



Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan

PIPPA NORRIS AND MONA LENA KROOK
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
AND WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST LOUIS

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Baseline study for the OSCE/ODIHR *Handbook on Measures to Promote Women's Participation in Political Parties*.

Front page photo: A participant speaks at the closing ceremony of the tenth Belgrade Open international parliamentary debate tournament jointly organized by the Open Communication Universities Debating Network and the OSCE Mission to Serbia, Belgrade, 7 March 2011.

Credit: OSCE/Milan Obradovic

This study was commissioned by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The opinions and information it contains do not necessarily reflect the policy and position of the ODIHR.

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I. Executive summary

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has repeatedly stressed the importance of ensuring equal rights of men and women; accordingly, participating States have agreed to take all actions necessary to promote equally effective participation of men and women in political, economic, social and cultural life.¹ The equal enjoyment of human rights is essential for women to participate fully in all spheres of public and private life, as citizens, activists and leaders. The goal of strengthening gender balance in legislatures is of particular importance for democracy and social justice. 2010–2011 is an important time to reflect on progress, as it marks the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), aimed at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural, and political decision-making.²

Beyond the issue of women's rights, persistent gender disparities matter for several other reasons. Firstly, legislative careers serve as a springboard to higher political office. Thus, political parties without adequate representation of women in elected office find it difficult to appoint women as ministers, party leaders, or heads of state and government. Political parties are often referred to as the gatekeepers of democracy. As gatekeepers, political parties can influence the level of women's political participation as members as well as candidates, thereby directly contributing to more representative political processes. Direct or indirect gender-based discrimination in political party legislation as well as in internal party procedures can create a barrier to women's participation. This is particularly so where such provisions impact on women's opportunities to be nominated as candidates and elected as representatives, or affect women's access to internal political party decision-making, campaign financing or other party resources. Where political parties fail to embrace women as valuable political actors in their own right, women's chances of gaining higher elected office become even more remote.

Secondly, women in parliaments can also have a substantive effect upon the policy agenda.³ The OSCE region continues to face many major challenges in achieving gender equality in education and the labour market, in social policies, healthcare, and reproductive rights, as well as in the home and care of dependents.⁴ Women in Central and Eastern European states have particularly serious problems arising from domestic violence, sex trafficking, and economic restructuring.⁵ When public policymakers seek to address these complex challenges, the inclusion of women's voices broadens the range of diverse experiences, interests, and expertise brought into parliamentary debates. This process widens the information and viewpoints available in deliberation about public policies.

Thirdly, more inclusive parliaments which reflect all sectors of society are symbolically important for the legitimacy and quality of these representative bodies. The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments is a common yardstick used to judge broader progress towards gender equality in public life. This indicator has been adopted to monitor how far the world's governments will have achieved the 2015 targets set by the Millennium Development Goals.⁶

Lastly, more inclusive parliaments also have the capacity to strengthen civic engagement and democratic participation among the general electorate; female leaders serve as role models who mobilize women as citizens, party members, and political activists.⁷ The empowerment of women in elected office can thus strengthen democracy and provide a more effective voice for articulating women's interests.

The worldwide record of women in high-level decision-making offices demonstrates continuing challenges. Globally, women held 19.3 per cent of seats in single/lower chambers of parliament in September 2010, compared to 11.3 per cent in 1995. Yet only 26 countries worldwide have achieved the 30 per cent target for women in decision-making positions set by the 1995 Beijing Platform. Women leaders are even rarer in the top decision-making posts: today only 19 women are heads of state or government around the globe, although this number reflects a substantial increase since 1995. In spite of advances, discrimination against women persists in law and in practice. Many countries have now passed positive action initiatives but the effective implementation and enforcement of these remains an issue.

Within the OSCE region, by mid-2010 women constitute one fifth (22 per cent) of all members of national parliaments, up from 15 per cent in 2000.⁸ Yet major contrasts are evident among participating States. Women have now almost reached parity among members of parliament (MPs) in Sweden, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Belgium, while they remain less than one in ten parliamentarians in Turkey, Malta, Georgia, and Ukraine. Trends since 1995 also show important cross-national differences among OSCE participating States, with remarkable improvements in the proportion of women as legislators in states as diverse as Belgium, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Lithuania, Moldova, and Spain, whilst others have lagged behind with minimal or no growth, exemplified by the situation observed in Georgia, Hungary, the Russian Federation, and Slovenia.

Why have some OSCE participating States registered substantial and sustained gains in moving towards gender equality in elected office in recent decades, while progress elsewhere has stagnated? The most common explanations emphasize the impact of political culture, human development, and formal institutional structures.⁹ While all are important, the diffusion of egalitarian attitudes towards women and men, improvements in human development, and societal modernization are long-term processes which take decades or longer to alter. Traditional cultural attitudes, and the lack of education and literacy for girls and women, can serve as important constraints for achieving gender equality in any society. Yet it is difficult to identify effective policy instruments with the capacity to transform these conditions in the short-term.

In contrast, the arena most amenable to intervention by parliaments, parties, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerns the *institutional context* determining the process of candidate recruitment for gaining entry into parliamentary careers. Candidate recruitment is made up of sequential stages, starting from the broad context of constitutional rights through to the successive steps to entry into elected office (see Appendix I). Figure 1 below identifies a Six-Step Action Plan, a series of fast-track strategic interventions which can contribute towards the attainment of gender equality in elected office, in a 'nested' model. Each of the six

strategies can be a starting point for action, taking into consideration the variety of different political and electoral systems and traditions in place.

Figure 1: Six-Step action plan to promote gender equality in elected office



Constitutional rights

Guarantee equal rights for women and men, including rights to the voting suffrage and to candidate nomination



Electoral system

Reform the type of electoral system; proportional representation with large district magnitudes maximizes opportunities for women



Legal quotas

Review laws regulating candidate recruitment processes for all parties; the use of reserved seats for women members or gender quotas for candidates generally expand women's representation



Party rules and recruitment procedures

Review internal candidate recruitment processes within each party; adopt fast track strategies in party rulebooks and regulations to achieve gender equality for nominated candidates



Capacity development

Strengthen the skills and resources of women in the pipeline for elected office, with initiatives by parties, the media and NGOs, including knowledge networks, mentoring programs, skills training and funding for women candidates



Parliamentary reform

Reform the rules and internal procedures within parliament, including the facilities and working conditions, hours of sitting, principles for leadership recruitment, and provision of childcare facilities

- **Constitutional rights:** Political rights and civil liberties for women embodied in the national constitution establish the broadest context for gender equality, especially rights to vote, to hold public office, and to exercise public functions, removing any residual forms of sex discrimination or limits to equal citizenship.¹⁰ More broadly, constitutional provisions guaranteeing gender equality and/or prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex and gender provide an important framework for more specific political and civil provisions on equality.
- **Electoral systems and party laws:** In turn, the laws governing elections and political parties regulate the nomination and election processes used for national, supra-national, and sub-national elected office. The most important feature is the type of electoral system used in any contest, whether proportional representation, mixed, or majoritarian, each providing different incentives and opportunities for the party's electorate engaged in candidate recruitment. Other features of electoral systems shaping women's representation include the use of reserved seats, the use of open or closed party lists, the average size of district magnitude, the provision and allocation of party and campaign funding, the use of incumbency term limits, ballot access nomination rules, and threshold requirements shaping opportunities for minor parties and independent candidates.
- **Legal quotas:** During the last decade, particular attention has been paid to the use of legal quotas designed to fast-track women's nomination and election to legislative office, as well as for civil service and judicial recruitment. Legal quotas vary in the level of women's representation they require, whether they specify any placement provisions, which institutions – if any – monitor their implementation, and whether they include any penalties for non-compliance.
- **Party rules:** In addition, political parties have their own internal rules and standardized procedures for the recruitment and selection of candidates for elected office. Effective strategies by parties for the increased recruitment of women include the adoption and implementation of party-specific gender quotas, informal targets, and other positive action mechanisms at all levels of office, including for internal party positions.
- **Capacity development:** Multiple actors can contribute towards capacity development, including international agencies, women's ministries, government gender equality commissions and equal opportunity agencies, political parties, and women's groups and networks in civil society. A diverse range of initiatives are designed to build the capacity of the pool of potential women leaders in the pipeline, to strengthen the skills, experience, and knowledge of women once they enter elected office, as well as to address broader issues of institutional capacity-building. These interventions can be categorized in terms of three distinct but overlapping threads: *equal opportunity initiatives* (candidate training, recruitment initiatives, and knowledge networks), *initiatives to combat stereotypes and raise awareness* (media campaigns and citizen education), and *political party initiatives* (women's sections, fundraising, and women's parties).
- **Gender-sensitive rules and procedures in elected office:** Lastly, legislative bodies are organized around a set of standardized rules, operating procedures, and institutional facilities which may generate obstacles to the equal inclusion of women in all decision-making and leadership roles. Elected bodies should review their internal procedures to ensure that there are gender-sensitive policies in place, such as considering the hours of parliamentary sitting, the recruitment of leadership positions within the legislature, and the provision of childcare and maternal facilities.

When selecting measures designed to strengthen gender equality in elected office, there is no single ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution that is suitable for all national contexts. Instead, the most effective strategies for change depend upon specific political conditions. For example, states in the early stages of peace-building, emerging from deep-rooted deadly conflict, or transitioning away from autocracy, are presented with an important opportunity to incorporate women’s rights into new constitutional agreements. Through this process, countries such as Rwanda, Iraq, and Afghanistan have leaped ahead of other countries in their regions in terms of women’s representation in their national parliaments.¹¹ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the transition to peace provided an opportunity to introduce legal quotas through electoral law reforms. Similarly, other states implementing major electoral reforms, or establishing new decentralized forms of governance, can incorporate effective provisions for women’s representation as part of this larger reform process. In many long-established democratic states where the constitutional arrangements are more settled, opportunities for reform may arise through campaigns favouring the adoption of legal quotas, reforms within specific parties concerning the internal rules used for candidate recruitment, emergence of capacity development initiatives for prospective candidates, and changes to the rules and procedures affecting elected bodies. Even in the absence of National Action Plans, political parties should be encouraged to develop and publish their own Party Action Plans designed to ensure gender equality in elected office, with clearly specified performance targets and goals.

To provide an assessment of opportunities for enhancing women’s political participation across the OSCE region, this report sets out the general picture of women’s representation in OSCE participating States and reviews the impact of each of the institutional strategies discussed above in the Six-Step Action Plan. Evidence is derived from cross-national comparisons among OSCE participating States, from public opinion surveys, and from ‘before’ and ‘after’ case studies. The study focuses in particular upon selected exemplars which illustrate the positive impact of each of these strategies, illuminating how measures were introduced and why some strategies have proved more successful and effective than others. The study concludes by considering the next steps in developing a *Handbook on Measures to Promote Women’s Participation in Political Parties* and what other information could be collected for this purpose. Where this baseline analysis explores the ‘menu of options’ of different measures available to government and political actors to enhance women’s political participation, the *Handbook* will provide strategies for putting these measures into action through practical incentives, attention to sequencing, and options tailored to different political and electoral systems.

II. Trends in women's representation in elected office in OSCE participating States

Understanding the need for and impact of these various types of interventions to increase women's representation in elected office requires first benchmarking the general patterns and trends observable worldwide and within the OSCE region.

The most straightforward indicator of progress towards gender equality in political representation comes from comparing the proportion of women currently elected to the lower house of the national parliament in each country (as of November 2010). When interpreting the historical data, some caution is necessary. Descriptive representation in elected office is not equivalent to women's empowerment, by any means, especially in autocracies where weak legislatures and assemblies lack the capacity and authority to check and scrutinize the executive or governing party. Under state socialism, the Communist Party mobilized separate women's organizations and efforts were made to ensure that legislative bodies contained women through the use of loose quotas or guidelines for candidate selection. Nevertheless real power remained in the upper ranks of the party, such as the Central Committee or Politburo, where far fewer women held office.¹² The inclusion of women in elected office is one step towards the broader goal of women's empowerment. However, even in largely ceremonial parliamentary bodies, the symbolic inclusion of women has some importance, as well as providing women members with experience in office.

As Figure 2 below illustrates, among OSCE participating States today there is considerable variance in women's representation. The Scandinavian countries are among leading nations in this regard, as has commonly been observed for decades, where today roughly four out of ten members of parliament are female. Nevertheless, among the other leading nations a wide range of other types of societies can be observed, which in Europe include Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, and Andorra. In Central and Eastern Europe, today women are also relatively well represented in the parliaments of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Belarus, as well as Kyrgyzstan and Moldova. By contrast, many countries lagging in this regard are also in post-communist states*, including the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Romania, Armenia,

* In this report the authors refer to "post-Communist" and "Western European" states to denote two geographical regions. The distinction is used solely to highlight general trends in women's political representation and participation.

Hungary, Ukraine, and Georgia. Similar cross-national patterns can be observed for other indices of gender equality in elected and appointed office: the proportion of women serving in the lower house is significantly associated with the proportion holding ministerial office, as well as representation in the upper house in countries with bicameral legislatures.¹³

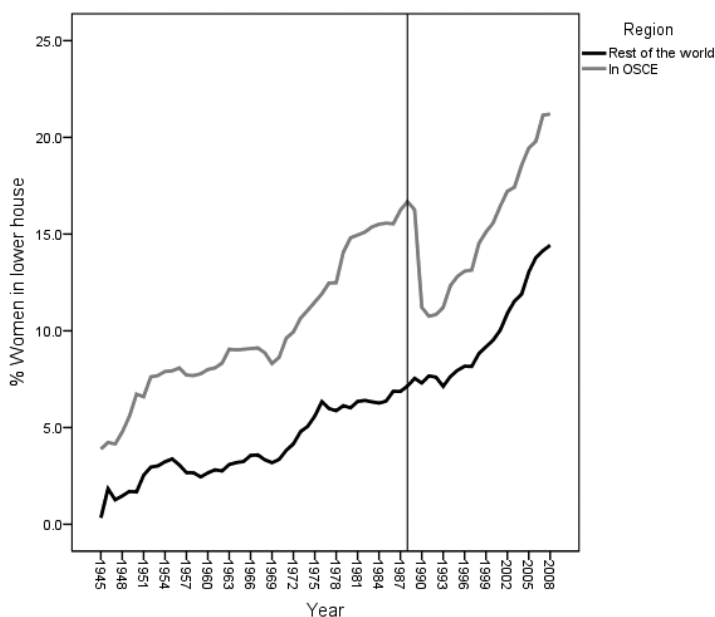
What has changed over time? Turning to long-term trends, the global rise in women's representation in the lower house of national parliaments, illustrated in Figure 3, displays steady incremental growth during the era since the end of World War II, albeit from a low base and at a slow pace of growth. The proportion of women in parliaments in the rest of the world outside of the OSCE region remained 5 per cent or less during the 1950s and 1960s, rising glacially by one or two per cent per decade until 2000, when there was a sharp jump upwards. If the increase in the proportion of women in elected office is maintained at the level evident since 1985 (0.20 per cent per annum), without any policy intervention, a simple linear projection estimates that it would take more than a century and a half for women parliamentarians to achieve parity with men. Despite the important gains over time, today women remain only a fifth of all legislators worldwide. This indicates that most countries are still far from fulfilling the pledge demanding equality for women and men in decision-making positions made by the UN Beijing Platform more than a decade ago. Women also continue to lag behind in other elected and appointed positions of political leadership, as heads of state and government, ministers, parliamentary speakers, and party leaders.¹⁴ Women in elected office are in the pipeline for higher leadership positions, and thus election to national parliaments has important consequences for gender equality in other key decision-making roles.

