

WOMEN AND PARTY POLITICS

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WHY
PARTIES?

Conservative

Green

Independent

Liberal Democrats

Labour

POLITICAL PARTIES

- Key political actors
- Key gatekeepers
- Structure of opportunities
- *"an implicit goal of feminist infiltration of parties is to secure changes in attitudes about gender, mainly by increases in understanding and awareness of gender differences and their implications for power relations"* (Lovenduski 1995)
- Descriptive representation
- Substantive representation and feminization of party programs

HOW PARTIES SHAPE WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES?

- Party competition can spur effort to get women
- Most influence in relation to money and votes (Young 2000)
- Scandal or major election failure (Beckwirth 2007)
- Weaker electoral competition and smaller parties (leaders) (Bashevkin 2010)
- Labour Party: after years of losses, women's votes matter
- Contagion of pro-women measures (eg. Canada, Norway, South Africa)

CASE
STUDY



BELGIUM

- Measures for gender balanced participation
- Parties compete to outperform each other in meeting the standard
- Opens way for new laws on quotas
- More effective than if only individual parties adopt quotas
- Belgium adopted quota in 1994 (updated in 2002)
- Pre quota: 2 parties had quota
- After the change of law: parties adopt internal measures (target figures); mostly go further than the 1994 quota: more balanced or double quota
- Existence of party measures paved way to 1994 quota, the quota imposed incentive to parties to adopt further measures, these paved way to the 2002 reform

PARTY IDEOLOGY

- The main predictor of inclusion of women
- Duverger 1955: Political Role of Women
 - Rural/urban areas
 - Electoral systems
 - Time
 - Different parties: Left (Communists and Socialists) and Christian Democrats give women a better chance. Center and Right put significantly less female candidates

IDEOLOGY

- Traditional cleavage: left-right
- But does it matter less today?
- Right-wing parties also include more women, e.g. D. Cameron,, Latin America, CDU..
- Is ideology losing its power?
- Not exactly....

ERZEEL AND CELIS 2016: IDEOLOGY AND WOMEN'S SUBSTANTIVE REPRESENTATION

- Abandon the one-dimensional measure of ideology
- Two dimensions: socio-economic and post-material
- Post-materialist left more connected to feminist post-materialisms
- 2008-2012 PARTIREP comparative survey among MPs
- (AT, BE, DE, FR, HU, IT, NL, NO, PL, PT, ES, SE, UK)

Table 4. Multinomial logistic regression explaining legislators' speaking on behalf of women, with clustered robust standard errors (Reference category = Non-actors; $N = 811$).

	Model 1 B (SE)		Model 2 B (SE)	
	Occasional actors B (SE)	Frequent actors B (SE)	Occasional actors B (SE)	Frequent actors B (SE)
Intercept	-1.707 (0.611)**	0.012 (0.519)	-0.733 (0.804)	0.188 (0.7)
Left-right economic	0.019 (0.059)	-0.004 (0.048)	-0.012 (0.064)	-0.026 (0.051)
Left-Right post-materialist	-0.077 (0.059)	-0.129 (0.046)**	-0.116 (0.062)	-0.12 (0.05)*
Presence women's group (Ref = yes)			0.051 (0.245)	-0.258 (0.202)
% women in PPG			-0.016 (0.008)*	-0.005 (0.008)
Electoral system (Ref = PR)			-0.469 (0.246)	-0.764 (0.237)**
MPs' sex (Ref = woman)	-0.872 (0.223)***	-1.19 (0.189)***	-0.96 (0.229)***	-1.124 (0.198)***
Seniority (log)	0.318 (0.454)	0.738 (0.415)	0.357 (0.459)	0.855 (0.425)
Age	0.024 (0.011)*	-0.002 (0.009)	0.023 (0.011)*	0.001 (0.01)
Government (Ref = government)	0.304 (0.197)	0.581 (0.179)***	0.304 (0.212)	0.680 (0.202)***
Nagelkerke R^2	0.113		0.135	

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Table 6. OLS regression explaining legislators' position on the feminist scale, with clustered robust standard errors ($N = 813$).

	Model 1 B (SE)	Model 2 B (SE)
Intercept	4.232 (0.144)***	3.915 (0.174)***
Left-Right economic	-0.095 (0.016)***	-0.087 (0.016)***
Left-Right post-materialist	-0.103 (0.014)***	-0.094 (0.015)***
Presence women's group (yes = 1)		-0.082 (0.055)
% women in PPG		0.007 (0.002)***
Electoral system (PR = 1)		-0.047 (0.062)
MPs' sex (woman = 1)	0.415 (0.05)***	0.373 (0.052)***
Seniority (log)	0.194 (0.104)	0.203 (0.106)*
Age	0.001 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
Government (= 1)	-0.023 (0.049)	0.01 (0.05)
Adjusted R^2	0.315	0.325

Note: Multi-collinearity is not a problem: highest VIF score = 1.997, lowest tolerance score = 0.501 (% women in PPG) in model 2.

