whose position on the **labour market** is still worse than men.

With regard to gender inequality in the candidate selection process, **transparency and formalisation** are the two main factors that could allow women to be successful participants in politics. Party-internal regulations such as quotas or the 'zipper system' can go a long way in overcoming the gender-specific barriers faced by women during the candidate selection process. Without clear selection rules, female candidates risk being sidelined by networks within the male political establishment.

## 9.7. Spain

### 9.7.1. Overview: Results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Since 2004, the number of women MEPs from Spain has **increased by 15%**. Spain scores overall a 54% out of 100 on the EIGE's Gender Equality Index.

For the European elections, Spain has only one national constituency for the whole territory and a system of closed lists. Thus, parties select the candidates and the order on the candidate lists. Certain parties are national such as the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the People's Party (PP) and others only cover the interests of a specific region (e.g. Catalunya, Basque Country). The national parties are **organised differently** in order to gain the interest of the local voters. For example, the Socialist Party is organised in federations such

as the Andalusian and Catalan that have certain autonomy from the national board and can influence the direction of the whole party<sup>19</sup>. Although PP has regional delegations, its structure is more hierarchical and centralised but can have discordant opinions by territories.

Spanish voters are used to voting in 12 different constituencies when it comes to national elections. Thus, the party needs to balance the order to **represent local and regional** interest when running for the EP.

Spain's organic law 3/2007 modified the Spanish electoral law (embodied in the 1978 Constitution) in favour of gender equality. 'Article.44.bis' stipulates that for any kind of election – including the European, the candidate lists must have **a balanced presence** of both genders. Neither gender should exceed 60%, grouped by sections of five candidates. This rule does not apply to towns with less than 3000 inhabitants in local and national elections. Furthermore, not only lists but also internal party bodies such as committees or federal executive need to comply with the legal quota<sup>20</sup>.

Overall, Spain achieves the **40% legal quota** for any gender in terms of candidates but there are significant **differences between parties**. Apart from the two main parties (PP, PSOE) which have their own lists and clear guidelines for gender balance, it is difficult to categorize small Spanish parties' performance in elections due to their geographical nature and the cross party alliances that they build. In order to understand these smaller parties' results in terms of gender balance, it is necessary to analyse the results by party list rather than by the different political affiliations and coalitions they form, as these change from one election to another.

#### 9.7.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

PP has a **passive attitude** towards gender balance and women's inclusion in politics, preferring not to use quotas beyond the **legal minimum**. Party respondents suggested that positive action is perceived as contrary to the principle of meritocracy and that gender quotas may reduce the overall quality of candidates. The party has a 'women and equalities' section, which advocates on gender equality issues such as gender violence or women's entrepreneurship but it has little influence in the way the party organises candidate lists.

PSOE uses a **zipping system** to ensure there is parity in party lists, although when the result returns odd-numbers of seats (as in 2009) parity cannot be achieved. The PSOE has pioneered using different gender balance policies since the late 1980's. They promote **total parity** not only in the candidate list but also in other bodies of the party such as Committees and the federal organs. The party has also a 'gender equality secretary' that oversees gender issues. The party implements the principle of gender mainstreaming in order to address inequality between men and women at any level of the party.

PP does not use formal party quotas. To fulfil legal quotas, the party fixes the list according to a tacit 3 / 2 (of either gender) zipped system by sections of 5 candidates, to achieve the 40% quota. Analysis of the PP list reveals that in each section of 5 candidates, there are 3 males and 2 females. PP allocated a man as a head of the lists. By using this system the party has reinforced disparity between female and male candidates.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.psoe.es/ambito/estructura/docs/index.do?action=View&id=97575>

<sup>20</sup> For further information on Spain's electoral process see <http://resultados.elpais.com/elecciones/2014/europeas/>

Some of the political forces that constitute the coalition Plural Left Party such as IU and ICV (both affiliated to GUE/NLG) use **quotas** to construct their lists. In the candidate list for the EP elections in 2014, the party had more women than men. IU, for example, has implemented the 'gender balance principle' in their **statutes** since 1997 in order to have at least 50% of women in the internal bodies and delegations. The party also implements the principle of parity for the electoral list – women have to take all the even or odd places, and at least 40% of women in the final composition of the Parliamentary groups – either national or European.

Podemos uses a zipping system in their candidate list. UPyD (ALDE) does not have statutory quotas and the party has significantly more men in the list than women (only 40%). Despite this, 50% of its MEPs were women in 2014.

**Minority coalitions** return low numbers of MEPs and, as they position men on the top of their list, women are far less likely to be elected from within these parties<sup>21</sup>.

### 9.7.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

Women MEP respondents suggested a number of **personal challenges** in being an MEP and running for election. It was seen as critical that women have the support of close family members to assist with **childcare** as well as agreement by their partner or husband to share family responsibilities.

The reconciliation of personal and political life is a key consideration for women MEPs in securing success and the European level. Women reported the need to have adequate arrangement for childcare in place but, according to MEP respondents, this is not so much of an issue for male politicians, as it is assumed that female partners will fulfil childcare duties. In addition, women must be able to stand up to and challenge **latent sexist attitudes** within political parties, it was reported. For example, MEP respondents suggested that women are frequently asked how they will balance political and family life during candidate selection processes, whereas men are not asked the same question. Additionally, women MEPs may have to work harder to demonstrate their abilities compared to men: *'Equality will be reached the day that an ignorant woman could take the place of an ignorant man'* (political party respondent).

### 9.7.4. Influence of ballot/electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

The main parties in Spain select MEP candidates through a very **hierarchical** and centralised process by which central committees have influence over the final composition of candidate lists. This is partly due to the constituency nature of the European election, which means there is little involvement of regional party structures.

