



Comparative Experiences in Promoting Gender Equality in Democratic Politics

International Institute for Democracy and
Electoral Assistance



Key Challenges

- Societal values and level of support for gender equality
- Structural Barriers
- Political gatekeepers, internal democracy and a male bias in parties
- Electoral systems influencing choice of candidates by parties
- Access to political finance and use of public funding for political parties and electoral campaigns



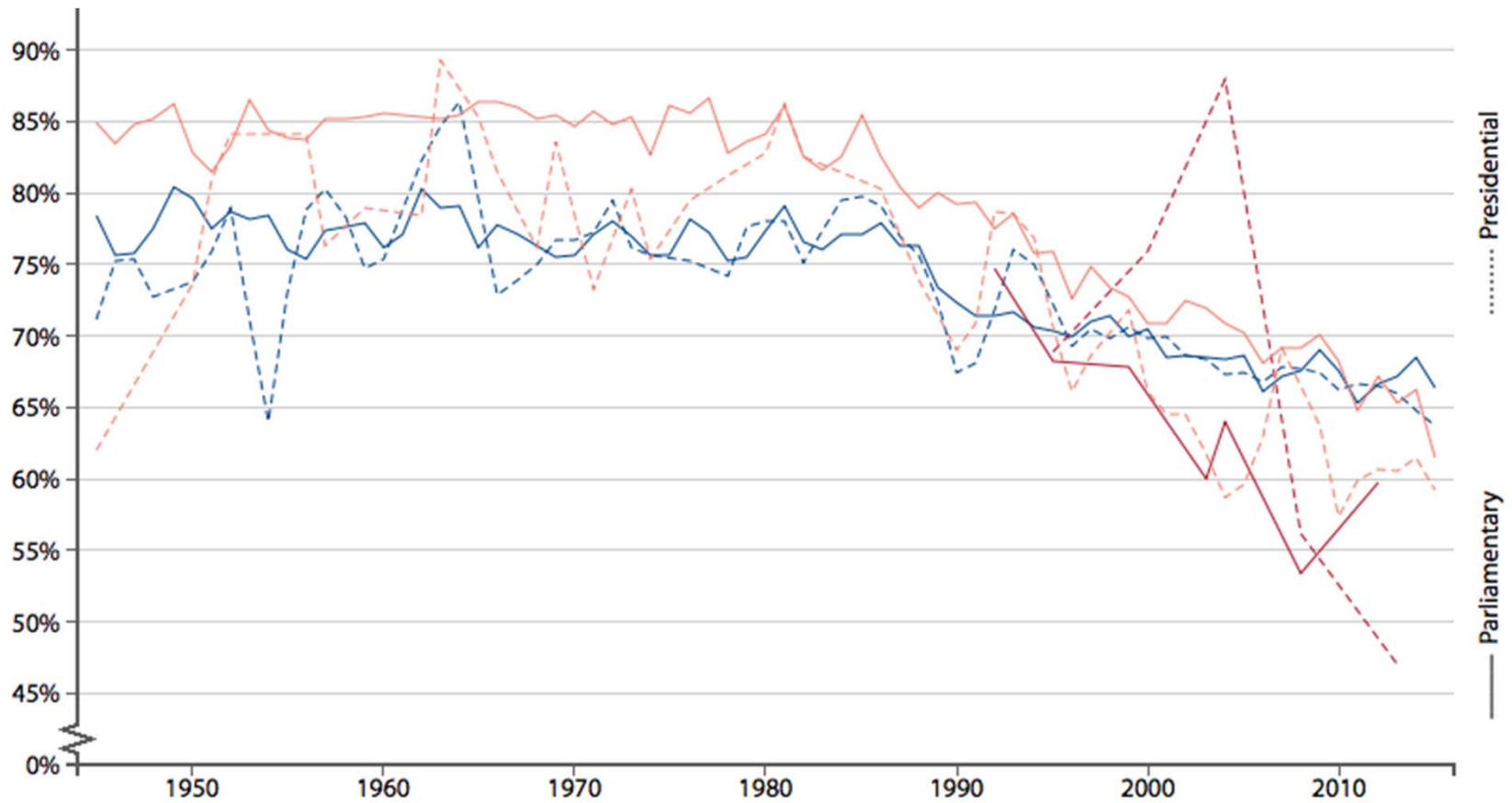
Promoting Responsiveness, Inclusivity and Accountability of Elected Institutions