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

CIRCUMSTANCES CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- 1. Are some political institutions more hospitable to the promotion of women?
- 2. Are parties more likely to promote women when there is a strong women's movement present?

- Comparison of Germany (Western) and the UK in 1980s and 1990s
- Similarities: class-based partisanship, strong soc.dem. parties, experience of second wave feminism
- Differences: pol. system and electoral system (at that time West Germany had proportional electoral system)

UK AND WEST GERMANY

- UK in 1970s: 3,7% female MPs; in 1980s 6,5%
- GER in 1970S: 6,6 %; in 1980s 15,4%
- What brings change?
- 1) if necessary to **secure majority**
- 2) not doing it would mean **loss of electoral support**
- 3) **change of system** (Lovenduski 1997)
- All three happened n 1908s

UK AND WEST GERMANY

- UK, neglect of women issues by all parties, in 1980s change:
 - 1) women no longer more likely to vote Conservative
 - 2) Labour women strengthened organization, pressure on party
 - 3) Third party appeared in 1981, efforts to win women's votes, strategies to nominate women
- Process of competitive bidding began
- Labour: new strategies to promote women's rights, Shadow Minister of Women, promise of 50 % quotas within three electoral cycles
- Conservatives: slower, momentum when threat of losing re-election, Shadow Minister of Women, promise to increase number of candidates

UK AND WEST GERMANY

- West Germany, female voters volatile, SPD tried targeting women in 1983, weak feminist presence in the parties, few women in the parties. But then..
- The Green Party, mobilizing feminist constituency
- Representation of women became issue, six women in the leadership of the parliamentary wing
- CDU: 1985 Congress as opportunity to highlight the need to promote women in the party, promise to nominate women in proportion to membership
- SPD: radical reaction of women, positive action, 50 % of female candidates by 1990s, in 1988 40% quota
- More successful than UK because of the system is more open
- Institutions matter! But feminism as well

THE BIG JUMP IN THE UK

- The big jump came with NEW LABOUR in 1997
- Labour had incentives to promote women candidates (after 18 years in opposition)
- All-women shortlist
- And the result?



THE BLAIR BABES: 101 OUT OF 120 FEMALE MPS

CONSERVATIVE PARTY PROGRESS SLOWER

- David Cameron stated underrepresentation as a major problem for his party in 2009
- Discussions of all-female shortlists
- Factor Theresa: inspiration by Theresa May in 2017, half of the seats available for women

HOW ABOUT WOMEN PARTY MEMBER'S ORGANIZATIONS?

- Women's section important in the past
- Mobilization
- Even before female suffrage
- In 1980s rise of women's activities and demands
- Dilemma: party structures or movement?
- Scandinavian countries as an example
- Change of the role of the sections

WOMEN PARTY MEMBER'S ORGANIZATIONS

- Do women's sections prevent women from integration?
- Not a modern feature
- Parties abolishing these

KITTILSON
AND CHILDS
2016

Table 2. Party women's organizations, by country.

Country	# Parties with women's organizations/total # parties
Australia	3/4
Austria	2/5
Belgium	6/12
Canada	3/5
Czech Republic	1/5
Denmark	0/8
Germany	3/7
Hungary	2/4
Ireland	2/5
Israel	4/9
Italy	5/5
Norway	3/7
Poland	2/6
Portugal	2/6
Spain	0/5
Sweden	6/8
United Kingdom	4/4

