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# **Handbook on Promoting Women's Participation in Political Parties**

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# HANDBOOK ON PROMOTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES



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# Foreword

Gender equality, including the equal participation of women and men in all aspects of political and public life, is a cornerstone principle to which all OSCE participating States have subscribed. The December 2009 OSCE Athens Ministerial Council adopted a Decision on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life, calling on all participating States to "encourage all political actors to promote equal participation of women and men in political parties, with a view to achieving better gender-balanced representation in elected public offices at all levels of decision-making". The Decision provided renewed momentum to objectives established by the OSCE participating States five years earlier in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. This Action Plan, adopted by all participating States of the OSCE, specifically mandates the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) "to assist participating States in developing effective measures to bring about the equal participation of women in democratic processes and assist in developing best practices for their implementation."

The current OSCE-wide rate of women's representation in parliaments stands at almost 25 per cent, an increase from 15 per cent in 2000. This increase over the last decade, however, has been due largely to significant gains in a limited number of participating States, while overall progress remains uneven across the region.

The extent of women's representation in elected office in any given country is determined by a wide range of factors, including the general progress towards achieving equality of rights and opportunities among women and men in public and private spheres, the choice of political and electoral systems, and the level of institutionalization of – and transparency in – decision-making processes within political parties. Nonetheless, within this complex set of factors, political parties are often referred to as the "gatekeepers" of women's political participation. Barriers such as direct or indirect gender-based discrimination in party procedures and practices, a lack of gender-sensitivity in candidate selection and outreach, or an inequitable distribution of party resources among candidates are some of the complex challenges faced by women within political parties and, in particular, by women candidates in their electoral campaigns.

This *Handbook on Promoting Women's Participation in Political Parties* aims at encouraging political party leaders, men and women alike, to support the integration of gender aspects into internal political party decision-making processes. It also seeks to develop the capacity of women politicians to advance their political careers. The key finding that has emerged during the development of this handbook is that internal party reform is critical to women's advance-



ment. A lack of internal party democracy and transparency, the absence of gender-sensitivity in candidate selection and outreach, as well as the failure to decentralize party decision-making processes, all inhibit women's opportunities to advance as leaders within parties and as candidates for elected office. To this end, the handbook provides a valuable overview of *voluntary measures* that political parties can adopt to enhance gender equality within party structures, processes, policies and activities, as a means to provide both women and men equal opportunities to participate meaningfully in the political life of OSCE participating States.

The drafting, review and production of this publication were completed almost entirely during the tenure of my predecessor as director of ODIHR, Ambassador Janez Lenarčič. While I have the privilege of presenting this resource, I must express my gratitude for the guidance he provided in ensuring its publication.

I am convinced that this handbook, written as a reader and a training tool, will motivate political party leaders to ensure that internal party procedures and practices support the equal participation of both women and men in democratic governance processes, to the benefit of participating States across the OSCE region.

Michael Georg Link  
Director  
OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

# Acknowledgements

This handbook was prepared by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), on the basis of research conducted and drafts prepared by Professors Pippa Norris of Harvard University and Mona Lena Krook of Rutgers University, experts in promoting gender equality in political office.

This publication would not have been possible without the information provided by gender and political party experts, women's civil society organizations, and representatives of both political parties and parliaments from across the OSCE region. In particular, ODIHR would like to thank the members of the expert and consultative advisory groups established within the framework of ODIHR's "Women in Political Parties" project, of which this handbook forms a part. These experts identified the key challenges confronting women in advancing their political careers, provided valuable examples of good practices for promoting women's participation within political parties and reviewed drafts of the handbook as it was prepared. Their input and feedback form the basis of this publication.

In particular, ODIHR would like to thank Michelle Bekkering, Lolita Cigane, Ivan Doherty, Lenita Freidenvall, Maria Rauch Kallat, Sonja Lokar, Joni Lovenduski, Petra Meier, Karolina Ó Beacháin Stefanczak, Susan Scarrow, Melanie Sully, Erika Veberyte, and Kristina Wilfore for their expert input and contributions to this handbook. ODIHR owes a debt of gratitude to its partners in the five pilot countries, including Jeta Katro of the Millennium Women's Network (Albania), Elena Rusetskaja of the Women's Information Centre (Georgia), Yevgenya Kozyreva of the Feminist League (Kazakhstan), Zulfia Kochorbaeva of the Social Technologies Agency (Kyrgyzstan) and Daniela Terzi-Barbarosie and Alexei Buzu of the Partnership Centre for Development (Moldova).

The Office would also like to thank representatives of OSCE institutions and field operations for providing feedback on the handbook and for supporting the organization of roundtable-training seminars at which chapters of this handbook were piloted, including the OSCE Presence in Albania, the OSCE Centre in Astana, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, and the OSCE Mission to Moldova. The OSCE Office in Tajikistan also provided valuable input to the handbook's content and structure, while the roundtable-seminars were further supported by the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), UN Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Special thanks are extended to June Zeitlin, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues, and Miroslava Beham, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues of the OSCE Gender Section, for their support of this handbook.



# Introduction

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In the early twenty-first century, the goal of achieving meaningful gender equality in politics continues to remain elusive. Today, women cast ballots in equal, or even greater, numbers than men.<sup>1</sup> Yet women continue to lag behind men as party members and campaign activists; as candidates running for legislative office; as elected members and leaders of local councils, regional assemblies, national parliaments and the European Parliament; as members of the judiciary and top civil service; and in the highest positions as cabinet ministers and heads of government and state.

This situation persists despite the fact that equal rights for women, including rights to citizenship and suffrage, are guaranteed in the constitutions of all modern democracies.<sup>2</sup> This disparity between theory and practice raises fundamental questions of social justice, when women are the majority of the electorate and yet few of the elected leaders. It also has negative effects on future generations, as ongoing imbalances in equal opportunities can affect the prospects for social and economic development in the longer term.

### **1.1. Status of women in political leadership and elected office in the OSCE region**

Women's representation in elected office is slowly advancing in the OSCE region. In 1996, women held only 13.8 per cent<sup>3</sup> of seats in the single or lower chamber of national parliaments, and only 16.5 per cent in 2000.<sup>4</sup> Today, women constitute 24.8 per cent of all members of the lower house in national parliaments in the OSCE region, or almost one in four.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Hilde Coffé and Catherine Bolzendahl, "Same game, different rules? Gender differences in political participation", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 62, No. 5–6, 2010, pp. 318–333.

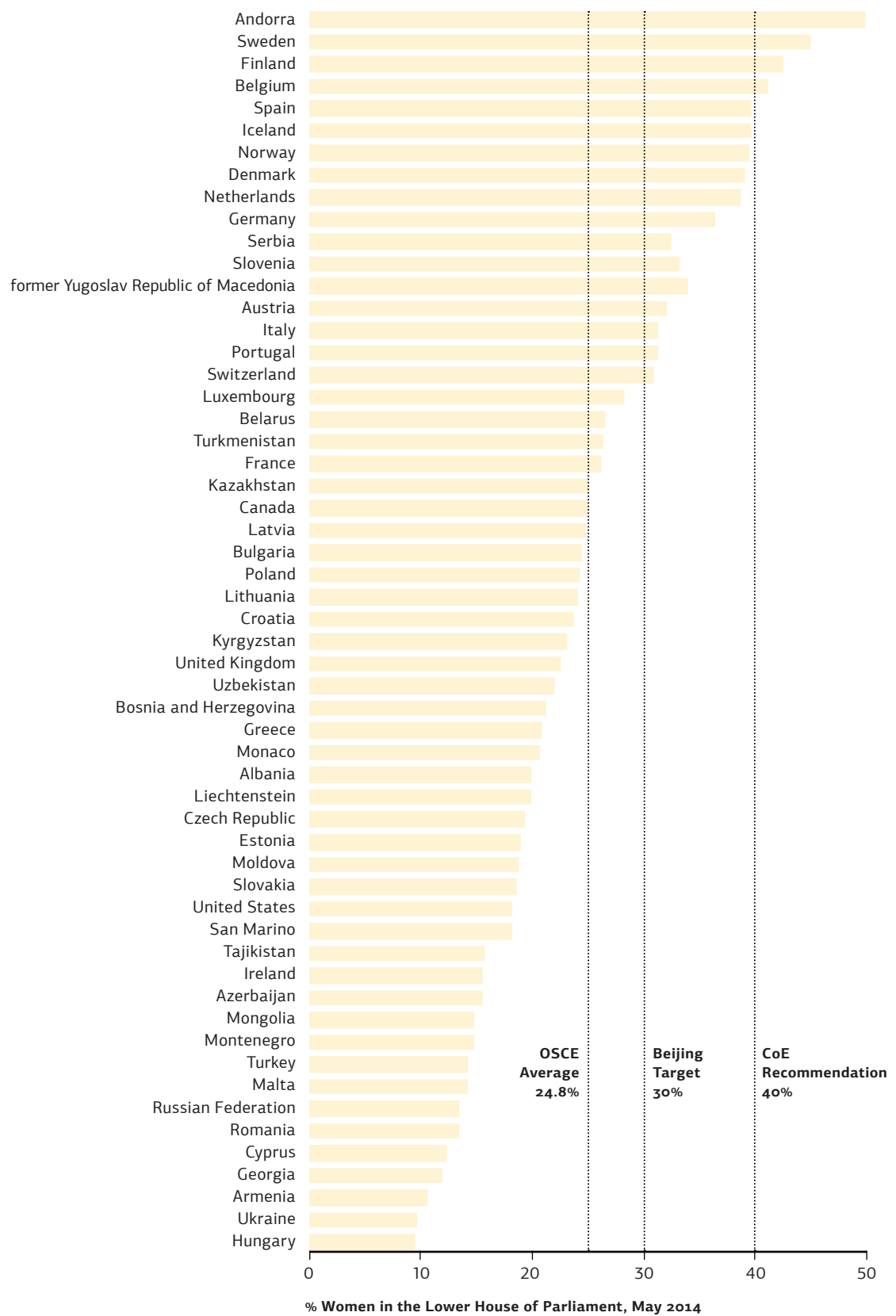
2 Ann Towns, *Women and States: Norms and Hierarchies in International Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

3 "Women in National Parliaments: Situation as of 1 January 1997", Inter-Parliamentary Union, <[www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/world010197.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/world010197.htm)>.

4 "Women in National Parliaments: Situation as of 15 December 2000", Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/world151200.htm>>.

5 "Women in National Parliaments: Situation as of 1 May 2014", Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>>. This Figure excludes the Holy See.

Figure 1.1: Women in the Lower House of Parliament, May 2014



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, <[www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)>

Moreover, during the last two decades, women have been heads of government and state in a number of OSCE participating States. Women have served as prime ministers of Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom, and have acted or continue to act as speakers of parliament in a number of other countries (see Table 1.2 for the latest figures). Finland made history when women were appointed to all three positions of speaker – speaker, first deputy speaker and second deputy speaker – in the 1996 Finnish parliament.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1.2: Women Speakers of National Parliaments in the OSCE Region**

Country	House of Parliament (if any)	Name
Albania	Parliament of Albania	Jozefina Topalli
Austria	Nationalrat	Barbara Prammer
Belgium	Senate	Sabine de Bethune
Czech Republic	Poslanecká Sněmovna	Miroslava Němcová
Estonia	Riigikogu	Ene Ergma
Italy	Chamber of Deputies	Laura Boldrini
Latvia	Saeima	Solvita Āboltiņa
Netherlands	Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal	Gerdi Verbeet
Poland	Sejm	Ewa Kopacz
Portugal	Assembleia da República	Maria da Assunção Esteves
Russian Federation	Soviet Federatsii	Valentina Matviyenko
San Marino	Consiglio Grande e Generale	Denise Bronzetti
Switzerland	Federal Assembly	Maya Graf
Turkmenistan	Mejlis	Akja Nurberdiýewa
United Kingdom	House of Lords	Baroness Frances D'Souza
Uzbekistan	Legislative Chamber	Diloram G. Tashmukhamedova

Source: "Women Speakers of national parliaments. 1 September 2013", <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/speakers.htm>>.

Women have also been presidents of Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>7</sup> Ireland has elected two women presidents in the last two decades: Mary Robinson, who served as president from 1990 to 1997, and Mary McAleese, the president of Ireland from 1997 to November 2011. Finland once again grabbed headlines in 2003, when women simultaneously held the positions of both president and prime minister.<sup>8</sup> Kyrgyzstan became the first country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to be led by a woman, when Roza Otunbayeva became the president in 2010.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Women members of Finland's parliament," Parliament of Finland, <[www.eduskunta.fi/efakta/opas/tiedotus/naisede.htm](http://www.eduskunta.fi/efakta/opas/tiedotus/naisede.htm)>.

<sup>7</sup> In addition, in 2012, a woman was elected President of Kosovo. All references to Kosovo refer to Kosovo under UNSCR 1244; all references to Kosovo institutions refer to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.

<sup>8</sup> "Finland – Government", Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2013, <[www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Europe/Finland-GOVERNMENT.html](http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Europe/Finland-GOVERNMENT.html)>.

<sup>9</sup> "Президент Киргизии – Роза Отунбаева", LiveJournal, <<http://aso3.livejournal.com/29569.html>>.

**Table 1.3: Recent Elected or Appointed Heads of State or Government in the OSCE region**

Country	Post	Name
Croatia	Prime Minister	Jadranka Kosor
Denmark	Prime Minister	Helle Thorning-Schmidt
Finland	President	Tarja Halonen
Germany	Chancellor	Angela Merkel
Iceland	Prime Minister	Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir
Ireland	President	Mary McAleese
Kyrgyzstan	President	Rosa Otunbayeva
Latvia	President	Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga
Lithuania	President	Dalia Grybauskaitė
Malta	President	Marie Louise Coleiro Preca
Slovakia	Prime Minister	Iveta Radičová
Slovenia	Prime Minister	Alenka Bratušek
Ukraine	Prime Minister	Yulia Tymoshenko

Source: Rulers.org, <<http://www.rulers.org/ruld.html>>

Yet despite this notable progress, major contrasts are evident among individual OSCE participating States. Less than a dozen countries have achieved the 30 per cent target for women in decision-making positions set by the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.<sup>10</sup> A few exceptional national parliaments are approaching gender parity: women now hold almost as many seats as men in the parliaments of Andorra, Finland and Sweden. At the same time, however, women's representation still falls below 15 per cent in a number of OSCE participating States.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, while the examples above prove it is possible, it remains relatively rare for women to successfully advance to the top decision-making posts as speakers of parliament, heads of state or government or elected ministers. The figures suggest that, when it comes to gender equality in politics, there is considerable room for improvement. Women's full political empowerment is long overdue.

## 1.2. Political parties as “gatekeepers” of democracy

The extent of women's representation in national legislatures or executives in any given country is determined by a wide range of factors. These include the general progress towards achieving equality of rights and opportunities among women and men in the public and private spheres, the design of political and electoral systems and the level of institutionalization of, and transparency in, political decision-making. Within this complex set of factors, however, political parties are increasingly referred to as the “gatekeepers” of democracy – and of women's political participation in particular.

<sup>10</sup> “The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing, China, – September 1995. Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Platform for Action”, United Nations (UN), <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>>.

<sup>11</sup> “Women in National Parliaments: Situation as of 1 May 2014”, Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>>.



Political parties act as gatekeepers as a result of the unique and fundamental role they play in the democratic process. Parties represent the views and perspectives of citizens – both men and women – and channel these into appropriate public policy fora. They also serve as the pipeline through which women and men emerge as elected representatives or political decision makers.

As associations, political parties should enjoy full rights of freedom of association, assembly and speech, based on OSCE commitments that protect the right of individuals to freely form and participate in associative bodies.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, given the unique position of political parties within the political and electoral arena, there is increasing acceptance by political party experts, regulators and even among party members themselves of the need to regulate their functioning “insofar as is necessary to ensure effective, representative, and fair democratic governance”.<sup>13</sup>

Accordingly, a number of OSCE participating States have enacted legislation to regulate the functioning of political parties and to define their role in the democratic process. Such legislation can be used to specify the processes and resources to which political parties enjoy a right. Most importantly, such laws outline access to the ballot for political parties and describe the process by which this access may be exercised. In addition, political party rights may include access to public funds to finance the operational costs of parties or party campaigns; access to property; and/or access to public air-time during elections.<sup>14</sup>

How political parties function and how their functions are regulated can have a significant impact on opportunities for women’s political advancement. Legislation governing political parties can directly or indirectly discriminate against women. For example, provisions on candidate registration, such as high candidate deposit costs, can stipulate requirements that many women are unable to fulfil due to their unequal political and socio-economic power vis-à-vis men. Furthermore, requirements for advanced educational qualifications or minimum years of public service can unduly limit the right to stand for public office and may disproportionately affect potential women candidates.

**Box 1.4:**  
**Political Parties:**  
**The “Gatekeepers” of Women’s Political Participation**

In its recent Resolution on Women and Political Participation, the UN General Assembly urged all States Parties to:

“[S]trongly encourage political parties to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women, to develop their capacity to analyse issues from a gender perspective, and to adopt policies to promote the ability of women to participate fully at all levels of decision-making within those political parties.”

Source: UN Resolution of the General Assembly 66/130 on Women and Political Participation, 2012.

**Box 1.5:**  
**Definition of a Political Party**

Paragraph 9 of the OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation* define a **political party** as “a free association of persons, one of the aims of which is to participate in the management of public affairs, including through the presentation of candidates to free and democratic elections”.

Source: OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> See OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, para. 4: “Political parties must be protected as an integral expression of the individual’s right to freely form associations”.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, para. 6.

<sup>14</sup> As the focus of this document is on *internal party regulation*, the handbook does not explore in detail what measures the state can introduce in order to require political parties to increase gender equality and women’s political advancement. In this regard, readers are encouraged to consult the OSCE/ODIHR-Venice Commission *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, published in 2010, available at: <[www.osce.org/odihr/77812](http://www.osce.org/odihr/77812)>.

At the same time, direct or indirect gender-based discrimination in *internal* party procedures can create barriers to women's participation. This is particularly so when such provisions affect women's opportunities to be nominated as candidates and elected as representatives, or their access to internal political party decision-making, financing or other party resources. Regulating the internal functioning of political parties, in an effort to make parties operate more democratically and equitably, is therefore an important first step in creating a more equal playing field for men and women party members.

### 1.3. Purpose of the handbook

This handbook is premised on the basic understanding that all OSCE participating States recognize equality between women and men as a fundamental aspect of a just and democratic society and are committed to promoting equal opportunities for the full participation of women and men in all aspects of political and public life. Through the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has been tasked to support OSCE participating States in fulfilling this latter commitment of ensuring equal opportunity for the participation of women in political and public life.<sup>15</sup>

Acknowledging that political parties can influence the degree of women's political participation at local, regional and national levels, this handbook has been developed as part of ODIHR's effort to assist OSCE participating States in enhancing equality between women and men in political parties specifically.<sup>16</sup> It elaborates concrete strategies aimed at increasing the capacity of political parties to develop and apply different voluntary measures to promote women's participation as party members, decision makers and candidates for public office. The handbook also seeks to present strategies to enhance gender equality in party policies, processes and procedures.

While political parties must adhere to regulatory standards introduced by the state as well as by international and national human rights conventions, this handbook has been developed on the premise that the first language political parties understand is that of maximizing electoral performance and securing political power. Political parties are more likely to adopt strategies to enhance women's political advancement if there are incentives to do so, whether these incentives translate into success at the ballot box, increased access to state resources, an improved public image or more efficient and effective functioning of party structures and procedures.

In fact, as this handbook will demonstrate, the evidence suggests that engaging more women in politics provides tangible benefits for political parties. On the one hand, women are the majority of voters in every country, due to the fact that women tend to live longer than men. In many countries, women are also more likely than men to turn out to vote – with the result that, as a recent report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) found, women can “deliver the margin of victory for successful parties and candidates”.<sup>17</sup> Parties cannot, therefore, afford to ignore female voters. Growing

<sup>15</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 14/04, “OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality”, Sofia, 7 December 2004, <<http://www.osce.org/mc/23295>>.

<sup>16</sup> In this way, the handbook supplements the information in: Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan”, (Warsaw: OSCE, 2011), <[www.osce.org/odihr/78432](http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432)>; OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, <[www.osce.org/odihr/77812](http://www.osce.org/odihr/77812)>; and other OSCE publications or OSCE-commissioned publications.