Figure 2: The proportion of women in the lower house of parliament, 2010



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database 2010, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

Figure 3: Trends in women's representation, 1945–2008, World

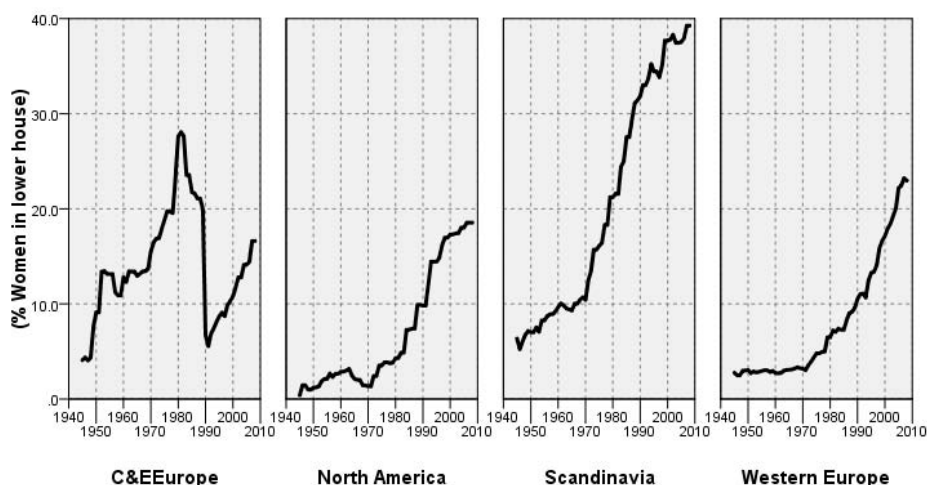


Note: The proportion of women in the lower or single house of parliament, 1945–2008.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

From 1945 until the late-1980s, the gradual rise in women's representation within the OSCE region thus reflects parallel developments found in many other regions and countries around the globe. By contrast, the dramatic and precipitate plunge downwards which occurred in women's representation in the OSCE region during the early-1990s is quite unique and contrary to worldwide trends observed in other developing and industrialized states. Understanding this pattern requires comparing sub-regions and the divergent trends affecting different OSCE participating States (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Trends in women's representation, 1945–2008, OSCE Sub-Regions



Note: The proportion of women in the lower or single house of parliament, 1945–2008.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

In Central and Eastern Europe, women's representation in national parliaments rose sharply during the era of state socialism and Communist party rule, from the end of World War II until 1989, peaking at around one third of all elected members. It should be emphasized, as noted earlier, that the inclusion of women in these bodies was more symbolic than substantive, since real power lay elsewhere in the regime.¹⁵ Nevertheless, reflecting their egalitarian principles, state socialist regimes also achieved a relatively positive record for female education and labour force participation, especially for women in the service sector, as well as for implementing generous welfare, reproductive, and employment policies.¹⁶ Communist parties exercised a hegemonic grip over the candidate recruitment process, and in common with other left-wing parties, their ideology favoured gender equality.¹⁷

The end of the Soviet Union during the early 1990s was followed by a precipitate crash in the number of women in elected office across the region, occurring during the transition from Communist party rule to multiparty competitive elections. The momentous events surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall in the transition from communism and the early stages in the processes of democratization opened new opportunities for free and fair competitive elections and more independent parliaments, but women leaders were suddenly marginalized again in the region. The rate of decline varied across countries, however, as did the degree to which women's representation recovered during subsequent years.¹⁸

This sudden fall during the transition process in post-communist states is striking, especially when set against contrary trends evident in many other transitions to democracy. This development is most commonly attributed to public opinion. In particular, notions of party quotas favouring women candidates are thought to have proved unpopular, since they were regarded (rightly or wrongly) as part of the communist regime, and thus essentially undemocratic.¹⁹ At the same time, much of the support for this claim remains anecdotal and there is a lack of systematic comparative survey data about regional attitudes towards gender quotas. The evidence which is available amongst post-communist societies from successive waves of the World Values Survey demonstrates considerable cross-national variations in attitudes towards gender equality, in politics as well as in the workplace and the home, even among those countries with similar levels of economic development and cultural traditions.²⁰ The role of cultural attitudes is further examined later in the report.

By contrast, among OSCE participating States in Western Europe and even more so in Scandinavia, the proportion of women in elected office has risen steadily since the early 1970s. Thus on average in Scandinavian nations, women were about one in ten members of national parliaments in the 1970s, with this figure quadrupling today. Similar trends, although at consistently far lower levels, are evident in North America as well.

Breaking these trends down by country, Table 1 shows the considerable variance evident among OSCE participating States as a whole. Within established democracies, substantial and steady growth in women's representation over several decades since the early 1970s is evident in places such as Switzerland, Spain, and Austria. By contrast, sharper sudden rises are found in recent years in Belgium and the Netherlands, suggesting the impact of fast-track strategies. Countries of Central and Eastern Europe have even greater differences over time and more erratic and volatile trendless fluctuations in the proportion of women in elected office, suggesting greater incumbency turnover and more fluid political institutions, exemplified by the situation in Romania, Poland, and Hungary.

Table 1: % Women in lower house of national parliament, OSCE participating States 2000–2010

	2000	2005	2010	Change	Legal quotas	Party quotas
Andorra	7	29	36	29		
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	8	19	33	25	Legal	
Kyrgyzstan	1	0	26	24	Legal	
Belarus	10	29	32	22		
Liechtenstein	4	24	24	20		
Turkmenistan	0	16	17	17		
Tajikistan	3	18	19	16		
Belgium	23	35	39	16	Legal	
Croatia	8	22	24	16	Legal	
Spain	22	36	37	15	Legal	
Moldova	9	22	24	15		Party
Uzbekistan	7	18	22	15	Legal	
Serbia	7	8	22	14	Legal	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7	17	19	12	Legal	
Albania	5	7	16	11	Legal	
Greece	6	13	17	11		Party
Italy	11	12	21	10		Party
Bulgaria	11	22	21	10		
Portugal	19	21	27	9	Legal	
France	11	12	19	8	Legal	
Iceland	35	33	43	8		Party
Cyprus	5	16	13	7		Party
Czech Republic	15	17	22	7		Party
Poland	13	20	20	7		Party
Kazakhstan	11	10	18	7		
Slovenia	8	12	14	7	Legal	
Switzerland	23	25	29	7		Party
Russian Federation	8	10	14	6		
Armenia	3	5	9	6	Legal	
Montenegro	5	10/6*	11	6		
Latvia	17	21	22	5		
Estonia	18	19	23	5		Party
Turkey	4	4	9	5		Party
Netherlands	36	37	41	5		Party
Romania	7	11	11	4	Legal	
Monaco	22	21	26	4		
Sweden	43	45	46	4		Party

United Kingdom	18	20	22	4		Party
United States	13	15	17	3		
San Marino	13	17	17	3		
Luxembourg	17	23	20	3		Party
Norway	36	38	40	3		Party
Finland	37	38	40	3		
Slovakia	13	17	15	3		Party
Ireland	12	13	14	2		
Germany	31	32	33	2		Party
Lithuania	18	22	19	2		Party
Canada	21	21	22	1		Party
Austria	27	34	28	1		Party
Hungary	8	9	9	1		Party
Denmark	37	37	38	1		
Ukraine	8	5	8	0		Party
Malta	9	9	9	-1		Party
Azerbaijan	12	13	11*	-1		
Georgia	7	9	7	-1		Party
Mean	15	20	23	8	15	25

Source: Compiled data from Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>.

Note: Montenegro held early parliamentary elections in October 2002, where women won 5 of 75 seats (6 per cent), a decrease from the 8 of 77 seats (10.6 per cent) won by women in the April 2001 parliamentary elections.

(Source: OSCE/ODIHR: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/montenegro>)

* Percentage calculated before the November 2010 elections in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan now has 20 women parliamentarians, totaling 16 per cent. (Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>)

The net percentage change in the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament is greatest in a wide range of societies and regimes, including the most substantial growth from 1995 to 2010 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova, among post-communist states, as well as in Belgium, Spain, and Portugal in Western Europe. The laggard states, registering persistently low levels of female representation during the last twenty-five years, are similarly varied, including Hungary, Slovenia, and Ireland. Some Scandinavian countries which have achieved relatively high levels of female representation also seem to have peaked at this level, suggesting a ceiling effect as countries start to reach gender parity in parliamentary office, with minimal gains over the last twenty-five years in Norway, Sweden, and Finland.²¹ It is notable, as discussed later in this report, that among the twenty OSCE participating States registering the sharpest growth in the proportion of women in parliament during the last decade, at the top of Table 1, half had introduced legal quotas. By contrast, among the twenty OSCE participating States lagging behind in growth, at the bottom of Table 1, none had implemented legal quotas.

Crucially, the gender inequalities in elected office are far greater than the size of any residual gender gaps in the electorate. Table 2 shows the patterns of women and men's reported voter turnout in recent national elections, derived from the World Values Survey 2005–7. The table shows that any gender gap in grassroots participation varies by size and direction; hence more

women than men report casting a ballot in countries such as the Russian Federation, Finland, and the United Kingdom. By contrast, this pattern is reversed in some other places, such as Switzerland and Cyprus. Moreover, longitudinal evidence over successive elections suggests the size of any turnout gap has gradually shrunk or even reversed in many countries.²² Thus any residual disparities among elites cannot be attributed to lack of civic engagement among women in the electorate.

Table 2: Mixed gender gaps in voting turnout, 2005

Nation	% Men	% Women	Voting gender gap
Switzerland	79	72	-8
Cyprus	89	84	-5
Slovenia	74	70	-4
Romania	91	88	-3
Germany	82	79	-3
Serbia	75	73	-2
Sweden	87	85	-2
Netherlands	76	74	-2
Italy	90	89	-1
Canada	75	75	0
France	76	77	0
Poland	67	68	1
Norway	83	84	1
Bulgaria	67	69	1
Moldova	67	68	2
Ukraine	85	88	3
Turkey	74	77	4
United States	77	82	4
United Kingdom	67	72	5
Finland	74	80	6
Russian Federation	58	64	6
Total	75	75	0

Note: Reported voting turnout in last national election by sex

Source: World Values Survey, 2005–7

To the extent that voting gaps remain, moreover, it should be noted that female voter turnout can be affected by legislative provisions regarding marriage and citizenship, irregularities in voting procedures, as well as access and exposure to voter education and media campaigns. Voter registration can be complicated in cases where women marry and change name. Likewise, provisions of citizenship laws can strip women of their citizenship upon marriage to a foreigner, thereby affecting the number of women eligible to vote. Family voting and proxy voting remain key challenges in several OSCE participating States. Furthermore, in countries where e-voting has been introduced, disparities in levels of IT literacy among women and men can disproportionately affect women, especially where men and women do not have equal access to training opportunities in e-voting processes.

A comparison of reported active and passive party membership across a more limited range of European states is shown in Table 3. This reveals more substantial gender gaps in a few cases. Notably, many more women report not joining a party in some of the Balkan states like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Croatia, as well as in Cyprus. In other states, such as Armenia and Estonia, the gender gap in party membership is small and insignificant. Therefore there is firmer ground for the claim that women are often, although not always, less active as members within political party organizations. This residual disparity may continue to limit the number of women who are on the first rung in the pool of those eligible for nomination by party selectors.

Table 3: Mixed gender gaps in party membership, 2005

	Active member			Inactive member			Not a party member		
	Men	Women	Gap	Men	Women	Gap	Men	Women	Gap
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8.2	3.0	-5.2	35.6	19.2	-16.4	56.2	77.8	21.6
Albania	19.8	6.6	-13.2	24.7	16.3	-8.4	55.6	77.1	21.5
Cyprus	13.9	4.2	-9.7	10.8	9.8	-1.0	75.2	86.0	10.8
Croatia	4.1	1.6	-2.5	9.5	4.3	-5.2	86.4	94.1	7.7
Azerbaijan	2.5	1.1	-1.4	6.6	2.5	-4.1	90.8	96.4	5.6
France	4.2	1.2	-3.0	3.8	2.7	-1.1	92.1	96.2	4.1
Czech Republic	3.6	1.7	-1.9	5.3	3.4	-1.9	91.1	94.9	3.8
Bulgaria	2.7	1.7	-1.0	4.3	2.3	-2.0	93.0	96.0	3.0
Belarus	0.9	0.1	-0.8	1.9	1.0	-0.9	97.2	98.9	1.7
Finland	5.5	5.2	-0.3	6.9	6.6	-0.3	87.6	88.2	0.6
Estonia	0.7	0.5	-0.2	1.6	1.2	-0.4	97.8	98.3	0.5
Andorra	3.0	3.4	0.4	7.0	6.6	-0.4	90.1	90.0	-0.1
Armenia	3.5	2.0	-1.5	56.4	58.3	1.9	40.1	39.8	-0.3
Mean	5.6	2.5	-3.1	13.4	10.3	-3.1	81.0	87.2	6.2

Note: Reported party membership by sex

Source: World Values Survey, 2005–7

III. Constitutions

What accounts for these remarkable cross-national contrasts in gender inequalities in elected office? Many attempts to explain these patterns have focused on political institutions. There is robust evidence indicating that formal institutions matter. At the same time, these ‘rules of the game’ are also open to effective policy interventions and reform.

At the most fundamental level, such institutional initiatives encompass constitutional provisions ensuring women’s civil rights, including rights to vote and hold public office irrespective of sex, as well as recognizing a wide range of other fundamental freedoms to prevent discrimination against women, such as those concerning property and inheritance rights, land rights, citizenship qualifications, and marital rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, enshrines “the equal rights of men and women”, and these commitments were further amplified in the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), endorsed by 189 UN member states.²³ Reflecting these international agreements, all national constitutions or Basic Laws in OSCE participating States grant women full citizenship on equal terms to men, with the right to stand for elected office and to cast a ballot. Nevertheless some of these reforms have occurred relatively recently; women only attained the full voting franchise on the same basis as men in 1971 in Switzerland, in 1976 in Portugal, in 1994 in Kazakhstan and Moldova.²⁴

Table 4: Constitutional provisions for gender equality in parliament

	Year of Constitution or constitutional amendment	Clause	Lower house of parliament	Upper house of parliament
Afghanistan	2004	Article 83, Ch. 5	X	X
Bangladesh	2004 ^a	Article 65, Ch. 3	X	
Burundi	2005	Article 164	X	X
France	1999	Articles 1 and 4	X	X
Iraq	2004	Article 4(4)	X	
Malawi	1994	Article 68(4)		X ^b
Pakistan	2002 ^c	Article 51(1,3)	X	X
Rwanda	2003	Articles 9(4), 76(2), and 82	X	X
Somalia^d	2004	Article 29	X	
Swaziland	2005	Article 84(2), 86, 95(3a)	X	X
Tanzania	1992	Articles 66(1b) and 78(1)	X	

Source: National constitutions.

^a Earlier constitutional provisions also reserved seats for women in parliament in 1972, 1978, and 1990, but each policy expired after 10 to 15 years.

^b Although the constitution reserves seats for women in the Senate, the Parliament of Malawi voted to suppress the Senate in 2001. The measure is thus for a body that does not exist.

^c Earlier constitutional provisions also reserved seats for women in parliament in 1954, 1956, 1962, 1970, 1973, 1981, and 1984.

^d Provision in the Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic.

Going well beyond provisions establishing equal civil rights for women and men as citizens, a dozen states worldwide have now enshrined gender quotas for elected office for the lower or upper houses of parliament into national constitutions or Basic Laws (see Table 4). In addition, two countries – India and Namibia – have instituted quotas for municipal elections via constitutional provisions. One of the best known of these initiatives among OSCE participating States concerns the constitutional amendment designed to achieve parity in elected office approved in France in July 1999, which was followed by a new electoral law passed in June 2000 (see Box 1 below).