WOMEN'S SECTIONS BY PARTY FAMILY

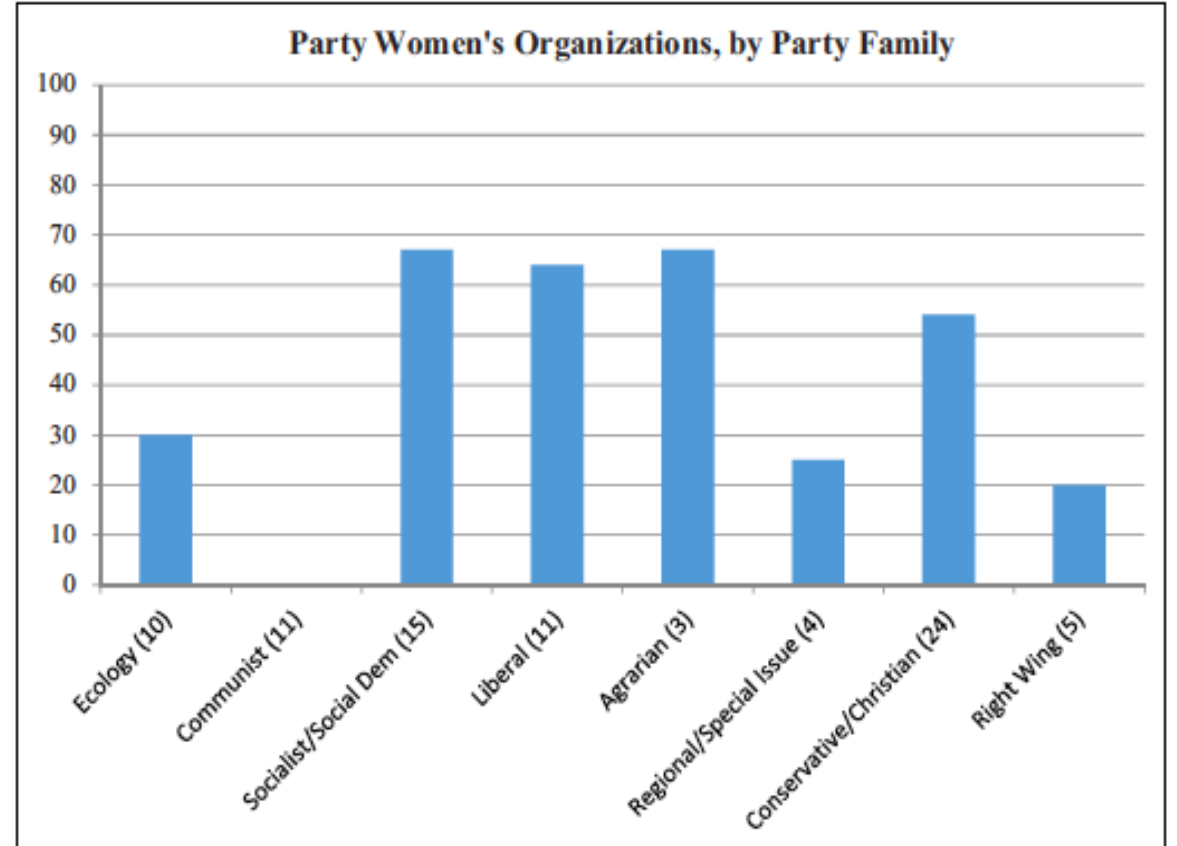


Figure 1. The presence of party women's organizations by party family.

Table 4. The influence of party women's organizations on the NEC.

	% Women on party NEC	Variance inflation factor
Party women's organization	0.37	1.04
Party gender quotas for NEC	2.29	1.08
Left-Right ideology	-1.77	1.08
Constant	40.33***	
Adjusted R ²	0.031	
Durbin-Watson	1.186	
Number of cases	65	

Note: Table entries represent coefficients from linear regression.
* $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.005$.

Table 5. The influence of party women's organizations on quota rules.

	Candidate quotas	Party gender quotas NEC
Party women's organization	-0.19	0.96*
Left-Right ideology	-0.24*	-0.24*
Constant	1.4*	0.30
Nagelkerke R^2	0.09	0.12
Number of cases	79	79

Note: Table entries represent coefficients from logistic regression.

* $p < 0.05$, *** $p < .005$.

DIFFERENCES ACROSS PARTIES

**Conservative Women's Organization
(CWO);**

Women2win;

**CWO Muslim Women Group;
Women's Summits and Forum;**

Vice-Chairman for Women

Shadow Minister for Women

Women's Policy Group of MPs



Conservatives

SOCIAL MOVEMENT

- What is the role of **women's movement**?
- Feminist critique of parties and partisanship
- Parties unresponsive, hollowed out institutions (critique from the left)
- Feminist movement blames parties from lack of representation of women
- E. Evans (2016) interviewed feminist activists in the UK and US
 - Parties run by men, serving men's interests,
 - Real politics takes place outside electoral legislative sphere
 - Pursue change beyond legislative sphere
 - Parties represent only mainstream interests, pragmatic players

FEMINIST ALLIES AND STRATEGIC ALLIES

- 1) individual politicians (across parties) pursuing progressive agenda
- 2) strategic partners on the right, pursuing the same goals (mostly for different reasons)

- Non-partisan status enables feminist activists to collaborate strategically with all relevant actors
- Alliances between radical feminism and conservative right; same policy ends, different motivations

MORE TOPICS

- ELECTORAL SYSTEMS
- WOMEN'S PARTIES
- all on your reading list