<sup>17</sup> *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>, p. 65.

numbers of parties around the world have recognized this and have found that nominating more female candidates can be one way to attract women's votes for the party.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, women – once elected – can strengthen the party in important ways, in addition to the vital work that non-elected women perform at the grassroots level.<sup>19</sup> Female members of parliament (MP), for example, have been found to be more loyal to the party in their legislative work, straying less than men in voting along party lines (even if they may feel compelled to do so).<sup>20</sup> This can improve the stability of the party, at the same time that it facilitates co-ordination by the party in terms of policy outcomes. Women can also be more effective than men in their legislative work, attending more sessions, proposing more bills and meeting more often with their constituents.<sup>21</sup> These activities can heighten public trust in the party. In fact, research has indicated that the presence of more women in legislatures is positively correlated with increased perceptions of government legitimacy among both women and men.<sup>22</sup>

Political parties across the OSCE region thus have important reasons – both normative and pragmatic – for promoting greater gender equality in politics. Accordingly, this handbook seeks to reach out to many potential audiences – political party leaders, MPs, candidates, civil society groups and individuals – whether or not they are currently committed to the goal of increased female representation. The aim is to make a case for the importance of having more women in politics, while also drawing on regional OSCE examples to identify what practical strategies can be applied and work most effectively to expand opportunities for women's empowerment in the political sphere.

#### 1.4. “Women in Political Parties” project and handbook methodology

This handbook was produced within the framework of the ODIHR “Women in Political Parties” project. The project aimed to expand the knowledge and build the capacity of political stakeholders – in particular political party members and candidates for elected office – to apply

18 Louise K. Davidson-Schmich, “Implementation of Political Party Gender Quotas: Evidence from the German Lander 1990–2000”, *Party Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2006, pp. 211–232; Miki Caul Kittilson, *Challenging Parties, Changing Parliaments: Women and Elected Office in Contemporary Western Europe* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006); Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (eds.), *Gender and Party Politics* (London: Sage, 1993); Richard E. Matland and Donley T. Studlar, “The Contagion of Women Candidates in Single-Member District and Proportional Representation Electoral Systems: Canada and Norway”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 58, No. 3, 1996, pp. 707–733; Petra Meier, “The Mutual Contagion Effect of Legal and Party Quotas: A Belgian Perspective”, *Party Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 5, 2004, pp. 583–600.

19 Jo Freeman, *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002); Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (eds.), *Gender and Party Politics*, (London: Sage, 1993).

20 Ayşe Güneş Ayata and Fatma Tütüncü, “Critical Acts without a Critical Mass: The Substantive Representation of Women in the Turkish Parliament”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 3, 2008, pp. 461–475; Philip Cowley and Sarah Childs, “Too Spineless to Rebel? New Labour's Women MPs”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2003, pp. 345–365. The literature suggests that the roots of women's loyalty are diverse. In addition, some women may feel compelled to be loyal, knowing that they may be easily replaced on party lists if they do not adhere to the party and party leader's line.

21 Sarah F. Anzia and Christopher R. Berry, “The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why Do Congresswomen Outperform Congressmen?”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 2011, pp. 478–493; Paul Chaney, “Critical Mass, Deliberation and the Substantive Representation of Women: Evidence from the UK's Devolution Programme”, *Political Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, 2006, pp. 691–714; Rainbow Murray, “Second Among Unequals? A Study of Whether France's 'Quota Women' Are Up to the Job”, *Politics & Gender*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2010, pp. 93–118.

22 Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer and William Mishler, “An Integrated Model of Women's Representation”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 2, 2005, pp. 407–428.

measures to increase women's participation in political life as political party leaders, decision makers and candidates for elected office. Recognizing that much attention has been paid to the *legal regulation and measures*, such as gender quotas, that can be introduced in order to support women's political participation, ODIHR wished to identify and compile good practices of *voluntary measures* that political parties themselves can introduce in order to create a more level playing field for women and men.

The handbook is the product of a number of activities implemented as part of the project. ODIHR undertook a thorough review of previous studies prepared by the OSCE and other international and non-governmental organizations on women's political participation globally, and specifically in the OSCE region.<sup>23</sup> In addition, ODIHR partnered with local civil society organizations to conduct field research in five pilot countries: Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova.<sup>24</sup> Through the field research, ODIHR aimed to identify common challenges to women's political advancement within political parties in the pilot countries. More specifically, ODIHR sought to gather information about how political party procedures can facilitate or hinder women's participation. The procedures examined include those governing party recruitment, promotion or advancement within the party, candidate-nomination and selection processes, decision-making and policy-making processes, and allocation of party resources.

The field research was conducted in the form of a survey consisting of three questionnaires.<sup>25</sup> These questionnaires were distributed to more than 150 interlocutors, namely parliamentarians, women party members and civil society activists, as well as representatives of election management bodies and governmental gender-equality mechanisms. The results of the survey formed the basis of a unique database containing more than 1,000 entries.

It is important to note that resource and time limitations on the part of ODIHR, as well as some challenges in gathering information from political stakeholders, prevent the survey – henceforth referred to as the 2012 ODIHR Survey – from being statistically representative of women's situation within all political parties in the five pilot countries, much less across the OSCE region as a whole.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, the compiled database presents a rich source of information about challenges, good practices and lessons learned in enhancing women's participation in political parties in the pilot countries.

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23 For example: *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>; "Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan", OSCE/ODIHR, 2011, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>; *Handbook for National Human Rights Institutions on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*, OSCE/ODIHR, 2012, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/97756?download=true>>. For a full list, see Bibliography.

24 These participating States were chosen as pilot countries for the project based on concrete requests for assistance by participating States and to achieve the objective of conducting research in States with different electoral and political systems. The relevant partner organizations in each country are as follows: Women in Development/Millennium Women Network ([www.albania-mwn.org](http://www.albania-mwn.org)) (Albania); Women's Information Center ([www.wicge.org](http://www.wicge.org)) (Georgia); Feminist League ([www.empowering-women.kz](http://www.empowering-women.kz)) (Kazakhstan); Alliance of Women Legislative Initiatives (AWLI)/Social Technologies Agency STA (<http://www.awli-kg.org>) (Kyrgyzstan); Partnership for Development Centre PROGEN ([www.progen.md](http://www.progen.md)) (Moldova).

25 Henceforth referred to as "2012 ODIHR Survey on Women in Political Parties" or "2012 ODIHR Survey". This ODIHR *Handbook on Promoting Women's Participation in Political Parties* is the first publication to apply the data from this survey.

26 Specifically, challenges arose in reaching a set number of interviews, completing interviews, as well as ensuring a random sample of interviewees.

Some of the gaps that remained following the field research were addressed through the implementation of training programmes<sup>27</sup> conducted in each of the five pilot countries.<sup>28</sup> Each training seminar consisted of a roundtable for political party leaders, followed by an intensive two-day training for women party members and potential candidates for public office. During each event, participants noted challenges facing party leaders, gender-equality activists, candidates and elected members in promoting the equal participation of men and women in political parties. Furthermore, information contained in handbook chapters was distributed in handouts or as training exercises. In this way, the handbook content has been tested in different country settings, and then verified or modified accordingly. The regional diversity of the pilot countries – in terms of political development, electoral systems and current rates of women’s political participation – helps to create a more representative picture of women’s participation in political parties across the OSCE region. Nonetheless, it must be kept in mind that every country context – and indeed, every political party – is unique, and that the pilot countries are not fully representative of the OSCE region as a whole.

**Box 1.6: The ODIHR Handbook on Promoting Women’s Participation in Political Parties: How did we do it?**

The ODIHR project team engaged in a number of activities in order to collect and compile the information contained in this handbook. In co-operation with partners, the project team:

- Conducted desk research and a thorough literature review:
  - » Approximately 200 books, scholarly articles, online resources and advocacy materials were consulted and reviewed; and
  - » ODIHR reports, including ODIHR Election Observation Mission Reports, as well as reports of international governmental and non-governmental organizations, were consulted.
- Developed written questionnaires in English and Russian:
  - » Questionnaires intended for three different focus groups were developed and distributed to:
    - representatives of the national gender-equality mechanism;
    - representatives of the national election management body; and
    - the leadership of the main political parties in each of the five pilot countries, as well as current MPs (both men and women) and political activists.
- Conducted interviews (referred to as the 2012 ODIHR Survey):
  - » 150 semi-structured interviews in the five pilot countries of Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova were conducted in the period from August to November 2011; and
  - » Relevant national publications and other data in local languages were consulted.
- Compiled a comprehensive database:
  - » The database contains more than 1,000 entries based on the survey findings.
- Wrote country case studies:
  - » Five country case studies were drafted by local civil society organizations in each of the five pilot countries, identifying the key challenges to women’s participation in political parties.
- Designed strategies for the handbook:
  - » Concrete strategies relevant to three target groups (political party leaders; women politicians; and civil society organizations) were developed.
- Conducted roundtables, seminars and workshops:
  - » A roundtable, a training seminar and one follow-up workshop were conducted in each of the five OSCE pilot countries, tailored to appeal to representatives of each of the three target groups; and
  - » Handbook strategies were presented, discussed and verified with political party leaders, women candidates, representatives of civil society and the international community.
- Engaged in extensive consultations:
  - » More than 20 international experts provided their input and feedback to the handbook through peer reviews and discussions; and
  - » More than 20 representatives of OSCE field operations and institutions read and commented on various drafts.

27 For more information on the training programmes conducted, see the OSCE/ODIHR website: <[www.osce.org/odihr/gender](http://www.osce.org/odihr/gender)>.

28 Training programmes were organized in Georgia in April 2012, Albania in June 2012, Moldova in September 2012, Kazakhstan in November 2012 and Kyrgyzstan in April 2013.



### 1.5. Target readership and structure of the handbook

This handbook was developed with three distinct target groups in mind: political party leaders, women party members and candidates for public office and civil society. The good practices, as well as lessons learned, contained in the handbook are logically organized according to the target group, recognizing that different arguments and strategies may motivate, persuade and/or encourage each group to promote women's political advancement more meaningfully.

- The main target group is **political party leaders**, recognizing the central role that party leaders play in facilitating or hindering women's political advancement. The chapter devoted to party leaders elaborates strategies aimed at making internal party policies, procedures and practices more transparent, fair and equitable for both women and men.
- The second target group includes **women interested in political advancement**, whether as party leaders, campaign managers, party candidates, or elected members or party activists. The chapter on women in political parties presents practical strategies to support women in planning and executing a political career.
- The third target readership group is **civil society**, including civil society organizations, women's groups, media and academia, whose actions can help exercise pressure on political stakeholders to initiate external and internal reform in support of gender equality and women's political advancement.

The overall aim of the handbook is to equip each of these groups with arguments, strategies and examples of good practice that could be mobilized to support women's empowerment in political parties and public office more broadly. However, the handbook might also be of use to election-management bodies, national gender-equality mechanisms and civil society organizations more generally, each of whom can play a key role in supporting or advocating for political parties to make necessary changes. In addition, the handbook could prove a useful resource tool for the media, to raise consciousness and help avoid gender-based stereotyping when covering election campaigns and communicating information about individual candidates.

Where applicable, the handbook also refers to broad concepts, organizational ideas and typologies that have been developed by experts and practitioners in order to better understand gender equality and women's representation in politics. Such concepts include the "supply and demand" model for political and candidate recruitment, which takes into account the number of women aspiring to run for elected office and their qualifications to do so (the supply), and the demand for women candidates among political elites as well as the voting public (the demand).

In different sections, the handbook also applies a known typology for understanding political party approaches to increasing the diversity of their candidates. Strategies that parties apply to increase candidate diversity can include *equality rhetoric* (including calls for equal representation in party platforms, electoral campaigns and the speeches of party leaders); *equality promotion* (implementing concrete actions such as training or financial assistance to encourage women to enter into politics); and *equality guarantees* (adopting actions at party policy level to increase the number of women candidates on party lists, such as party gender quotas). Understanding the theories and concepts behind gender equality in politics can give party leaders and women themselves frameworks and arguments for better promoting their objectives.

It is important to note that the resources and examples referenced in this handbook are included owing to their value as effective good practices for the promotion of women's partici-

pation in political parties. As such, their inclusion in no way represents an endorsement of or agreement with the policy agendas or political platforms of the organizations, platforms and political parties that produced them.

Notwithstanding the above, this handbook has been designed as a practical tool, allowing for easy navigation by the reader through the different chapters and sections. While each chapter can stand on its own, ODIHR believes that a holistic approach is required to truly achieve substantive gains in women's political advancement. To advance their political careers, women and gender activists must mobilize and organize themselves. To successfully enact reforms in favour of greater gender equality, however, requires the support of both women and men party members and, in particular, party leaders. Likewise, support from external actors, namely civil society and other stakeholders, is no less important. In short, no single group and no single strategy alone will be sufficient: effective strategies are those that combine the efforts of party leaders, women politicians, gender activists and civil society.

In line with the research constraints elaborated in section 1.4 above, it is important to conclude by noting the limitations of this handbook. Firstly, it represents a collection of good practices, presented as strategies to be implemented by the key stakeholders. Nevertheless, given the closed nature of political parties and the relative novelty of this subject area in many participating States, this handbook does not purport to be a comprehensive collection of all existing good practices for promoting women's participation in political parties. Furthermore, readers may find that the handbook includes more examples from some participating States than from others. This is due to research limitations encountered while developing the handbook.

Furthermore, as the political context differs in each OSCE participating State, and as each political party is a unique organization, readers are encouraged to tailor the strategies presented in the handbook as is relevant and appropriate. In particular, each strategy should be tailored keeping in mind the democratic experience of the country, its national framework, its electoral and political system, its current political and socio-economic environment and its historical socio-cultural context.

Lastly, and importantly, this handbook does not address in detail the divide between party leaders, party activists and party members. Some research suggests that, because of the often male-dominated membership and leadership structures of parties, rank-and-file members can be particularly resistant to the type of change that is necessary in order to make political parties more supportive of women's political advancement.<sup>29</sup> While the strategies in the handbook can be tailored by either party activists or party leaders to build internal support for greater gender equality, it is acknowledged that this is a gap that the handbook is not able to fully address. Further research and development of tailored strategies are needed to address the specificities of the leader-party member relationship.

For the sake of user-friendliness, the handbook is divided into six chapters, including this **Chapter One: Introduction**, which surveys trends in women's political participation in the OSCE region and highlights the pivotal role of political parties in facilitating women's political advancement.

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29 See, for example, survey results captured in *Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: A Strategy Paper*, developed by the Ukrainian Women's Fund in 2011. Available at: <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/85974>>. See also research undertaken by Professor Susan Scarrow.

**Chapter Two: Why Advocate for Gender Equality and the Promotion of Women in Political Office?** summarizes the arguments in favour of promoting women's political representation, addressing both principled needs for gender balance and the strategic benefits to political parties in supporting this goal. The chapter explores in greater depth the benefits for each of the three target groups of enhanced gender equality and increased participation of women in political parties.

**Chapter Three: Political Parties and Political Party Leaders** equips political party leaders with a range of strategies that can be implemented in various phases of the electoral cycle to promote women's empowerment. The chapter focuses on internal political party processes and procedures, and the degree to which these facilitate or hinder women's political advancement. Where possible, it presents strategies that can lead to enhanced *demand by political parties* for more women as members, decision makers, leaders and party candidates for public office.

**Chapter Four: Women in Political Parties** focuses on women political party members, namely those aspiring to be candidates for elected office, party leaders or decision makers, campaign managers and/or party activists. The strategies presented in this chapter are aimed at increasing the *supply of women* willing to pursue political careers by building their confidence, knowledge and access to party resources and leadership opportunities. Accordingly, the emphasis is placed on the attitudes and motivations of women for entering politics, combating persistent gender-based stereotypes and enhancing the capacities and resources of women in the pipeline for political advancement.

**Chapter Five: Civil Society and Other Actors** looks at the supportive role played by civil society in helping both party leaders and women party members in achieving the goal of gender equality in political parties and national elected office. These strategies focus on how civil society can support both women and political parties through media campaigns, fundraising initiatives, capacity-development strategies, knowledge networks and gender audit monitoring.

**Chapter Six: Conclusions** summarizes the core findings of each chapter and presents recommendations for further action.

The **Annexes** include excerpts from OSCE documents on gender equality, as well as summaries of key international gender-equality standards. They also contain templates of methodologies presented in the handbook chapters, which can be used or adapted by political parties to enhance gender equality within parties, in addition to case studies and other useful data and information. The handbook is accompanied by practical training materials that can be used by all political stakeholders.

**ODIHR welcomes readers to submit examples of good practices, measures and strategies to promote women's participation in political parties, via the OSCE/ODIHR website.**

ODIHR hopes that this handbook is only the first in a series of publications that identify the wide range of effective strategies, measures and practices in existence to promote women's meaningful participation in political parties. To this end, ODIHR welcomes readers to submit additional examples of good practices for future publication purposes.





# Why Advocate for Gender Equality and the Promotion of Women in Political Office?

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## Introduction to Chapter 2

Equality between men and women is recognized by OSCE participating States as a fundamental aspect of a just, secure and democratic society. “Equality between men and women” means securing the equal rights and opportunities of women and men in laws and policies, as well as ensuring equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society.<sup>30</sup> This includes equal rights to participate in all spheres and at all levels of political and public life.

Women’s political participation is slowly increasing across the OSCE region. As noted in the Introduction, women’s representation in national parliaments in the OSCE region stands at 24.8 per cent as of 2013, up from just 17 per cent in 2000. Nevertheless, wide disparities in women’s representation remain among different OSCE participating States, and too few women occupy decision-making positions at all levels of political and public office. Indeed, the baseline study “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan”, commissioned by ODIHR, found that, if current trends in women’s representation continue, gender parity in elected office will only be achieved in the OSCE region in **50 years** and worldwide in only **150 years**.<sup>31</sup>

Notwithstanding international obligations and commitments, political parties themselves are often not at the forefront of efforts to promote women’s full and active political participation in the OSCE region. Even when membership of women reaches parity with that of men, political party culture – as well as both the formal and informal practices that govern party functioning – can create obstacles to women’s political advancement within the party and within the electoral arena.

Why should political parties be interested in facilitating women’s political advancement and creating a more gender-friendly party environment? Many of the traditional arguments to promote women in politics and political parties in OSCE participating States are based on the obligation to comply with the international human rights framework, an appeal to strengthen democratic credentials and a desire to increase the representativeness of democratic institutions, particularly parliaments.

While universal human rights and international standards should remain the framework governing the functioning of all democratic institutions, including political parties, this handbook recognizes that political parties operate according to the logic of maximizing electoral performance. Performing well at the ballot box secures political parties the opportunity to

*Gender equality is about equal rights and opportunities of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society. It refers to women and men being able to access and participate on an equal footing in all spheres of life, including in democratic governance, decision-making and the security sector.*

Source: “ODIHR and Gender Equality Fact Sheet”, OSCE/ODIHR, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/103449>>

### Box 2.1: Women in national parliaments in the OSCE region

The current rate of women’s representation in national parliaments in the OSCE region stands at **24.8** per cent.

According to the baseline study “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan”, if recent trends continue, parity in elected office will only be achieved in the OSCE region in **50 years** and worldwide in **150 years**, without the introduction of concerted and targeted policy interventions.

Source: Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan”, a baseline study commissioned by ODIHR, 2011.

30 See “Gender”, Legislationline, OSCE/ODIHR, <http://legislationline.org/topics/topic/7>; and “ODIHR and Gender Equality Fact Sheet”, OSCE/ODIHR <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/103449>>.

31 Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan”, (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2011), p. 53, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>.

influence and shape public policy and the way institutions function. When the participation of women in politics can be proven to help parties in securing electoral victory, political party leaders will be more likely to facilitate and actively support women's advancement.

Accordingly, this chapter not only presents traditional arguments that provide the foundation for the equal participation of women and men in political and public life in the OSCE region, but also explores incentive-based arguments that may convince more political party leaders to take an active role in supporting women's political advancement. Once party leaders are convinced of the benefits of supporting women's political advancement, these arguments may then need to be developed further in order to convince rank and file party members, who can be more resistant to women's advancement than party leaders and/or the voting public.<sup>32</sup> It also presents arguments regarding the benefits of gender equality for women in political parties and society more generally.