For example the PP, when it comes to national elections, is more likely to recruit a 'charismatic' candidate or someone with a **high profile nationally**. By contrast, at the

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<sup>21</sup>Coalitions such as Citizens (C's), Left Coalition 'Right to decide' (EPDD), which integrates among others the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC) and the New Catalan Left (NECat); and the Coalition for Europe (CEU), which integrates the Catalan and Basque nationalist right-wing parties such Democratic Convergence of Catalonia (CDC) and Basque Nationalist Party (PNV);

European level, the party seeks candidates that can provide **expertise** required for the work in the European Parliament such as agriculture, immigration or security. Because the main goal of the party is to win the elections, it starts the recruitment process in order to obtain the best candidates for every specific area of expertise. Party respondents suggested that the party does not work in first instance to secure gender balance but to attract the candidates with the **most suitable knowledge** areas. Once the 'best' candidates are chosen, the party arranges the list with the 3/2 zip system in order to fulfil the Spanish legal quota.

In the PSOE, regional and national committees have decision-making influence over the candidates list.

#### 9.7.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

There was very **little awareness** of the work of the EWL 50/50 campaign for gender balance in decision making across respondent groups.

#### 9.7.6. Influence of social attitudes and media coverage of female MEPs

Media coverage of female MEPs was reported by one MEP respondent to be **disproportionately negative**, compared to coverage for male politicians. Even though there is less attention given by the media to European politics, compared to national politics, unfair negative attention given to female MEPs could serve as a deterrent to women running and also to their chances of success in elections.

Women may be disadvantaged in the Spanish media not just in terms of the **quality of the coverage but also quantity**. For example, quantitative research conducted in 2013<sup>22</sup>, which examined coverage in the Catalan media of male and female politicians found that only 21.9% of coverage (for example interviews or debate) is given to women.

#### 9.7.7. Summary

The key **enabler** for women being elected as MEP has been the introduction of national gender **quotas**. However, whilst this has improved gender balance at the macro level, gender imbalance in party lists is still a problem.

Verge (2014) argues that a 'simple' **quota solution cannot automatically** address informal sources of male power in party organisations. This finding is corroborated by the present case study. Men still retain a larger share of power through a variety of **informal institutions** such as control in party meetings and informal networking. Moreover, parties use the legal quotas in different ways, some simply to ensure a minimum whilst others stretch their gender balance goals beyond these targets. It is mainly the conservative or right-leaning parties in Spain that take a minimal approach to gender quotas, compared to left leaning parties which are more proactive in their application of the law. Consequently, on some lists, the share of female candidates does not exceed 40%. The legal quota has also failed to encourage parties to place women on high list positions.

Minority parties integrated in coalitions contribute to an increased the gender gap by selecting male candidates for the **top of the list**. The Spanish rules dictate that if these

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<sup>22</sup> [http://www.cac.cat/pfw\\_files/cma/actuacions/Continguts/i29\\_2013\\_INFORME\\_DIVERSITAT\\_I\\_DONES.pdf](http://www.cac.cat/pfw_files/cma/actuacions/Continguts/i29_2013_INFORME_DIVERSITAT_I_DONES.pdf)



kinds of parties obtain only 1 to 3 seats then quotas do not apply – only sections of 5 candidates are subject to a 40% quota of any gender.

List selection processes for the European elections are **centralised and opaque**. This presents barriers to improving the gender balance on lists because selection processes are made behind closed doors and away from the influence of regional parties.

## 9.8. Sweden

### 9.8.1. Overview: results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

Sweden has a traditionally **strong track record** on gender equality. It scored 74.3% on the EIGE's GEI, one of the highest scores in the EU – compared to 54% for the EU overall.

Sweden has 20 seats in the European Parliament, which are elected from one national constituency. MEPs are elected using a mixed ballot system which combines elements of an open list - whereby voters are able to express a preference for individual candidates rather than parties as a whole - as well as elements of a closed system in which voters vote only for a party. Thus, **party list position** is a relevant factor in determining the gender balance among Sweden's MEPs. National gender **quotas** for the selection of party candidates for European elections **do not exist**. In 2014, 11 elected MEPs out of the 20 seats were female, thus Sweden has more than 50% female MEPs.

### 9.8.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

Across political parties in Sweden, gender equality is seen as an important feature in politics, which must be protected. This reflects parties' perceptions that the electorate's desire also to see a fair balance in terms of gender amongst its politicians. However, only a **minority of parties deploy the use of quotas**. This likely reflects a perception from within parties that gender equality is strong within Swedish society generally which also translates into equality between men and women participating in party politics. However, party respondents from across the parties suggested that whilst there may be reasonable gender equality in terms of candidates and MEPs there are still other ways that women are **discriminated against within parties**. These are generally referred to as '**glass ceilings**' within parties. Glass ceilings are perceived barriers to women from rising up inside the party hierarchies, even after they have been elected, preventing their involvement in important committees or meetings. It was reflected that the glass ceiling could be a result of a degree of complacency within political parties that gender equality has 'been addressed'. *'It is a surprise to many male politicians and party officials when women party members talk to them about the glass ceiling and the need for strategies to include women at all levels. They think that gender equality is not an issue'* (party respondent).

Only three political parties in Sweden deploy a party-originated quota: Social Democrats (S) that uses a zipper system to secure parity on their list, the Green Party (MP) which has a gender parity quota and the Left Party (V) which also has a gender parity quota. However, the use of quotas is not felt, by party respondents, to be necessary to secure sufficient numbers of women in politics but rather, for those parties that do use them, to maintain **gender balance for women as well as for men**. *'In Sweden, we generally have greater acceptance of gender equality throughout our society so quotas are not really needed for women, if anything, they are used to make sure there are enough men'* (political party respondent).