Elsewhere the remarkable effect of these provisions can be illustrated by the positive action clauses in the Afghan constitution (see Appendix II), which were implemented in the new electoral law passed in 2005. This requires that the parliament set aside seats for at least 68 women out of 249 members (27 per cent) in the lower house of parliament (the *Wolesi Jirga*), but Afghans have elected more than the minimum requirement. Despite a highly traditional culture in attitudes towards girls and women, and an atmosphere of violence and intimidation during the recent elections to the *Wolesi Jirga* in 2005 and in 2010, many women candidates ran for office and many were also successfully elected. Hence in 2005, women constituted 28 per cent of the lower house.²⁵

Box 1: The French Parity Movement

In July 1999 the French parliament amended the constitution through Constitutional Law 99-569, reforming Article 1 to read that “statutes shall promote equal access by women and men to elective offices and posts” and Article 4 to require that political parties “contribute to the implementation of [this] principle”. In June 2000, MPs approved a new electoral law – known popularly as the ‘parity law’ – mandating that parties nominate an equal number of male and female candidates in municipal, legislative and European elections (with local elections in towns of fewer than 3,500 people being exempt from this requirement). Party lists are declared ineligible if they fail to meet this standard for municipal, Senate, and European elections. Parties face financial sanctions, in contrast, if they do not nominate equal numbers of women and men for elections to the National Assembly. Law 2000-493 allows a difference of two percentage points (51 to 49 per cent), but for any gaps larger than two points, parties lose a percentage of their state funding equal to half the difference in percentages of male and female candidates. In 2007, this penalty was increased to 75 per cent of the difference, coming into force on January 1, 2008.

The results of the first elections held in March 2001 under the new rules indicated a substantial impact at municipal level, almost doubling the number of women in local office from 25 to 47 per cent. These elections are governed by proportional representation, and parties are required to present three women and three men in any order for every six candidates, under the penalty of having their lists rejected. In contrast, elections to the National Assembly held in June 2002 yielded an increase of only 1.4 per cent, from 10.9 to 12.3, with only eight additional women entering the Assembly. These elections are governed by a two-round majoritarian electoral system. The law requires parties to nominate equal numbers of women and men across all the districts they are contesting. All parties responded by concentrating women primarily in unwinnable seats, favouring male incumbents in ‘safer’ districts. In addition, larger parties simply opted to absorb the resulting losses in state funding, which were not insignificant: in each year of the 2002–2007 sessions, the Socialists lost more than 1.5 million Euros and the Union for a Popular Movement nearly 4 million, around 10 per cent of their budget.²⁶ A closer look reveals this to be a poor electoral strategy: taking district characteristics into account, female candidates win at equal or greater rates than male incumbents.²⁷ Responding to popular pressure, however, many parties – but particularly the Socialists – took steps to nominate more women and place them in winnable districts, leading to an increase in women’s representation to 18.9 per cent. Because other countries have witnessed greater success in their initiatives, this figure remains below the West European average and leaves France ranked 64th worldwide today, compared with the ranking of 59th before parity was introduced.

IV. Electoral systems

The electoral system concerns multiple aspects of electoral law and the most basic features involve the *ballot structure*, determining how voters can express their choices; the *electoral threshold*, or the minimum votes needed by a party to secure representation; the *electoral formula*, determining how votes are counted to allocate seats; and the *district magnitude*, referring to the number of seats per district. Electoral systems are categorized in this study into three primary families – majoritarian, combined, and proportional – each with many subsidiary types. *Majoritarian* formula include First-Past-the-Post, Second Ballot, the Block Vote, Single Non-Transferable Vote, and Alternative Voting systems²⁸; *mixed* (or *combined*) systems incorporate both majoritarian and proportional formula in elections to the same body; while *proportional formula* include Party Lists as well as the Single Transferable Vote systems.

The idea that electoral systems matter – in particular that more women are usually elected to parliament under party list proportional representation (PR) than under majoritarian electoral systems – has been confirmed by a long series of studies since the mid-1980s. This pattern has been established in research comparing established democracies and also confirmed in a broader range of developing societies worldwide.²⁹ The proportion of women elected under mixed or combined systems usually falls somewhere between pure majoritarian and PR systems.³⁰ Within PR electoral systems, district magnitude has commonly been regarded as a particularly important factor, with more women usually elected from larger rather than smaller multi-member constituencies. While the OSCE as an institution does not promote one electoral system design over another, it is nevertheless important to understand how the election system in place can have repercussions on women’s opportunities to access political power and participate in political processes.

Table 5: Electoral systems and women’s representation, OSCE participating States

	% Women in parliament, 2000	N. countries	% Women in parliament, 2010	N. countries
Majoritarian	12.7	13	20.2	8
Mixed	11.5	7	18.7	10
PR List	19.1	29	24.4	35
Total	15.9	54	22.6	54

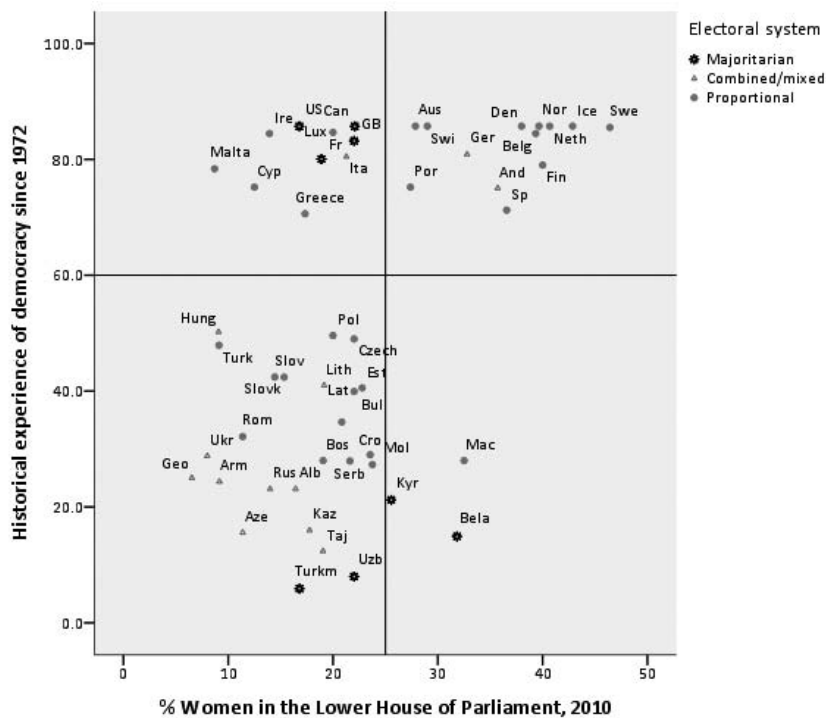
Note: For the classification of electoral systems, see Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in Parliament' database, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

The comparison within the OSCE region in Table 5 confirms that in the past, proportional electoral systems were a significant and consistent predictor of the proportion of women in parliament. The data shows how women were generally more successful under PR List systems. In 2000, within the region, women were on average 12.7 per cent of MPs in majoritarian systems, 11.5 per cent in mixed systems, and 19.1 per cent of members in PR systems (generating a 6-point gap). Comparing the situation a decade later confirms that these contrasts in women's representation according to the basic type of electoral system continue to be evident. It is also striking that over time many more OSCE participating States have adopted PR electoral systems.

The main reason usually put forward to explain the greater success of women under PR is that in this system, each party presents the public with their collective list of candidates for each multi-member district. As such, parties have an *electoral incentive* to maximize their collective appeal in party lists by including candidates drawn from all major social cleavages in the electorate. Multi-member districts encourage collective party accountability for the complete list of candidates. Where parties have to nominate a slate of candidates for a multi-member district, the exclusion of any major social sector, including women, could signal discrimination, and could therefore risk an electoral penalty at the ballot box. By contrast, in First-Past-the-Post systems parliamentary candidates are selected to run within each single member district. Where the selection process is in the hands of the local constituency party, this creates minimal incentive for each particular constituency to pick a ticket that is 'balanced' at the district or national level. Local party members often want a representative who will maximize their chances of winning in that constituency, irrespective of the broader consequences for the party or parliament.³¹ The selection of the default option – a candidate reflecting the characteristics and qualifications of previous MPs – may be expected to predominate in many cases as the rational vote-maximizing strategy designed to minimize electoral risks.

Although PR electoral systems often tend to result in the election of more women, the *ballot structure* of PR candidate lists can impact women's success at the ballot box. In 'closed' PR Lists, the political party itself chooses the order of candidates; voters select the party of their choosing but not the individual candidate who will represent them. Some studies³² suggest that closed lists are more favourable to female candidates, as parties may be more apt to include female candidates that would be difficult to elect otherwise, and to place these candidates higher on their list. 'Open' lists, by contrast, allow voters to choose not only the party but also the candidates. This gives voters greater power over the outcomes of the electoral process; this may benefit women if voters express a preference for female candidates, or hurt women's chances if voters are unwilling to endorse female candidates. Open lists can also privilege candidates with greater access to campaign resources, and can encourage a more aggressive style of individual campaigning. Where women have less access to campaign resources or personal networks of patronage, open list PR campaigning can be disadvantageous to female candidates.

Figure 5: The impact of electoral systems and historical experience of democratization

Note: The historical experience of democracy during the third wave era is measured by the summarized Freedom House measure of civil liberties and political rights since 1972, standardized to 100-pts.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments Database [October 2010], <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

The type of electoral system is also related to *patterns of incumbency turnover*. One major barrier to the entry of new candidates is that elected officials are often returned over successive contests due to the advantages of greater familiarity and name recognition, higher levels of media attention, as well as access to the financial and organizational resources that accompany legislative office.³³ In many contests the key challenge facing women challengers in the pipeline to legislative office is not just becoming nominated per se, but also contesting a winnable seat in single-member districts, or being ranked near the top of the party list of candidates in PR systems. A comparison of election to the lower house of the national parliament in twenty-five established democracies from 1979–1994 found that on average about two-thirds of all incumbents were returned from one general election to the next, including 66 per cent in PR electoral systems and 70 per cent in majoritarian elections.³⁴ In the United Kingdom, for example, the massive turnover in MPs following the Labour Party's landslide victory in 1997, coupled with the use of positive action placing women in target seats, doubled the number of women in the UK House of Commons overnight. As incumbents, Labour women MPs were re-elected in the 2001 British general election, despite the fact that by then the original positive action strategy had been discontinued. In the United States, studies have established that from 1998–2000 women challengers were more successful in states where term limitations expanded the opportunities for open seats, although this effect is reversed in states like California, where many women were already incumbents.³⁵

As discussed further below, *party list PR also facilitates the use of positive action* designed to boost women's representation, as exemplified by legal or party gender quotas in candidate

selection procedures. The reason for this is that a quota can be applied in a relatively straightforward manner when multiple seats are available on a party list. When elections revolve around single member districts, in contrast, it is not clear how a demand for quotas should be translated into action. However, positive action strategies have also been used under majoritarian electoral systems, as shown by the French or British cases, albeit with varying rates of success.³⁶ In France, parties are required by law, under financial penalty, to nominate equal numbers of women and men across all the districts where the party is presenting candidates. This provision led to a minor increase in women's representation in the 2002 elections, followed by a more substantial increase in 2007. In the UK, quotas adopted by the Labour Party have taken the form of 'all-women shortlists,' mandating that the final list of candidates in selected constituencies be composed entirely of women. In 1997, this strategy contributed to a doubling in the number of women elected. In the first elections to the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales, the Scottish and Welsh Labour parties applied a related but slightly different strategy known as 'twinning' for the majoritarian component of the mixed electoral system: districts that were deemed to be similarly 'winnable' were paired, and a female candidate was selected for one constituency and a male candidate for the other. The results were dramatic, with close to 40 per cent women elected to both assemblies.

These examples are, however, unusual for majoritarian systems. Consequently, for a variety of reasons, PR systems are likely to be more 'women-friendly' than majoritarian electoral systems. These qualities are also present in 'combined' or 'mixed' electoral systems. Hence, in Germany, Hungary and New Zealand women have usually proved more successful in gaining office via party lists rather than through single member districts. Nevertheless two major qualifications need to be made to these general observations.

Firstly, considerable variations within the OSCE region can be seen within each major electoral family. Among established democracies which use PR, for example, the Mediterranean countries in southern Europe continue to lag well behind their Scandinavian counterparts. These variations still need to be explained.

Secondly, and even more importantly, among the post-communist societies within the region, the relationship is often reversed. Countries with majoritarian electoral systems, such as Uzbekistan and Belarus, have more women in parliament today than states using PR List, such as Slovakia and Romania.

The impact of the electoral system on women's representation thus differs between democracies with a longer democratic tradition and newer democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. This contrast can be attributed to many intervening cultural and institutional conditions, but the most important concern is the use of legal and party-based gender quotas in Central and Eastern European states, as discussed below. Other factors which may help to account for these contrasts include other features of electoral system design, like mean district magnitude (the average number of candidates per electoral district) and electoral formula proportionality, as well as party competition and party ideologies, with socialist, communist, and green parties generally more sympathetic towards positive action strategies designed to achieve gender equality.³⁷ Patterns of political culture are also important; as shown in Figure 6, traditional cultural attitudes towards women in politics continue to prevail in many OSCE participating States, and there is a clear relationship between these cultural attitudes and the success of women in parliament. Moreover, levels of gender development can also constrain women's election; Figure 7 shows a complex link but it is clear that countries where gender equality in patterns of development are greatest, measured by basic indices such as longevity, education and per capita income, are also the ones where women have often made the greatest strides

Notes: Gender-related development measures achievement in the same basic capabilities as the Human Development Index, including in longevity, educational attainment and per capita income, but it takes note of inequality in achievement between women and men.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments Database [October 2010], <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>; Human Development Report 2007 United National Development Programme, http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/gdi_gem.

Beyond the structure of electoral systems, provisions of electoral and political party laws regarding candidate registration and nomination rules, as well as campaign financing, can also affect women's success as candidates. For example, political party laws which require electoral candidates to submit a large monetary deposit can deter female candidates from running, particularly in countries where there are large disparities in the average wages earned by women and men. For example, the required candidate deposit for Tajik parliamentary elections is exceptionally high. In 2005 the registration deposit for a single candidate was €600, increased to €1,100 in 2010. The revised figure is approximately 24 times higher than the average monthly salary. Whilst this requirement clearly affects a host of people of all ages, genders and professions, women as significantly lower earners than men are notably disadvantaged. In a similar vein, Tajik electoral law includes a provision that stipulates that parliamentary candidates must have higher education. This requirement is likely to be disproportionately disadvantageous to women candidates when female tertiary education levels in Tajikistan are taken into account; in 2008, males in tertiary education outnumbered females by a ratio of 40 to 1.³⁸ Similarly, provisions requiring candidates to collect a large number of signatures to signify 'minimum support' can act against women, especially where female candidates have not developed strong networks of established supporters and allies.

Special measures that can be introduced to support women nominees include establishing a pool to pay the financial deposit for female candidates or waiving deposit requirements for women. Legislative measures to incentivize political parties to nominate more female candidates can include the provision of extra public funding if party lists exceed the minimum threshold of female candidates. In Croatia, for example, parties that exceed the minimum threshold of female candidates on party lists can receive up to 10 per cent additional public campaign funding. Alternatively, the state can also introduce financial sanctions through legislation, whereby political parties lose part of their share of public campaign funds if they do not nominate a required number of female candidates or must pay a fine if candidate lists do not include the minimum number of female candidates. This is the case, for example, in France, as noted above.

Access to campaign financing and other public resources is another critical area which can impact women's success as electoral candidates. Non-discrimination in the allocation of and access to state and party resources for men and women can be regulated through legislation, as most countries have introduced political and campaign financing laws. Provisions can be included to require political parties to have gender-balanced representation in order to receive state funding. Such requirements for access to public funding are particularly important given most parties' dependence on private contributions and financial support. Where women lack established networks of wealthy patrons and supporters, it is particularly important that female candidates are allocated an equal and fair share of public funds for campaigning. Legislation can also be used to ensure that male and female party members are provided equal opportunity to benefit from other types of public state support, such as additional access to public airtime (for example, organizing public debates between female candidates during electoral campaigns) or access to public meeting spaces.