**Figure 2.2: Summary of Arguments Supporting Women's Political Participation**

Traditional	Benefits for Parties	Benefits for Women Politicians	Benefits for Society
Equal rights and opportunities for women and men are universally recognized	Improves a party's public image and standing	Expands the pool of women willing to run for public office	Ensures fair representation of society in elected office
Equal representation of women and men in politics is a prerequisite for democratic elections	Enhances a party's programme and policy agenda	Changes the perceptions of society and political stakeholders regarding women's capacity	Impacts the policy agenda
Inclusive parliaments can enhance legitimacy and representativeness	Strengthens a party's electoral and/or campaign strategy	Strengthens confidence of women to influence policy agendas in parties and parliament	Promotes better understanding of gender-equality issues in society
Gender equality is conducive to economic development	Helps combat decline in party membership		

## 2.1. Traditional arguments to support women's political participation

International human rights and gender-equality standards remain the reference frameworks governing how all political institutions and actors operate in the OSCE region, and all OSCE participating States have committed themselves to respecting these standards. This section provides an overview of arguments to promote women's political participation based on the universal human rights instruments that enshrine equal rights for women and men and promote gender equality, as well as the international standards and principles governing the functioning of democratic institutions.

32 See, for example, *Ukrainian Women's Fund, Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: Strategy Paper*, commissioned by the OSCE/ODIHR, 2011, p. 13.

## → Equal rights and opportunities for women and men is universally recognized

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) enshrines “equal rights of men and women”, including the right to participate in government.<sup>33</sup> The Declaration paved the way for further international commitments in the area of women’s rights, most comprehensively in the 1979 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).<sup>34</sup> Expanding upon this “bill of rights” for women, as CEDAW is often called, the 1995 UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action mandated that Member States “take measures to ensure women’s equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.”<sup>35</sup> The Beijing Declaration, building on commitments made during the United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985),<sup>36</sup> reflects a new international commitment to the goals of equality, development and peace for all women.

Similarly, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000, contains a statement of values and principles, as well as eight specific goals – known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – with related targets, which constitute an international agenda for the twenty-first century. In it, UN Member States agreed to “promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.”<sup>37</sup> Fulfilling Goal 3 – to promote gender equality and empower women – is widely recognized as essential to achieving the other seven Millennium Development Goals. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, also passed in 2000, reaffirmed the importance of women’s participation in the security sector and in peace processes, emphasizing the importance of their “equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.”<sup>38</sup>

OSCE participating States have repeatedly pledged to end gender-based discrimination and strengthen gender equality in political and public life.<sup>39</sup> The 1990 Copenhagen Document, for example, contains non-discrimination provisions that can be particularly relevant to the protection of women’s rights. Paragraph 5.9 commits participating States to “prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground.”<sup>40</sup> The 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality directly links equal rights of women and men to “peace, sustainable democracy, economic development

33 “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, United Nations (UN), Article 2: “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”, 1948, <<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>>.

34 “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979” (CEDAW), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), Article 7, <<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cedaw.htm>>. The Convention has been ratified by 189 countries.

35 “The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing, China – September 1995. Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Platform for Action. United Nations (UN). Platform strategic objective G1”, <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/decision.htm>>.

36 “United Nations. Global Issues. Women”, <<http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/women/>>.

37 “Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, 55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration”, A/55/L.2, <<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>>.

38 “Resolution 1325 (2000)”, UN Security Council, 31 October 2000, <[http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf)>.

39 “OSCE Commitments Relating to Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination. A Reference Guide Prepared for the OSCE Human Dimension Seminar on Participation of Women in Public and Economic Life”, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Warsaw, 13–15 May 2003, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/19575>>.

40 “Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE”, Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe (CSCE), 1990, <[www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304](http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304)>.

and, therefore, to security and stability in the OSCE region.”<sup>41</sup> The OSCE Gender Action Plan remains the most comprehensive OSCE framework to date in guiding OSCE institutions and participating States in advancing towards true and meaningful gender equality.

The OSCE Gender Action Plan’s emphasis on ensuring the equal participation of women and men in political and public life, including political parties, was elaborated upon at the December 2009 OSCE Athens Ministerial Council, where the Council adopted Decision No. 7/09 on Women’s Participation in Political and Public Life.<sup>42</sup> This Decision calls on all participating States to

*[E]ncourage all political actors to promote equal participation of women and men in political parties, with a view to achieving better gender-balanced representation in elected public offices at all levels of decision-making.*<sup>43</sup>

As this comprehensive range of international obligations, standards and instruments shows, OSCE participating States are committed to promoting gender equality and women’s political participation, including in decision-making positions.

### → Equal representation of women and men in politics is a prerequisite for democratic elections

Democratic elections require that citizens can choose freely from among competing political parties and candidates. Some claim that it is unfair to intervene in the electoral marketplace through policies that restrict equal opportunities by favouring one group (for example, women) over another, or which limit electoral choice at the ballot box.

*Party leaders’ reluctance to nominate equal numbers of female and male candidates limits voters’ (both women and men) ability to vote for women.*

Yet any electoral system incorporates rules that determine the translation of votes into seats in ways that favour some parties and candidates over others. A good example is the use of legal thresholds, which do not allocate seats to smaller parties when they fail to receive a certain percentage of the vote. Similarly, campaign finance regulations, media access rules and ballot access rules all shape the nature of electoral competition.

Thinking about electoral choice in this way opens up an alternative interpretation – namely, that the refusal to nominate substantial numbers of female candidates limits voters’ ability to vote for women. Moreover, as the playing field has not been even for men and women, well-structured attempts to redress this misbalance should be welcomed. Positive action strategies, designed to facilitate women’s access to elected office, expand the voter’s choices at the ballot box. These strategies also contribute to more inclusive, legitimate and diverse parliaments.

41 OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 14/04, “OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality”, Sofia, 7 December 2004, <<http://www.osce.org/mc/23295>>.

42 A more detailed overview of OSCE commitments on gender equality can be found in Annex 1.

43 OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 7/09, “Women’s Participation in Political and Public Life”, Athens, 4 December 2009, <<http://www.osce.org/mc/40710>>.

## → Inclusive parliaments can enhance legitimacy and representativeness

The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments is a common yardstick used to judge national progress towards gender equality in public life as well as the political empowerment of women.<sup>44</sup> For example, this indicator has been adopted to monitor how far the UN Member States will have achieved the 2015 targets set by the UN Millennium Development Goals.<sup>45</sup>

According to research, both men and women believe that “government is more democratic if it includes a substantial proportion of women.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, countries cannot be regarded as fully democratic if they exclude women from participating in representative bodies. Men and women constitute roughly equal shares of the population in the OSCE region.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, this fact should be reflected in all spheres of life, including in the political sphere.

### 2.2. Benefits for political party leaders

The arguments described above are rooted in the “justice argument”, which states that providing opportunities for women and men to participate equally in all political processes is a human rights obligation. Respect for this human right also brings greater democratic legitimacy and increases the likelihood of inclusive governance. As such, the “justice argument” constitutes a powerful justification for progressing towards equal participation of women and men in political life.

However, not all political parties may be convinced to take action in support of women’s political advancement based on human rights obligations and principles of legitimacy alone. An incentive-based approach can be effective in persuading political parties, and political party leaders in particular, to support women’s political participation. Leaders are more likely to be convinced if they see that the increased presence of women in political office can help parties compete more effectively and draw attention to the party’s policy issues that may secure greater support from the electorate.

This approach is rooted in two arguments often put forward in order to enhance women’s political participation, in addition to the justice argument: the “difference” argument, and the “pragmatic” or “utilitarian” argument.<sup>48</sup> The difference argument posits that women and men bring different perspectives, views and experiences to the table that can enrich political and policy debate. Only through full and fair representation will these differences be taken in account in political policy – and decision-making. The “pragmatic” argument outlines the benefits to parties by including more women, including greater electability and legitimacy amongst voters. In addition, parties benefit from the broader array of skills, knowledge and expertise that women bring. Accordingly, this section presents key arguments to motivate political party

44 Ann Towns, *Women and States: Norms and Hierarchies in International Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

45 “What is the MDG Monitor?”, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2007, <<http://www.mdgmonitor.org/index.cfm>>.

46 Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer and William Mishler, “An Integrated Model of Women’s Representation”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 2, 2005, pp. 407–428.

47 “Population trends”, UNFPA, <<http://www.unfpa.org/pds/trends.htm>>.

48 See, for example: Joni Lovenduski, *Feminizing Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); and Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* (London: Hansard Society, 2005).

leaders to increase the number of women among political party members, decision makers and candidates for elected office. It focuses on four main incentives for political party leaders:

- Improving a political party's public image and reputation;
- Enhancing political party platforms and policy agendas;
- Strengthening political party electoral strategies; and
- Combat falling party membership.

Each incentive contains concrete arguments as to how women's political participation can bring specific benefits to political parties.

### 2.2.1. Improves a political party's public image and reputation

#### → Takes a political stand on gender equality

In many OSCE participating States, formally discriminating against different identity groups, if not altogether illegal, certainly opens parties to public criticism.

Some modern political parties have developed a similar attitude towards gender equality, deeming it to be not only legally necessary, but also politically expedient to support the full and equal participation of women and men in all spheres of political life. The lack of an official

#### **Box 2.3:** **The Council of Europe's "Gender Equality Prize"**

The Gender Equality Prize is awarded every five years to parties that have "significantly improved women's participation in elected assemblies or political parties, or in their respective executive bodies."

Nominations can be made by any political group of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament or the national parliaments of Council of Europe member states.

Source: The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, "Gender Equality Prize", [www.assembly.coe.int](http://www.assembly.coe.int)

stance of a political party and its leadership on such a crucial issue can be easily picked up and used to the party's detriment by the opposition, the media and voters. Likewise, formulating and publicizing a clear policy in support of gender equality can have a positive impact on increasing the party's legitimacy, membership and voter base.

A demonstrated commitment to gender equality is also an essential precondition for co-operation with international party networks and foundations, such as the European People's Party and German party foundations. Membership in such networks can help boost a party's international reputation and standing as a modern political force, while also providing a party access to additional resources and capacity-building assistance.

#### → Improves a party's public image

Political parties continue to be dominated by men in the 45-year-old to 64-year-old age group globally, as well as in the OSCE region, a demographic that makes politics and political office seem inaccessible to would-be candidates of other age groups or backgrounds, whether male or female. This membership composition also often makes parties appear elitist and out-of-touch with the average voter, particularly youth. Diversifying a party's membership base by including more women of different ages and backgrounds can, therefore, help strengthen a party's public image among key voting groups. In addition, recruiting more women may help offset declining party-membership rates more generally, as will be explored below.



### 2.2.2. Enhances party platforms and policy agendas

#### → Broadens political party policy agendas

A large-scale survey of members of parliament undertaken by the Inter-Parliamentary Union<sup>49</sup> found that more than 90 per cent of respondents agreed that women bring different views, perspectives and talents to politics by introducing new perspectives into policy areas traditionally dominated by men, such as defence, security, economics and business. Women's role in peace and reconciliation efforts, conflict prevention, post-conflict rehabilitation and peacebuilding more generally, for example, can bring to the table new views on how to prevent, manage and resolve conflict.

In addition, it is often argued that women bring specific areas of expertise to politics, especially on social issues such as welfare, education and healthcare. In fact, women's expertise is not limited to such issues, as evidenced by women's employment in all spheres of work. However, prevailing gender stereotypes in many OSCE participating States mean that women politicians may experience more success when they focus on social policies and, thus, "use voters' dispositions toward gender as an asset rather than a liability."<sup>50</sup> Without entrenching gender-based stereotypes, political parties should recognize that women are often perceived as more credible on key social issues and use this as a way to expand their political platforms and party lists.

#### Box 2.4: Women in Politics: The Smart Choice\*

Jane Doe never thought of becoming a representative of the local council in her community. Following the construction of a large commercial enterprise near her home, however, she discovered that traffic on the road had increased heavily, resulting in more traffic accidents.

A teacher by profession, Jane realized that most of these traffic accidents involved children walking home from school and those who had no other place to play after school than on the streets. Concerned, she founded a community group to establish road safety plans for the area affected by the development of the commercial enterprise.

The group put pressure on local councillors (mostly men), who had no idea how children got home from school or where they played, and did not take these issues into account when approving the development of the enterprise.

With local elections approaching, Jane joined a political party that had campaigned in the past on social justice and education issues, and presented her organizational

skills, commitment and experience with children as attributes that would make her a successful candidate. While the party leadership and selectors debated possible candidates, Jane helped re-invigorate the party's policies and electoral platforms relating to local education and road safety, winning her party's trust and candidacy support. She campaigned on the promise to introduce road safety laws in her area and to build a children's play area in the local park, ideas popular with local voters.

Jane Doe won a seat in the local election and as a local councillor, continued to lobby for improved road safety, bringing her party more credibility when it came to local socio-economic policy issues.

*\*This is a fictionalized example based on the experiences of real life women in local politics.*

Studies also indicate that the increased presence of women in political office can help parties to compete more effectively, drawing attention to important policy issues that have previously been overlooked, thereby attracting new voters.<sup>51</sup> A more inclusive and responsive policy agen-

49 "Equality in Politics: A Survey of Men and Women in Parliaments", Inter-Parliamentary Union, Reports and Documents no. 54, 2008, p. 31.

50 Paul S. Herrnson, J. Celeste Lay and Atiya Kai Stokes, "Women running as women: Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter-Targeting strategies", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 65, No. 1, 2003, p. 244.

51 "Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation", UNDP/NDI, 2011, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

da can also be used to signal a party's dedication to the country's socio-economic development, thereby contributing to better and more effective governance overall.

In sum, as long as women remain under-represented in the political arena, women's expertise and perspectives on policy agendas will be underutilized. Including women experts, academics and practitioners in political party policymaking can help to legitimize the party's perspective on key policy issues, as well as expand party policy agendas.

### → Innovates a party's policy platform

Integrating new perspectives on policy issues – especially policy areas of concern to the electorate or where the electorate may feel existing policies are weak or inefficient – into specific political party platforms can strengthen a party's appeal to disillusioned voters or attract new voter groups, in both cases bringing in more votes for a party. This approach can also re-energize a party platform that may have become stale or seem out-of-touch with current realities. In this way, a party becomes one whose policy platform exudes innovation, inclusiveness and responsiveness to current and emerging policy issues.

*Developing a powerful stance on gender equality in a party platform can make a party more attractive to an increasing share of voters for whom gender equality is important.*

Similarly, integrating into a party platform a specific commitment to gender equality, or a policy perspective that aims to strengthen women's rights or better respond to their needs, can be a powerful means of differentiating a party platform from those of others. It can also make the party more attractive to an increasing share of voters who believe that gender equality is

important. For example, seeking to overcome gender gaps in voter support, the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom has set policy targets to increase the number of women in business, reduce the gender pay gap, bring about flexible parental leave and tackle violence against women.<sup>52</sup>

### → Articulates a party's view on gender equality in order to entice new voters

Developing a political stance on gender equality can also be used as an opportunity to review, strengthen and update party values. In most democracies, women make up more than 50 per cent of the voting population, who have an interest in how a party will treat them once in power. Therefore, party leaders have an incentive to consider what role women play within their party and where their party stands on gender equality.

*Women make up more than 50 per cent of the voting public. Party leaders should take the time to reconsider what role women play within their party ideology, and where the party stands on gender equality.*

Promoting gender equality can become part of a party's values and political platform wherever it finds itself on the political spectrum. Given increasing attention to gender equality in societies across the OSCE region, a progressive political party would do well to review its own stance on gender equality, and to develop a coherent policy or set of views that are in line

with party values. A party that not only develops a stance on gender equality, but also articulates its stance in the form of concrete objectives and goals, obtains a powerful tool by which to reach out to female members of its electorate, and possibly to the broader voting public.

<sup>52</sup> "Where we stand", UK Conservative Party website, <[http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where\\_we\\_stand/women2.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/women2.aspx)>. The resources and examples referenced in this handbook are included owing to their value as effective good practices for the promotion of women's participation in political parties. As such, their inclusion in no way represents an endorsement of or agreement with the policy agendas or political platforms of the organizations, platforms and political parties that produced them.

### 2.2.3. Strengthens political party electoral and/or campaign strategies

#### → Diversifies electoral strategies by diversifying candidates

A national or regional list of candidates that reflects a cross-section of society can help maximize the potential electoral appeal of political parties to different groups in the voting public. By contrast, parties that clearly exclude certain sectors of the population on their lists of candidates – whether on the basis of sex, region, class, status, religion, age, race or ethnicity – risk failing to appeal to these sectors. For example, it has been observed during local elections both in the United Kingdom and Ireland that teams that are most likely to attract the attention of the electorate are those that include candidates representing a variety of professions. Local community leaders, in particular, tend to be chosen from among teachers, medical nurses, doctors, shopkeepers or small-business owners – positions that women hold in large numbers.<sup>53</sup>

Including more female candidates can thus help to “get out the vote” among women members of the electorate. Female voters may feel inspired and motivated to vote if they see a woman running for office. A public opinion survey conducted in Ukraine, for instance, found that there is a demand from voters to see more women in decision-making at different levels, despite the fact that gender-based stereotypes still prevail in the country.<sup>54</sup> Including a higher number of women on the party’s candidate list is one way to captivate voters’ attention. By adopting this strategy, political parties can attract new voters, including women.

#### → Expands the party’s pool of skills, knowledge and expertise

A common argument in favour of bringing more women into politics put forward in the Nordic countries has been the expansion of the pool of resources – skills, knowledge and expertise – that women can bring to political parties.<sup>55</sup> Party activists in these participating States have framed the issue of women’s political representation as an issue of women’s specific competence and experience within female-dominated issue areas, while also stressing the special contribution of women to what have traditionally been seen as male fields of expertise.

#### Box 2.5: From Academia to Politics: A Winning Combination for Women & Parties

In Poland, a provision of the Electoral Code allows parties to put forward twice as many candidates as there are seats. In the capital, Warsaw, this means each party can propose up to 40 candidates, which encourages parties to present as diversified lists as possible.

In 2007, a well-respected professor at the Catholic University in Lublin, Dr. Joanna Mucha, was recruited by the Civil Platform party to run as a candidate, and won the seat for the party. She was a minister in the Polish Cabinet from November 2011 to November 2013. Likewise, in 2001, Professor Joanna Senszyn, after many years in academia in the sphere of economics (she served as Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration at the University of Gdansk), became a candidate for the Democratic Left Alliance. She also won the seat for the party in the 2001 elections, and now has served as a Member of the European Parliament.

Both women were placed in the second position on the respective party lists (Mucha in 2011 and Senszyn in 2009), and both fared much better than the leadership favourites placed in first position on the lists.

Source: Interview with Karolina Ó Beacháin Stefańczak, 31 October 2012.

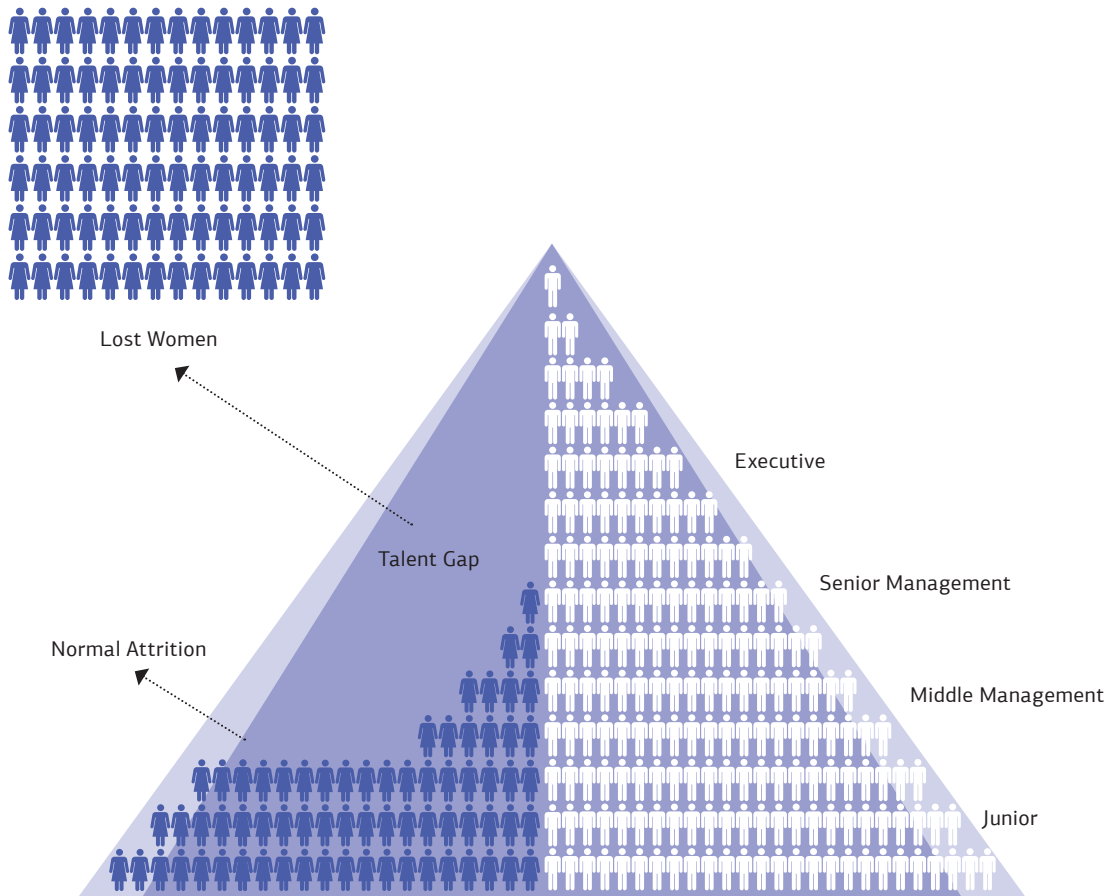
<sup>53</sup> ODIHR, e-mail interview with Karolina Ó Beacháin Stefańczak, 31 October 2012.