- **Public confidence and trust in elected institutions shows declining levels across the world, and Europe is not an exception;**
- **Promoting legitimacy of elected institutions through increased openness, inclusivity and outreach to all segments of the population, particularly to the politically marginalized sections of society;**
- **Declining levels of political party membership, support for political parties in general, and the voter turnout**
- **Political parties seem to be at the center stage of this public dissatisfaction**



Voter Turnout Global and Europe 1995-2015

Red – Georgia, Orange – Europe, Blue – Global





Global and Regional Trends

- **Women globally comprise about 23 % of elected parliamentarians – about 10 % increase from 1995**
- **45 countries have reached or crossed the threshold of 30 %, while around 70 countries remain below the 15 % threshold**
- **Regional trends in Central and Eastern Europe – between low 10% to high 30 %s - has largely stayed similar over the past decade (electoral systems and special measures).**



PROMOTING EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ELECTIONS

- 68 countries globally provide gender-based rule in the candidate nomination or composition of the highest elected body of legislation – quota rules, gender parity rules, minimum targets, recommended approaches.
- 44 from these relate to legislated candidate quota or gender parity requirements as part of the electoral laws at national or subnational levels;
- 12 countries with legislated candidate quotas require a strict alternation between female and male candidates on candidate lists for at least one level/house within the legislature (known as zipper or zebra systems)



PROMOTING EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ELECTIONS

- 34 countries (57 per cent) stipulate sanctions for non-compliance in the form of rejecting the entire list or refusing to register the section/candidates
- only eight countries (13 per cent) provide for a financial sanction.
- 22 countries globally provide for a measure linking the provision of public funding for political parties, including for political campaigns, with a certain gender-based criteria – either as a sanction for non-compliance with gender quota provisions or as an additional incentive.