V. Legal quotas

Attention to the importance of electoral institutions more broadly has led to efforts to revise existing laws to incorporate gender quota regulations. Quotas have become an increasingly popular response to the problem of women's under-representation, appearing in more than 100 countries worldwide.³⁹ Gender quotas take three main forms: *reserved seats*, *legal quotas*, and *party quotas* (see Appendix Table A. 1 for details on specific quota policies in the OSCE region).

Reserved seats are implemented through constitutional provisions, and occasionally electoral laws, setting aside parliamentary seats for women that men are not eligible to contest. They are not used in OSCE participating States but they are found in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. They first emerged in the 1930s, but since 2000 have become especially popular in countries with otherwise very low proportions of women in politics. Early policies reserved between 1 and 10 per cent of seats for women, but more recent measures have entailed much larger provisions of 30 per cent.⁴⁰ Reserved seats can be implemented through either appointment or competitive election. A common concern regarding these measures is that they may serve as an inadvertent ceiling for women's participation, leading elites and citizens to assume that seats not explicitly reserved for women are therefore implicitly reserved for men.

Legal quotas, in contrast, are enacted through reforms to electoral laws and sometimes constitutions, requiring that all parties nominate a certain percentage of women candidates. They are found in many developing countries, especially Latin America, and post-conflict societies, primarily in Africa and the Middle East. In line with these trends, some of the most effective legal quotas in the OSCE region are those that have been introduced in countries also emerging from conflict, namely the states in South-Eastern Europe – Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia. Whilst the OSCE as an institution does not take a formal position for or against quotas, it can be noted that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the OSCE assisted in reforms of the electoral system, the government introduced legal quotas for women's representation. Legal quotas have also been adopted in other OSCE participating States, however, including in more established democracies such as Belgium, France, Portugal, and Spain, as well as in some post-communist states, such as Albania, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. These policies became popular during the 1990s and continued to be proposed and passed in many OSCE participating States during the last decade.

Legal quotas generally call for women to form between 25 per cent and 50 per cent of all parliamentary candidates nominated by political parties. In most instances, the language of these

measures is gender-neutral, speaking of women and men together or making reference to the ‘under-represented sex.’ Yet, legal quotas vary in terms of how strictly their goals are articulated: some speak vaguely about ‘facilitating access,’ as is the case in France, while others offer concrete guidelines regarding the selection and placement of female candidates, as in countries like Argentina, Belgium, and Costa Rica. Similar to party quotas (see Table 6 below), these policies are implemented in different ways depending on the electoral system, often applying to party lists as well as to a broader group of single-member districts, as in France. Given their legal status they may contain sanctions for non-compliance and be subject to oversight from external bodies such as Electoral Commissions, as in Mexico and Portugal.

The impact of legal quotas in the region is estimated in Table 6. This compares the 13 OSCE participating States using legal quotas, looking at the proportion of women elected to the lower house of parliament during the last decade, before and after most of the legal quotas were implemented. The results demonstrate that on average, in countries with legal quotas, the proportion of women members rose by about 10 per cent between 2000 and 2010. Yet all these gains should not be attributed to the use of legal quotas per se, since many other policy initiatives and cultural trends are also encouraging gender equality in elected office; in all other OSCE participating States not using legal quotas, the proportion of women also increased, although at a lower rate (5.8 per cent). Thus the net impact of legal gender quotas can be estimated more conservatively at an average gain of 4.4 per cent over a decade, based on calculations of figures contained in Table 6. Moreover variations in the design and implementation of legal quotas mean that the numerical effects of these policies have been mixed. Hence gains have been relatively modest in some countries, like Armenia, France, and Romania, and far more dramatic in others, as in Belgium, Kyrgyzstan, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. These differences stem from a number of factors including the *design of quota policies*, in terms of their wording, requirements, and sanctions for non-compliance, as well as in their *perceived legitimacy*.⁴¹

Table 6: The impact of legal quotas used for candidates for the lower house of parliament, OSCE region

	Electoral system	Year adopted	Percentage	Rank placement requirements	Penalties for non-compliance	% women in 2000 (prior to law)	% women in 2010 (after law)	% Change
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	List PR	2002	30%	No	Non-registration	6.7	32.5	+25.8
Kyrgyzstan	List PR	2007	30%	Yes	Non-registration	0.0	25.6	+25.6
Serbia	List PR	2002	30%	Yes	Non-registration	5.1	21.6	+16.5
Belgium	List PR	2002 ^a	50%	Yes	Non-registration	23.3	39.3	+16.0
Uzbekistan	2 nd Round	2004	30%	No	None	7.2	22.0	+14.8
Albania	Mixed	2008	30%	No	Campaign funding	5.2	16.4	+11.2
Portugal	List PR	2006	33%	Yes	Campaign funding	17.4	27.4	+10.0
Spain	List PR	2007	40%	Yes	Non-registration	28.3	36.6	+8.3
France	2 nd Round	2000	50%	No	Campaign funding	10.9	18.9	+8.0
Slovenia	List PR	2006	35%	No	Non-registration	7.8	14.4	+6.6
Armenia	Mixed	2005 ^b	15%	Yes	Non-registration	3.1	9.1	+6.0
Romania	List PR	2004	None	No	None	7.3	11.3	+4.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	List PR	2001 ^c	33%	Yes	None	28.6	19.0	-9.6
All above						13.0	23.2	+10.2
All other OSCE participating States						16.6	22.4	+5.8

Notes: Other OSCE participating States do not currently use any legal gender quotas for legislative candidates. Poland adopted legislative quotas in 2011 which will be applied to the next elections, scheduled for late 2011.

^a An earlier legal quota of 33% was adopted in Belgium in 1994.

^b An earlier legal quota of 5% was adopted in Armenia in 1999.

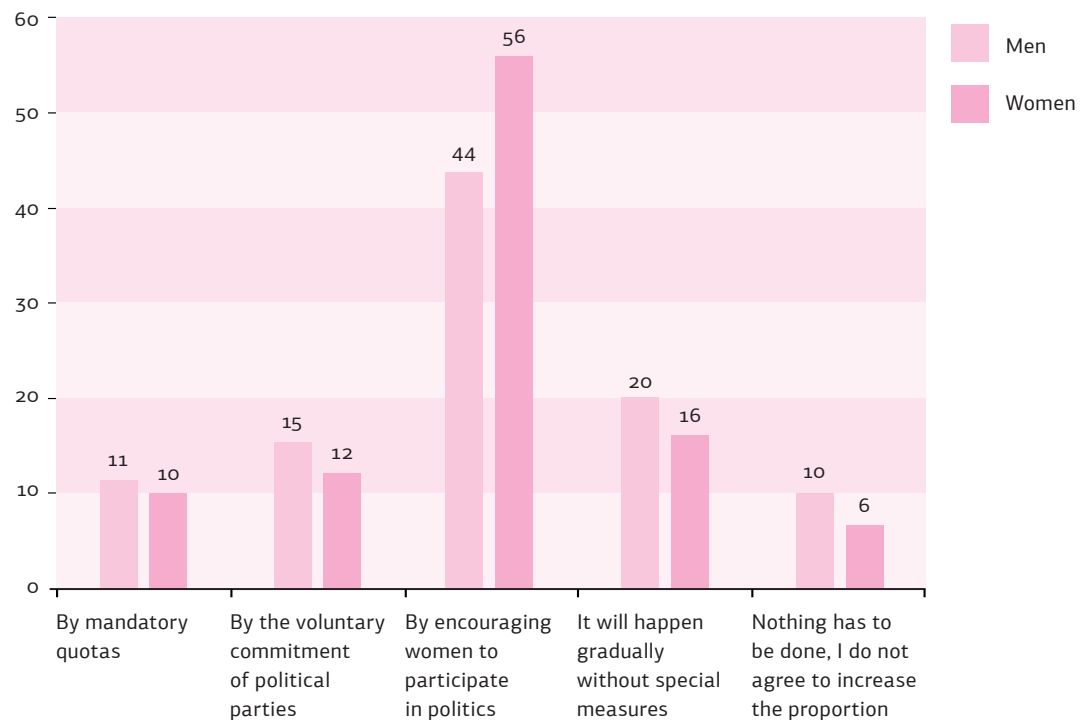
^c An earlier legal quota of 30% was adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998.

Source: www.quotaproject.org.

While elements of quota design have been the subject of extensive analysis, most of the evidence about perceived legitimacy is largely anecdotal. However, a recent survey of citizens across the European Union (EU) indicates that few (7 per cent) believe that nothing should be done to increase the proportion of women elected to the European Parliament (see Figure 8).

Most Europeans favour encouraging women to participate in parties, or voluntary actions by political parties, and only one in ten citizens support mandatory quotas as the best means for increasing the percentage of women in the European Parliament (EP). Interestingly, however, there are virtually no differences in support for mandatory quotas across Western European and post-communist countries (see Table 7). This undermines assertions that today citizens in former Communist states hold particularly negative views regarding legal gender quotas – at least when compared to their counterparts in Western Europe.⁴²

Figure 8: European attitudes towards ways to increase women's representation, 2009



Notes: 'If we should increase the proportion of women MEPs, what would be the most effective way?'

Source: EuroBarometer Flash Survey #266, Feb 2009, ZA4891 N.40, 747

A second explanation for variations in quota effects relates to features of the *broader institutional context*. Quotas often have the greatest impact in countries with PR electoral systems with closed party lists and high district magnitudes.⁴³ In Sweden, for example, multiple seats are available in each constituency and candidates are elected from lists put forward by political parties. In contrast, it is more difficult to apply quotas where only one seat is available per district, unless the quota entails reserved seats, as in Tanzania. Quotas also tend to improve women's representation in countries where several parties co-exist and larger parties respond to policy innovations initiated by smaller parties, as well as in parties with left-wing ideologies where the party leadership is better able to enforce party or national regulations. Further, quotas are often more successful in countries where the political culture emphasizes sexual difference and group representation, and less successful where it stresses sexual equality and individual representation.⁴⁴ In part, this is because quotas have been challenged in some countries as a violation of constitutional principles of equality, as was the case in Italy, Spain, and the UK.

Table 7: European attitudes towards gender equality measures, 2009 by nation

	By mandatory quotas	By the voluntary commitment of political parties	By encouraging women to participate in politics	It will happen gradually without special measures	Nothing has to be done, I do not agree to increase the proportion
Austria	14	11	52	13	9
Belgium	9	12	55	15	9
Bulgaria	10	8	42	33	6
Cyprus	12	14	61	7	5
Czech Republic	12	13	49	19	7
Denmark	7	26	47	14	6
Estonia	7	10	34	35	13
Finland	15	10	50	19	5
France	16	17	43	20	4
Germany	13	12	59	11	5
Greece	15	16	54	10	5
Hungary	13	13	50	17	8
Ireland	6	11	70	9	4
Italy	15	19	47	14	5
Latvia	12	12	39	24	13
Lithuania	8	6	52	22	13
Luxembourg	7	12	65	9	6
Malta	7	10	72	6	4
Poland	13	12	58	11	6
Portugal	8	10	62	19	2
Romania	4	7	71	8	10
Slovakia	12	16	53	11	7
Slovenia	9	7	57	21	7
Spain	6	18	45	23	7
Sweden	14	18	55	11	3
Netherlands	4	8	58	20	10
United Kingdom	4	9	64	14	8
All European Union member states	10	13	54	16	7

Notes: 'If we should increase the proportion of women MEPs, what would be the most effective way?'

Source: EuroBarometer Flash Survey #266, Feb 2009, ZA 4891 N.40, 747

These challenges, however, are not in line with international declarations: as Article 4 of the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women emphasizes, "temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination". A third account, finally, points to the importance of *political will*. Party leaders, officers, activists and members who make up the 'selectorate' are the group most directly responsible for variations in quota impact, since the effective application of these measures largely hinges upon their willingness to recruit female candi-

dates. Moreover selectorates are often disproportionately male; Table 3 demonstrated continued sex disparities in active party membership, a pattern which increases at higher levels of party office. In a large number of cases, selectors take various steps to mitigate quota impact, ranging from passive refusal to enforce quotas to more active measures to subvert their intended effects, including large-scale electoral fraud. Selectors in Bolivia, for example, went so far as to change male names into female ones as a means to circumvent the 30 per cent quota law. However, other actors may play a direct or indirect role in enforcing quota provisions, including women's organizations inside and outside political parties, national and international courts, and ordinary citizens, all of whom may monitor party compliance with quota measures in ways that lead elites to ignore or honour quota requirements.

The actors involved in the quota implementation process may depend to some degree on the campaigns leading to quota adoption. In some countries, women's grassroots mobilization is central to bringing quotas to the political agenda. In others, quotas are the result of more strategic calculations on the part of political elites, who may view these measures as an effective means for competing for female votes.⁴⁵ This concern may be heightened if the party is seeking to overcome a long period in opposition or a dramatic decrease in popularity. A third group of actors that may play a role include international organizations and transnational NGOs. Over the last decade, a variety of international organizations – including the UN, the Socialist International, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the Organization of American States – have issued declarations recommending that all member states aim for 30 per cent women in all political bodies, in line with the Beijing Declaration.⁴⁶

These various demands often meet with the greatest success when gender quotas can be linked to existing or emerging political values. For example, left-wing parties are said to be generally more open to measures such as quotas because these match with their more general goals of social equality.⁴⁷ In other countries, gender quotas may be viewed as an extension of guarantees given to other groups based on linguistic, religious, racial, and other cleavages. In Belgium, for example, quotas for women have followed the adoption of reserved seats for linguistic groups.⁵⁰ Finally, many quotas emerge during periods of democratic transition, when quotas are seen as a way to establish the legitimacy of the new political system, as has also been the case in many post-conflict societies.

The dramatic impact of legal quotas can be witnessed in the case of Kyrgyzstan, where a 30 per cent quota law was introduced in 2007, with the requirement that no more than three positions separate male and female candidates. Combined with a PR electoral system, this policy resulted in an overnight shift in women's representation: the proportion of women in parliament jumped from zero per cent to one quarter of all members after the 2007 elections (see Appendix III). Even in this case, however, there was a disparity between the percentage of female candidates and the number of women actually elected, given that the law applied to the former and not to the latter. Together with the data presented in Table 6, such outcomes suggest that legal quotas can serve as a very effective measure for electing greater numbers of women to political office, especially in cases where quotas are well-specified in terms of their requirements, where they are combined with the PR electoral system, and where compliance to implement them is carefully enforced. The evidence suggests that in general, legal quotas are most successful in establishing gender equality in elected office when:

- These laws require a relatively *high proportion* of female candidates to be nominated by political parties;

- These laws have *placement mandates* (also known as 'double quotas') which regulate the alternative rank order of women and men candidates on party lists ('zippering');
- These laws include *penalties for non-compliance* which strictly bind the behaviour of political parties through financial sanctions or the rejection of nomination lists which do not comply with the law, or, alternatively, which create positive incentives for parties to nominate more women; and
- *Compliance is monitored* by independent bodies, including Electoral Commissions, the courts, NGOs and women's groups, using legal and political means if necessary, to ensure that parties implement these policies to their fullest degree.

VI. Party selection rules and procedures

Reserved seats and legal quotas reflect state-led policies to ensure gender equality in the political realm. Party quotas, in contrast, entail commitments by individual political parties which aim to include a specific proportion of women among their own candidates nominated to political office. Party quotas are most often implemented through party constitutions, statutes, and rulebooks. In Western Europe, these measures were first adopted in the early 1970s by a few socialist and social democratic parties. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, however, they began to appear in a diverse array of parties in all regions of the world, such that today they are the most common type of quota policy. Today, almost half of the OSCE participating States include at least some parties using gender quotas in candidate selection processes.