<sup>54</sup> *Women’s Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: Strategy Paper* (Kiev: Ukrainian Women’s Fund, 2011).

<sup>55</sup> Lenita Freidenvall, *Vägen till Varannan damernas: om kvinnorepresentation, kandidaturval och kvotering i svensk politik 1970–2002* [Every other one for the ladies: on women’s political representation, candidate selection and gender quotas in Sweden 1970–2002], Ph. D. Diss. (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2006); Lenita Freidenvall, Drude Dahlerup and Hege Skjeie, “The Nordic Countries: an Incremental Model”, in Drude Dahlerup (ed.), *Women, Quotas and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Women's skills sets, knowledge and expertise are vital leadership resources for parties, and are underutilized when parties are insufficiently represented by women. This gap becomes even more apparent at decision-making levels in political parties. The "talent gap" that has been identified within companies in the business sector is applicable to the sphere of politics as well.

**Figure 2.6: The Talent Gap**



Source: Adapted from Christina Ioannidis and Nicola Walther, *Your Loss: How to Win Back your Female Talent* (Richmond: Aquitude Publishing; 2010).

Addressing the gender-based talent gap can benefit political parties in several ways. Women are often more in touch with problems facing society due to the traditional gender-based division of labour still present in many societies. As such, they are uniquely positioned to assist parties in appealing to broader swathes of the electorate, including marginalized groups and latent voters. In many situations, women have also proven to be skilful negotiators, demonstrating their ability to achieve compromise in conflict situations. For example, women have been activists for peace in the former Yugoslavia and Ireland and played key roles in democratic transition within the OSCE region and beyond.

Do these experiences mean that the skills women develop are functionally equivalent to the qualifications and capacities required to compete in politics? Research has demonstrated how women often bring different styles and values to leadership, by displaying a strong sense of

community,<sup>56</sup> encouraging co-operative behaviour,<sup>57</sup> and facilitating consensus-building. Women often possess the same skills as men, including in decision-making, management, budget planning, problem solving and analysis, although these may be developed in different ways.

In addition, studies have shown that more women than men engage in volunteer work, including political volunteer work.<sup>58</sup> More women than men are engaged in the non-profit sector, and are particularly active in grassroots civil society organizations, as well as in non-governmental organizations operating at local and national levels. Moreover, women are more likely to remain with the same party even if the party is not successful in elections. For instance, in Georgia it was found that women party members were more likely than men to promote their party during election campaigns; were more willing to engage in less visible party promotion, such as door-to-door campaigning; and were more apt to remain members of the party, even if the party gains no seats in the parliament or loses its majority.<sup>59</sup> Volunteer rates among women are particularly high among younger age groups,<sup>60</sup> suggesting that young women active in their local communities and engaged in social issues represent a valuable resource for parties looking to improve their image and outreach among the younger generation.

These examples indicate that women are capable mobilizers, and parties that effectively utilize these skills can successfully expand their voting base by mobilizing latent votes and attracting broader voter support.

#### **2.2.4. Combats falling party membership**

A widespread decline in political party membership since the 1980s has created numerous problems for political parties. These include inadequate financing for certain party activities, staffing issues (particularly in local party offices) and disengagement of parties from the societies they claim to represent.<sup>61</sup> Political parties risk extinction if they continue to be the exclusive domain of older and wealthier men. By including women, parties can reverse this trend on two fronts, as women can swell the ranks of dwindling party membership and may be more likely to recruit new party members from a more diverse cross-section of society.

56 Colleen Lowe Morna, "Ringing up the changes: gender in southern African politics", *Gender Links*, 2004.

57 Maryann Barakso, "Is There a 'Woman's Way' of Governing? Assessing the Organizational Structures of Women's Membership Associations", *Politics & Gender*, Vol. 3, 2007, pp. 201–227.

58 For example: Hiromi Taniguchi, "Men's and Women's Volunteering: Gender Differences in the Effects of Employment and Family Characteristics", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 2006, p. 91–96; Volunteering in the United States, 2012, *Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor*, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nro.htm>.

59 Reflections from the conference "Political Party Funding and Women's Political Participation" held on 29–30 June 2011 in Tbilisi, Georgia, organized by ODIHR, the Central Elections Commission of Georgia, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), see: <http://www.nimd.org/>.

60 Volunteering Statistics, The Centre for Volunteering, [http://www.volunteering.com.au/tools\\_and\\_research/volunteering\\_statistics.asp](http://www.volunteering.com.au/tools_and_research/volunteering_statistics.asp).

61 "Lonely at the top: Is the mass political party on its way out, and does it really matter?", *The Economist*, 12 August 2012, <http://www.economist.com/node/21559901>.

**Table 2.7: Percentage (%) of Men Party Members in Europe, 1990s and 2000s**

	1990s	2000s	Gender Gap
<b>Belgium</b>	63	60	-3
<b>Denmark</b>	60	67	+7
<b>France</b>	65	51	-14
<b>Germany</b>	69	64	-5
<b>Great Britain</b>	58	61	+3
<b>Greece</b>	73	63	-10
<b>Ireland</b>	69	61	-8
<b>Italy</b>	73	77	+4
<b>Luxembourg</b>	78	60	-18
<b>The Netherlands</b>	61	56	-5
<b>Portugal</b>	72	66	-6
<b>Spain</b>	77	68	-9

Source: Susan E. Scarrow and Burcu Gezgor, "Declining memberships, changing members? European political party members in a new era", *Party Politics*, Vol. 16, No. 6, 2010, pp. 823 – 843.

As Table 2.7 shows, in a number of OSCE participating States, men represent more than two-thirds of party members. However, while the percentage of male party members has risen in some countries, like Denmark, Italy and the United Kingdom, the percentage of men's membership in political parties has actually fallen in most of the countries surveyed. Although there is a general decline in party membership in the OSCE region, the percentage of women in political parties is increasing. Decline in party membership is driven by a wide range of factors. Nonetheless, actively recruiting more women to join parties might be one effective strategy to both offset decreasing party membership and revamp the party image. By tapping into the often unused resource of potential women party members, party leaders can thus simultaneously minimize party membership decline, support waning local structures and strengthen their grassroots campaigning. This strategy should also improve parties' public images and help parties become more representative of the electorate.

### **2.3. Benefits for women in political parties**

Women, too, play an important role in the process of advocating for gender equality in political office. In this section, arguments are presented as to why more women should be supported to run for elected office, as well as what women can do to convince party leaders to support women's political advancement. These arguments can help female party activists expand the pool of women willing to run for public office and eliminate gender-based discrimination in political parties.



### 2.3.1. Expands the pool of women willing to run for public office

#### → Represent yourself and people like you

The question is often asked: why more women in politics? In a promotional video for its “2012 Project”, the United States-based Center for American Women and Politics of Rutgers University reversed the question to ask “Why *not* more women in politics?”<sup>62</sup> The non-partisan video encouraged more women to run for public office in the United States.<sup>63</sup> In it, one of the women elected to the United States Congress noted that what convinced her to run was:

*“[W]anting someone who looked like me to represent me. Someday, you just look in the mirror and say ‘I need to be that person’.”*

Encouraging women of different identities, backgrounds and levels of experience is critical to achieving the essence of representative government. It will also ensure that women are present to influence policymaking on issues of specific concern to different groups of women. As Figure 2.8 suggests, too often, women are absent from the very policy discussions that affect them the most.

**Figure 2.8: Representative Politics?**



*The all-male congressional panel assembled to discuss a Birth Control Mandate in the United States, February 2012. Photo credit: ABC News.*

#### → Serve as a role model and mobilize civic engagement

Women are often reluctant to start a political career for a variety of different reasons tied to real or imagined barriers to their success.<sup>64</sup> The more frequently women enter into politics, however, the more encouraging it will be for other women to take an interest in politics, be-

<sup>62</sup> Anne Phillips, *The Politics of Presence* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, U.K.; New York, the United States, 1995).

<sup>63</sup> “2012 Project Videos”, Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, <[http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/site/pages/news\\_2012videos.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/site/pages/news_2012videos.php)>.

<sup>64</sup> Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

**Box 2.9:  
Women as Agents of Change**

“The large presence of women in local governments has brought women considerable gains, both social as well psychological, including enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, which has led to a greater role for women in their households and in the community.”

Source: Ambassador Melanne Verveer, “Women as Agents of Change: Advancing the Role of Women in Politics and Civil Society”, United States, Department of State, 9 June, 2010

come active voters, consider careers in politics, join a political party or stand as independent candidates. Seeing women in leadership positions can have positive effects on voters of both sexes, and can help shatter existing gender-based stereotypes about women’s political capacities.

A range of studies have found that female politicians often serve as role models who inspire other women to become politically involved, as citizens, party members and political activists.<sup>65</sup> This is because female leaders can enhance female voters’ identification with the political system – and in turn their sense of being able to influence the decision-making process, making their participation worthwhile. These effects, however, are not confined only to women: the presence

of women in a wide range of political offices can increase the confidence that male citizens have in the political system as well.<sup>66</sup> Consequently, electing greater proportions of women to political positions can deepen democracy and encourage civic engagement in the general population.

→ **Change the perception of society and political stakeholders regarding women’s capacities**

Electing greater numbers of women to public office can thus build confidence among women, contribute to strengthening legislative and policy agendas, and increase trust by the electorate in the political system. The presence of women in office, however, can also lead to broader, positive changes in the social and cultural perceptions of women’s capacity. The presence of strong, capable women in public office can result in changes in societal perceptions, and can help combat gender-based stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes.

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- 65 Lona Rae Atkeson, “Not all cues are created equal: The conditional impact of female candidates on political engagement”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 65, No 4, 2003, pp. 1040–1061; Christina Wolbrecht and David E. Campbell, “Leading by example: Female members of parliament as political role models”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2007, pp. 921–939; Jeff A. Karp and Susan Banducci, “When politics is not just a man’s game: Women’s representation and political engagement”, *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 105–115; David Campbell and Christine Wolbrecht, “See Jane run: Women politicians as role models for adolescents”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68 No. 2, 2006, pp. 233–247.
- 66 Ana Espirito Santo, *The Symbolic Value of Descriptive Representation: The Case of Women*, Ph.D. Diss., European University Institute, 2011; Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer and William Mishler, “An Integrated Model of Women’s Representation”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 2, 2005, pp. 407–428.



## 2.4. Benefits for society

Society in general benefits from the increased representation of women in political parties and elected office. Women's political presence can ensure that policy issues affecting women in particular are channelled into political debates, raise awareness about gender-based discrimination in all spheres of political and public life and enhance socio-economic development.

### 2.4.1. Increases public trust in the political system

The presence of women in political office, both elected and appointed, can increase the political system's legitimacy and, thus, public confidence in the system.<sup>67</sup> As noted above, both male and female citizens believe that government is more democratic when more women are present in political institutions. Electing more women to political positions can, therefore, enhance voters' identification with the political system, leading to a higher voter turnout.

*Gender equality in political parties can increase confidence of the public in the political system.*

In addition, greater inclusiveness and representativeness of the electorate in political office can lead to greater political stability, constituting one of the most effective tools of conflict prevention. The premise of inclusion is that stability can only be guaranteed if everyone feels part of society on an equal footing.

### 2.4.2. Impacts the policy agenda

A critical mass of women<sup>68</sup> in politics can bring vital attention to issues that disproportionately affect women.<sup>69</sup> Participating States in the OSCE region continue to face major challenges in achieving gender equality in the following areas: education; remuneration and access to certain sectors of the labour market, such as military service; social policies and healthcare, including maternal and reproductive health; and care of dependents, including children and the elderly.<sup>70</sup> Women in many participating States are particularly susceptible to problems arising from political and economic restructuring, domestic violence, sexual harassment and trafficking in human beings.<sup>71</sup> If women are absent from politics or constitute only a small fraction of elected assemblies, important issues such as these are not likely to be prioritized or addressed.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Critical mass of women in office—postulated as around 30 per cent of legislators in a given country—refers to the level of women's representation in elected office when they can begin to influence policy and laws and, potentially, move the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda forward.

<sup>69</sup> Sarah Childs, *New Labour's Women MPs: Women Representing Women* (London: Routledge, 2004); Michelle Swers, *The Difference Women Make* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Sue Thomas, *How Women Legislate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>70</sup> Tanja van der Lippe and Eva Fodor, "Changes in gender inequality in six eastern European countries", *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 1998, pp. 131–149; Sylke Viola Schnepf, "Gender differences in subjective well-being in Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2010, pp. 74–85.

<sup>71</sup> Janet Elise Johnson, "Domestic violence politics in post-Soviet States" *Social Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2007, pp. 380–405; Olga Avdeyeva, "When do states comply with international treaties? Policies on violence against women in post-communist countries", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2007, pp. 877–900; Jane Hardy, Wiesława Kozek and Alison Stenning, "In the front line: women, work and new spaces of labour politics in Poland", *Gender Place and Culture*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2008, pp. 99–116; Tomas Sobotka, "Re-emerging diversity: Rapid fertility changes in central and eastern Europe after the collapse of the Communist regimes", *Population*, Vol. 58, No. 4–5, 2003, pp. 511–547.

Evidence suggests that the inclusion of women's voices – especially when addressing complex challenges – broadens the diversity of viewpoints, experiences, interests and expertise brought into parliamentary debates.<sup>72</sup> Electing more women from different backgrounds and political parties can further enhance these positive effects by allowing women's views to be channelled into public policy discussions.

### 2.4.3. *Contributes to socio-economic development*

There is also a growing consensus among international actors that gender equality is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. There is some evidence suggesting that a higher number of women in elected office leads to greater economic advantages.<sup>73</sup> The World Bank, for example, argues that promoting gender equality is “smart economics” because it can increase output per worker by 3 per cent to 25 per cent across a range of countries:

“Countries that create better opportunities and conditions for women and girls can raise productivity, improve outcomes for children, make institutions more representative, and advance development prospects for all.”<sup>74</sup>

Similarly, the World Economic Forum's 2011 Gender Gap Report finds that:

“Countries and companies will thrive if women are educated and engaged as fundamental pillars of the economy, and diverse leadership is most likely to find innovative solutions to tackle the current economic challenges and to build equitable and sustainable growth.”<sup>75</sup>

Another finding of this report is that women are more likely to invest a larger proportion of their household income than men in the education and health of their children.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, a 2011 study found that if one dollar of development money is given to a **woman**, she is likely to spend **90 per cent** of that money on her family and on her community. If one dollar of development money is given to a **man**, he is likely to spend only **30 to 40 per cent** of that money on his family and on his community; the rest he will spend on himself.<sup>77</sup> Figure 2.10 illustrates the proportion of funds allocated by men and women to their community and to themselves.

72 Anne Phillips, *The Politics of Presence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Jane Mansbridge, “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent Yes”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 3, 1999, pp. 628–657.

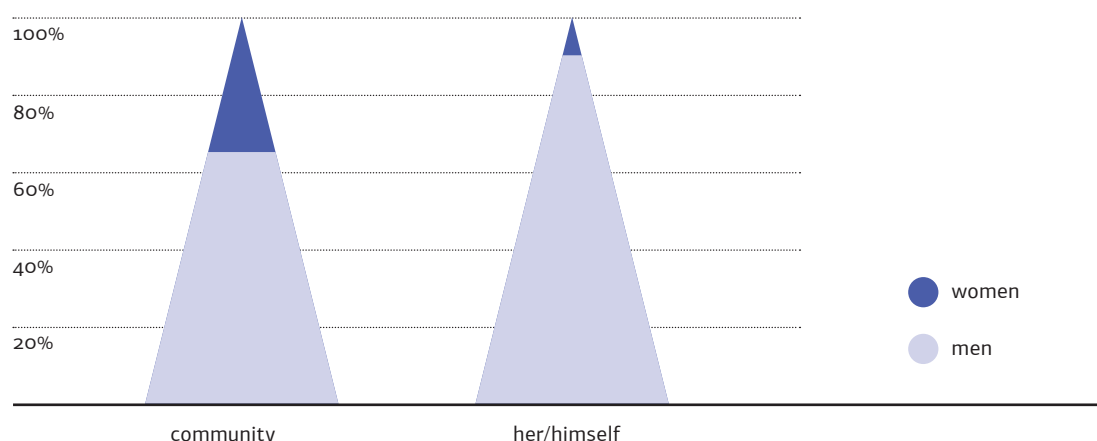
73 Kofi Annan, *Quotes on Human Rights*, 2008, <<http://www.unfpa.org/rights/quotes.htm>>.

74 “World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development”, The World Bank, 2012, <<http://go.worldbank.org/CQCTMSFI40>>.

75 “The Global Gender Gap”, World Economic Forum (WEP), 2011, <<http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>>.

76 Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D. Tyson and Saadia Zahidi, “The Global Gender Gap Report 2011”, World Economic Forum, 2011, <[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GenderGap\\_Report\\_2011.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2011.pdf)>.

77 Cherie Booth QC, “Seeking True Democracy: The Challenge and Promise of Full Equality for Women”, Chatham House, December 2011.

**Figure 2.10: How 1 dollar of development money is spent according to sex**

Source: Prepared by ODIHR for the purposes of this handbook based on Cherie Booth QC, "Seeking True Democracy: The Challenge and Promise of Full Equality for Women", Chatham House, December 2011.

#### **2.4.4. Promotes better understanding of gender-equality issues in society**

Gender equality is still misunderstood in many societies in the OSCE area as a whole. It is difficult to prioritize on the policy agenda a concept that not everyone – particularly politicians, decision makers and policy-makers – understands. When elected representatives are able to define gender equality and identify the benefits of gender equality for society at large, there is a greater chance that these messages can be communicated in a positive way to citizens – both male and female.

For the most part, respondents to the 2012 ODIHR Survey generally demonstrated a good understanding of the concept of gender equality.<sup>78</sup> A male respondent from Kazakhstan, for example, described gender equality as a "necessary attribute of modern life, meaning equal rights for women and men."

A female respondent from Moldova defined it as "the opportunity for both men and women to express their position, to affirm their qualities, to participate in the process of making life better, to be heard and try to realize their ideas and plans for the benefit of the society." For a male respondent from Georgia, "gender equality is a full democracy." A female respondent from Kyrgyzstan defined gender equality as "equal rights and responsibilities of men and women in all the spheres of life, as well as equal income and access to resources." Other interlocutors mentioned the necessity of legal measures for gender equality, the provision of a level playing field for women and men, the presence of women and men in all spheres of the society, as well as an understanding of the roles and importance women and men play in society.

**"Gender equality is EQUALITY regardless of gender."**

Source: 2012 ODIHR Survey, male respondent from Moldova

**"Gender equality is necessary to create equal conditions for women and men in political, social and cultural life."**

Source: 2012 ODIHR Survey, female respondent from Kazakhstan

<sup>78</sup> 2012 ODIHR Survey, multiple respondents from pilot countries.