In response to the 'glass ceiling' in politics that was reported by a number of party respondents, a number of strategies were identified for addressing it. It was considered important, according to one party respondent, for women within the party to maintain an **informal strategy** to keep pressure on the party to consider gender equality in their work and processes. These strategies involve developing language to describe the ways that gender inequalities may be maintained and that women in politics are able to easily articulate the reasons why gender equality should be addressed. Another strategy is to build solidarity between women involved in the party so that, for example, women recommend other women for posts that come up within the party hierarchy. *'In politics so many decisions are made off the table and often women are not involved in these inner circle discussions'* (Political party representative). The way to maintain equal numbers of women MEPs within this context is thus to maintain a consistent pressure on the **party culture** so that gender equality remains a priority. Another party respondent identified more formal ways that the party maintains gender equality within the party. For example, the party officials work closely with **local selection committee** members to share knowledge and advice about how to improve gender representation. Another example provided is the restriction placed on the amount of terms MEPs may serve, restricted in one case to 2 terms in office. This was felt necessary to ensure that new people are introduced into party politics and to provide opportunity to address any imbalances in terms of gender, or other, representation.

#### 9.8.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

Across all respondent groups, a number of **personal characteristics** and experiences were identified as important for women MEPs. In addition to being **analytical** and **confident**, it was reported important for women to have **experience and prestige** within a field of expertise or profession. This seemed to be more of an important consideration for women compared to men as it was felt women might not be so entrenched in party networks, compared to men. It was felt that women might be more inclined to be involved in politics at the **community level**, often through campaigning on specific issues. In some cases, MEP candidates were not existing party members when they were approached by the party to consider running. Thus, for women, an important route to party politics is through non-party political action or professional activities, which attract the attention of parties.

Building networks of local support throughout the party organisation was also reported to be important for securing a position on the party list and also for raising candidates' profiles during their campaign. Female MEP respondents reported having strong networks built through **professional and party life**, were essential to secure a successful campaign. Women MEPs from across the parties, according to respondents, had to be adept at balancing family life and **caring responsibilities with demands of their political careers**. This was felt to be discriminatory because men were not challenged as often on how they would maintain this balance in the same way as women were. Once in Brussels, MEPs had to develop strategies for childcare which usually involved relying on close family members for support, without which, it would be difficult for them to continue as an MEP.

#### 9.8.4. Influence of ballot/electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

Sweden deploys a mixture of an open and closed list system. The party is able to place candidates in rank order however; voters are also given the opportunity to vote for



individuals as well as the party. In this way, as with one female MEP respondent, candidates who may be fairly low on the party list may increase their list position by appealing directly to voters. This system means that not only is it important for candidates to secure the support of their party but also to **develop appeal directly** to voters.

In addition, as Sweden has only one constituency which, therefore, covers a large (national) geographical area, **list rank position is particularly important** as individuals cannot rely on their local power bases and networks to build support. Thus, candidates must rely on **networks of volunteers**, personal contacts and party officials throughout the country to improve their chances of gaining press coverage and also to be given a 'good' list position in the first place, as party members vote on list position. This system presents both opportunities and challenges for women candidates. Its impact on gender balance is unclear, however. A potential risk is that women may not have as advanced networks as men to rely on, if they do not have similar professional profiles.

#### 9.8.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

There was **minimal awareness** of actions at the EU level to improve gender balance and decision making in the European Parliament. This was felt across respondents to be due to a perception that Sweden is largely successful and not in need of much external assistance in respect of gender balance.

#### 9.8.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

Respondents from across groups maintain that Sweden has a **high degree of gender equality** and general support from within its population for gender balance in different aspects of life. However, a number of respondents from both NGOs and MEPs themselves pointed to subtle ways that gender imbalances in politics are reproduced. These are mainly through a **tacit and widespread acceptance** that women will take responsibility for the majority of care work to the extent that women politicians are more likely to consider the impact of a political career on their family life than men are. Whilst not overt discrimination, a number of respondents feared that they might be 'judged', including by other women, for choosing a political career when they also have a family. This was due in part to media coverage that was felt to be more critical of women politicians compared to men. This perception was felt to influence women in their decision to run for political office and may discourage a number from that course.

Another way that may inhibit women in political life is women's own **lack of belief in their own abilities**, which was felt to be a reflection of long held social attitudes that do not identify women as politicians. For example, it was reported by one party respondent that men generally seek higher office or more responsibility compared to women because they are more likely to have self-confidence.

#### 9.8.7. Summary

Sweden has a **good track record** in terms of gender balance in European Politics. It has achieved this despite the uncommon use of quotas for party lists. To a large extent, that gender balance largely accomplished for Sweden's MEPs is a reflection of a broader commitment within Swedish society to gender equality. This means that party processes, language and cultures are **more amenable to arguments for gender equality**. It also means that women may be more likely to be involved in influential positions within parties. However, challenges remain. Chief among these is the perceived glass ceiling within political parties, which restrains women from achieving higher office within parties, even if

they are elected. Thus, gender balance in the number of elected representatives is not sufficient to ensure that power is shared equally between men and women in European Politics. The glass ceiling effect must be **continuously challenged**; it was reported by respondents across groups, in order not only to avoid depreciation in women's power base but also to increase it.

## 9.9. United Kingdom

### 9.9.1. Overview: results of the 2014 EP election from the perspective of gender balance

The United Kingdom scored 60.4% on EIGE's GEI, compared to 54% for the EU on average. The UK deploys a first past the post system in its national elections.

The UK has **73 seats** in the European Parliament. It elects MEPs through a closed list system in which seats are allocated according to candidates' places on political parties' lists. Thus, **list rank order** is a critical factor in determining candidates' chances of success of being elected as an MEP. In 2014, 30 of the 73 elected MEPs (41%) were women. This included 11 from the Labour party; 6 from the Conservative Party; 1 from the Liberal Democrat Party (LDP); 1 from Sinn Fein (SF), 3 from the Green Party (GP); 7 from United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and one from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

### 9.9.2. Attitude and actions towards gender balance by political parties

All parties have a **stated commitment** to inclusivity and gender equality within their party; however, there is a strong, traditional resistance to measures that are perceived as positive discrimination within both the Conservative (affiliated to EPP) and LDP (affiliated to ALDE) parties, which joins a commitment to allow regional parties to make decisions with little interference from central party officials. There is also, within the Conservative and LDP party a long held belief that **positive discrimination** – which many party members consider gender quotas to be – is in **opposition to meritocratic** principles through which anyone is thought to be able to succeed within the party regardless of gender, race or ability.