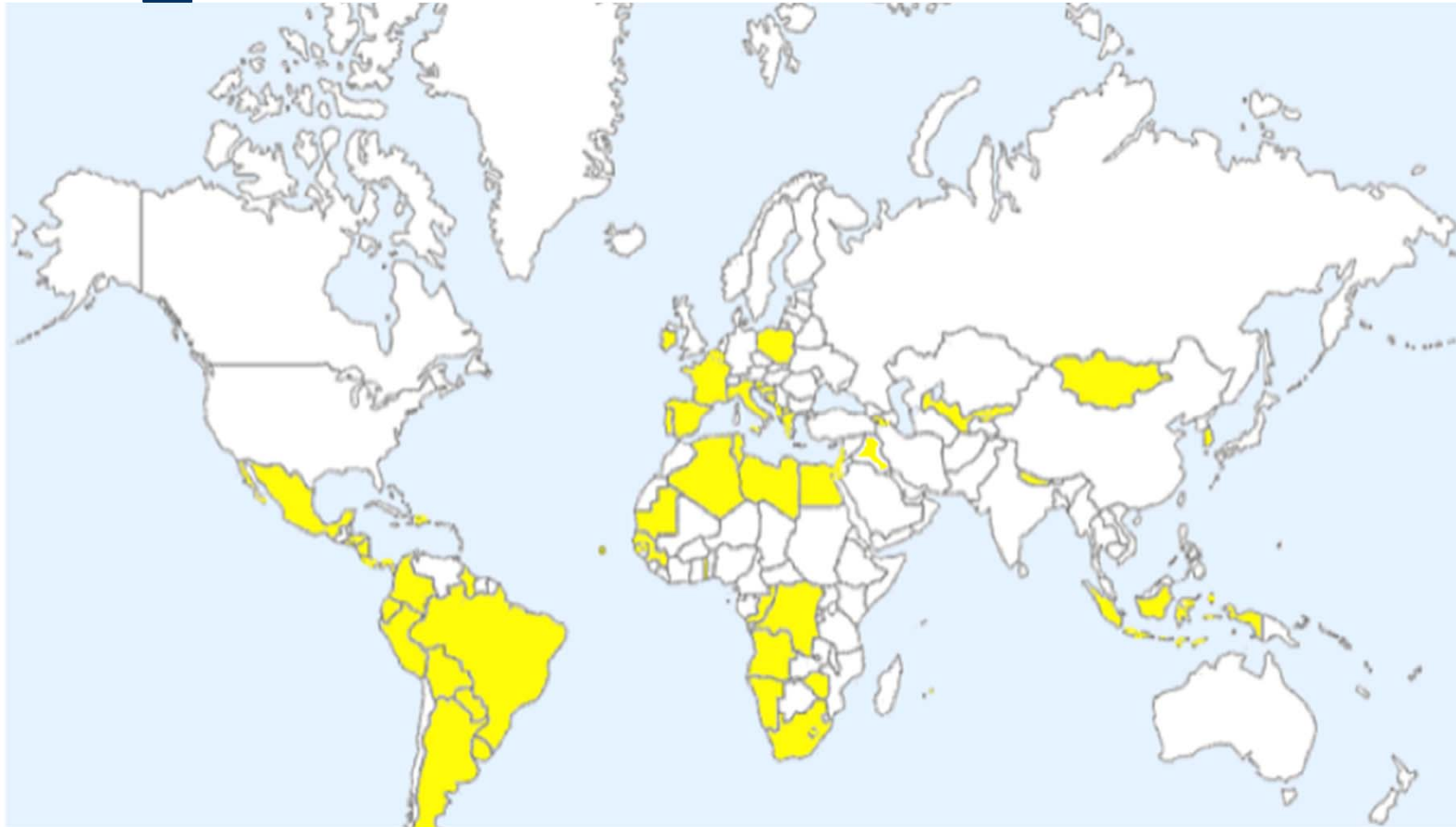


When Designing Quotas

- Call for a relatively *high proportion* of women to be nominated as party candidates
- Include provisions regarding the *ranking order or placement rules and provide effective sanctions*
- Make them *institutionalized* within the organizational structures and formal nomination procedures, so that *rules are enforced* by internal party bodies.
- For single member constituencies, applying measures that ensure that women are nominated to winnable districts, or use of 'all-women shortlists' or 'twinned' constituencies, accompanied by sanctions.



Countries with legislated candidate quotas in the lower house, upper house or sub-national levels





Parallel Electoral Systems

- Andorra
- Armenia
- Congo, Democratic Republic of
- Georgia
- Guinea
- Japan
- Jordan
- Korea, Republic of
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sudan
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Ukraine



Gender and Electoral Systems

- **District magnitude** (the number of representatives elected in one electoral district);
- **the electoral formula** by which the winner of a seat is chosen
- **the ballot structure** which determines whether the voter votes for a candidate or a party

The evidence so far suggests that PR systems with well designed rules are friendlier to gender balance in politics, then other forms.

2014 results – PR systems resulted in 25 % women, mixed – 18 % and majority/plurality – 14 %/



Key Challenges in Candidate Selection and Nomination

- Informal and unregulated (institutionalization, centralization, inclusion)
- Ad-hoc – difficult for candidates to plan and lobby
- Top-down – weaken internal democracy, and support at the grassroots level
- Resource driven- diminish importance of meritocratic criteria, increase monetization of politics and representation



Gender sensitive candidate selection

- When designing any party rules for gender equality, a key question to ask:
 - ‘does the proposed measure transform the existing rule/process in a more just and fair, transparent and equitable process?’
- Candidate selection committees – need to be gender balanced and start reaching out to potential WOMEN candidates (active and passive candidate selection) to avoid the ‘men selecting men’ patterns



Leveling the playing field internally

- **German Christian Democratic Union:** Apply a 33 per cent quota for party officials; internal elections are held again if this threshold is not met.
- **German Green Party: Dual Presidency:** Requires that a man and a woman 'co-chair' the presidency of the party.
- **United States Democratic Party:** "The National Convention shall be composed of delegates equally divided between men and women."
- **United States Republican Party:** "Each state shall endeavor to have equal representation of men and women in its delegation to the Republican National Convention."



Leveling the playing field internally

- **Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario)** - in sending delegates with a voting right to the Annual General Meeting, each constituency association must guarantee a minimum representation of each sex. Of the eighteen members, at least four must be women, four must be men and four must be under the age of 25.
- **UK Labour Party** for its Annual General Meeting, “it shall take steps to ensure that 50 per cent of any delegation shall be women and, where only one delegate is appointed, a woman shall hold the positions at least every other year.”