## Conclusion to Chapter 2

This chapter has explored arguments for promoting women's political participation, with a focus on women in political parties. It highlighted traditional arguments, rooted in respect for and compliance with international human rights instruments, as well as adherence to principles of legitimacy, representation and inclusivity. In addition, it looked at more incentive-based arguments, linked to enhancing the appeal of political parties to voters. From the perspective of political party leaders, women politicians and civil society, this chapter has demonstrated that gender equality in politics is not only the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do. The following chapters will elaborate on concrete strategies and measures that can support political party leaders, women politicians and civil society in realizing these benefits.



# Political Parties and Political Party Leaders

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## Introduction to Chapter 3

Women's representation in elected office in any given country is determined and influenced by a number of factors. Among these are the design of political and electoral systems, the degree to which decision-making processes are institutionalized and the broader economic and cultural developments in society. Notwithstanding the above, however, modern democracy is still dominated by political parties. Therefore, political parties – and the processes by which they are governed – play a key role in determining the degree to which women participate in political and public life and the quality of their engagement.

For this reason, political parties are often referred to as the “gatekeepers” of women's political participation. Barriers such as direct or indirect gender-based discrimination in party procedures and practices, a lack of gender-sensitivity in candidate selection and outreach or an inequitable distribution of party resources among candidates are some of the complex challenges faced by women in political parties and, in particular, by female candidates in organizing and implementing electoral campaigns.

Political parties across the OSCE region have increasingly become the targets of gender-oriented strategies aimed at enhancing women's presence and influence in political life. This is due to the fundamental role political parties play in the democratic process in selecting and socializing prospective political representatives and leaders, as well as in advancing a gender-equality perspective within the political party system. This makes political parties the primary actors of change if gender equality in political and public life is to be achieved. To do so effectively, political parties should consider four dimensions:

- The internal functioning of the party, including party rules and procedures;
- The party's work with women party candidates, party activists and party members, as well as interactions between women and men within the party;
- The party's work and interaction with women civil society activists and voters; and
- The party's record in gender-responsive governance at the national and local level.

**Internal party functioning**, including both formal and informal party rules and procedures governing how a party operates, is a key factor that can influence political parties' responsiveness to gender issues. Political parties that have highly institutionalized structures tend to be more responsive to a policy agenda that promotes women's political advancement.<sup>79</sup> This is because a clear party structure, governed by defined and transparent sets of rules concerning decision-making, policy-making, promotion and recruitment, lays the groundwork for equitable access of both men and women to political party resources and to leadership. Furthermore, clearly-defined party processes make it easier for a party's members to introduce measures in support of women's political representation into existing party policies, processes and procedures. Such measures can include voluntary party quotas, targets or other voluntary measures.

To be effective, however, these measures need to be accompanied by initiatives to actively **encourage and support women** within parties to advance their political careers, whether through capacity-building activities, awareness raising or the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and procedures. The commitment to gender equality should be promoted not only within parties, but within the **electorate** as well, through a party's platform and campaign messages. Lastly, parties need to ensure that campaign promises and commitments regarding

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79 Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan” (Warsaw: OSCE, 2011), <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>.

the equal participation of women and men in political life are implemented in practice. This can be achieved by lobbying for the introduction and/or effective implementation of gender-equality legislation and policies at local and national levels.

This chapter will examine strategies that political parties and, in particular, political party leaders, can adopt to increase the presence and influence of women within political parties and particularly in decision-making positions. These strategies focus on strengthening the democratic and gender-friendly foundations of party structures and processes, as well as supporting women in their career advancement. Importantly, it draws on the international standards and good practices contained in the *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, developed by ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, as well as works by international organizations and NGOs working in this sphere.<sup>80</sup>

The chapter responds to six key challenges identified by interlocutors as hindering women's political empowerment:

- ✓ Lack of provisions and measures in founding party documents to ensure women's representation in party structures and activities;
- ✓ Candidate recruitment and/or selection processes that are not transparent;
- ✓ Unclear and non-transparent promotion procedures;
- ✓ Unequal access to and distribution of party resources;
- ✓ Gender-insensitive party culture; and
- ✓ Institutional and regulatory frameworks that discriminate against women and provide insufficient mechanisms to redress complaints.

In the following section, each of the above challenges is explored in more detail; the chapter then presents concrete strategies for addressing each of these challenges.

### ***Challenges to Women's Participation in Political Parties***

The **founding documents** of political parties govern how parties function internally as well as externally. Some political parties have made efforts to promote gender equality through, and integrate gender-sensitive language into, their founding documents. Too often, however, these documents contain no reference to equality or equity whatsoever. Furthermore, even where parties make an effort to institutionalize party processes and policies in a transparent manner, in many cases these rules are not adhered to in practice, often to the detriment of women members. One of the key party functions that should be made more transparent, fair and equitable is the process of **candidate recruitment and/or selection**. While the number of women eventually *elected* from each political party may reflect bias on the part of the electorate,<sup>81</sup> the number of women *selected* as candidates by party leaders can give a clear indication of whether or not a party is biased against women. For example, a political party claiming that half its members are female and that its female members hold leadership positions, but selects less than 20 per cent of women to make up its

80 See OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, <[www.osce.org/odihr/77812](http://www.osce.org/odihr/77812)>. See also, for example, *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p. 25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

81 The overwhelming finding in the academic literature, however, is that voters do not discriminate against women. For a review, see Rainbow Murray, Mona Lena Krook and Katherine A. R. Opello, "Why Are Gender Quotas Adopted? Parity and Party Pragmatism in France", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 529–543, 2012.



candidate list, may be an indication of gender-based bias in the party's candidate-selection process. Clearly written and transparent selection procedures are the best mechanisms by which to insure that parties abide by the rules they have developed.

Although a few political parties have already introduced democratic and gender-sensitive procedures into the process of recruiting and selecting their candidates, including specific measures to increase the number of women selected, party leaders still tend to choose candidates using criteria that are not always merit-based. The same can be said about **promotion procedures**, including those governing advancement to decision-making and leadership positions within parties. While undemocratic procedures can hurt both men and women party members, lack of gender-sensitivity in party procedures can leave female party members outside formal and informal decision-making processes regarding candidate selection, recruitment and promotion. Therefore, when such processes are undemocratic and non-transparent, women – unless they are part of the party hierarchy – are likely to be the most disadvantaged.

Another key obstacle to increasing women's participation in political affairs is **unequal access to and distribution of party resources**. This is due to inadequate funding of women candidates, on the one hand, and the high cost of campaigning, on the other. Men are often favoured by party candidate-selection committees where the allocation of resources is concerned, as they are usually considered “safe” candidates. This is because men, as the majority of incumbents, enjoy name recognition among the electorate that can give them (and their party) an electoral advantage. In addition, men have traditionally enjoyed better access to financial donors and business networks as a result of their professional careers, as well as access to administrative resources that can be indirectly used for campaign purposes. All these factors appear to give men an electoral advantage.

The nature of some political parties and their relationship with women is manifested in the way they deal with female party members, be it candidates, campaign managers, activists or supporters. Gender equality has been promoted in the statutes, charters and electoral programmes of a number of political parties in the OSCE area, as this chapter will demonstrate. However, women's political potential has rarely been recognized in party leadership and decision-making structures. Women tend to be selected for time – and labour-intensive positions, including volunteer positions, but are rarely entrusted with those posts which entail real political visibility and weight.<sup>82</sup> Other **institutional as-**

#### Box 3.1:

##### Key Challenges to Women's Advancement in Political Parties

1. **Gender-blind party regulations:** The founding documents of political parties often do not include measures to support women's advancement, and can be written in a language that directly or indirectly discriminates against women.
2. **Candidate recruitment/selection:** Candidate recruitment and selection processes that are not formalized or written down can be easily manipulated or ignored by party leadership, to the detriment of potential women candidates.
3. **Promotion:** Procedures for party promotions that are not institutionalized in party documents may result in political advancement based on connections rather than merit.
4. **Access to resources:** Unequal access to, as well as allocation of, party resources can disproportionately affect women, who often have less access to external patrons and support networks, and less experience in fundraising.
5. **Party culture:** Party culture – including traditional means of communicating, socializing and campaigning – can be reminiscent of “old boys’ clubs” that marginalize or openly discriminate against women, or perpetuate gender-based stereotypes and double standards.
6. **Party operations and functioning:** Modes of party operating – including working hours, holding meetings on the evenings and weekends and other social requirements – can conflict with women's other responsibilities, particularly if there is a lack of balance in family roles.

82 2012 ODIHR Survey on Women in Political Parties; personal interviews with women MPs and local partners in pilot countries, 2011–2012.

**pects**, such as long and late working hours, unenforceable rules, informal practices and unwritten customs, serve as further constraints. In some political parties, the prevailing **party culture** remains discriminatory towards women, indirectly and sometimes directly hindering their career advancement. This is particularly true where traditional party socializing and campaigning practices involve venues or activities where women may feel uncomfortable. Party culture can be particularly discriminatory when it reflects the prevailing norms of the broader political culture. For example, the qualities deemed necessary for political success are often viewed positively in men (authoritative, ambitious, driven, tenacious, principled) but are viewed negatively in women, or are transformed into negative traits (aggressive, power-hungry, belligerent, passive-aggressive, stubborn).

### 3.1. What strategies work?

This section presents specific strategies that political parties can introduce in order to address the challenges identified above and enhance the role of women within political parties. Some of these strategies may result in a dramatic and immediate change, while other results may be achieved progressively. Nonetheless, the overall outcome for political parties in the mid – to long-run should be a clear gain. It is important to keep in mind, however, that no single strategy alone, implemented in isolation, will be sufficient. In order to rectify the current disparities in the participation of men and women in politics, a comprehensive approach is required. This means changing the structure and function of political parties from largely male-oriented institutions to institutions equally representative of both sexes. This demands reforms to the institutional design of parties; party procedures of candidate recruitment, selection, promotion and allocation of resources; party policies and strategic planning; and party culture.

As party leaders themselves may not be convinced immediately of the need or desire for reform, this chapter targets both reform-minded gender-equality advocates, who can pressure or encourage party leaders to institute change, as well as party leaders directly. Where party leaders themselves need convincing, gender-equality advocates will have at their disposal both arguments and concrete strategies that may influence party leaders to initiate or approve the desired reforms. In addition, party leaders will need support to implement these strategies; equality advocates can offer to assist leaders in planning, implementing and monitoring the impact of these strategies.

It is also worth keeping in mind that many of the strategies presented here will not only benefit women or gender-equality advocates, but also party members more broadly. Party leaders and equality advocates are encouraged to consider how to mobilize other identity groups in the form of coalitions within parties to support suggested reforms. For example, party codes of conduct can ensure that all party members – regardless of socio-economic background, ethnicity, age or origin – are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner. A gender audit can be expanded into a “diversity audit” – to identify which men and which women benefit the most from party processes, and which men and which women can be directly or indirectly discriminated against due to unwritten rules and customs (for example, regarding candidate selection or allocation of resources). Increased capacity-building initiatives, such as skill development training, may help younger members, newcomers or those from local branches diversify and enhance their skills. Likewise, a safe environment for campaigning will benefit all party candidates, as well as voters – both women and men.

The strategies are presented starting with those to implement within the party, advancing to those linked to the immediate environment of the party, and ending with strategies that political parties can implement once in power or part of the opposition. All of these strategies may

require different sequencing by political parties themselves, based on their internal structures and processes, the political environment, the level of political party support and the electoral system within which parties operate.

### **3.1.1. Institutionalizing gender equality within party structures, processes and practices**

While political party regulations, procedures and structures vary considerably across the OSCE region, most parties have adopted founding documents and rules of procedure to govern how they function. Therefore, getting to know how a party operates – both formally and informally – can reveal the degree to which men and women are provided equal opportunities for political advancement within parties. Accordingly, this section focuses on strategies to introduce gender equality as a principle and gender balance as a goal in party documents, processes and procedures.

#### **→ Undertaking a comprehensive gender audit of the party**

Undertaking a gender audit is an important first step in identifying gaps in party statutes, processes and practices related to gender equality.

A political party **gender audit**, or “self-assessment”, is a methodology for assessing party processes, procedures, structures, culture and activities from a gender perspective, with the aim of identifying discriminatory practices – whether direct or indirect, formal or informal – that can perpetuate gender inequality and hinder women from advancing in their political careers. It is a tool to equip political party leaders with the necessary information to adjust its political party policies, programmes and campaign strategies as regards gender equality. A party can establish an internal working group comprised of party activists, decision makers and gender experts to undertake a gender audit within a specified period of time. Where the establishment of an internal working group is not possible, a party could commission its women’s wing to carry out the audit. Alternatively, it can hire a professional gender analyst or work with specialized NGOs that possess gender audit expertise (see more on the role of civil society in Chapter 5). However, in order to ensure that the audit is carried out with the co-operation of the party leadership, it is preferable to create a gender audit working group

or taskforce composed of the party’s secretary general or president, leading members of the party’s executive committee, the head of the women’s wing, as well as gender experts. The involvement of party leaders will help to ensure that the party acts on the results of the audit.

The political party’s charter/statutes, the party’s policies, strategies and platform, as well as its internal rules of procedure (both formal and informal), should all be scrutinized as part of a gender audit. In addition, a gender audit can be used to survey party members and leaders, to determine attitudes towards gender equality and women’s advancement, as well as to uncover perceptions as to the fairness and gender-sensitivity of existing party practices. The gender audit should also survey the types of party positions women and men currently occupy (leadership or decision-making positions), and what type of work they undertake (paid or voluntary). A political party gender audit template can be found in Annex 2.

#### **Box 3.2: Possible Members of a Political Party Gender Audit Team**

To undertake a comprehensive political party gender audit, party leaders could consider establishing a Gender Audit Taskforce, consisting of:

- 1. The party secretary-general**, or the leader of the political party;
- 2. Representatives of the political party leadership**, for example, representatives of the party’s Executive Committee or Board;
- 3. Head or member of the women’s wing**, if such an organ exists, or, alternatively, a party gender activist; and
- 4. Gender mainstreaming experts**, from within the party or from civil society.

Gender audits can be undertaken not only at the national level, but also at regional or local party branch levels as well. In fact, this will allow a comparative picture to emerge of what progress (if any) party branches are making in terms of promoting gender equality, what strategies or good practices can be learned from them, and what more needs to be done to support women's advancement at local level. Furthermore, these tailored gender audits will allow party leaders and gender advocates at both national and local levels to develop more targeted responses to the needs of individual party branches. Lastly, comparing the progress of different party branches could spur those branches that are doing very little to devote more attention to promoting gender equality.

Self-assessment activities ensure that both the strengths and shortcomings of a party's gender-equality approach are identified and that a strategy addressing the shortcomings, in particular, can be devised. The picture that emerges from a gender assessment can indicate whether a political party is gender-friendly or not. It may also point to the activities that a party can undertake in order to strengthen its commitment to gender equality (see Box 3.3).

Pre-electoral or post-electoral periods are ideal entry points for parties to undertake a gender-equality assessment.

- **Pre-electoral period:** During this period, parties can review their existing documents – statutes, founding documents, strategies, party platforms, policies and rules of procedure – to pinpoint any discriminatory provisions or gaps, as well as interview party members to identify discriminatory practices and solicit suggestions on how the party can improve. Ideally, this knowledge will be used to inform the development of the party's election platform and ensure more equitable access to electoral resources for both men and women.
- **Post-electoral period:** The post-electoral period is also an opportune period to undertake analysis of public opinion surveys and research, exit polls conducted during the electoral period, as well as electoral results, from a gender perspective. During this period, interviews with party leaders and voters can also be undertaken, to assess their views on women candidates and whether the electoral campaign unfolded in a gender-sensitive manner. This data will often provide sufficient external information to assist a party in conducting a gender audit. The outcome of the gender audit will also help reveal to what extent the political party upheld its campaign messages and promises, and can be used to design its next electoral strategy.<sup>83</sup>

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83 See *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p. 25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

**Box 3.3: Checklist of Criteria for a Gender-friendly Party**

- ✓ The political party's **statutes** ensure balanced participation of men and women in all party decision-making bodies, on party electoral lists and for all nominated and appointed positions.
- ✓ Gender equality is mentioned as a basic party **value** in its statutes, policies and programmes.
- ✓ The party keeps updated **records** of party members at local, regional and national levels, including members of the board; all data is **disaggregated by sex**.
- ✓ The party undertakes regular **gender audits** to identify processes and practices that can discriminate against women, and to assess progress towards gender equality.
- ✓ Specific **gender-equality priorities** are elaborated; some of these priorities are included in the electoral campaigns and promises of the party.
- ✓ An autonomous, active and publicly-visible **gender-equality mechanism/organization** (e.g., women's wing or section) is established and respected within the party.
- ✓ The party gender-equality mechanism/organization regularly and freely initiates intra-party and public **discussion on gender-equality issues**.
- ✓ The party serves as a **conduit** between women's NGOs in civil society, parliament and government.
- ✓ The party's **resources** are distributed fairly between female and male members and candidates.
- ✓ The political party **budget** provides for financing for the gender-equality mechanism and gender-equality policies/strategies within the party.
- ✓ The party has established a **complaints mechanism and procedure** that allows both men and women to bring to the party's attention cases of gender-based misconduct or discrimination.

*Source: Adapted from materials prepared by Sonja Lokar for this handbook.*

**→ Developing a party gender action plan**

Gender audits are not meant to be undertaken as ends in themselves but, rather, to provide the necessary information a party needs to improve its policies, strategies, procedures, structures and activities in favour of greater gender equality. The findings of an audit may be used to develop party policies to prevent discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, introduce and inform party codes of conduct, initiate revisions of party statutes, develop strategies for capacity building of women (and men) party members or inform the party's next electoral campaign.

On the basis of the gaps identified in the gender audit, parties can develop a party gender action plan. A step forward in this direction has been undertaken by the Slovenian government, which requires political parties to develop and adopt a party gender action plan, examples of which can be found in Annex 3. Gender action plans can be developed as a result of gender audits undertaken at national level, but also for gender audits conducted at local and/or regional levels, allowing for more targeted and nuanced gender action plans to emerge.

The taskforce or working group established to undertake the gender audit is in the best position to lead the process of developing a gender action plan for the party. During the process of drafting the document, the taskforce should keep all party members informed about progress. Likewise, drafts of the gender action plan should be presented to party members to raise awareness about the document, as well as to obtain party feedback and buy-in for the action plan. This discussion can take place in specifically convened focus groups or deliberative forums that meet to discuss the proposals presented in the gender action plan by the taskforce. Following the adoption of the document, the party leadership should ensure that party members at all levels fully understand and comply with the gender action plan's activities and objectives. Table 3.4 below identifies and explains the different components that could make up a party gender action plan.