Of the three main political parties, Labour, Conservative and LDP, only Labour deploys a **gender quota** which is a commitment to give 50% of winnable seats to women. Labour achieves this by using a **zipper system** in which males and females are allocated alternatively on regional party candidate lists. Having a zipped system means that regional parties must identify suitable candidates to fill the list, and at least 50% of these should be women. Regional parties, encouraged by the Labour Party central office, therefore actively seek high quality women candidates, typically from their existing membership base. The Labour Party has traditional links with the **Trade Union movement** and Trade Unions are also active in promoting and supporting candidates when they compete for places on the regional party lists as well as when candidates run their campaigns. The Trade Union movement has a tradition of promoting gender equality within its own membership and leadership and so has been active in promoting a number of women candidates. This involves in some cases, **offering support** with printing campaign publications or providing help with **accommodation** during campaigns, which often involves considerable travel within regions.

The LDP party previously used the zipping system in its development of party lists but this process was abandoned and was not in place in the 2014 election. Party respondents from

across parties reported that gender balance in terms of candidates could be improved through the use of the zipping system.

The Conservative Party has no structural system in place to deliver gender balance within their lists. It does have a **women's section** within the party, which advocates for the greater inclusion of issues that affect women and also seeks to promote women candidates.

#### 9.9.3. The role of individual MEPs/candidates' personal characteristics and strategies in succeeding in elections

Respondents from across parties and NGOs stressed a number of skills and qualities that were necessary for MEPs both as candidates and as legislators. These skills include the ability to **communicate** across a wide section of the population, **knowledge of European policy** and key party issues and commitment to the party values. Women MEP respondents also suggested that the ability to communicate and forge personal connections with voters and party members at the local level was a skill that may be more available to women compared to men. In particular, male politicians who are part of the party establishment may not have developed the ability to **connect with local voters** or party officials because they have had not to develop a power base from the ground up. On the one hand, this demonstrates that women may have more opportunity than men to develop local power bases, on the other hand, it demonstrates that women may have to invest much more time and effort to creating their power bases compared to men who can rely on their networks.

Female MEP and party respondents reported that it is particularly important to have the support and backing of **close family members**. In particular, candidates and MEPs with young children were reported to need close relatives to share childcare responsibilities so that they could fulfil their campaigning and political duties.

#### 9.9.4. Influence of ballot/electoral system on parties' and candidates' strategies for improving gender balance

Party respondents reported that the relatively low appeal among party members, across parties, of the role of an MEP was a key challenge within European Parliament elections. Consequently, party officials had difficult times in **attracting sufficient numbers of candidates** willing to run. Furthermore, given that there are fewer women than men generally who are willing to put themselves forward to begin with, the '**talent pool**' for women MEP candidates to fill all list positions was felt to be smaller than that of men. Besides, the size of lists is also a problem. As the election is organised by regions, each with relatively few numbers of seats, in some areas, only the candidate at the top of the list is likely to have a reasonable chance of winning the election. This means that other candidates on the list run their campaign with very little chance of winning. This results in very low levels of interest in being a candidate for list positions that are not at or near the top.

Moreover, regional parties for all of the main political parties are responsible for deciding the contents and rank order of their election lists; and even where a zipping system is used, only the candidate at the **top of the list** is likely to win an election. Very often, the party will chose a man at the top of the list because he is well known to the local party. **Regional parties tend to be very resistant** to directions from central party offices as to which candidates should be at the top of their lists. In addition, incumbent MEPs are usually placed at the top of the party list. As there are more men than women MEPs, this situation also means that women are less likely to be at the top of the list.

#### 9.9.5. Impact of EU level campaigns for gender balance

There was only **minimal understanding** of the role and impact of EU level action to improve gender balance in decision-making, across all respondents. National debate and political party actions around gender balance in politics was felt to be more important than EU level actions. In particular, given that Conservative and Liberal parties have established moral standpoints against positive action to secure gender balance, any encouragement to adopt such measures would be strongly resisted.

#### 9.9.6. Influence of social attitudes towards female MEPs including media coverage

One party respondent highlighted the growing importance of **social media** in election campaigns. It was suggested that even candidates who are low profile, low on party lists and unlikely to be elected, had the **capacity to attract media attention** through social media posts. Whilst this was seen as a **hazard for political parties** – particularly if the candidate posted a message that was contrary to the party view – it also suggests a potential opportunity for women candidates. Social media may be used to increase their presence amongst voters and local party officials, including those who vote on party list order.

It was also reported, across respondent groups, that subtle forms of latent 'sexism' still exist within parties to the extent that women are expected to face child care problems, whereas men are not. These attitudes are pervasive in society and reflected in party attitudes; they were reported to contribute to glass ceilings within political parties also. NGO respondents highlighted the importance of challenging such **subtle sexism** within parties so that discriminatory social attitudes are not replicated in party politics.

#### 9.9.7. Summary

The key challenge for gender balance among the UK's European Parliament representatives is the lack of women being placed at the **top of party lists**. Even where zipper systems are used, unless a woman is at the top of the list, a woman is unlikely to be elected in many regions. Women are generally not placed at the top of lists because of old party hierarchies, particularly within the three main UK parties, which have long histories and strong establishments but from which women have traditionally been rather excluded than encouraged to participate in.

However, women have been elected to the European Parliament in greater proportions than to the national parliament at Westminster. Women have been successful where they have secured high positions on party lists. They have done this through great effort in building up **local power bases** and personal connections particularly within and around regional parties.