Party quotas typically set a goal of between 25 per cent and 50 per cent female candidates. All the same, the phrasing of this requirement varies: some policies identify women as the group to be promoted by the quota, for example in Argentina, South Africa, and Spain, while others set out a more gender-neutral formulation, as in Italy and several Nordic countries. Party quotas govern the composition of party lists in countries with PR electoral systems, which is the case in much of the world and the OSCE, and are directed at collections of single-member districts in countries with majoritarian electoral arrangements, such as the United Kingdom.

The numerical effects of party quotas are sensitive to the type of party system and, in particular, the size of the party making this commitment. Party quotas thus have a greater impact on the numbers of women elected when:

- *many parties*, especially several *larger parties*, adopt these policies;
- the quotas adopted call for a relatively *high proportion* of women to be nominated as party candidates and contain provisions related to the *placement* of female candidates on party lists in PR systems;
- the quotas are framed in ways that link them to well-understood and widely accepted *cultural practices and traditions*; and
- parties have bureaucratic organizational structures, and formal nomination procedures, so that *rules are enforced* by internal party bodies. Where party nomination procedures are

more informally determined, for example in clientelistic parties where the top party leadership personally hand-picks a shortlist of loyal supporters as candidates, few enforcement mechanisms will be able to guarantee the inclusion of women.

Party quotas have been particularly effective in Sweden, where women have mobilized inside and outside the political parties since the 1920s to ensure the selection of female candidates. Over time, they gradually increased the proportion each party considered necessary for women to be adequately represented, from one woman per list to now equal numbers of women and men. In the 1990s, more informal goals, targets, and recommendations in many parties gave way to more formal quota policies (see Box 2). While gains have been made possible through the use of a PR electoral system, party strategies have been of paramount importance. Today, almost all Swedish parties embrace the principle of alternation (or ‘zippering’), meaning that they alternate between male and female names on party lists to ensure that women form not only 50 per cent of candidates, but also close to 50 per cent of those elected. The result is that the country ranks second in the world in terms of women’s representation, with women occupying 45 per cent of all seats in parliament.

Box 2: Sweden's Party Quotas

After gaining the right to vote in 1921, women in Sweden engaged in a series of campaigns to persuade parties to select female candidates, precipitating a number of difficult struggles in the 1930s and 1940s over the nomination and placement of women. Women mobilized both inside and outside the political parties in a complementary way, combining work through women's sections in the parties with efforts of nonpartisan organizations like the Fredrika Bremer Association. Female party members lobbied their own parties to get women placed in electable positions on party lists, while civil society groups sought to raise elite and public awareness on women's status in politics.

Although women's mobilization was ongoing, important gains were made in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when campaigns began to press party leaders to make firmer commitments to increasing female representation. In the 1970s and 1980s, almost all major parties introduced recommendations, targets, or goals regarding the proportion of women to be nominated to internal and elected office, usually in the form that "neither sex be represented in less than 40 per cent" of all positions. As a result of these efforts, the percentage of women in the Swedish Riksdag had increased to 38 per cent by the 1988 election.

In 1991, however, the proportion of women in parliament dropped for the first time since the 1920s, decreasing from 38 to 34 per cent, reflecting shortcomings across all parties in their recruitment of women. Although women began to lobby inside the parties, many also began to meet across party lines, establishing a cross-party network known as the 'Support Stockings'. Their hope was to pressure parties to place women in more 'safe' positions on party lists, and they pledged that if parties did not take such steps, they would consider forming a women's party to contest the next elections.

To this end, they began to coalesce around the demand for a new approach known as *varannan damernas*, or literally "every other one for the ladies". Originating with a state-commissioned report on women's representation on local and national committees, the term *varannan damernas* referred to a custom at countryside dances where every other song it was the women's turn to invite the men, a tradition also known as 'democratic dancing'. Some parties responded with unequivocal support for quotas, while others made firmer commitments to the need for equal representation. Women's representation has grown closer and closer to 50 per cent as more parties have endorsed the principle of alternating between men and women on party lists, rising to 41 per cent in 1994, 43 per cent in 1998, 45 per cent in 2002, 47 per cent in 2006, and 45 per cent in 2010.

Although not all parties adopt formal quota policies, many nonetheless recognize the importance of taking active steps to recruit more women to their candidate ranks, as the Swedish case illustrates. When gender quotas per se are particularly controversial, as is the case in many conservative parties but also in various national contexts, political parties may reject formal quotas but still establish informal goals or targets regarding the selection of women. The exact number of such 'soft quotas' is difficult to calculate, given that these measures are not labelled 'quotas'. Yet, these policies are often functionally equivalent to formal party quotas in that they seek to increase women's representation in some concrete way.

The two main forms that soft quotas may take are *informal targets and recommendations*, which are anticipated to directly affect the nomination of more female candidates, and *quotas for internal party bodies*, which are expected to indirectly influence the numbers of women in the pipeline who eventually run for elected office.⁵⁰ As such, despite the care taken to disassociate these measures from quotas, these party-level provisions are often adopted with the express purpose of stimulating – although not necessarily guaranteeing – the election of more women to various kinds of political bodies. In some instances, the language is simply to 'encourage' attention to possible female candidates. As such, soft quotas are measures that step back from the spirit and aims of formal quota policies, even as they agree with – and seek to promote – similar ends.

The shared aim of quota policies of various types is to recast the candidate recruitment process, stimulating both the supply of and demand for female candidates. Models of political recruitment typically focus on a sequence that progresses from (1) the large number of citizens who are *eligible* to run for political office to (2) the smaller pool of citizens who *aspire* to run for political office to (3) the small group of citizens who are *nominated* to run for political office to (4) the smallest band of citizens who are *elected* to political office.⁵¹ If no mechanisms of distortion are at work, the characteristics of the individuals present at each of these four stages should be roughly the same. Although various types of qualifications may set some groups of candidates apart from others, including their levels of education, party service, legislative experience, speaking abilities, financial resources, political connections, kinship, name-recognition, group membership, and organizational skills,⁵¹ there are clear patterns of exclusion, resulting in fewer female, minority, and younger candidates than exist proportionally in the electorate.

Within this framework, studies have sought to determine whether the main reason behind women's under-representation stems from gender differences in political ambition that cause fewer women than men to consider running for political office, biases in the recruitment practices of political elites that lead them to select fewer female candidates than male candidates, or prejudices on the part of voters who prefer to elect men over women. The third explanation has been firmly debunked, with evidence indicating that voters not only elect male and female candidates at equal rates, but may even vote in greater numbers for women over men.⁵² Most research has thus focused on the relative role of supply- and demand-side factors, as well as interactions between them, in explaining how and why their representation might be increased. In this context, quotas reflect a clear 'demand-side' solution to the problem of women's under-representation, seeking to encourage party elites to find qualified female candidates, which may require exploring less traditional avenues of recruitment. However, quotas might also be viewed as a 'supply-side' strategy, indicating that the political arena is open to women and thus leading more women to come forward as candidates.

Beyond the electoral arena, soft quotas addressing the representation of women in internal party bodies can also more broadly impact women's opportunities for political advancement – for example, in shaping whether there is a gender balance in selection boards and commit-

tees responsible for nominating candidates. Furthermore, political parties can consider the development of internal gender equality programmes, strategies and action plans to guide the process of achieving greater gender balance, particularly within decision-making structures. Plans which include concrete timeframes, responsibilities and targets are apt to be more effective in reaching the goal of increased women's representation.

The right to freedom of association granted to political parties, importantly, provides protection from interference in internal party affairs by state and state bodies. Nonetheless, as 'gatekeepers of democracy' political parties in OSCE participating States are expected to regulate the internal functioning of parties in accordance with democratic standards such as transparency, consultation of members, equality and non-discrimination. To this end, the state can promote special measures through legislation or other methods in order to increase the participation of women and achieve gender equality in political parties. For example, legislative acts may require political parties to implement training and capacity building programmes for female candidates with limited experience, or to ensure that men and women have equal access to training opportunities and equal opportunities to participate in party activities.

VII. Capacity development

In addition to quotas, there have also been a number of additional strategies developed, primarily by groups in civil society, to stimulate women's interest in pursuing elected office. While largely reflecting supply-side tactics, these efforts have also sought to raise broader awareness of the need for more women in politics, and therefore to raise the demand for female candidates on the part of elites and voters. Whether countries have introduced quotas or not, capacity development initiatives are vital to efforts to increase women's political representation. However, they are also essential in countries where quotas are in force, as together these two strategies offer a more holistic approach to addressing problems of both supply and demand.

Although civil society organizations have played a major role in this area, a variety of actors are engaged in capacity building initiatives, and these can be broadly categorized in terms of three distinct but overlapping threads: *equal opportunity initiatives* (candidate training, recruitment initiatives, and knowledge networks), *initiatives to combat stereotypes and raise awareness* (media campaigns, media training, and citizen education), and *political party initiatives* (women's sections, fundraising, and women's parties). These strategies are necessary not because women lack the skills and qualifications to hold political office, but rather because women as a group have not had the same opportunities as men to access a political career.⁵³ The presence of three threads reflects the fact that enabling women's participation requires a multi-faceted approach, focused on encouraging women who might consider coming forward as candidates, undermining the stereotypes that maintain patterns of gender inequality, and highlighting the party structures that facilitate women's candidacies.

Equal opportunity initiatives

Many women possess the qualifications needed to hold political office, but due to gender discrimination, do not always have access to the same information as men in terms of learning how to launch a political career. For this reason, programmes focused on developing this knowledge form a crucial part of any campaign to enhance women's political representation. The most direct capacity development initiatives in this sense involve *training programmes* for current or future female candidates, run by political parties or bipartisan civil society groups. A recent example is the Women2Win campaign in the British Conservative Party, which provides support, advice, and training in public speaking and media skills to women who wish to

get more politically involved. The group also hosts networking events for women at all levels of politics to meet with one another.⁵⁴

A similar initiative was pursued by the British Liberal Democrats in the late 1990s, whose women's section launched a 50:50 campaign to get more women into parliament using the slogan 'cash, confidence, and culture'. They identified these three 'C's as the three major roadblocks that newcomers face in politics. To this end, they set up the Nancy Seer Trust Fund in 1997 to help finance expenses that are often shaped by gender such as child and elder care and travel expenses (to provide cash); developed a programme to shadow MPs (to promote confidence); and encouraged the construction of a skills database to recruit spokeswomen and candidates (to combat male-dominated culture).⁵⁵ Mentoring programmes can also be used, establishing long-term relationships between women leaders who have successfully entered elected office and others aspiring to these positions.

Along slightly different lines, women inside the Norwegian Labour Party designed a programme known as Women Can Do It, which arranges candidate training opportunities in more than 25 countries worldwide, including in the OSCE participating States of Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia. Funded by Norwegian People's Aid, the topics covered in the programme range from democracy and women's participation to communication, argumentation/speeches/debate, handling the media, negotiations, networking, advocacy training, and violence against women. Seeking to facilitate women's participation in public affairs, the programme offers training in particular skills, but also views the programme as a chance for women to meet and form networks.⁵⁶

In the United States, since 1972 Harvard University's Institute of Politics has run a bipartisan programme for newly elected members of Congress, including women and men. The programme provides intensive seminars on major public policy issues such as foreign policy, health care and the federal budget, led by prominent scholars and practitioners representing viewpoints from across the political spectrum. It also offers workshops to help new Representatives make the most of their first weeks and months on Capitol Hill. These workshops focus on the 'how' of getting things done in Washington, and they are led by current and former senior officials from Congress, the White House, cabinet departments, regulatory agencies, and the national media. The programme also provides informal opportunities for newly elected members to network socially with members across the aisle, prior to the pressures of entering Congress, thus promoting an atmosphere of collegiality, trust, and collaboration on Capitol Hill. Similar programmes have been run for newly elected mayors and governors.

A second prong in promoting equal opportunities entails *recruitment initiatives* to identify and encourage women to run for office, whether in the immediate or distant future. Organized primarily by civil society organizations, these programmes are particularly well-developed in the United States, where the use of a majoritarian electoral system, combined with hostility to gender quotas, make it difficult to achieve dramatic increases in women's political representation, at least overnight. Many of these projects are therefore focused on promoting a shift in women's mentalities over the long term.

A recent campaign that has gained some national prominence is the 2012 Project, a non-partisan campaign initiated by the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.⁵⁷ The campaign is directed at women aged 45 and older, especially those in professions that are generally under-represented in politics, such as finance, environment, science, health, technology, and small business. The 2012 Project focuses on older women on the grounds that women of this age are more likely to be at the top of their professions, hold fewer family responsibili-

ties (because children may be older), and be financially independent. The project seeks to reach these women at industry conventions through talks led by former female legislators and those who express interest in the project are given information on think tanks, campaign training programmes, and fundraising networks that can help them succeed.

A group named Running Start, in contrast, centres its work on a younger demographic, arguing that the key to increasing women's representation in the United States is getting more women engaged in politics and elected to office at a younger age.⁵⁸ Running Start's Young Women's Political Leadership Program introduces secondary school (high school) girls to the importance of women in political leadership and trains them in public speaking, networking, on-camera media training, and platform development. The Running Start/Wal-Mart Star Fellowship places seven university-aged women in the offices of female representatives or senators for a semester long internship, with each Friday spent in a seminar learning the 'nuts and bolts' of political office.

Two final, United States-based initiatives include She Should Run, an online nomination tool and resource centre that asks women to consider a run for office, inspired by statistics which show that women are much less likely than men to think about becoming a candidate, but that when they do run, they tend to win at equal rates to men. An individual can submit a form with the information of a woman who he or she believes should run for office someday, and the programme will guarantee that she gets positive encouragement, connections, and the necessary resources to take the next step.⁵⁹ A related project is the Appoint Her campaign organized by the Women's Campaign Forum Foundation. It provides a national resource for women seeking appointed office by informing women of available positions, sharing skills and traits of women currently in office, and discussing how they launched their own careers.⁶⁰

A third type of equal opportunity strategy focuses on information sharing through the creation of *knowledge networks*, primarily across national borders, to exchange ideas on effective ways to raise public awareness, identify prospective female candidates, and assist women in running successful campaigns. At the global level, a group of transnational NGOs have come together to facilitate these exchanges through the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, or iKNOW Politics (<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>), a website funded by the United Nations Development Programme, UN Women, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. The project is described as an 'online workspace' designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students, and other practitioners interested in advancing women in politics (see Box 3 below).

In Europe, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) based in Brussels has been active in campaigning for the increased representation of women in the European Parliament. The EWL has organized a campaign before each European Parliament election since the early 1990s, with the goal of getting parties to nominate more women. It does so by mobilizing its network of 2500 women's groups across Europe, but also by providing a number of lobbying tools on its website, available in a range of languages, to help ordinary citizens to put pressure on elites in their own countries to take gender balance seriously in their nominations.⁶¹

Box 3: iKNOW Politics Website

The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics, at <http://www.iknowpolitics.org>) provides a web-based forum for exchanging information on the status of women in politics around the globe. Its goal is to increase the participation and effectiveness of women in political life by utilizing a technology-based forum. The website provides users with opportunities to *access resources*, including an online library and the expertise of other users, experts, and practitioners; *create knowledge* via mediated discussion forums, information exchange, and consolidated expert responses to member queries; and *share experiences* by using tools specifically designed to facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices among members of the global community committed to the advancement of women in politics. To ensure accessibility and wide-scale use, the content and resources on the website are available in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish.