Table 3.4: Creating a Political Party Gender Action Plan: Key Components

Type of Activity	Activity
1. <b>Conduct a gender audit of internal party procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a self-assessment or gender audit of key party processes and practices, the party's views regarding gender-equality issues, as well as the distribution of work and power within the party based on the sex of the party member.</li> </ul>
2. <b>Develop and build party leadership support for a Gender Equality Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a party-specific gender action plan, based on the findings of the gender audit.</li> <li>Ensure that the party's main organs agree to discuss the implementation of this action plan at least once every four years and to accept the development of new action plans, based on progress made.</li> </ul>
3. <b>Strengthen party founding documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce provisions in party statutes to ensure minimum representation of women in parties and especially in party decision-making bodies and processes.</li> <li>Introduce or strengthen internal party codes of conduct or policies to prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender.</li> </ul>
4. <b>Include women's sections in party statutes/by-laws</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish or strengthen autonomous women's organizations or sections ("women's wings") within the party.</li> <li>Introduce provisions in party statutes or by-laws that require the representation of women's sections in decision-making bodies and processes.</li> </ul>
5. <b>Support the party's gender-equality mechanism/ women's section</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop specific activities that women's sections can undertake, including mentorship programmes, trainings, forums or open debates.</li> <li>Ensure the women's sections are provided with resources to undertake these activities.</li> </ul>
6. <b>Collect sex-disaggregated data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect and regularly maintain sex-disaggregated membership statistics, including at local and regional levels.</li> </ul>
7. <b>Enhance internal party democracy by making party processes more transparent and fair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the introduction or application of existing internal party procedures regarding party recruitment, promotion of party members, candidate selection, decision-making and allocation of resources in a clear and transparent manner and according to democratic principles.</li> <li>Ensure party procedures are written down in a clear and gender-sensitive manner.</li> <li>Introduce induction courses for all newly-recruited male and female party members, with a module on gender equality in political parties.</li> </ul>
8. <b>Adopt internal party measures to promote women as leaders and candidates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt at the highest executive party level an operational plan for gradually increasing the share of women in all bodies of the party and in key party roles, in a way that reflects the share of women in party membership.</li> <li>Voluntarily set time-bound benchmarks, targets or quotas to achieve increased representation of women within the party.</li> </ul>
9. <b>Organize training and leadership development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop special types of training for women members (on leadership skill development, preparing women as candidates, etc.).</li> </ul>
10. <b>Conduct internal party awareness raising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of all party members on the party policy regarding gender equality.</li> <li>Organize seminars to increase party understanding of gender-equality objectives and policy for both male and female party activists, members and officials, including all those who perform public roles for the party.</li> </ul>
11. <b>Develop concrete party platform positions on gender equality-related issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define priorities and prepare concrete party platform positions that address specific gender-equality issues and challenges.</li> <li>When in opposition, a party (and not only the women's wing) should organize campaigns advocating for the introduction of such policies; when the party is a governing party, it should drive the process of introducing such policies and persevere in their implementation.</li> </ul>



<b>12. Link party recruitment and promotion to gender-equality efforts of prospective and actual members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include respect and support for equality between women and men as a requirement or condition of membership in the party.</li> <li>• Link promotions within the party (to party leadership positions, eligible places on the lists, placement of candidates in winnable districts or other authority roles) to the commitment and successful work of both male and female candidates or party members to promote gender equality.</li> </ul>
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Source: Prepared by Sonja Lokar for this handbook.

To some extent, the components contained in the gender action plan template above also inform the order and content of the strategies contained in the rest of this chapter.

### → Developing rules guaranteeing representation of women in party decision-making bodies

There is no definitive research on numbers of women in political parties in the OSCE region, either as members or in positions of leadership, although some data indicate that women make up less than 40 per cent of party members in a number of participating States, and that their representation in decision-making is much lower. In some participating States, there have been noted gains in women's representation in leadership in political parties. In Spain, for example, research from 2009 revealed a sharp increase in women holding executive positions in parties, to 31 per cent. Since 2008, more than 50 per cent of the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party's officers have been female.<sup>84</sup> This increase is the result of sustained efforts by gender advocates within and outside the party to advance women's representation in party decision-making bodies (see Box 3.15 below).

By contrast, in Georgia, research undertaken in 2011 revealed that women make up at least 40 per cent of party members of all major political parties (regardless of their position on the political spectrum), and between 60 and 70 per cent of all members of the Georgia's Way and Labour parties. However, their representation in party decision-making structures ranged from less than 10 per cent to just under 30 per cent. In fact, while women made up roughly 60 per cent of the Labour Party, they occupied under 20 per cent of decision-making positions.<sup>85</sup>

Political party leaders should, therefore, consider introducing detailed rules guaranteeing representation of women in political party **decision-making bodies**. For example, the United

#### Box 3.5: Women's Representation in Party Decision-Making Bodies

In various OSCE participating States, political parties have adopted provisions in their statutes that guarantee a minimum representation of women in party decision-making bodies or specify the positions that require the representation of women. These include:

##### United Kingdom Labour Party: National Executive Committee:

Of the three frontbench Members of Parliament to be represented in the 24-member NEC, at least one must be a woman.

##### 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.

Source: For full reference to political party statutes, see Bibliography.

84 Soledad Ruiz Seguin and Marta Plaza, "Gender Equality Policies in Spain: The commitment of social democracy", *Queries*. See: <[http://213.192.236.136/sites/default/files/marta\\_plaza\\_genero\\_\\_feps\\_pdf.pdf](http://213.192.236.136/sites/default/files/marta_plaza_genero__feps_pdf.pdf)>

85 Tamar Bagratia, Medea Badashvili, David Jijelava and Irakli Khmaladze, "Developing intra-party democracy from a gender perspective", in *Intra-party democracy and local governance* (Tbilisi: NIMD Georgia), 2012, p. 12.

**Box 3.6:**  
**Women's Representation**  
**in Party Decision-Making**  
**Processes**

Parties can also introduce provisions in their statutes or constitutions to ensure minimum representation of each sex in decision-making processes and activities:

**Canada: Liberal Party of Ontario:** Requires minimum representation of women and men at the Annual General Meeting (four men and four women of the 18 Constituency Association members).

**United Kingdom Labour Party:** Takes steps to ensure gender parity in its delegations to the Party's Conference as well as to the Annual General Meeting.

**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."

Source: For full reference to political party statutes, see Bibliography.

Kingdom Labour Party Rule Book contains a provision to guarantee the representation of women in the National Executive Committee of the party (see Box 3.5).<sup>86</sup>

In addition, specific gender-equality rules for internal party bodies can be introduced to regulate the **leadership** composition of the party. For example, Germany's Green Party has 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. In other cases, gender-equality rules prescribe that women should be members of key **committees, taskforces and/or working groups**. In 1996, for example, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Germany adopted a 33 per cent quota for party officials; if this quota of female political party officials is not met, internal party elections must be repeated.<sup>87</sup> The Liberal Democratic and Social Democratic parties of Moldova encourage 30 per cent women's representation in party leadership at all levels.

Ensuring women's representation in internal decision-making bodies is believed to indirectly influence the numbers of women who eventually run for elected office.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, these gender-equality rules might come from or serve as a basis for a political party gender-equality strategy and/or a party platform on gender issues more broadly.

→ **Introducing rules guaranteeing women's representation in decision-making processes**

In addition to provisions guaranteeing minimum representation of women in decision-making *bodies*, party leadership can also introduce provisions to ensure a minimum representation of women in decision-making *processes and activities*, such as party congresses or conferences, or annual general meetings (see Box 3.6). For example, the Texas State Democratic Executive Committee in the United States has included in its party's charter the rule that nominations of convention delegates should comprise women and men in the proportion present in the district or state.<sup>89</sup> Likewise, the United States Democratic Party requires that the elected delegates

86 "Labour Party Rule Book", 2010, <<http://www.leftfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Labour-Party-Rule-Book-2010.pdf>>. The resources and examples referenced in this handbook are included owing to their value as effective good practices for the promotion of women's participation in political parties. As such, their inclusion in no way represents an endorsement of or agreement with the policy agendas or political platforms of the organizations, platforms and political parties that produced them.

87 "Voluntary Political Party Quotas for Europe", Global Database of Quotas for Women, Quota Project, <<http://www.quotaproject.org/systemParty.cfm?region=50>>.

88 Miki Kittilson, *Challenging parties, changing parliaments: Women and elected office in contemporary Western Europe* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006); Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski and Judith Squires, "Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2009, pp. 781–803.

89 "The Rules of the Texas Democratic Party. State Democratic Executive Committee", Texas Democratic Party, 2012, <<http://www.txdemocrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/2010-2012-TDP-Rules.pdf>>.



to the national convention must be gender balanced, while the Republican Party encourages states to nominate a gender-balanced delegation.<sup>90</sup> The United Kingdom Labour Party's Rule Book stipulates that for participation in the party conference, a "requirement is placed on affiliated organizations that their delegation should include women at least in the proportions in which they are represented in that organization."<sup>91</sup>

As regards participation in annual meetings, the Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario) requires that, 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.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, the United Kingdom Labour Party states that, 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."<sup>93</sup>

### Box 3.7: Examples of Sexist Language in Parliaments in the OSCE Region

In November 2011, during a session of a parliamentary group in the Greek parliament, a female MP started to protest that she had not been given the floor. One of the vice-ministers responded, "Oh, take it easy, you with the garter." A Greek media outlet reporting on the incident stated that, "When another colleague of his saw [a female MP] passing close to him, he said, 'Where is this [sexist epithet] going? Isn't she ashamed? We have made her an MP! And she has an opinion?'"

A Hungarian MP commented in a December 2011 television interview on the Hungarian channel ATV that male MPs are often condescending towards their female colleagues and make sexist remarks. Examples of sexist jibes included a female MP allegedly being told to "drop her clothes", "shut her [sexist epithet] mouth" and "go home and mind her children."

In November 2012, the Moldovan Speaker of the Parliament, replying to a female MP, suggested that, in addition to being good looking, she should also try to be smart.

Sources: "The fall of Papandreou: sexist remarks in the parliamentary lobbies", *GR Reporter*, 4 November 2011, <[http://www.grreporter.info/en/fall\\_papandreou\\_sexist\\_remarks\\_parliamentary\\_lobbies/5384](http://www.grreporter.info/en/fall_papandreou_sexist_remarks_parliamentary_lobbies/5384)>; "MP claims sexism rampant in Hungarian Parliament", *Politics.Hu*, 7 December 2011, <<http://www.politics.hu/20111207/male-policians-shout-sexist-obsenities-at-female-peers-in-parliament-says-one-mp/>>; and "Lupu către Șupac: Pe lângă faptul că sunteți simpatică, mai fiți, vă rog, și deșteaptă", *Publika.md*, November 2012, <[http://www.publika.md/lupu-catre-supac-pe-langa-faptul-ca-sunteti-simpatice-mai-fiti-va-rog-si-desteapta\\_1104161.html](http://www.publika.md/lupu-catre-supac-pe-langa-faptul-ca-sunteti-simpatice-mai-fiti-va-rog-si-desteapta_1104161.html)>.

### → Introducing/enhancing and/or gender mainstreaming internal political party codes of conduct

Political parties can further boost the participation and role of women in political parties by introducing or enhancing political party codes of conduct and by mainstreaming a gender perspective into these codes of conduct. A political party code of conduct can supplement existing parliamentary codes of conduct and further raise the professionalism of politics by outlining minimum standards of behaviour and respect for its members in political debates within the party, in parliament or in other elected offices, as well as in public.<sup>94</sup>

90 "Democratic Party Charter", Democratic Party, amended 2002, <<http://www.democrats.org/pdfs/charter.pdf>> and "Republican National Committee", Republican Party, <<http://www.gop.com/About/default.aspx?Section=32>>

91 "The Labour Party Rule Book 2010", 2010, <<http://www.leftfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Labour-Party-Rule-Book-2010.pdf>>.

92 "Rules of Procedure for the Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario) and its Constituent Bodies", Liberal Party of Canada, 2012, <<https://ontario.liberal.ca/files/2010/06/Rules-of-Procedure-2011-ENGLISH.pdf>>.

93 "The Labour Party Rule Book 2010", 2010, <<http://www.leftfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Labour-Party-Rule-Book-2010.pdf>>.

94 Luc van den Brande, "The code of good practice for political parties", Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, No. 11210, 29 March 2007, <<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc07/EDOC11210.htm>>.

The need for codes of conduct that clearly outline norms of behaviour in line with gender-equality standards is demonstrated by numerous incidents in some parliaments in the OSCE region, where women party members have been verbally abused, belittled and/or humiliated (see Box 3.7). In the Austrian parliament in 2011, a member recited a comedy verse about an incident in the news concerning rape allegations. The “joke” was considered offensive by many MPs, particularly female deputies, but parliamentary rules required neither a call to order nor an apology.<sup>95</sup>

In April 2011, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom responded to comments from a female MP, who also served as shadow chief secretary to the Treasury, by telling her to “calm down dear” twice, repeating the phrase “calm down” on another five occasions.<sup>96</sup> The Prime Minister was not subject to any official disciplinary measures for the comments, but has subsequently apologized.<sup>97</sup> On another occasion, he allegedly stated about another female MP that “she must be very frustrated” and addressed a female MP with the rather patronising “love”.<sup>98</sup>

The very fact that such incidents happen in parliamentary sittings which are under close public scrutiny can only raise the question of what is happening in political party settings behind closed doors. Therefore, political party leaders at the forefront of gender-equality developments could consider adopting a political party code of conduct expressly forbidding use of discriminatory and sexist language and introducing sanctions for perpetrators.

**→ Encouraging the creation and/or strengthening of the role of women’s sections/ wings or other gender-equality bodies within parties**

Party leaders alone do not always have the expertise, resources or time to introduce the changes to party statutes, by-laws, policies and strategies that are necessary to promote women’s political advancement and encourage greater gender equality. An efficient and effective means of capitalizing on the gender expertise of party members (where it exists) is to support the establishment or strengthening of women’s sections within parties.

Party leaders can institutionalize and encourage the establishment of women’s sections through party statutes and by-laws. Women’s sections, also referred to as women’s wings, are internal party bodies established to facilitate women’s participation in the party. They can play a key role in promoting women’s political advancement by advocating on issues of concern to members, supporting women’s leadership development and helping to select potential new members and candidates, as well as providing resources and/or support to women running for public office.

Women’s sections can also be mobilized to provide expertise to party leaders on how to introduce more gender-friendly practices and policies, as well as to conduct gender audits and assessments. Furthermore, women’s sections can be used to collect sex-disaggregated data to inform a party’s substantive positions and messages, conduct research on issues of importance

95 For Austrian press coverage of this incident, see: <<http://derstandard.at/1304552182958/Grossruck-sorgt-mit-Strauss-Kahn-Reim-fuer-Empoerung>>; and <<http://www.oe24.at/oesterreich/politik/Aufregung-wegen-Sex-Sager-Eklat-um-VP-Politiker-im-Parlament/28082443>>.

96 “David Cameron’s ‘calm down dear’ outburst in Commons exposes flaws”, The Guardian, 27 April 2011, <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/wintour-and-watt/2011/apr/27/davidcameron-michael-winner>>.

97 “David Cameron says sorry for comments to female MPs”, The Guardian, 2 October 2011, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/02/david-cameron-sorry-female-mps>>.

98 “David Cameron says sorry to ‘frustrated’ Nadine Dorries”, BBC News website, 8 September 2011, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-14834867>>.

to women voters and help party leaders develop party platforms that appeal to women voters.

It is important to note that not all women's sections necessarily have gender expertise to undertake the activities above. Likewise, women's sections can be easily marginalized if their role is not officially institutionalized in party documents and supported by the party leadership, either financially or through official approval of its existence and/or activities. The structure, autonomy, agenda and financing of women's sections, as determined by party rules and the party leaders' support, determine whether they are merely token structures tolerated by a reluctant political party leadership or are effective and genuine structures that support the party leadership in its work while facilitating women's political advancement.

To be most effective, therefore, women's sections should be formally integrated into the governance structure of the party. For example, the women's wing of Serbia's G17 Plus political party is recognized in party documents as a formal structure of the party.<sup>99</sup> It is also important to ensure that "women's issues" or gender issues are not the only item on the agenda of the women's wing, and that members are supported to discuss and debate all policy areas. Moreover, there should be clear channels of communication through which decisions and recommendations of women's sections are communicated to the political party leadership, as well as follow-up mechanisms to communicate feedback from party leaders to women's sections.

One means of addressing the tendency to equate women's sections with "women's issues" only is to consider establishing gender-equality bodies or mechanisms with the clear aim of engaging both men and women in making parties more gender-sensitive. For example, the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (El Partido Socialista Obrero Español – PSOE) has established a secretariat for gender-equality policy that focuses on efforts to progress towards gender equality within the party. The secretariat has its own dedicated website that is regularly updated to include relevant news, upcoming events, social actions and party statements on issues relating to gender equality or topical issues such as violence against women. The site makes the most of social networking tools, for example, uploading clips of secretariat actions on YouTube, and providing instant updates via Twitter, Facebook and Reddit.<sup>100</sup> The Izquierda Unida (United Left) political party has established a "Women's Area" on its party website, with regular updates on party activities to empower women members and voters; at one point the Popular Party had also developed such a webpage.<sup>101</sup>

### **Box 3.8: Representation of Women's Sections in Party Statutes and By-laws**

Parties can introduce provisions in their statutes and constitutions to ensure representation of women's sections (where they have been established) in decision-making processes and activities.

**United States Democratic State Central Committee of Virginia:** The president and first vice-president of the Virginia Democratic Women's Caucus are guaranteed membership in the Democratic State Central Committee.

**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.

*Source: For full reference to political party statutes, see Bibliography.*

99 *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.18, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

100 See: <<http://www.psoe.es/ambito/igualdad/news/index.do>>. Site available in Spanish only.

101 See: <<http://www.izquierda-unida.es/taxonomy/term/70>>. Site available in Spanish only.

**Box 3.9: Political Party Statutes of a Gender-friendly Party****Including gender equality in a party's Statement of Principles**

The Party creates equal opportunities for representation in the governing bodies of the Party, as well as in the Party's candidate list for elected bodies at the state and local level, in the manner prescribed by this Charter and the laws of the Russian Federation, to men and women, citizens of the Russian Federation, of different nationalities and members of the Party. (*Adapted from the statute of the Just Russia party*).

**Introducing gender equality as a key principle of internal democracy**

The party is committed to ensure the equal representation of women and men in its governing and executive bodies at all levels. In doing so, the party promotes gender equality in nominations for the elected assemblies and pursues the goal of achieving equality between men and women in its internal institutional structure. (*Adapted from the statute of the Democratic party of Italy*).

**Providing for greater gender balance in the composition of party decision-making bodies**

Balancing Delegations to the supreme decision body of the party (Congress, Conference, etc.):

In selecting Delegates and Alternates at all levels, the Nominations Committee and the Convention itself shall make every effort to select persons so that the delegation as a whole shall reasonably reflect [...] the proportion of women [...] present in the district or state.

At least one-third of the Delegates and one-third of the Alternates of any delegation elected at any level shall be of the sex opposite to that of the rest of the delegation. (*Adapted from the United States Democratic Party statute*).

**Using gender neutral language**

For example, using the term Chairperson (instead of Chairman) or expressly referring to *Committeeman* and *Committeewoman*. (*Adapted from the United States Republican Party statute*).

**→ Ensuring the representation of women's sections in decision-making bodies and processes**

As noted above, party leaders can support women's sections by ensuring they are institutionalized in party statutes and by-laws and that their roles are clearly defined. However, this does not automatically mean that women's sections are empowered to make a substantive impact on party policies and practices, nor that they play a role in party governance.

One way to prevent the marginalization of women's sections is to ensure that women's sections participate in decision-making bodies and processes. Statutes and by-laws can ensure that women's sections are represented in party executive organs at all levels, in party nomination committees, as well as in party bodies dealing with the development of the party programme, statutes and party electoral campaign strategies or with processes related to party finance management, administration and/or party recruitment.

In terms of representation in decision-making *bodies*, the United States Democratic State Central Committee of Virginia requires that its members include the president and first vice-president of the Virginia Democratic Women's Caucus.<sup>102</sup> Likewise, in Canada, the president of a Women's Liberal Club or Association, if any, is also empowered to serve on the Executive Committee of the Constituency Association.<sup>103</sup> The chairperson of the National Federation of Social Democratic Women in Sweden has the right to attend meetings of the executive committee, as well as to speak and to move proposals.

Some statutes also require representation of such bodies in decision-making *processes*. For example, the Swedish Social Democratic Party constitution guarantees the participation of

102 Virginia Democratic Party Plan, December 2010, p.7, <[http://www.leedems.org/wp-content/files/DPVA\\_Party\\_Plan\\_revised\\_December\\_4\\_2010.pdf](http://www.leedems.org/wp-content/files/DPVA_Party_Plan_revised_December_4_2010.pdf)>.

103 "Constitution of the Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario)", amended January 2012, <<http://ontario.liberal.ca/governance/>>.

at least one representative of the National Federation of Social Democratic Women to the National Conference, with the right to address the Conference and present proposals.<sup>104</sup>

→ **Encouraging healthy competition between party factions and groups at different levels in promoting gender equality**

Party factions, groups and sections have been established within many political parties in OSCE participating States, bringing together like-minded party members on specific policy or political issues. Party leaders and gender-equality advocates can encourage healthy competition between different factions or groups concerning their views on gender equality and what should be done within the party to support women's political advancement. This strategy could also be applied to party branches operating at different levels or in different regions. For example, party leaders at national level could challenge different party branches to develop a strategy for supporting gender equality within their own areas of political responsibility.