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## APPENDIX 1: EUROPE LEVEL DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

All European Countries

Parliamentary seats 750

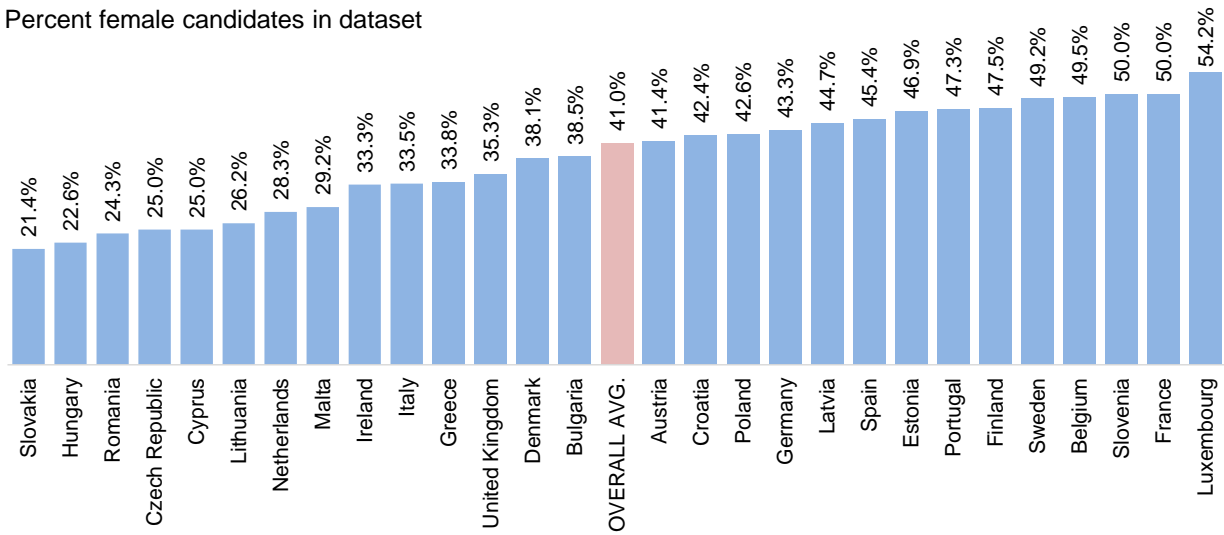
Candidates in dataset 4,073

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Frequency	%	% elected	
<b>Elected</b>	Yes	535	13.1%		
	No	3,538	86.9%		
<b>Sex</b>	Male	2,403	59.0%	13.9%	
	Female	1,670	41.0%	12.0%	
<b>System type</b>	Closed	1,710	42.0%	<b>Male</b> 15.1%	<b>Female</b> 14.3%
	Mixed	1,544	37.9%	11.3%	7.3%
	Ppen	819	20.1%	16.1%	17.2%
<b>Quota type</b>	Whole list zipped	849	20.8%	11.9%	9.8%
	Top of list zipped	99	2.4%	24.0%	4.1%
	% quota for whole list	1,441	35.4%	13.2%	11.1%
	Other	467	11.5%	13.6%	11.4%
	No quota	1,217	29.9%	15.2%	16.8%
<b>Quota percent</b>	Unknown	467	11.5%	13.6%	11.4%
	0%	1,217	29.9%	15.2%	16.8%
	20%	20	0.5%	13.3%	0.0%
	25%	11	0.3%	33.3%	50.0%
	30%	32	0.8%	34.8%	44.4%
	33%	291	7.1%	12.6%	11.9%
	35%	781	19.2%	6.7%	3.0%
	40%	110	2.7%	26.3%	30.2%
	50%	1,144	28.1%	15.9%	11.7%
<b>Incumbent</b>	Yes	422	10.4%	57.7%	62.8%
	No	3,651	89.6%	8.3%	7.1%

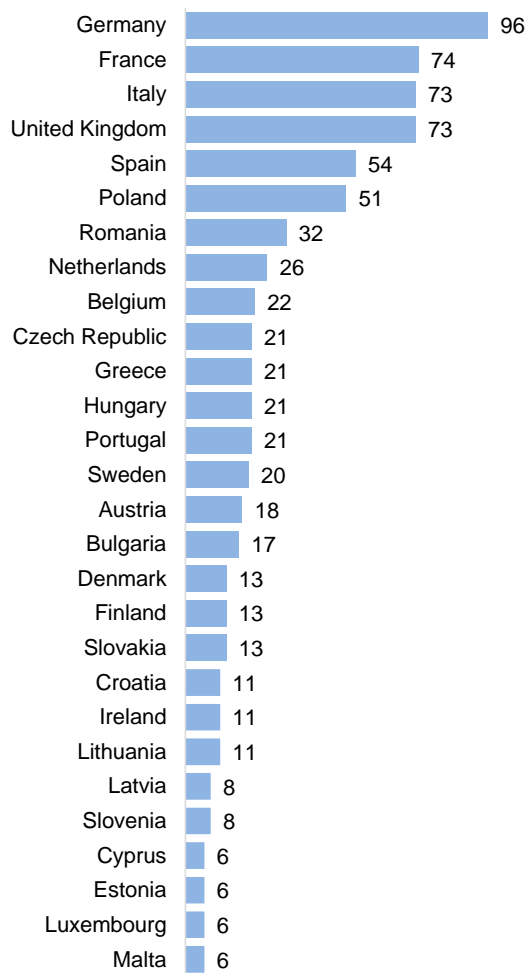
Note: Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

Note: the dataset shows only 532 candidates being elected (out of the real number of 750 MEPs in the European Parliament). This is because the dataset used was a sample of the total of candidates who stood for election to the EP.