The project is a joint initiative of several organizations committed to improving women's status in political life. The United Nations Development Programme works in 166 countries to assist governments and citizens in finding solutions to national and global development challenges. It supports capacity development of political parties' female members and independent candidates preparing to enter the political arena. UN Women provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that foster women's empowerment and gender equality. It seeks to increase the number of women at all levels of government by training women leaders and equipping them with the skills necessary to participate in elections as candidates and voters. The National Democratic Institute offers practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices, and institutions. Its Women's Political Participation Program is dedicated to increasing the number of women in elected positions and improving women's leadership in parties and civil society. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance is an intergovernmental organization that seeks to strengthen democratic institutions and processes. It develops comparative analyses and tools to advance the participation of women in public life. The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the world organization of parliaments of sovereign states. It conducts extensive research to monitor trends and raise awareness of women in politics and provides technical assistance on projects for women parliamentarians and candidates.



Half the nation is not reflected democratically in the parliament

Það sem skilur okkur að gerir okkur sterkari sem heild.

Íslendingar eru heild ólíkra einstaklinga, karla og kvenna, með fjölbreytta reynslu og viðhorf.

Alþingi Íslendinga hefur það höfuðverkefni að standa vörð um lýðræðið,

- rétt og velferð hvers Íslending.

Lýðræðið felur í sér jafnrétti

- jöfn tækifæri einstaklinga af báðum kynjum, meðal annars til náms, starfa, launa og ábyrgðar.

Konur eru helmingur þjóðarinnar.

Alþingi Íslendinga hefur hingað til ekki náð að endurspegla það hlutfall.

Sjónarmið beggja kynja hafa ekki náð lýðræðislegu jafnvægi.

Það er þjóðinni í hag að ólíkum sjónarhornum beggja kynja sé gert jafn hátt undir höfði. Þess vegna er aukin þátttaka kvenna í stjórnámum hagur íslensku þjóðarinnar.

Cabinet appointed committee to increase women's share in politics

Image 1

Source: A. Woodward, *Going for Gender Balance* (Strasbourg; Council of Europe, 2002), p. 38.

Česká politika: Máte opravdu na výběr?

■ Zeny tvoří přes 50 % populace České republiky. V nově zvolené Poslanecké sněmovně však zasedá jen 15,5 % poslankyň.

■ Vyrovnání podíl žen by přinesl do našeho veřejného života odlišné zkušenosti a nový přístup k řešení politických otázek

Občanské sdružení Fórum 50/50 uskutečňuje spolupráci s vyrovnáním zastoupení žen a mužů v politice a ve veřejném životě. Více na www.podstataprocent.cz

Image 2

Source: <http://www.5050democracy.eu/>



Some experiences are beyond our reach

Það sem skilur okkur að
gerir okkur sterkari sem heild.

Íslendingar eru heild ólíkra einstaklinga, karla og kvenna,
með fjölbreytta reynslu og viðhorf.

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um lýðræðið,

- rétt og velferð hvers Íslendinga.

Lýðræðið felur í sér jafnrétti

- jöfn tækifæri einstaklinga af báðum kynjum, meðal annars
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Það er þjóðinni í hag að ólíkum sjónarhornum beggja kynja sé gert
jafn hátt undir höfði. Þess vegna er aukin þátttaka kvenna
í stjórnmálum hagur íslensku þjóðarinnar.

Cabinet appointed committee to increase women's share in politics

Image 3

Source: A. Woodward, *Going for Gender Balance* (Strasbourg; Council of Europe, 2002), p. 37.

Toplumun yansını kadınlar oluşturuyor.
Ancak kadınlara, 1935 yılından bugüne
TBMM'de temsil oranı sadece % 2,2.
Türkiye, parlamentoda kadın temsilinde
167 ülke arasında 163. sırada.
Kadınlara eşitlik temelli eğitimci meclisler
demokratik çözümler üretmiyor.
Demokrasi için, gerçek ve adil temsil için
siyasette kadınlara destekleyin.

ka-der
Kadın Adayları
Destekleme ve
Eğitme Derneği

HAYDI KADINLARI SECELİM

ka-der.org.tr

Image 4

Source: <http://www.ka-der.org.tr/>

Initiatives to combat stereotypes and raise awareness

Beliefs that women should not run for political office are informed and reinforced by gender stereotypes, which associate men with the public sphere of politics and women with the private sphere of the home. Changing these stereotypes can increase the number of women considering a political career, as well as alter how voters – and political parties – view female candidates. One mechanism for combating such stereotypes is the use of *media campaigns* aimed at changing how citizens think about politics. Several campaigns waged across the OSCE region have focused, in particular, on providing a more conducive environment to women's candidacies by raising awareness among voters and elites regarding the current lack of gender balance in the political sphere and the need to elect more women for the sake of democracy.

An early example was the Parity Parliament in Portugal, the initiative of three female members of the European Parliament in the run-up to European Parliament elections in 1994. They invited 115 female politicians and 115 male politicians to a one-day parliamentary session to discuss democracy, the role of women in Portugal, and citizenship and parity. Partially funded by the European Commission, the event sought to provide an example of what gender balance would look like with 50 per cent of the seats filled by women and 50 per cent of the seats occupied by men.⁶²

A more extensive media campaign was organized in Iceland in 1997 in the form of a multi-partisan parliamentary committee that created a well-funded five-year campaign (1997–2002) to increase the proportion of women in politics through humorous advertisements, alongside training courses, education networks, public meetings, and mentoring programmes. The advertisements included posters challenging stereotypes at the top levels of government to frame gender balance as an issue affecting both women and men. In one poster a female MP is shown shaving while in another the male foreign minister is holding a pair of pantyhose (see Images 1 and 3). The captions read “Half the nation is not reflected democratically in the parliament” and “Some experiences are beyond our reach”.

More recent examples of media campaigns include a poster campaign in the Prague subway and street network, sponsored by Fórum 50% in the run-up to the 2006 elections in the Czech Republic. The posters featured a long row of trousers or ties and the question: “Do you really have a choice?” The message implied that while there were some differences among men in politics, opportunities were severely restricted when the options did not include women (see Image 2).

In Turkey, Ka-Der, the Association to Support Women Candidates, has waged a series of innovative public awareness campaigns. In preparation for general elections in 2007, the group created posters of well-known businesswomen and female artists wearing a tie or moustache, asking “Is it necessary to be a man to enter parliament?” (see Image 4). In the run-up to local elections in 2009, they used billboards depicting the three male leaders of the main political parties shoulder to shoulder, with text implying that the three parties were united in preferring male candidates over female ones.

Political party initiatives

In addition to campaigns organized within civil society, there have also been efforts inside political parties directed at improving the proportion of female candidates. Women's voices in political parties have traditionally been aided by the establishment of *women's sections*, or formal organizations that – theoretically, at least – bring together all of the women who are members of a particular party. In Western Europe, women's sections were often created after women gained the right to vote as a means to attract female voters to the party. In Communist states, such sections were viewed as crucial for incorporating female workers and for drawing support from non-party women. In both instances, however, the goal was typically for women to serve the interests of the parties rather than for the parties to serve the interests of women. Yet, over time women's sections in many countries have come to serve as an important platform for women inside political parties, both in mobilizing around women's issues and in gaining commitments from party leaders for the increased recruitment of female candidates.⁶³ Notably, some new parties like the Greens do not have separate women's sections, arguing that these might contribute to the side-lining of women's issues. Attempts to get rid of women's sections in more established parties, however, have not been successful, due to arguments that these organizations continue to play an important role in providing women with a vehicle for putting items important to women on the political agenda.⁶⁴

A second set of party-based strategies involve *fundraising initiatives* to encourage female candidates and ensure that they have the resources necessary for waging successful campaigns. A focus on removing the financial obstacles to elected office takes on special importance in countries where public funding is not available for candidates' campaigns. Perhaps the most well-known among these is the United States-based EMILY's List, a group founded in 1985 which recruits and trains women, but more uniquely, publicizes their names to solicit campaign contributions from supporters across the country.⁶⁵ Similar fundraising groups have been established in other countries on the model of EMILY's List, including in Australia, the UK, and Italy.

Additional mechanisms are available in countries with quotas, or where parties are publicly funded. As noted above with respect to the case of France, parties are subject to a financial penalty proportional to the degree to which they violate the quota requirements of 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female candidates. This 'stick' approach has had different effects on smaller versus larger parties, with the former being more dependent on state funding and the latter being better able to 'afford' to nominate more men.⁶⁶ Therefore, it is worth recognizing the limits of such an approach. In France several parties opted to absorb the financial penalty rather than fulfil the quota requirement; without recourse to other enforcement mechanisms, such an approach can set a precedent for disregarding quota requirements. Actors in other countries have sought instead to offer a 'carrot' to parties as a way to induce them to nominate more women. In recent years, for example, parties in Croatia were granted a ten per cent increase in their funding if they succeeded in electing women to parliament. In a similar effort to get more women elected, the government of Morocco offered financial incentives to the party with the most female candidates in the 2009 local elections. While not yet extensively applied, these experiments with funding may go some way to meeting the goals of groups like the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), which seeks to enhance among other things the transparency of party funding.

A final and less common party-based strategy for raising public awareness and getting women elected is the establishment of *women's parties*. In 1995, thirteen women's organizations in Lithuania founded the Lithuanian Women's Party, headed by the former female Prime Minister,

Kazimiera Prunskiene, with the goal of showing the public that women did not need quotas to be independent political actors. The party came in seventh among 24 parties in the 1996 elections, providing important shock value to the existing parties.⁶⁷ A more recent example is the Women's Party created in Poland in the run-up to the 2007 elections, which employed a controversial poster campaign to alert female voters that the real problem is that Poland is a country run by men, for men.⁶⁸ They campaigned on issues related to child birth, contraception, expanded child care, equal pay, and pension rights. Such initiatives often grow out of women's political movements that seek to stand 'above' the existing political parties while giving a voice to women.⁶⁹

VIII. Gender-sensitive procedures and rules in elected office

The initiatives outlined above indicate that promoting women's representation is a multi-faceted process, requiring various strategies to raise awareness of the need for gender balance, to locate and encourage prospective female candidates, and to ensure that women receive the resources, skills and tools that can help them succeed in getting elected. However, it is not sufficient to integrate gender equality issues into campaigns if women are unable to make their voice heard effectively once they enter elected office. A 2008 IPU survey of parliamentarians revealed that many women continue to perceive the traditional culture, rules, and working practices of parliament to be problematic.⁷⁰ Even in egalitarian Sweden, a 2004 survey of parliamentarians revealed that women found it more difficult to reach senior leadership positions. There are two dimensions involved in developing a more gender-sensitive parliament.

The first concerns the capacity of parliaments to *mainstream gender* into their policy work, legislative priorities, and debates by emphasizing the gendered dimensions of all public policies. One strategy to achieve this goal has been to establish specialized parliamentary committees and caucuses focused on issues of gender equality. Parliamentary caucuses of women MPs and women cross-party clubs also create networks among women in legislatures. Another alternative involves gender mainstreaming throughout the existing parliamentary committee structure and legislative work, through tools like gender budgeting (doing an analysis of the national budget in terms of its implications for women and men, respectively) and the use of gender experts in legislative drafting.

The second dimension concerns *parliamentary working conditions and operational cultures*. Legislative bodies are organized around a set of standardized rules, operating procedures, and institutional facilities which may generate obstacles to the equal inclusion of women in all decision-making and leadership roles. As a recent OSCE report notes, certain elements of parliamentary culture may deter women from pursuing a political career, like party meetings that take place late in the evening and the lack of child care facilities.⁷¹ To facilitate women's participation, parliamentary bodies should review their internal procedures to ensure that there are gender-sensitive structures and working conditions in elected office, including considering the hours of sitting, the recruitment of leadership positions within the legislature, and the provi-

sion of childcare and maternal facilities. Moreover, new MPs face major challenges in learning parliamentary rules, legislative drafting skills, and debating procedures, hence parliaments should ensure that new women and men members have equal access to capacity development, induction programmes, and training.

In Sweden, for example, an internal process has been used to assess the gender sensitivity of the Swedish Parliament.⁷² The results of a survey assessment highlighted that women members faced several challenges in parliament: they usually struggled to reach high positions within the parliament, they viewed themselves and their work as being invisible, they were often subject to ridicule and belittling, and they often did not have access to full information about parliamentary work. This resulted in a document with “15 proposals for gender equality in Parliament”. A gender equality plan was adopted for each parliamentary session, which requires reporting and follow-up, falling under the responsibility of the Secretary General of Parliament. Some of the reforms that Sweden has implemented to make parliament more family-friendly included the provision of subsidized childcare facilities, the possibility to take parental leave without resigning, and a standardization of rules regarding working hours and sick-days to bring them closer to the rules guiding the rest of the workforce. The leadership also took a strong stand promoting these initiatives. It took a number of years and dedicated political will to implement these reforms, indicating that even when gender equality appears widespread, further systematic efforts are needed to ensure true gender equality in the political sphere.

IX. Enforcement mechanisms: Sanctions

In line with the basic human right of freedom to associate, the OSCE/ODHIR supports a limited regulatory role for the state vis-à-vis political parties. However, many OSCE participating States have introduced legislation pertaining to political parties with provisions regarding, *inter alia*, registration requirements, access to state resources (such as public airtime, public political and campaign funds), and access to the ballot. Nevertheless, where political parties as associations are privy to unique privileges not granted to other associations, such as public funding or free use of public airtime, it is reasonable to expect that the functioning of a political party can be governed to a certain extent by legislation and regulation.

States can apply a variety of different sanctions and tactics in order to enhance women's political participation, whether or not there are legislated or voluntary policies in place. An overarching strategy of this kind can involve:

- **Naming and shaming:** Publicizing a list of the worst performing political parties in terms of women's participation can damage the party's reputation and ultimately its electoral success. The press has an important role to play in this regard. In the run-up to the 2010 UK parliamentary elections, the significantly lower percentage of female MPs in the Liberal Democrat Party compared with the Labour and Conservative Parties was extensively discussed in the media and was the subject of much negative attention. This brought the issue of women's representation further onto the popular agenda and meant that parties were forced to discuss and justify their own records. Alternatively, political parties can also build their credibility as societal 'value-holders' by promoting women's participation and including more women in decision-making positions. The German Green Party, for example, instituted a 'dual presidency', with a man and woman co-chairing the party; this practice is used to reflect the Green Party's commitment to values such as fairness and equality.

Where legal quotas are in place, states can ensure greater implementation through a variety of additional strategies, such as:

- **Restricting access to the ballot:** One of the most direct sanctions that can be used by electoral commissions is refusing to accept candidate lists which do not meet legal gender balance requirements. This sanction is in place for French municipal and European

Parliament elections and for Slovenian National Assembly elections: party lists are rejected if they do not comply with the law requiring an equal number of female and male candidates on the list.

- **Suspension of voting rights in international fora:** Governments and international organizations can consider suspending voting rights of members who fail to comply with a given gender-balance requirement. This can apply to political parties as well as other public groups, such as national delegations to international organization meetings or mediation committees.
- **Suspension of public funds/financial sanctions:** Political parties often rely on state funding to fulfil their core functions. Where private funding is limited, particularly for smaller parties, public funds are especially vital. Withdrawing these funds can jeopardize parties' ability to properly campaign and compete. Albania and Portugal have introduced legal provisions for such a withdrawal. Their electoral codes stipulate that those parties who fail to meet the legal quota be subjected to a suspension of state funds until the violation is corrected. This suspension can apply to election campaign funds only or to all state political financing. Withdrawing state funding is a powerful means of incentivizing compliance with gender equality legislation. Such measures have been implemented in France, where the electoral law was changed in 2000 to demand that parties nominate an equal number of male and female candidates in all elections. In case of non-compliance in nominations for the National Assembly, political parties lose a percentage of their state funding equal to 75 per cent of the difference in percentage of male and female candidates (see Box 1: The French Parity Movement).
- **Limiting access to free public airtime:** Equal allotments of free access to public airtime for political parties are a key element of most democratic elections. In view of the importance of the media in modern campaigns, the withdrawal of this entitlement can be used as a very effective sanction against political parties who fail to comply with quotas. Sanctions could include reducing the number or length of free advertisements, removing the party's television broadcasts from primetime slots or limiting speaking time for the party leader in televised debates.
- **Government monitoring mechanisms:** States can also endow government entities with monitoring and enforcement mandates to ensure that provisions regarding women's participation in political parties are respected, such as establishing gender equality mechanisms with powers to monitor compliance with legislative provisions. Where gender equality mechanisms are not endowed with enforcement or monitoring powers, but are rather constituted as advisory bodies, these mechanisms still play an important monitoring and consultative role, which can be used as a leverage to influence political party behaviour.