Alternatively, party leaders or gender-equality advocates could enlist the support of established sections or societies within parties (separate from women's wings), to assist efforts in promoting gender equality. For example, the Fabian Society in the United Kingdom, affiliated with the Labour Party, is composed of a number of women Labour MPs who could be enlisted to support party leaders in initiating reforms to party practices in support of greater gender equity. The Fabian Women's Network is active in supporting women's political advancement, and organizes awareness raising and capacity-building events at annual Labour Party Conferences. Importantly, the Fabian Women's Network enlists the support of other party factions and groups within the Labour Party on areas of joint interest, for example, partnering with the Labour Finance and Industry Group on issues related to economic growth and with the Young Fabians Health Network on issues related to maternal or reproductive health.<sup>105</sup>

As some party factions are established specifically in order to contest the current party leadership or its practices, developing fruitful partnerships with well-established party groups could be an effective strategy for party leaders seeking to shore up support within a party.

### **3.1.2. Adopting voluntary measures to support women's political advancement**

The section above looked at strategies to improve the founding and governing documents of political parties from a gender perspective, focusing specifically on party statutes and rules of procedure. It also looked at support to party structures, such as women's sections. It identified various specific provisions parties can introduce into their statutes to ensure greater representation of women, as well as specific strategies the party leadership can introduce to identify existing discriminatory provisions and party practices.

However, women's political advancement has been limited not only by the absence of specific measures to support their participation in official party documents or the absence of support for specific party structures. Women in politics remain underprivileged in most OSCE participating States in terms of access to resources, information and campaigning tools. This is due to the fact that men have had a "head start" in the political arena; men's representation far exceeds that of women in almost all parliaments in the OSCE area. Furthermore, men dominate

104 "The Constitution of the Swedish Social Democratic Party", Swedish Social Democratic Party, 2001, <[http://www.socialdemokraterna.se/upload/Internationellt/Other%20Languages/SAPconstitution\\_eng.pdf](http://www.socialdemokraterna.se/upload/Internationellt/Other%20Languages/SAPconstitution_eng.pdf)>.

105 See: <<http://www.fabianwomen.co.uk/2013/08/fabian-womens-network-at-labour-party-conference-2013/>>.

decision-making structures both in the parliament and within political parties. This is because men have traditionally belonged to networks or clubs that can be mobilized to access financial resources or facilitate fundraising, for example, membership in professional associations, business clubs or networks or sports clubs. It is exactly this advantage that is reflected in the description of politics as a “man’s business” or an “old boys club”.<sup>106</sup>

Accordingly, this section looks at what strategies a party’s leadership can apply to actively support women’s political advancement through key party processes, such as party recruitment, candidate selection, leadership development and capacity building, fundraising and allocation of party resources. Such a process must begin by identifying how many women are actually members of the party, at what level they are located and what skills they bring.

### → Getting to know the party’s female party members

Even though many parties have developed databases and keep records of party members, most party leaders do not know how many women belong to their party, of which party branch they are members or what positions they hold within the party. Needless to say, when this basic information is incomplete, it is likely that party leaders do not know the existing resources they possess in the form of female party members, including what resources, skills, expertise and professional qualifications women specifically bring to the party. Therefore, before engaging in any extensive recruitment initiative with the objective of recruiting more female members, party leaders should make a concerted effort to learn more about the women already active within the party. These data should then be used to inform the recruitment strategy the party leadership develops and applies.

Such an assessment could and should form part of a gender audit, as described earlier in the chapter. In this case, equality advocates, representatives of women’s wings or members of entities established in order to conduct a gender audit can help party leaders to collect this data. In other cases, women’s wings or local party branches may already possess this data, and it will just be a matter of compiling it in a manner that can be mobilized effectively and efficiently by party leaders, selectors and recruiters. Where these data may not already exist, equality advocates, women’s wing members or representatives of the gender audit working group could be nominated or appointed by party leaders to develop and update such databases. The database can include information on the number and position of women at different levels in the party as well as concrete data regarding women’s qualifications, skills, expertise, profession, interests and experience. To collect this information, party representatives could ask the following questions:

- Why did the individual join the party?
- At what level is the individual active? In what position(s) is the individual active?
- What are the individual’s educational qualifications?
- Does the individual have any additional professional qualifications?
- Has the individual participated in skill-development trainings or professional development courses to further build her skill base?
- Is the individual involved in her community and/or in any local associations?
- Does the individual have any ideas about how to increase women’s involvement in the party?
- Does the individual have any ideas about what the party can do to attract more women to the party and into decision-making positions?

<sup>106</sup> Petr Kopecky and Maria Spirova, “Jobs for the Boys? Patterns of Party Patronage in post-communist Europe”, *West European Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 897–921.



- Does the individual have any ideas on how the party can better institutionalize gender equality within the party?

### → Recruiting new women party members and retain them

The recruitment of new female members is a critical starting point for having a larger pool of potential women party candidates, campaign managers and party activists. Expanding the pool of potential members and activists – both women and men – is particularly important in an era of declining party membership and low voter turnout.<sup>107</sup> To this end, strategies for recruiting more women into parties should be developed and prioritized by party leaders.

Such strategies can be designed by gender-equality advocates within the party, and can be used to achieve greater gender balance within a political party, including at the decision-making level. Given that increasing numbers of political parties are adopting provisions to ensure gender balance not only within the party membership at large, but also within decision-making processes, gender-targeted recruitment initiatives can help party leaders fulfil their own party rules. To facilitate this process, party leaders and recruiters should first determine what types of positions they may wish new recruits to occupy or eventually fill – including general party membership, party advisors, campaign managers or potential party candidates.

It is worth mentioning that recruitment is a two-way street: to encourage women to join the party requires that the party be made appealing to women. The more gender-friendly a party is, the more likely women from various backgrounds and levels of experience will be interested in joining. Parties that move away from the rhetoric of gender equality towards concrete policies, strategies and initiatives to achieve gender equality within parties are also those that will appear most appealing to women. To this end, a party's leadership can enlist women through various *active* or *passive* recruitment strategies.<sup>108</sup>

**Active recruitment** includes inviting individuals with expert knowledge, specific skills or certain professional backgrounds to join the party, reaching out to universities and academia more broadly, head-hunting in professional associations and networks or co-operating with civil society organizations to identify potential new female members. In each of the strategies noted above, parties can make a point to reach out to both men and women. For example, the Canadian Liberal Party appointed a Women's Candidate Search Director to help recruit women to the party.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, the Labour Party recently of the United Kingdom launched the Labour Party Future Candidates' Programme.<sup>110</sup> In addition to the on-line announcement of the programme, current female activists from the Labour Party wrote personalized e-mails to other women in their constituency, encouraging them to join the party. The impact of this programme can be seen in a letter from a woman Labour Councillor to a potential candidate (see Box 3.10 below).

107 "Lonely at the top", *The Economist*, 4 August 2012, <<http://www.economist.com/node/21559901>>.

108 Emelie Lilliefeldt, "European Party Politics and Gender. Configuring Gender-Balanced Parliamentary Presence", *Stockholm Studies in Politics*, Stockholm, 2011.

109 *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

110 "Future Candidates Programme 2012", United Kingdom Labour Party, <<http://www.labour.org.uk/nextgeneration>>.

**Box 3.10: The Labour Party Future Candidates Programme: Testimony**

Dear Karolina,

My name is Jess Phillips. I'm a working mum, and a newly elected Labour Councillor from Birmingham. I live with my two lovely boys, Harry and Danny, and my husband Tom, and I go out to work full time at a local charity.

I've been active in my local community since the street I live in was blighted by a spate of anti-social behaviour a couple of years ago. To find out more about my story take a look at this video.

Last year I received an email from the Labour Party telling me about the Future Candidates Programme. I'd never really thought much about going into politics before and doubted if I was the kind of person they were looking for, but I thought I'd fill out the application form and see what happened.

I was shocked to hear a few weeks later that I'd been selected to take part. Through the programme I learnt about what it means to be a Labour representative and received the training and support I needed to get selected as a Labour candidate.

I never thought political parties were interested in people like me – ordinary people with families – being their candidates. But the Future Candidates Programme has shown me that is exactly what the Labour Party wants.

I wanted to tell you about the Future Candidates Programme. Perhaps you or someone you know have much you could offer your community and the Labour Party but haven't thought about taking a step into politics before? Like I did last year, maybe you might think about applying for the Future Candidates Programme? And maybe, like me, doing so could take you on a journey which ultimately sees you having the privilege to serve a community that you care about deeply.

If you want to find out more about the Future Candidates Programme, and how to apply, visit [labour.org.uk/nextgeneration](http://labour.org.uk/nextgeneration).

Best wishes,

Jess Phillips

Labour Councillor for Longbridge Ward, Birmingham

*Source: Personal email to a Harlow Labour Party constituency member.*

**Box 3.11:  
Four Main Challenges of the  
Candidate-Selection Process**

1. **Informal and unregulated** candidate-selection processes allow for non-transparent and unaccountable selection of candidates.
2. **Ad hoc** selection processes make it difficult for candidates to properly plan and execute electoral campaigns.
3. **Top-down** candidate-selection processes negatively affect the principles of internal party democracy while weakening party support at the grassroots level.
4. **Resource-driven** candidate-selection processes drastically reduce the pool of eligible candidates and diminish the importance of meritocratic criteria.

Civil society organizations are another excellent sector from which to recruit potential new members, particularly women. Recent research indicates that women make up as much as 80 per cent of civil society organizations in the United States, and up to 68 per cent of these organizations in the United Kingdom.<sup>111</sup> Civil society organization activists usually develop skills that are easily transferable to the political arena, including advocacy, lobbying, budget development, communications and outreach skills.

**Passive recruitment** can include activities such as open recruitment calls placed in the printed or broadcast media. One example of such a strategy is the creation of a national database of “professionals”, a strategy employed by Russia's United Russia party.<sup>112</sup> Similar databases have been developed by the Kazakhstani Nur Otan party and the Ukrainian Green Party. While these databases include both male and female aspiring candidates, a similar initiative could be launched to create “women-only” databases in order to identify and target potential women candidates.

111 “Women in civil society: Breaking the glass pyramid”, Council for International Development, 7 March 2013, <<http://www.cid.org.nz/news/women-in-civil-society-breaking-the-glass-pyramid/>>. Leadership statistics from “Women in leadership: It's not going to work the way we're doing it”, The Guardian, 1 August 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/aug/01/women-in-leadership-international-ngos>>.

112 Проект “Кадровый резерв – Профессиональная команда страны”, “Единая Россия” 2005–2012, [Project: Personnel reserve – National Team of Professionals], <<http://profkomanda.edinros.ru/>>.



## → Making the candidate-selection process open, regulated, transparent and women-friendly

Recruiting more women into a political party is the critical first step in broadening the party membership. Within parties, however, the single most important obstacle to women's political advancement is the *candidate-selection process*.

Candidate-selection procedures have been described by scholars as a “secret garden” or a “black box”, as they are typically considered to be a very private matter taking place among a select few individuals within political parties, and thereby requiring substantial country – and party-specific expertise on the part of outsiders.<sup>113</sup> Devising strategies to apply to the candidate-selection processes of all political parties in the OSCE region is further complicated by the nature of the electoral system. The electoral system imposes a particular ballot structure that may require bargaining among groups within parties when parties compose slates of candidates. This task is also difficult in light of the fact that political parties within the same country have developed different rules, or may alter their selection strategies from election to election.

The importance of making candidate-selection processes transparent, regulated, open and women-friendly is difficult to overestimate. The composition of the candidate list determines how the party will be perceived and evaluated by voters and may eventually determine the outcome of the election for each particular party. Thus, political party leaders, regardless of their ideological stance, often pursue one aim during candidate-selection procedures: maximizing the number of votes for the party. In other words, electoral performance is one of the main reasons why the political party leadership wishes to maintain strong control over the candidate-selection process.

Making the candidate-selection process transparent and regulated implies introducing a description of the candidate-selection procedures into party statutes and internal party rules. Where rules on candidate selection are formalized and clearly formulated, it is possible to introduce reforms to existing procedures in order to ensure that candidate selectors at all levels take gender equality into account when identifying potential candidates. By contrast, if the selection process is informal and lacking transparency, the impact of formal rule changes is likely to be more symbolic and rhetorical

### Box 3.12: Gender Equality in Political Party Candidate-Selection Processes

Academic literature identifies three common strategies of political parties wishing to enhance the diversity of their candidates. These are: *equality rhetoric*, *equality promotion* and *equality guarantee* strategies.

**Equality rhetoric:** A party will include support for equal representation of women and men in party platforms and electoral campaigns and in the writings and speeches of political party leaders.

**Equality promotion:** Equality promotion includes the adoption by party leadership of concrete actions or strategies to include the under-represented sex in politics through specialized training, financial assistance and setting of targets.

**Equality guarantees:** Equality guarantees move into the realm of seeking to increase the number or proportion of women candidates, by making sex a necessary qualification for candidacy, as is the case with voluntary party gender quotas.

This conceptual framework can be useful for party leaders and equality activists, because it allows for a graded or gradual approach to enhancing candidate diversity.

Source: Joni Lovenduski, *Feminizing Politics*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); and Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* (London: Hansard Society, 2005).

113 Bonnie N. Field and Peter M. Siavelis, “Candidate Selection Procedures in Transitional Politics”, *Party Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 5, 2008, pp. 620–639; Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh (eds.), *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics* (London: Sage, 1988); Reuven Y. Hazan and Gideon Rahat, *Democracy within Parties: Candidate Selection Methods and their Political Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

than substantive and binding. Moreover, clearly written candidate-selection rules guarantee that the selection criteria will not be changed or altered by the party leadership shortly before the election; allow candidates (both female and male) to devise and implement a strategy for candidate nomination; and provide a basis for holding the political party leadership accountable when the rules are broken or not implemented.

To make candidate-selection processes more transparent as well as gender-friendly, candidate-selection provisions should include the *minimum criteria for eligibility*, as well as precisely describe the *entire process of candidate selection*. In addition, party rules should specify the *timeframe for selection*, to allow sufficient time for candidates to prepare themselves. When candidate selection occurs too close to the electoral process, it is very difficult for candidates to raise sufficient financial resources and plan their campaign properly.

**Box 3.13:**  
**Making the Candidate-Selection Process More Transparent**

To make the candidate-selection process transparent, party leaders and selectors should consider including the following into candidate-selection provisions:

1. **Minimum criteria for eligibility**, keeping in mind proportionality as a guiding concern, so that women are not placed at a disadvantage due to different or lower levels of qualifications.
2. **Overview of the candidate-selection process**, indicating relevant timeframes, so that all potential candidates are aware of the different steps and deadlines.
3. **Time-frame for selection**, to allow candidates to properly prepare themselves and implement a political campaign well before the dates of the election.
4. **Means of publicizing information**, for example, publicizing the candidate-selection process on a party's website and updating the information as necessary, so that candidates and their supporters are up to date on all key candidacy requirements and deadlines.

The candidate-selection process can also be opened to new people, particularly women, outside the traditional political party membership and hierarchy. Candidate selectors tend to consider incumbents first when identifying potential candidates, possibly leading to incumbency inertia.<sup>114</sup> After all, the easiest way to become a parliamentarian is to already be one, indicating the difficulties in removing incumbents who have performed well in politics (or at least not poorly) and who would like to continue their political careers. There are a number of reasons why politics (and hence, political parties) favours incumbents, including the advantages of greater name recognition, higher levels of media attention and access to a greater number of political resources. However, there is a gender dimension to this issue; historically, men have dominated politics as incumbents. In this case, incumbency can work directly against women newcomers.

Taking this into account, party leaders can make a point of considering both men and women as party candidates, whether selecting from within the party membership or recruiting candidates externally. Some parties have already taken advanced steps in this regard. For example, Canada's Liberal Party created a candidate recruitment committee to ensure that the rules regarding inclusion of women candidates are followed and diversity in candidate recruitment is respected.<sup>115</sup> This approach can help overcome institutionalized inertia in political parties.

When recruiting external candidates, party selectors can introduce questions to determine whether an external candidate respects gender-equality principles and agrees with the party's stance on gender equality. The process of looking

<sup>114</sup> Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, "If Only They'd Ask: Gender, Recruitment and Political Ambition", *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 72, No. 2, April 2010, pp. 310–326.

<sup>115</sup> *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.15, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

outside party membership for candidates should be implemented carefully, however, so that party leadership and candidate selectors do not bypass qualified party members (either men or women) in their search for a “star” candidate. At the very least, any newcomers recruited by the party to the candidate list should be required to become regular party members and be obliged to respect party policies regarding gender equality and non-discrimination.

Lastly, as will be discussed below, political parties should reflect upon the composition of candidate-selection or nomination bodies. All-male candidate-selection boards, committees or commissions are still the norm in many political parties. Introducing provisions to ensure gender balance in candidate-selection/nomination bodies is an important step in making selection processes themselves more gender-friendly. More information about the challenges that candidate-selection processes can pose to female party members can be found in Annex 4.

### Box 3.14: Candidate Selection: Academic Approaches

#### **Centralization versus Institutionalization**

Some academic research identifies two dimensions – centralization and institutionalization – seen as vital to understanding the internal party selection processes that determine who is nominated to stand for election in a given party.

*Centralization* refers to the degree of control by the party leadership of the nomination process. Other relevant actors may include local branches or regional party bodies, which may be authorized to override the central office when making decisions regarding candidate selection. Determining the key location of power in these multi-stage processes is far from straightforward.

At one extreme, democratic procedures may allow all citizens or all party members to select party nominees, typically through primary elections or caucuses, as in the United States. Non-party officials may be important at the district level as well, including local non-party affiliated organizations, district oligarchies, financial supporters or the news media, all of which may endorse some potential candidates over others.

More commonly, in many European parties there is a multi-stage internal selection process that engages local party members and party officials, regional party assemblies or conventions and the central party office and leadership. At the other extreme, elitist decision-making in some parties means that just a few, such as the party leader, the central party office or the parliamentary party, determine party nominees.

*Institutionalization* captures the extent to which formal rules matter or whether informal norms and tacit procedures operate to determine the outcome. Candidate selection can be described as “institutionalized” when formal rules and procedures are well-established, transparent and

clear, and typically embodied in written party rulebooks and constitutions. It is not considered institutionalized when the process is governed primarily by informal norms and tacit conventions.

This distinction is important because where formal rules are meaningful, it is possible to target reform of these rules to ensure that selectors take gender equality into account in their decision-making processes. By contrast, if the selection process is more informal, the impact of formal rule changes is likely to be more symbolic and aspirational than substantive and binding.

#### **Centralization versus Inclusion**

Other academic research, following upon the work of Reuven Y. Hazan and Gideon Rahat, is increasingly distinguishing between *centralization* and *inclusion* in candidate selection. Here, centralization is defined as the party level at which decisions are made, while inclusion or inclusiveness is defined as the size of the “selectorate” involved in making the decisions.

The degree of inclusiveness in candidate selection may depend on the legal framework, as in the United States, where state laws rather than internal party procedures regulate candidate-selection processes. In the United States, candidate-selection processes are inclusive in that almost anyone that fits a basic set of criteria would be eligible to run as a candidate. In many European political parties, particularly within proportional representation systems, parties themselves set the criteria for candidacy. Party leaderships can set inclusive candidacy requirements, which enable all or a wide range of members to be eligible, or set more exclusive candidacy requirements, which enhance the control of party leadership and selectors over the candidate-selection process.

### → Introducing voluntary party quotas

In addition to making the rules for candidate selection more transparent, fair and equitable, parties can consider additional, more specific strategies to increase the number of women selected to run as party candidates, including the introduction of voluntary party quotas.<sup>116</sup>

Party quotas are defined as measures adopted voluntarily by political parties, usually through reforms to party constitutions, statutes and rulebooks. By introducing party quotas, individual parties pledge to select a certain proportion of women – or place minimum or maximum limits on members of each sex – among their candidates and, in some instances, for party decision-making positions (see more on the latter below).<sup>117</sup> Party quotas typically involve a commitment to nominating between 25 per cent and 50 per cent female candidates. While voluntary quotas can be implemented in the absence of legal quotas – voluntary quotas are usually introduced before quota laws are enacted – some political parties use voluntary quotas to supplement legal quotas, where political parties willingly undertake to exceed legal requirements.<sup>118</sup>

Political parties using gender quotas in candidate-selection processes exist in almost half of the OSCE participating States (for a full list of voluntary party quotas in the OSCE area, see Annex 5). In countries with proportional representation (PR) electoral systems, as is the case in much of the OSCE region, party quotas govern the composition of party lists. In countries with majoritarian electoral arrangements, such as France and the United Kingdom, they apply to collections of single-member districts. Some political parties add the further requirement that women must be nominated to “safe seats” on party lists or in “winnable” constituencies, recognizing that this is the only way to ensure an increase in the proportion of women elected.