Percent female candidates in dataset



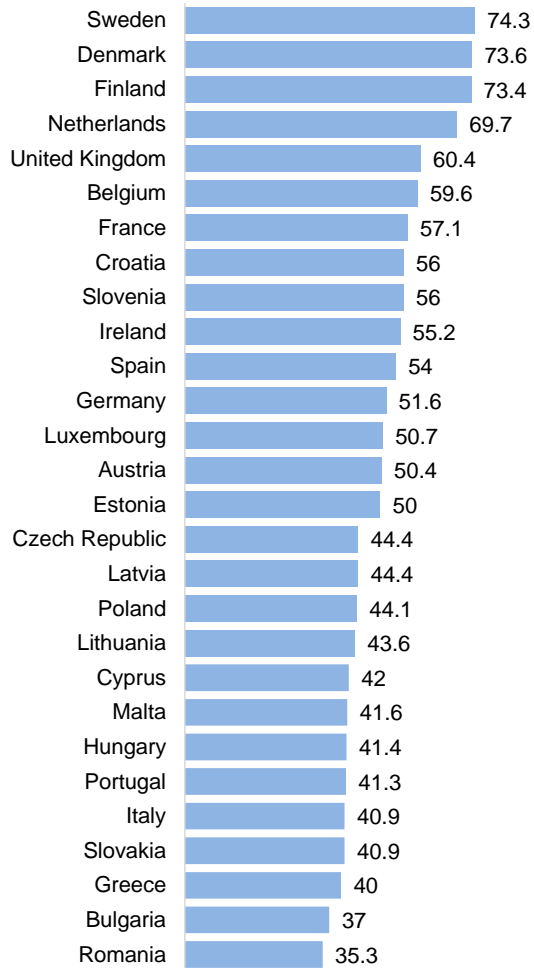
Total seats in European Parliament per Member State 2014





## **APPENDIX 2: EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

### **GENDER EQUALITY INDEX (OVERALL) SCORES FOR MEMBER STATES 2010**



Note: The score for Croatia was not available so an assumption score was used in the analyses, based on similar Member States.

## APPENDIX 3: COUNTRY LEVEL DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

<b>Austria</b>						
Equality index		50.4				
Type of system		mixed				
Parliamentary seats		18				
Candidates in dataset		70				
Variable			Univariate		Multivariate	
			Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes		18	25.7%		
	no		52	74.3%		
Sex	male		41	58.6%	26.8%	
	female		29	41.4%	24.1%	
System type	closed		0	0.0%		
	mixed		70	100.0%	26.8%	24.1%
	open		0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped		0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped		0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)		30	42.9%	46.7%	40.0%
	other		0	0.0%		
	no quota		40	57.1%	15.4%	7.1%
Quota percent	unknown		0	0.0%		
	0%		40	57.1%	15.4%	7.1%
	20%		0	0.0%		
	25%		0	0.0%		
	30%		0	0.0%		
	33%		10	14.3%	60.0%	40.0%
	35%		0	0.0%		
	40%		10	14.3%	60.0%	40.0%
	50%		10	14.3%	20.0%	40.0%
Incumbent	yes		13	18.6%	75.0%	80.0%
	no		57	81.4%	15.2%	12.5%

Note: Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Belgium</b>					
Equality Index	59.5				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	21				
Candidates in dataset	99				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	14	14.1%		
	no	85	85.9%		
Sex	male	50	50.5%	24.0%	
	female	49	49.5%	4.1%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	99	100.0%	24.0%	4.1%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	99	100.0%	24.0%	4.1%
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	99	100.0%	24.0%	4.1%
Incumbent	yes	7	7.1%	80.0%	50.0%
	no	92	92.9%	17.8%	2.1%

Note: Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Bulgaria**

Equality index	37
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	17
Candidates in dataset	39

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	11	28.2%		
	no	28	71.8%		
Sex	male	24	61.5%	29.2%	
	female	15	38.5%	26.7%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	39	100.0%	29.2%	26.7%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	39	100.0%	29.2%	26.7%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	39	100.0%	29.2%	26.7%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	6	15.4%	33.3%	33.3%
	no	33	84.6%	28.6%	25.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Croatia**

Equality index	56
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	11
Candidates in dataset	33

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	9	27.3%		
	no	24	72.7%		
Sex	male	19	57.6%	26.3%	
	female	14	42.4%	28.6%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	33	100.0%	26.3%	28.6%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	11	33.3%	42.9%	25.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	22	66.7%	16.7%	30.0%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	22	66.7%	16.7%	30.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	11	33.3%	42.9%	25.0%
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	8	24.2%	75.0%	75.0%
	no	25	75.8%	13.3%	10.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Cyprus**

Equality index	42
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	6
Candidates in dataset	24

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	4	16.7%		
	no	20	83.3%		
Sex	male	18	75.0%	16.7%	
	female	6	25.0%	16.7%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	24	100.0%	16.7%	16.7%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	12	50.0%	11.1%	33.3%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	12	50.0%	22.2%	0.0%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	12	50.0%	22.2%	0.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	12	50.0%	11.1%	33.3%
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	4	16.7%	50.0%	50.0%
	no	20	83.3%	12.5%	0.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

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**Czech Republic**

Equality index 44.4  
 Type of system open  
 Parliamentary seats 21  
 Candidates in dataset 44

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	12	27.3%		
	no	32	72.7%		
Sex	male	33	75.0%	27.3%	
	female	11	25.0%	27.3%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	44	100.0%	27.3%	27.3%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	11	25.0%	33.3%	50.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	33	75.0%	25.0%	22.2%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	33	75.0%	25.0%	22.2%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	11	25.0%	33.3%	50.0%
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	13	29.5%	45.5%	50.0%
	no	31	70.5%	18.2%	22.2%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Denmark</b>					
Equality index	73.6				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	13				
Candidates in dataset	42				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	12	28.6%		
	no	30	71.4%		
Sex	male	26	61.9%	23.1%	
	female	16	38.1%	37.5%	
				Male	Female
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	42	100.0%	23.1%	37.5%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	42	100.0%	23.1%	37.5%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	42	100.0%	23.1%	37.5%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	5	11.9%	66.7%	50.0%
	no	37	88.1%	17.4%	35.7%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex



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**Estonia**

Equality index	50
Type of system	closed
Parliamentary seats	6
Candidates in dataset	32