Women's Groups within parties as critical support structures

- **Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario):** The president of the Women's Liberal Club or Association shall also serve on the Executive Committee of the Constituency Association.
- **Swedish Social Democratic Party:** Guarantees representation of the National Federation of Social Democratic Women to the Party's National Conference, with the right to address the Conference and to move proposals.
- **Spanish Socialist Worker's Party** - established a secretariat for gender-equality policy that focuses on efforts to progress towards gender equality within the party.
- **US Democratic Party Virginia committee** – President and First Vice President of the Virginia Democratic Women's Caucus a membership in the Democratic State Central Committee



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Gender and Political Finance

- Individual contributions overwhelmingly comprise the most important source of financing for all candidates, both women and men
- The average size of individual donations to most female candidates continues to be smaller than the average donation to male candidates
- The vast majority of large donors to political campaigns are men
- Female candidates generally depend upon female donors for financial viability and win monetary support from men only as their odds of election approach certainty
- Women who win raise significantly more money than women who lose, while male winners collect only marginally more money than their losing counterparts.



Financial Incentives

- Waiving internal candidate-registration fees or establishing a fund to pay the candidate-registration fees of female candidates (if fees are required by legislation);
- Reimbursing certain campaign costs for women candidates, such as child care and transport costs in large constituencies
- Offering women privileged access to a party's donor list and creating a separate list of donors willing to support women politicians;
- Creating special fundraising networks and organizing fundraising events to support female candidate EMILY's Lists, Australian Emily's List; UK fund for Women;
- Earmarking a portion of party finances (including public funds, if applicable) for women's groups, candidates and/or capacity-building training for women candidates – see a separate list;
- Offering in-kind contributions and support, for example, in the form of training programmes, allocation of free broadcasting time, use of private mass media time and/or access to party property (physical as well as party resources)



Public Funding Linked with Gender Based Criteria

- Serbia Parliament
- Portugal
- Georgia
- France (3/4 decrease in public funds)
- Romania
- Croatia
- Bosnia 10 % additional funds
- Ireland- half decrease
- Italy – for European

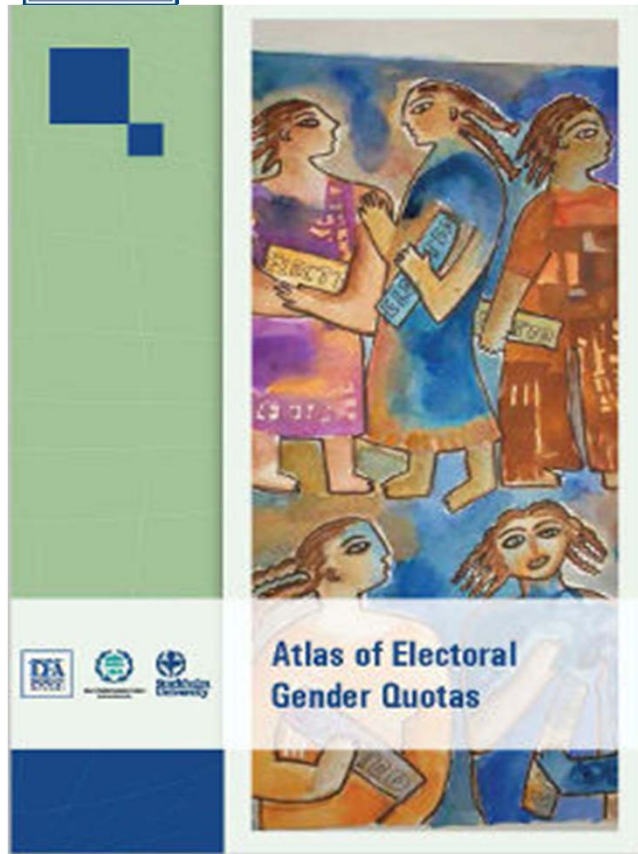


Work and Family balance

- Consider adapting legislative and public policy provisions regarding parental leave, working hours and working environments to political party contexts.
- Consider how to provide child care facilities and services during party conferences or congresses
- Create financial incentives and allowances for party members on parental leave
- Allow for flexible work arrangements



Atlas of Electoral Gender Quotas



Available at

www.idea.int/publications/

Data updated at

www.quotaproject.org