X. Conclusions and next steps

The OSCE aims to provide equal opportunities for women and men, as well as to integrate gender equality into policies and practices. Full and equal exercise by women of their human rights is essential to achieving a more peaceful, secure, and democratic OSCE region. The issue of gender equality in decision-making is particularly important, as highlighted by the 1995 Beijing Declaration. Since Beijing, there have been some concrete gains in women's participation in national parliaments, but the rate of progress has been slow, uneven, and incomplete. Institutions are still far from achieving gender balance, either within the OSCE region or worldwide. Among all OSCE participating States, the proportion of women in national parliament has gradually risen on average by about 0.5 per cent per annum since 1995. If maintained at this pace of change, without any further active intervention, gender parity in OSCE national legislatures will only be achieved more than half a century from now.

The Six-Step Action Plan

Nevertheless, this projection is far too pessimistic since the cases presented in this report clearly demonstrate that, where there is a genuine commitment to gender equality, concrete steps can be extremely effective in bringing more women into elected office. The Six-Step Action Plan described in this report suggests multiple policy mechanisms to fast-track gender equality. No single approach works in every context, but national stakeholders can select the initiatives most appropriate in each case.

1. **Constitutional reform:** The broadest interventions expand constitutional rights for women. This includes expanding rights to vote and to hold public office and removing any residual forms of sex discrimination. Constitutions can also incorporate positive action provisions, including specifying the provision of reserved seats or the requirement for legal quotas. As exemplified by Afghanistan, an OSCE Partner for Co-operation, new or revised constitutions provide important opportunities to incorporate and strengthen women's rights, such as in constitutional agreements following the transition away from autocracy, peace-building efforts in post-conflict states, or following the introduction of new decentralized legislative bodies.
2. **Electoral, campaign finance, and party laws** regulate the nomination, campaigning, and election process for entering parliaments. Many features shape opportunities for male and female candidates but the most important concern the type of electoral system, the

average size of district magnitude, the provision of party and campaign funding, term limits, ballot access, and threshold requirements. The study demonstrated that within the OSCE region during the last decade, compared with countries using majoritarian systems, those using PR party list electoral systems included on average about 4–6 per cent more women in their lower house of parliament. The need to present a balanced ticket for PR lists, to maximize voting support, provides an electoral incentive for the party selectorate. Any revisions to electoral, campaign finance, and party laws should consider the consequences of these changes for gender equality.

3. **Legal gender quotas** are a related strategy which has been implemented during the last decade in a dozen OSCE participating States. The design of these policies varies in terms of the proportion of women and men specified in each, the use of rank placement requirements, and the penalties for non-compliance. Overall the study demonstrated that the proportion of women elected to parliament during the last decade rose at a faster pace (a net gain of about four percentage points) in OSCE participating States which had implemented legal gender quotas compared with those which has not used these measures. Nevertheless, substantial variance was also evident; a remarkable 25 percentage point rise in the proportion of women in elected office was registered during the last decade in the cases of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kyrgyzstan, both of which combined list PR with a 30 per cent gender equality target.
4. **Party selection rules and nomination procedures**, determined by internal processes and rulebooks, are also vital for achieving gender balance in elected office. As documented in this report, Sweden has almost achieved gender parity in parliament, a country with an egalitarian culture and party list PR elections, where many major parties have adopted party gender quotas. The design and implementation of party quotas varies across and within countries, for example in their target levels, how far there is rank ordering on party lists, and how far formal rules are respected in practice.
5. **Capacity development** policies and programmes have also been widely used, especially by civil society organizations working outside of parties, involving *equal opportunity initiatives* (candidate training, induction and mentoring programmes, recruitment initiatives, and knowledge networks), *initiatives to combat stereotypes and raise awareness* (media campaigns and citizen education), and *political party initiatives* (women's sections, fundraising, and women's parties). There are numerous examples of these types of initiatives and although specific cases are often regarded as successful, it remains difficult to draw any general lessons assessing their overall effectiveness. Further knowledge-sharing and evaluation is recommended as a valuable next step in this process.
6. Lastly, it is insufficient to get more women candidates into office if the standard rules and procedures of democratic bodies are gendered and thus prevent women from operating effectively as elected representatives. Thus, encouraging **gender-sensitive rules and procedures in elected bodies** is also important, both through integrating gender issues into all parliamentary committees, debates, action plans, commissions, reports, and legislation, as well as through reviewing standard working conditions and operational cultures to make sure that there are equal opportunities for women and men members. This is an area which has received far less attention in public debates and it is recommended to gather more systematic information, perhaps by surveys and workshops monitoring the experience of parliamentarians across OSCE participating States and identifying the best practices of elected bodies.

In all these initiatives, National Action Plans should be developed and published to establish clear targets, to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of gender equality policies, and to disseminate and share the lessons learned from these experiences. Political parties should also be encouraged to develop, publish, implement, and monitor their own Party Action Plans, also specifying clear performance targets and specific time-sensitive goals. As the next step, it is recommended that the OSCE develops practical guidelines and handbooks providing technical assistance and templates which parties could use to develop and monitor their own Action Plans. Through implementing these types of initiatives, it is hoped that gender balance will gradually be achieved in all areas of political leadership and public life, strengthening women's rights and deepening the quality of democracy. The next stage of this important work on enhancing women's political participation will be to develop a *Handbook on Measures to Promote Women's Participation in Political Parties*, which will provide practical advice on choosing, developing and implementing strategies to promote gender balance in political party processes.

Appendix Table A.1: Use of legal and party rule gender quotas for lower house of national parliaments, OSCE participating States 1995—2010

NATION	ELECTIONS		LEGAL QUOTAS		PARTY QUOTAS		
	% Women in Lower House 2010	Electoral system for lower house	Quota Level (and Year)	Placement Policy	Sanctions	Party, Quota Level, and Year (when available)	
Albania	16	MMP	30% (2008)	No	Financial: A party that does not comply with the law gets its state contribution for the electoral campaign reduced by up to 10 per cent.	Social Democratic Party 30% (2001) Democratic Party 25% (2003)	
Andorra	36	Parallel mixed	None			None	
Armenia	9	Parallel mixed	15% (2007) Previous: 5% (1999)	Yes: At least every tenth position in the lists (Electoral Code, Article 100 [2]).	Registration: Parties will not be registered (Electoral Code, Article 102 [1]).	Union of National Self-Determination (NSDU) 20%	
Austria	28	List PR	None			Social Democratic Party 25% (1985) Social Democratic Party 40% (1993) Green Party 50% (1986) Greens-Green Alternative 50% (1993) Austrian People's Party 33.3% (1995)	
Azerbaijan	16	FPTP	None			None	
Belarus	32	TRS	None			None	

Belgium	39	List PR	50% (2002) Previous: 25% (1994) Previous: 33.3% (1999)	Yes: The two top candidates on candidate lists and on the lists of alternates cannot be of the same gender (Electoral Code, Article 117).	Registration: If a party fails to comply with the gender composition, their list shall be refused by the electoral authorities (Electoral Code, Article 119).	French Christian Democrats: At least one seat for a woman (Previously) Flemish Liberal Party 20% (Previously) French Christian Democrats 33.3% (Previously) Flemish Green Party 50% (Previously) Flemish Social Democratic Party 25% (Previously) French Green Party 50% (Previously) French Social Democratic Party 50% (Previously) Flemish Socialist Party (Previously) French Socialist Party (Previously)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	19	List PR	35% (2001) Previous: 30% (1998)	Yes: 1 candidate of the under-represented sex to be included in the first 2 candidates on lists, 2 amongst the first 5 candidates, 3 amongst the first 8 candidates (Article 4.19 Election Law 2001).	None	Social Democratic Party 30% (2001)
Bulgaria	21	List PR	None			None
Canada	22	FPTP	None			National Democratic Party 50% (1992) Liberal Party of Canada 25% (1993)
Croatia	24	List PR			Financial: 10 per cent more funds will be given to political parties that have women elected into parliament	Social Democratic Party 40% (1996) 40% (2000) Croatian Democratic Union 25% (1999) Croatian Social Liberal Party 35%
Cyprus	13	List PR	None			Movement of Social Democrats (KISOS) 30% Democratic Rally Party (1999)

NATION	ELECTIONS		LEGAL QUOTAS			PARTY QUOTAS	
	% Women in Lower House 2010	Electoral system for lower house	Quota Level (and Year)	Placement Policy	Sanctions	Party, Quota Level, and Year (when available)	
Czech Republic	22	List PR	None			Social Democratic Party 25% Party of Democratic Left (25%) (Previously)	
Denmark	38	List PR	None			Socialist People's Party 40% (Previously) Social Democrat Party 40% (Previously) Left Socialist Party 50% (Previously)	
Estonia	23	List PR	None			Pro Patria (Previously)	
Finland	40	List PR	None				
France	19	TRS	50% (2000)		Financial: If the difference between the numbers of candidates a party or group present of each sex is greater than two per cent, the party or group will have their subsidies cut by 75 per cent of the difference (Law n°88-227, Article 9-1).	Socialist Party 50% (1990)	
Georgia	7	Parallel mixed	None			Citizens' Union 30% (2003)	
Germany	33	MMP	None			Alliance 90/ The Greens 50% (1986) Social Democratic Party 40% (1998) 33% (1994) 25% (1988) Christian Democratic Union 33% (1996) Party of Democratic Socialism 50% (Previously) The Left Party 50%	
Greece	17	List PR	None			Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) 40%	

Hungary	9	MMP	None			Social Democratic Party (1999) Hungarian Socialist Party 20% Politics Can be Different 50%
Iceland	43	List PR	None			People's Alliance 40% (Previously) Social Democratic Party 40% (Previously) Progressive Party 40% (1996) United Front 40% (2002) Social Democratic Alliance 40% (2007) Left-Green Movement 50%
Ireland	14	STV	None			Workers Party 40% (Previously) Labour Party 20% (Previously) Fine Gael 40% (Previously) Green Party 40% (1992) Sinn Fein 40%
Italy	21	List PR	Previously: 25% (1993)	Yes: A second quota law stated that "male and female candidates will appear alternately" for the list party of any election.	Registration	Communist Party (1987) Italian Republican Party (1987) Christian Democrats (1989) Democrats of the Left 40% (1989) Green Federation 50% (1991) Democracy is Freedom 30% (2001) Communist Refoundation 40% Italian People's Party 20% Italian Democratic Socialists 33% Democratic Party 50%
Kazakhstan	18	Parallel mixed	None			
Kyrgyzstan	27	List PR	30% (2007)	Yes: No more than three positions can separate men and women (Code on Elections, Article 72 [3])	Registration: Lists that fail to meet the quota requirement will be rejected by the Electoral Commission (Code on Elections, Article 27 [5])	
Latvia	22	List PR	None			
Liechtenstein	24	List PR	None			
Lithuania	19	Parallel mixed	None			Social Democratic Party 33% 20% (1996)

NATION	ELECTIONS			LEGAL QUOTAS			PARTY QUOTAS	
	% Women in Lower House 2010	Electoral system for lower house	Quota Level (and Year)	Placement Policy	Sanctions	Party, Quota Level, and Year (when available)		
Luxembourg	20	List PR	None			The Left 50% (Previously) Christian Social People's Party 33% (2002) Green Party 50%		
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	33	List PR	30% (2006) Previous: 30% (2002)	Yes: One in every three places [on candidate lists] will be reserved for the less represented sex (Electoral Code, Article 64 [5]).	Registration: If a political party fails to meet the quota, the list shall be rejected (Electoral Code, Article 67 [1-4]).	Social Democratic Union of Macedonia 30% (Previously) Liberal Democratic Party (Previously) Liberal Party (Previously)		
Malta	9	STV	None			Labour Party 20%		
Moldova	24	List PR	None			Christian Democratic People's Party 50% in top 20 seats		
Monaco	26	Parallel mixed	None					
Montenegro	11	List PR	None					
Netherlands	41	List PR	None			Labour Party 50% (1987) Green Left		
Norway	40	List PR	None			Socialist Left Party 40% (1975) Norwegian Labour Party 50% (1983) Centre Party 40% (1989) Christian People's Party 40% (1993)		
Poland	20	List PR	35% (2011)	Yes: At least one woman must feature among each list's first three candidates.		Union of Freedom 30% (Previously) Zieloni (Green) 2004 50% (2003)		

Portugal	27	List PR	33.3% (2006)	Yes: In multi-member constituencies, the lists can not have more than two consecutive names of the same sex (Decree 72, Article 2 [2]).	Financial: If a list does not comply with the quota law, the incorrectness is to be made public and there will be financial sanctions in relation to the level of inequality on lists (Decree 72, Article 7). The financial sanction does not apply to lists with less than three names (Decree 72, Article 7 [2]).	Socialist Party 33% (2001) 25% (Previously)
Romania	11	List PR	Candidate lists for parliamentary elections must include both male and female candidates. No specified percentage (2004).			Social Democrat Party 30% Democratic Party 30%
Russian Federation	14	Parallel mixed				
San Marino	17	List PR	30% (2002)	Yes: Every fourth place on electoral lists is reserved for the less represented sex (Law on Elected Representatives, Article 40a).	Registration: If an electoral lists fails to provide at least 30 per cent of each sex and reserve each fourth place for the least represented sex, the Republic Electoral Commission should refuse to proclaim the list (Law on Elected Representatives, Article 40a).	Social Democratic Party 30% (2000)
Serbia	22	List PR				

NATION	ELECTIONS		LEGAL QUOTAS			PARTY QUOTAS	
	% Women in Lower House 2010	Electoral system for lower house	Quota Level (and Year)	Placement Policy	Sanctions	Party, Quota Level, and Year (when available)	
Slovakia	15	List PR	None			Party of the Democratic Left 20% (Previously) People's Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia – Parity Target Communist Party of Slovakia mandates one woman among the eight first candidates Alliance of the New Citizen has an informal 33% quota	
Slovenia	14	List PR	35% (2006) Previously: Parties must secure equal opportunities for male and female candidates (1994)	No	Registration: List will be rejected.	Social Democrats 40% (1997) 33% (1992) Liberal Democracy Party 25% (1998) 30% (1994) 30% (1990)	
Spain	37	List PR	40% (2007)	Yes: Quotas are not only applied to the whole party list but also to every five posts. If the number of eligible posts is less than five, then the list must be as close as possible to the 40 to 60 per cent equilibrium.	Registration: Party lists that do not comply with parity will not be approved by the Electoral Commission at the provincial level. Parties are given a short period to amend their lists.	Socialist Party of Catalonia 40% (2000) 30% (1996) 25% (1990) 15% (1987) 12% (1982) Spanish Socialist Workers Party 40% (1997) 25% (1988) United Left 40% (1997) 25% (1989) Initiative for Catalonia – Green 40% (2002) 30% (1991) Canarian Coalition 40% (2000) Nationalist Galician Block 40% (2002) Republican Left of Catalonia 40% (2004)	