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	4	12.5%		
	no	28	87.5%		
Sex	male	17	53.1%	11.8%	
	female	15	46.9%	13.3%	
System type	closed	32	100.0%	11.8%	13.3%
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	32	100.0%	11.8%	13.3%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	32	100.0%	11.8%	13.3%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	3	9.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	no	29	90.6%	12.5%	15.4%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Finland**

Equality index	73.4
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	13
Candidates in dataset	139

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	12	8.6%		
	no	127	91.4%		
Sex	male	73	52.5%	8.2%	
	female	66	47.5%	9.1%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	139	100.0%	8.2%	9.1%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	139	100.0%	8.2%	9.1%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	139	100.0%	8.2%	9.1%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	14	10.1%	42.9%	42.9%
	no	125	89.9%	4.5%	5.1%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>France</b>					
Equality index	57.1				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	74				
Candidates in dataset	746				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	67	9.0%		
	no	679	91.0%		
Sex	male	373	50.0%	10.5%	
	female	373	50.0%	7.5%	
System type	closed	746	100.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%	10.5%	7.5%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	746	100.0%	10.5%	7.5%
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	746	100.0%	10.5%	7.5%
Incumbent	yes	36	4.8%	73.7%	70.6%
	no	710	95.2%	7.1%	4.5%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Germany</b>					
Equality index	51.6				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	96				
Candidates in dataset	60				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	40	66.7%		
	no	20	33.3%		
Sex	male	34	56.7%	64.7%	
	female	26	43.3%	69.2%	
System type	closed	60	100.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%	64.7%	69.2%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	10	16.7%	100.0%	100.0%
	other	30	50.0%	63.2%	90.9%
	no quota	20	33.3%	50.0%	30.0%
Quota percent	unknown	30	50.0%	63.2%	90.9%
	0%	20	33.3%	50.0%	30.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	10	16.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Incumbent	yes	43	71.7%	83.3%	84.2%
	no	17	28.3%	20.0%	28.6%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Greece</b>					
Equality index	40				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	21				
Candidates in dataset	210				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	9	4.3%		
	no	201	95.7%		
Sex	male	139	66.2%	4.3%	
	female	71	33.8%	4.2%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	210	100.0%	4.3%	4.2%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	210	100.0%	4.3%	4.2%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	210	100.0%	4.3%	4.2%
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	8	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	no	202	96.2%	4.4%	4.5%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Hungary</b>					
Equality index	41.4				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	21				
Candidates in dataset	62				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	16	25.8%		
	no	46	74.2%		
Sex	male	48	77.4%	25.0%	
	female	14	22.6%	28.6%	
System type	closed	62	100.0%	25.0%	28.6%
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	20	32.3%	13.3%	0.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	42	67.7%	30.3%	44.4%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	42	67.7%	30.3%	44.4%
	20%	20	32.3%	13.3%	0.0%
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	10	16.1%	100.0%	66.7%
	no	52	83.9%	12.2%	18.2%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Ireland**

Equality index	55.2
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	11
Candidates in dataset	15

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	5	33.3%		
	no	10	66.7%		
Sex	male	10	66.7%	30.0%	
	female	5	33.3%	40.0%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	15	100.0%	30.0%	40.0%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	15	100.0%	30.0%	40.0%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	15	100.0%	30.0%	40.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	8	53.3%	33.3%	50.0%
	no	7	46.7%	25.0%	33.3%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex



<b>Italy</b>					
Equality index	40.9				
Type of system	open				
Parliamentary seats	73				
Candidates in dataset	364				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	50	13.7%		
	no	314	86.3%		
Sex	male	242	66.5%	14.0%	
	female	122	33.5%	13.1%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	364	100.0%	14.0%	13.1%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	73	20.1%	42.9%	35.5%
	other	291	79.9%	8.0%	5.5%
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	291	79.9%	8.0%	5.5%
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	73	20.1%	42.9%	35.5%
Incumbent	yes	48	13.2%	28.2%	66.7%
	no	316	86.8%	11.3%	8.8%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Latvia**

Equality index	44.4
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	8
Candidates in dataset	38

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	6	15.8%		
	no	32	84.2%		
Sex	male	21	55.3%	14.3%	
	female	17	44.7%	17.6%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	38	100.0%	14.3%	17.6%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	38	100.0%	14.3%	17.6%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	38	100.0%	14.3%	17.6%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	6	15.8%	33.3%	66.7%
	no	32	84.2%	11.1%	7.1%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Lithuania</b>					
Equality index	43.6				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	11				
Candidates in dataset	42				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	10	23.8%		
	no	32	76.2%		
Sex	male	31	73.8%	29.0%	
	female	11	26.2%	9.1%	
				Male	Female
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	42	100.0%	29.0%	9.1%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	10	23.8%	16.7%	25.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	32	76.2%	32.0%	0.0%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	32	76.2%	32.0%	0.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	10	23.8%	16.7%	25.0%
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	6	14.3%	100.0%	50.0%
	no	36	85.7%	18.5%	0.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

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**Luxembourg**

Equality index	50.7
Type of system	mixed
Parliamentary seats	6
Candidates in dataset	24

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	6	25.0%		
	no	18	75.0%		
Sex	male	11	45.8%	36.4%	
	female	13	54.2%	15.4%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	24	100.0%	36.4%	15.4%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	18	75.0%	37.5%	20.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	6	25.0%	33.3%	0.0%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	6	25.0%	33.3%	0.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	6	25.0%	66.7%	33.3%
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	12	50.0%	20.0%	14.3%
Incumbent	yes	4	16.7%	100.0%	
	no	20	83.3%	0.0%	15.4%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Malta**

Equality index	41.6
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	6
Candidates in dataset	24

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	6	25.0%		
	no	18	75.0%		
Sex	male	17	70.8%	11.8%	
	female	7	29.2%	57.1%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	24	100.0%	11.8%	57.1%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	24	100.0%	11.8%	57.1%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	24	100.0%	11.8%	57.1%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	3	12.5%	100.0%	100.0%
	no	21	87.5%	6.3%	40.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

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**Netherlands**

Equality index	69.7
Type of system	open
Parliamentary seats	26
Candidates in dataset	99

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	20	20.2%		
	no	79	79.8%		
Sex	male	71	71.7%	18.3%	
	female	28	28.3%	25.0%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	99	100.0%	18.3%	25.0%
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	13	13.1%	14.3%	33.3%
	other	11	11.1%	20.0%	16.7%
	no quota	75	75.8%	18.6%	25.0%
Quota percent	unknown	11	11.1%	20.0%	16.7%
	0%	75	75.8%	18.6%	25.0%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	13	13.1%	14.3%	33.3%
Incumbent	yes	13	13.1%	77.8%	75.0%
	no	86	86.9%	9.7%	16.7%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Poland</b>					
Equality index	44.1				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	51				
Candidates in dataset	781				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	40	5.1%		
	no	741	94.9%		
Sex	male	448	57.4%	6.7%	
	female	333	42.6%	3.0%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	781	100.0%	6.7%	3.0%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	781	100.0%	6.7%	3.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	781	100.0%	6.7%	3.0%
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	36	4.6%	36.7%	33.3%
	no	745	95.4%	4.5%	2.4%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Portugal</b>					
Equality index	41.3				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	21				
Candidates in dataset	55				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	17	30.9%		
	no	38	69.1%		
Sex	male	29	52.7%	37.9%	
	female	26	47.3%	23.1%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	55	100.0%	37.9%	23.1%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	55	100.0%	37.9%	23.1%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	55	100.0%	37.9%	23.1%
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	10	18.2%	83.3%	75.0%
	no	45	81.8%	26.1%	13.6%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex



<b>Romania</b>					
Equality index	35.3				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	32				
Candidates in dataset	70				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	19	27.1%		
	no	51	72.9%		
Sex	male	53	75.7%	22.6%	
	female	17	24.3%	41.2%	
System type	closed	70	100.0%	22.6%	41.2%
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	20	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	50	71.4%	12.8%	36.4%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	50	71.4%	12.8%	36.4%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	20	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	17	24.3%	80.0%	71.4%
	no	53	75.7%	9.3%	20.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Slovakia</b>					
Equality index	40.9				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	13				
Candidates in dataset	42				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	9	21.4%		
	no	33	78.6%		
Sex	male	33	78.6%	18.2%	
	female	9	21.4%	33.3%	
System type	closed	42	100.0%	18.2%	33.3%
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	42	100.0%	18.2%	33.3%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	42	100.0%	18.2%	33.3%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	10	23.8%	66.7%	75.0%
	no	32	76.2%	7.4%	0.0%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Slovenia</b>					
Equality index	56				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	8				
Candidates in dataset	40				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	6	15.0%		
	no	34	85.0%		
Sex	male	20	50.0%	15.0%	
	female	20	50.0%	15.0%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	40	100.0%	15.0%	15.0%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	8	20.0%	0.0%	25.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	32	80.0%	18.8%	12.5%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	32	80.0%	18.8%	12.5%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	8	20.0%	0.0%	25.0%
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	5	12.5%	66.7%	50.0%
	no	35	87.5%	5.9%	11.1%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

**Spain**

Equality index	54
Type of system	closed
Parliamentary seats	54
Candidates in dataset	216

Variable		Univariate		Multivariate	
		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	36	16.7%		
	no	180	83.3%		
Sex	male	118	54.6%	17.8%	
	female	98	45.4%	15.3%	
System type	closed	216	100.0%	17.8%	15.3%
	mixed	0	0.0%		
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	0	0.0%		
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	81	37.5%	22.0%	30.0%
	other	135	62.5%	15.6%	5.2%
	no quota	0	0.0%		
Quota percent	unknown	135	62.5%	15.6%	5.2%
	0%	0	0.0%		
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	81	37.5%	22.0%	30.0%
	50%	0	0.0%		
Incumbent	yes	31	14.4%	61.1%	46.2%
	no	185	85.6%	10.0%	10.6%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>Sweden</b>					
Equality index	74.3				
Type of system	mixed				
Parliamentary seats	20				
Candidates in dataset	181				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	16	8.8%		
	no	165	91.2%		
Sex	male	92	50.8%	8.7%	
	female	89	49.2%	9.0%	
System type	closed	0	0.0%		
	mixed	181	100.0%	8.7%	9.0%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	33	18.2%	12.5%	17.6%
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	78	43.1%	7.9%	5.0%
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	70	38.7%	7.9%	9.4%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	70	38.7%	7.9%	9.4%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	111	61.3%	9.3%	8.8%
Incumbent	yes	3	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	no	178	98.3%	8.9%	9.1%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex

<b>United Kingdom</b>					
Equality index	60.4				
Type of system	closed				
Parliamentary seats	73				
Candidates in dataset	482				
		Univariate		Multivariate	
Variable		Freq	%	% elect.	
Elected	yes	61	12.7%		
	no	421	87.3%		
Sex	male	312	64.7%	11.2%	
	female	170	35.3%	15.3%	
System type	closed	482	100.0%	Male	Female
	mixed	0	0.0%	11.2%	15.3%
	open	0	0.0%		
Quota type	whole list zipped	70	14.5%	28.1%	28.9%
	top of list zipped	0	0.0%		
	quota (not zipped)	0	0.0%		
	other	0	0.0%		
	no quota	412	85.5%	9.3%	11.4%
Quota percent	unknown	0	0.0%		
	0%	412	85.5%	9.3%	11.4%
	20%	0	0.0%		
	25%	0	0.0%		
	30%	0	0.0%		
	33%	0	0.0%		
	35%	0	0.0%		
	40%	0	0.0%		
	50%	70	14.5%	28.1%	28.9%
Incumbent	yes	52	10.8%	60.0%	76.5%
	no	430	89.2%	5.1%	8.5%

*Note:* Multivariate column shows the probability of a candidate being elected by sex



## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

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