Sweden	46	List PR	None	Liberal Party 40% (1972) Green Party 50% (1987) Left Party 50% (1987) Christian Democratic Party 40% (1987) Swedish Social Democratic Party 50% (1993)
Switzerland	29	List PR	None	Social Democratic Party of Switzerland 40% Green Party 50%
Tajikistan	19	Parallel mixed	None	
Turkey	9	List PR	None	Republican People's Party 25%
Turkmenistan	17	TRS	None	
Ukraine	8	List PR	None	Ukrainian Social Democratic Party 33%
United Kingdom	22	FPTP	None	Social Democrat Party: 2 of 9 positions on shortlist (1980–83) Labour Party: All-women shortlists (1993) Labour Party: "Twinning" of male and female candidates in paired districts in Scotland and Wales (1999) Liberal Democrats 40% (2001)
United States	17	FPTP	None	
Uzbekistan	22	TRS	30% (2004)	No
Mean	23			

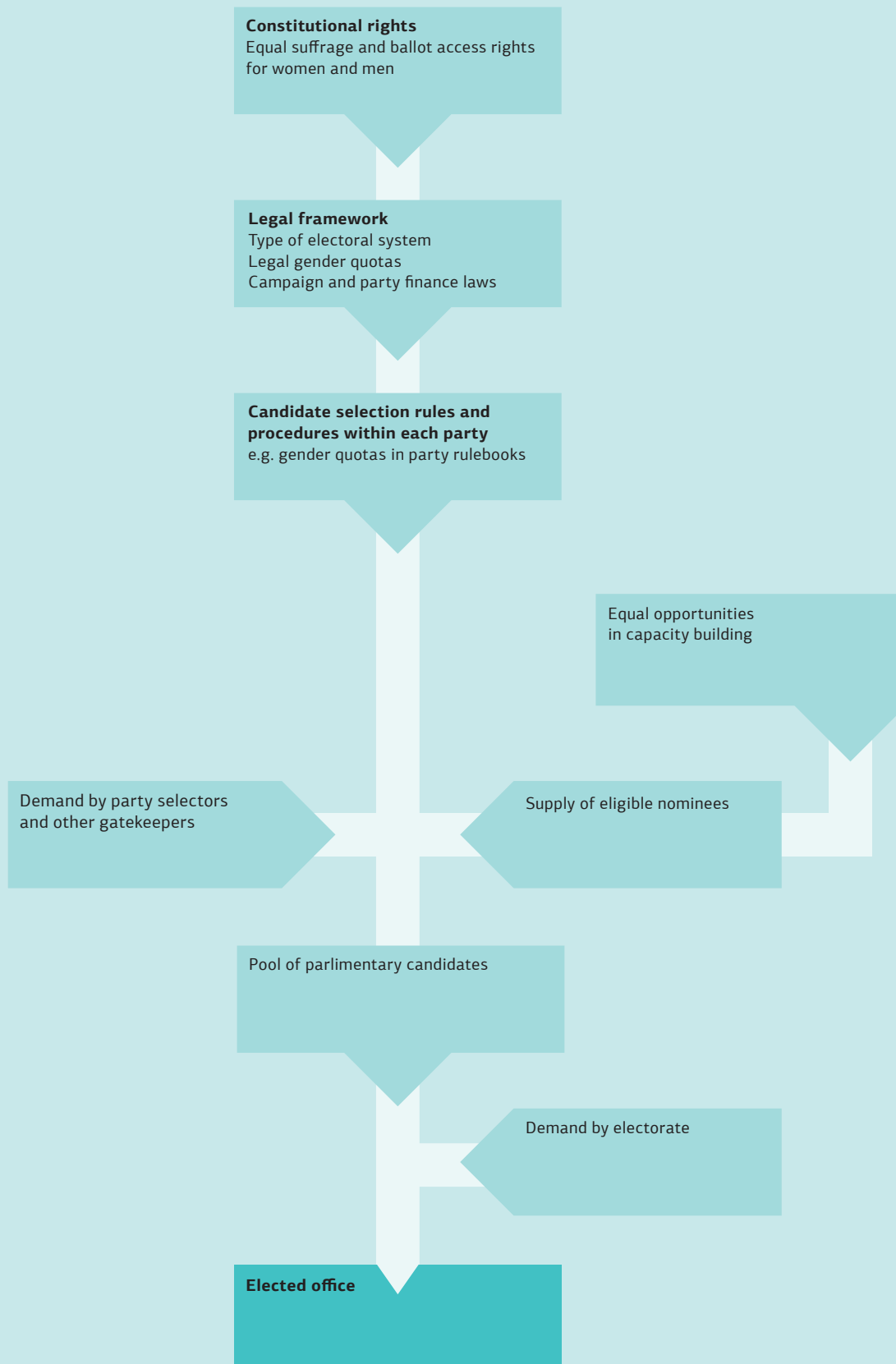
Glossary of Electoral System abbreviations:

MMP Mixed Member Proportional
List PR List Proportional Representation
FPTP First Past the Post (plurality/majoritarian system)
TRS Two-Round System
STV Single Transferable Vote

Source: <http://www.quotaproject.org> plus country-specific updates and Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Note: Please note that this table is subject to change and that the information contained herein is true to the authors' knowledge. The ODHR and authors welcome feedback to update and further refine the Table.

Appendix I: Stages in the candidate selection process



Appendix II: The 2004 Afghanistan* constitution

The adoption of reserved seats for women in post-conflict constitutional settlements, and their impact in the context of traditional cultures, is exemplified by the case of Afghanistan. Afghanistan had not had a functioning parliament since 1973 and even during the decade of the New Democracy (1963–1973) the king usually ruled by decree. The breakdown of Taliban rule, international pressures for democratization and human rights, and the development of the new constitution presented a critical opportunity to develop new political institutions and to incorporate women into the public arena.

The new constitution was crafted by the Constitutional Drafting Commission and the Constitutional Review Commission, before finally being debated in December 2003 by the emergency *Loya Jirga* (Grand Assembly). Women had a voice in each of these bodies, representing 12 per cent of the delegates in the *Loya Jirga*, while two women sat on the nine-member Drafting Commission. The international community, led by the United Nations, was also engaged in providing expert advice about constitutional design options, including measures for the inclusion of women. Women's groups in Afghanistan also mobilized, including those who had been exiled, calling for 25 per cent female representation in the new assembly and a woman's Bill of Rights.

The new Afghan constitution, agreed in January 2004, established that women would be included in both houses of the national assembly. Article 83 Ch. 5, Art. 3 specified that for the *Wolesi Jirga* (lower house): *Members of the Wolesi Jirga are elected by the people through free, general, secret, and direct elections. Their mandate ends on the 1st of Saratan of the fifth year after the elections, and the new assembly starts its work. The number of members of the Wolesi Jirga, proportionate to the population of each region, shall be not more than two hundred and fifty. Electoral constituency and other related issues shall be determined by election laws. In the election law, measures should be adopted for so the election system shall provide general and just representation for all the people of the country, and at least two female delegates should be elected from each province.*

The constitution specified the total number of seats and that at least two women should be directly elected to the *Wolesi Jirga* from each of the 34 existing provinces. In practice this meant that 68 women would be included in the lower house, or 27.3 per cent of the total. But the constitution did not specify either the type of electoral system or how to guarantee the inclusion of women. For the *Meshrano Jirga* (upper house), the constitution empowered the President to appoint one-third of the members, of whom half must be women. At least one quarter of the seats on provincial councils were also reserved for women.

The May 2005 Electoral Law and the Electoral Commission determined how these requirements would be implemented. Afghanistan chose the Single Non-Transferable Voting (SNTV) electoral system for the *Wolesi Jirga*, with multi-member constituencies and simple plurality voting. In this system, used in Japan until 1993, electors cast a single vote for one candidate in a multi-member district. The candidates with the highest vote totals are declared elected. This system was adopted as it is technically simple to administer and count, and it works even in the absence of organized parties and any other political groupings. Multi-member districts

* Afghanistan is an OSCE Partner for Cooperation. The OSCE-ODIHR has been active in supporting the electoral reform process in Afghanistan, including by dispatching an Election Support Team for the parliamentary elections in 2009 (as well as 2004 and 2005). The reforms undertaken in Afghanistan to enhance women's political and electoral participation can be used as a positive example for other states emerging from conflict.

based on existing provincial boundaries are also advantageous, given the practical limitations of insufficient population data (and time) to draw single-member constituency boundaries. The system allows any independent candidate to be self-nominated, without requiring prior party endorsement. The system also encourages local elected members to serve their provincial constituency, since individual candidates compete for popular support within as well as among parties.

The disadvantages of this system, however, are that candidate-centred voting encourages weak party organizations, with potential problems for coordination within the new legislature. It is one of the most disproportional electoral systems since candidates can be elected with an extremely modest plurality of the vote, and even a small shift in votes may tip the outcome in an unpredictable direction. SNTV also encourages strategic party nominations (in deciding how many candidates to nominate in each district) and strategic voting. Electors faced long lists of candidates – for example, 390 candidates listed on seven pages on the ballot in Kabul – without any familiar party cues to simplify their choices. This system may have reinforced voting for local leaders along ethnic lines with minimal incentive for cooperation in the parliament.

In terms of the constitutional requirement for the inclusion of women, the choice of the SNTV electoral system constrained the available options. The system ruled out statutory gender quotas via ranking a specified proportion of women candidates in party list PR. The use of voluntary party quotas would also fail to achieve the constitutional guarantee in Article 83. Moreover, reserved seats for women and minority communities had also long been employed for majoritarian elections in neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh, as well as for village elections in India, which may have influenced the Afghan decision-makers. As a result, the Commission specified reserved seats within each province, varying the number allocated in each area according to population size until the total reflected the constitutional provisions.

Two women could not have been allocated in every province, as in the smaller provinces with only two seats this would have meant that only women could have been returned. The Electoral Commission implemented the constitutional requirements and designated the number of *Wolesi Jirga* seats per province according to population size, for example allocating 33 seats for Kabul, of which nine were reserved for women. The system meant that the candidates with the most votes in each province were elected until all general seats were filled, irrespective of their gender. If the specified minimum number of women were not returned under the general competition, then the women who achieved the most votes in each province were elected to the reserved women's seats. This system meant that women candidates were often elected even though they received dramatically fewer votes than men, which may raise questions about the fairness of the outcome.

The first legislative elections in September 2005 attracted 2,835 candidates for the *Wolesi Jirga*, of whom 344 were women (12.1 per cent). The results saw the election of 68 women out of 249 members (27.3 per cent) so that Afghanistan ranked 24th in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's global comparison of the proportion of women in parliament. This situation is all the more remarkable given that it occurred in a context where Afghan women have long lacked many basic human rights, including access to education, health-care, and freedom of movement, and in a traditional culture where many of the women candidates who stood for office were subject to serious threats, harassment, and violent intimidation during the campaign. The parliamentary elections in September 2010 saw a record number of women candidates run; at least 406 female candidates ran compared with 382 in 2005, despite intimidation and threats against them.⁷³

Appendix III: Kyrgyzstan's legal quotas

A Central Asian state bordering China, Kyrgyzstan became independent with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The 2005 election saw the return of no women members to the Kyrgyzstani Parliament, and women were also poorly represented in the Government. There was only one female member in the Cabinet of Ministers, no female deputy ministers, and the number of women in higher administrative positions was falling sharply.

In October 2007, following advocacy by civil society organizations, many of whom were actively supported by ODIHR, a new article 13 in the Kyrgyzstan Constitution was passed giving men and women equal rights and opportunities. This article was applied in the new edition of the Election Code of Kyrgyzstan, which introduced a gender quota in the electoral lists of political parties that participated in parliamentary elections. In the parliament – the Supreme Council, or *Jorgorku Kenesh* – 120 members are elected through a closed-list proportional representation system to serve 5-year terms. The Electoral Law specifies a 30 per cent quota for either sex on electoral lists (Code on Elections, Article 72) and requires that no more than three positions can separate men and women. Lists that fail to meet the quota requirement will be rejected by the Electoral Commission. The impact of the new quota was immediate. In national elections in December 2007, 23 women (25.6 per cent) were elected to the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan. This figure made Kyrgyzstan a leader in women's representation within Central Asia.

In April 2010, President Kurmanbek Bakiyev was deposed in a popular uprising amid widespread anger over falling living standards and rampant corruption. To replace him, the opposition-dominated interim government chose a female head of state, Roza Otunbayeva. Within months of taking over she supervised a referendum in which 90 per cent of voters backed a new constitution intended to reduce the powers of the presidency and transform the country into former Soviet Central Asia's first parliamentary democracy. In June 2010 the new constitution was passed, establishing a parliamentary republic. Otunbayeva was formally sworn in as caretaker president and the region's first post-Communist female leader, in anticipation of new presidential elections scheduled for October 2011. With the ratification of over 30 international conventions, including CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, and a vast array of domestic legislation, the foundations for gender equality are developing strongly in Kyrgyzstan.

However, it is important to note that the impact of the newly introduced quota has been undermined more recently in two respects. In the 2010 parliamentary elections, despite 33 per cent of registered candidates being women, only 23.67 per cent of members of the new parliament were women. Where a quota does not apply to the actual distribution of seats but only to the candidate lists, the final representation cannot be guaranteed to meet the quota provision. This can occur when women are placed far down on a closed list (in the case of Kyrgyzstan) or in the case of an open list, when women candidates are simply not chosen by the electorate.

Furthermore, respect for the quota has been threatened in cases of candidate withdrawal. In 2010, a total of 80 candidates withdraw after registration and they were replaced by the next person on the list, without due regard for whether or not the new candidates' gender upset the quota requirement. A further 7 MPs refused to take up their seats following the election results and were replaced in the same way. This practice was overturned in December 2010 in an amendment to the electoral code which gives power to a party's political council to decide who is to replace unseated deputies. However, this system also fails to guarantee that the 30 per cent requirement is respected in the event of resignation, and leaves room for selection which takes no account of gender balance.

Appendix IV: OSCE commitments and activities

The 56 OSCE participating States have adopted several specific policies and measures to support gender equality and women's participation in politics. These commitments include:

- Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE (Copenhagen 1990)
- Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE (Moscow 1990), in which participating States commit to the following, among others:
- (40.8) – to encourage and promote equal opportunity for full participation by women in all aspects of political and public life, in decision-making processes and in international co-operation in general
- (40.9) – to recognize the vital role women and women's organizations play in national and international efforts to promote and enhance women's rights by providing, inter alia, direct services and support to women and encouraging a meaningful partnership between governments and these organizations for the purpose of advancing equality for women
- 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality
- 2005 Ministerial Decision 15/05 on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women
- 2005 Ministerial Decision 14/05 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation
- 2009 Ministerial Decision 7/09 on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life

These commitments and the OSCE's gender work are rooted in international legal frameworks, including:

- European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)
- Convention on Political Rights of Women (1952)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979) and its Optional Protocol (2000)
- UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993)
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security (UNSCR 1820 of 2008, UNSCR 1888 of 2009, UNSCR 1889 of 2009)

OSCE-ODIHR Activities and Publications

The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) engages in the following activities:

- Transfer of good practices;
- ODIHR and The Venice Commission jointly published *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation* in 2010 which integrated gender best practice on the drafting and implementation of political party legislation, with specific attention to the impact of campaign financing regulation on women's representation;
- Facilitating knowledge-sharing and expertise;
- ODIHR organizes Roundtables and Forums to discuss key issues in gender equality and has a database of experts to draw upon and recommend for such events.

Reviewing draft legislation:

- ODIHR's Legislative Support Unit carries out assessments of the compatibility of legislation on gender equality and women's participation with international standards;
- Gender and security sector reform;
- ODIHR organizes trainings of security actors based on the Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit.

Election-Related Activities

The OSCE is committed to mainstreaming gender into all its work, including in election observation.

- The *Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections* provides practical steps to be taken by each Election Observation Mission to integrate a gender perspective.
- Many EOMs include a Gender Analyst who is charged with providing guidance to all members of the core team and long-term observers, ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed into the work of the EOM, coordinating the team's work on gender issues, and taking the lead in reporting and providing recommendations on gender-related issues in the election.

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