An analysis of the international experience suggests that to make voluntary quotas within a political party more efficient, the political party leadership should ensure that quotas:

- (1) call for a relatively *high proportion* of women to be nominated as party candidates;
- (2) include provisions regarding the *ranking order*;
- (3) are framed in ways that link them to well-understood and widely accepted *cultural practices and traditions*; and
- (4) are *institutionalized* within the organizational structures and formal nomination procedures, so that *rules are enforced* by internal party bodies.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Petra Meier, “The Mutual Contagion Effect of Legal and Party Quotas: A Belgian Perspective”, *Party Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 5, 2004, pp. 583–600.

<sup>119</sup> Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan” (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2011), <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>.

### Box 3.15: The Impact of Voluntary Party Quotas in Spain: An Incremental Approach?

Efforts to increase women's representation in elected office in Spain have been characterized as an "incremental" as opposed to a "fast-track" approach. In 1979, women held only 5 per cent of seats in the parliament. By 2007, when a legislated gender quota was officially introduced, women's representation had already increased to 36 per cent.

Voluntary quotas played a key role in this change, but were effective because they were accompanied by measures to raise public and party awareness and acceptance, by sustained lobbying by party women's sections and civil society activists and by party engagement in international women's movements and events. At the forefront of the political movement for women's advancement, the women's section of the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE) lobbied for the introduction of party quotas in the mid-1980s by conducting research demonstrating the gender imbalance within the party and in executive structures and by highlighting the PSOE's low standing as compared to Socialist parties in other countries. Representatives of the women's section also polled party members on their views towards a voluntary quota, revealing that 67 per cent supported it.

By the late 1980s, both the PSOE and the Communist Party had adopted party quotas requiring 25 per cent of women on candidate lists. Taking advantage of public-awareness campaigns mounted by gender activists in Spain, women party activists were energized by research indicating that over 60

per cent of the public supported such measures. Strong centralization of the party system in Spain also ensured that such quotas could be applied to regional and local-level elections.

In 1994, PSOE strengthened the provisions of the party quota to ensure women were placed in winnable positions. The "supply" of women candidates was increased by encouraging women members to take political marketing and other skill development courses. By 1997, with the PSOE officially in opposition, the party adopted a new, gender-neutral provision requiring no less than 40 per cent of each gender on candidate lists. Its efforts were inspired by participation of its members in various international and European events, including the European Summit of Women in Power (held in Athens in 1992) and gatherings of the Socialist Women International, as well as by the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action by the UN in 1995.

The United Left coalition, created by the Communist Party, quickly adopted the same quota provision in 1997. Almost all major political parties in Spain adopted similar quotas within the next decade, including those of a more conservative persuasion, such as the Popular Party, demonstrating the impact of "cross-party contagion". Since then, both the executive and the legislature in Spain has adopted comprehensive gender-equality laws, policies and strategies to support women's advancement.

*Source: Regulating Gender Equality in Political Office in Southern Europe: The Cases of Greece, Portugal and Spain, Tània Verge, Paper Prepared for the 3rd European Conference on Politics and Gender, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 21–23 March 2013.*

Examples illustrating each of these points are presented below.

#### 1) High proportions

The Alliance 90/Green Party of Germany and Greens/Green Alternative of Austria require that party lists contain at least 50 per cent women. The Socialist Worker's party in Spain aims for 40 per cent women candidates on its party lists, as do the Social Democratic Party of Austria and the Social Democratic Party of Germany. According to the statutes of the Christian Social People's Party (CSV) in Luxembourg, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany and the Austrian People's Party, at least a third of the candidate list must be made up of women. The Peace and Democratic Party (BDP) of Turkey recently adopted an internal party quota, which requires that 40 per cent of the party's candidate list for both national and local elections be made up of the less-represented gender. Similarly, the Republican People's Party (CHP) has adopted a quota that requires that candidate lists contain at least 33 per cent women.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>120</sup> See "Global Database of Quotas for Women", International IDEA, University of Stockholm and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.quotaproject.org/>>.

## 2) Rank order

Several parties not only specify the proportion of candidates that must be women (or, more often, minimum or maximum proportions of each sex), but also specify what positions they should hold on party lists. 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 as close as possible to 50 per cent of those elected. The result is that the country ranks fourth in the world in terms of women’s representation, with women occupying 45 per cent of all seats in parliament. The Left party of Germany requires that the first two positions be held by women, followed by alternating between men and women for all other positions.

## 3) Cultural practices

The exact phrasing of party quota provisions varies to some extent. In Sweden, the alternation policy is labelled the policy of “every other one for the ladies”, a reference to a countryside dance tradition where every other song is a chance for the women to invite the men. In France, a 25 percent quota policy for municipal elections was overturned by the Constitutional Council in 1982, on the grounds that it violated the principles of equality and universal citizenship in the French constitution. In response, a campaign developed around the concept of “parity”, which aimed to give two sexes to the “universal citizen”, a change that was achieved with reform to the Constitution in 1999 and revisions to the electoral law in 2000. More generally, gender-neutral language has been effective in numerous other contexts where the constitutionality of quotas has been challenged, as this transforms both men and women into potential beneficiaries of the policy, with neither sex receiving special treatment.<sup>121</sup> In Spain, for example, the initial wording of the voluntary quota of the Socialist Worker’s party referred to women specifically, but in 1997, the party shifted towards gender-neutral phrasing, referring to the “under-represented sex”.

### Box 3.16: Voluntary Quotas in Poland

After the collapse of communism and free elections held in 1989, the number of women representatives in the Polish parliament sharply decreased from 23 per cent in 1985 to 10 per cent in 1991. Only in the fourth term of the parliament did the proportion increase to 20 per cent, as a result of the introduction of a voluntary 30 per cent quota adopted by three political parties: the Alliance of Democratic Left (SLD), the Labour Union (UP) and the centrist Freedom Union (UW).

To achieve this result, two main actors exerted pressure on party leaders: female members of these parties and the women’s organization Pre-Electoral Coalition of Women, supported by the Women’s Parliamentary Group. As a result, even right-wing or conservative parties – while officially rejecting quotas – included more women on their candidate lists: the League of Polish Families (LPR) included 25 per

cent, with 26.3 per cent women eventually being elected (25 per cent in positions 1 to 3 on the list). The list of the current ruling party – Civic Platform (PO) – featured 15 per cent of female candidates in the first three names, and reached 20 per cent of women elected in 2001.

Before the 2007 elections, following a motion by Iwona Śledzińska-Katarasińska, a member of the Civic Platform party, a resolution was adopted that one of the first three positions on each candidate list must be held by a woman. There was no sanction for infringing this rule, but the party leadership was pressured to ensure that it was enforced. In practice, 34 out of 41 electoral districts observed the rule, and three others included a woman in fourth position. As a result, with a 21 per cent share of women on the party’s candidate lists, 23 per cent were elected MPs.

Source: Małgorzata Fuszara, *Case Study: Poland: It’s Time For Women: Gender Quotas on Electoral Lists*, “Electoral Gender Quota Systems and their implementation in Europe” (Brussels: European Parliament, 2011), p. 97.

<sup>121</sup> *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women’s Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.34, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.



#### 4) Enforcement mechanisms

Voluntary quotas need to be institutionalized within existing statutes, by-laws and policies of political parties to be effective. Without full institutionalization of the quota, there will be no incentive for party leadership to comply with and enforce the quota provisions. One means of enforcing party quotas is to empower the party's executive committee and candidate-selection committee to reject any party list or internal recruitment process that does not adhere to quota rules. In Canada, the Liberal Party's central party committee will not certify candidate nominations if one-third of the nominees are not women, and will even override nominations by placing candidates of their own choosing.<sup>122</sup>

Any effort to introduce voluntary quotas by party leaders, women's sections or party members should be accompanied by an intensive awareness-raising campaign within the party, to explain that quotas are *special measures* aimed at rectifying historical inequalities between men and women's access to political power. All efforts must be made to assure party members that such measures are not discriminatory, but rather a means of creating a more level playing field for men and women within political parties and in the electoral process. Furthermore, political parties can integrate the adoption of special measures into their party platforms, demonstrating to the electorate their commitment to gender equality in political life and the practical steps they have taken to achieve it.

#### → Applying voluntary quotas to party decision-making structures

Party leaders can also ensure greater representation of women in the decision-making structures of the party by introducing voluntary quotas for key governance structures and processes. These can include minimum thresholds for women's representation in party congresses and conferences, quotas for women's representation in candidate-nomination boards, as well as quotas for the participation of women in party governance structures, such as party executive boards. For example, Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) invalidates the results of elections into party structures if less than one-third of women are proposed as candidates,<sup>123</sup> while the Social Democratic Party of Germany requires at least 40 per cent of each gender on its party board. Moldova's Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) and Social Democratic Party (PSDM) statutes advocate for a 30 per cent quota of women in the party leadership at all levels, in addition to its candidate lists for elected office.<sup>124</sup> Figure 3.18 presents a step-by-step approach to introducing voluntary measures to increase women's participation in political parties; for more information on the step-by-step approach, please refer to Annex 6.

#### Box 3.17: Voluntary and Legal Quotas in Slovenia

In 1992, the United List of Social Democrats introduced a voluntary party quota requiring at least 33 per cent of each sex on party lists. In 1996, 42 per cent of the party's candidates were female, but none were elected to office.

In 1997, the party shifted from a voluntary party to a soft "target", but increased the target threshold to 40 per cent of each sex on party lists.

In 2005, Slovenia adopted a new electoral law, which introduced a legislated quota for elections at both national and local levels. Interestingly, the provisions regarding local elections foresaw a graduated increase in the minimum threshold for each sex. For the 2006 elections, the electoral law required 20 per cent representation of each sex, raised to 30 per cent for the 2010 local elections and rising to 40 per cent for the 2014 elections.

Source: Global Database of Quotas for Women, <<http://www.quotaproject.org>>.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> "Statutenbroschüre der CDU Deutschlands 2007", <<http://www.cdu.de/doc/pdfc/o8o121-CDU-statut.pdf>>.

<sup>124</sup> "Statutul Partidului Liberal Democrat din Moldova", [http://www.pldm.md/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=158&Itemid=50](http://www.pldm.md/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=158&Itemid=50); "Statutul Partidului Social Democrat", 2007, <[http://psdm.md/?lang=md&menu\\_id=13](http://psdm.md/?lang=md&menu_id=13)>.

### → Adopting informal quota provisions

In addition to adopting formal party quotas, many parties across the OSCE region have introduced more informal quota provisions, taking the form of *informal targets and recommendations*. This is most often the case in parties where quotas *per se* are particularly controversial – frequently in conservative parties, but also in various national contexts. Opposing the use of formal quotas, these parties nonetheless recognize the importance of taking active steps to recruit more women to their candidate ranks.

The exact number of such “soft quotas” is difficult to calculate, yet these policies are often functionally equivalent to formal party quotas in that they seek to increase women’s representation in a concrete way, addressing candidate-nomination processes with the express purpose of stimulating – although not necessarily guaranteeing – the election of more women to various kinds of political bodies.<sup>125</sup> In some instances, however, the language is simply to “encourage” parties to pay more attention to potential 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.

### → Considering women-only shortlists as a party quota strategy in majoritarian systems

In majoritarian electoral districts and systems, one strategy for increasing the number of women on party lists is to create “women-only shortlists” (WOS). In this technique, only women are nominated as candidates for posts in particular constituencies, in order to create a similar effect to that of “zippering” in proportional representation systems. In its Recommendation 1899 on “Increasing women’s representation in politics through the electoral system” of 2010, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe encouraged countries with majority or plurality systems to consider introducing measures to enhance women’s representation on party lists, including by “applying innovative mandatory gender quotas within political parties, or ‘all-women shortlists’ or ‘twinned’ constituencies, again accompanied by effective sanctions”.<sup>126</sup>

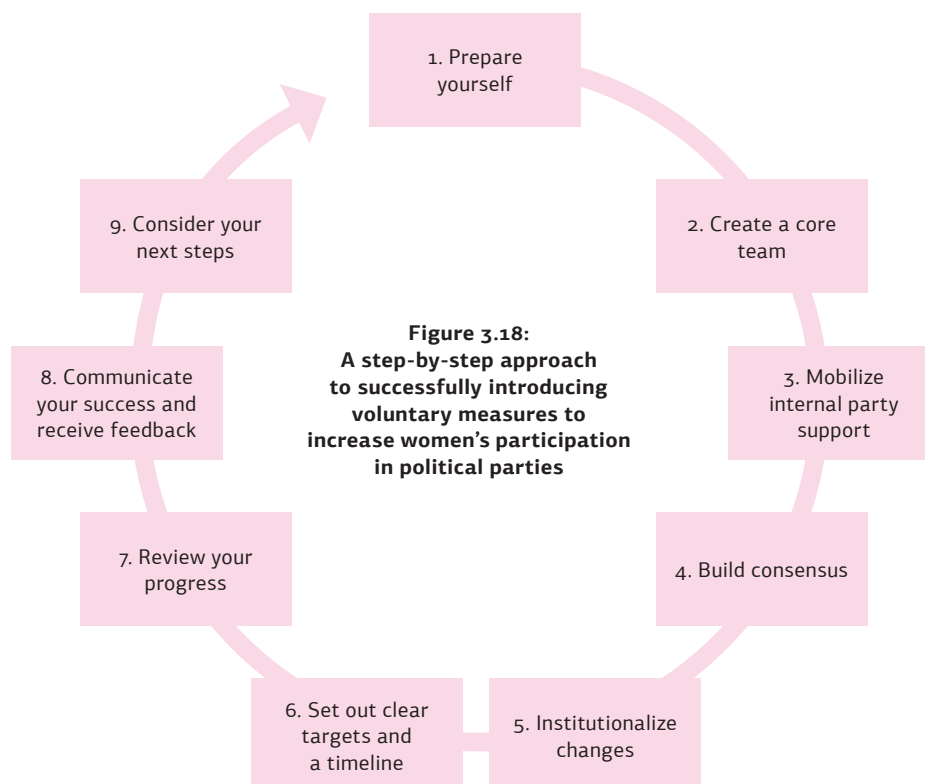
In 1997, Tony Blair’s New Labour (a new term for the Labour Party introduced by Blair) elected 101 women to Parliament, and the number of women MPs doubled overnight from 60 to 120. Labour’s policy of women-only shortlists played a significant part in this change. While at one point women-only shortlists were ruled as unlawful (shortly after the 2001 elections won by the Labour Party), the Labour government legislated to permit women-only shortlists in the Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act 2002. In the following elections in 2005, more women than men were elected as new Labour MPs: of Labour’s 40 new MPs, 26 were women.<sup>127</sup>

125 Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski and Judith Squires, “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2009, pp.781–803.

126 Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Recommendation 1899 (2010), “Increasing women’s representation in politics through the electoral system”, <<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta10/EREC1899.htm>>.

127 “United Kingdom General Election, 2005”, Research Paper 05/33, 2005, <<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons/lib/research/rp2005/rp05-033.pdf>>.





Source: Developed by ODIHR staff and based on various materials including: UNDP and NDI, *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*. UNDP/NDI. 2011; and "Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan", OSCE/ODIHR, 2011, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>. See Annex 6 for more information on each step in the plan.

### → Introducing mentoring for female party members

Mentorship is an important – and often cost-effective – strategy for strengthening women's political skills. Mentorship can be defined as a personal, on-going developmental relationship of learning and dialogue between colleagues. Mentoring programmes can be aimed at preparing female party members as candidates for elected office, or in developing their capacities to become campaign managers, election observers, party activists and/or party leaders.

When men are paired with women, women can benefit from men's experiences and successful strategies for political advancement. Men also become more aware of the specific challenges women face in their political careers. Mentoring can thus strengthen partnership and communication between male and female party members, and increase support by men of women's participation in internal party structures and leadership positions. Likewise, when women with more political experience are paired with women newcomers, an equally effective form of peer exchange and support can emerge. Mentoring programmes are one of the most cost-efficient tools a political party leader can introduce to promote women's participation and advancement within a party. Moreover, this strategy can also help gender-sensitize both male and female party members to the gender-based inequalities and discrimination that pervade political life. Mentorship is explored in greater detail in Chapter 4.

### → Providing political capacity-building training

Providing political capacity-building training to promising women can help encourage more women to enter into politics and political leadership positions. This strategy is aimed at stimulating women's interest in politics, providing them with critical political skills and knowledge and empowering them to apply these skills in their political careers.

Many women possess the experience and qualifications needed to hold political office, but, possibly due to direct or indirect gender-based discrimination, do not always have access to the same information or opportunities as men in terms of learning how to launch a political career. Thus, women in politics require further support and training on how to overcome gender-based barriers and obstacles in order to assume political leadership positions and promote their political agenda. In this context, mobilizing and capitalizing on the knowledge and skills of women within political parties can be a driving force for nurturing a new generation of female leaders. For this reason, programmes focused on developing this knowledge form a crucial part of any effort by political parties to enhance women's political representation.

#### Box 3.19:

##### Political Party Families

**Liberal International:** Founded in 1947

**Socialist International:** Founded in 1951

**International Democratic Union:** Founded in 1983

**Centrist Democrat International:** Founded in 1961

**International Democrat Union:** Founded in 1983

**Global Greens:** Founded in 2001

**Pirate Parties International:** Founded in 2010

Many capacity-development initiatives seek to provide training to women who are currently running – or in the future may decide to run – for political office. These initiatives can focus on developing a campaign plan and/or campaign message, identifying effective electoral campaigning techniques, fundraising, working with the media and/or building voter contact and establishing outreach programmes. To implement such training, political party leaders can engage their party women's sections, but must also consider providing the financial resources necessary to implement effective training activities.

In addition, parties can also benefit from initiatives run by international political party foundations. Political party foundations in established democracies in the OSCE area

have been actively involved in strengthening political parties in post-socialist countries, for example through providing funding, training and professional assistance. Support is usually determined according to ideological affiliations. For example, the German Konrad Adenauer Stiftung<sup>128</sup> supports Christian Democratic parties, the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung and the Friederich-Naumann-Stiftung work with Liberal parties and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung actively engages Social Democrats.<sup>129</sup> Multi-party projects funded by the United States and directed to countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia are often implemented by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).<sup>130</sup> There are a number of foundations, such as the Westminster Foundation for Democracy<sup>131</sup> and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD),<sup>132</sup> that implement activities to promote cross-party dialogue and co-operation. Some of these organizations primarily work with like-minded parties, while others work with political parties across the political spectrum.

<sup>128</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, <<http://www.kas.de/>>.

<sup>129</sup> Pippa Norris, "Building political parties: Reforming legal regulations and internal rules", International IDEA, 2005, p. 15.

<sup>130</sup> National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), <<http://www.ndi.org/>>.

<sup>131</sup> Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), <<http://www.wfd.org/>>.

<sup>132</sup> Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), <<http://www.nimd.org/>>.

There are also a number of organizations that serve as international or regional networks of party families, politicians and policymakers around the world (see Box 3.19). These include the Liberal International, founded in 1947; the Socialist International, founded in its present form in 1951; the International Democratic Union, formed in 1983, bringing together Christian Democratic politicians; and Global Greens, regional networks of Green party members operating in different parts of the world.

An example of international party-based training is the “Women Can Do It” programme designed by women inside the Norwegian Labour Party. It arranges candidate training opportunities for women 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 include democracy, women’s participation, policy issues, as well as skill training in political communication, public speaking, engagement in debates, handling the media, negotiation, networking and advocacy training. In addition to these training opportunities, the programme is viewed as a chance for women to meet and form networks.<sup>133</sup>

Political party leaders can also consider organizing – in co-operation with other political parties along national or ideological lines – joint capacity-building activities for women candidates. Similarly, they can partner with civil society groups active in their country, as well as international governmental and non-governmental organizations (the role of civil society organizations is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). What is of utmost importance is to ensure that capacity-building initiatives introduced by political parties are supported by the political party leadership, including through the allocation of specific party funds for training women, as well as promoting women as candidates and leaders in the wake of this training.

### → Encouraging women to run

If women do not feel confident or supported to run for office, the power of incumbency will continue to favour men. It is important to keep in mind that long-standing patterns and norms, which convey to prospective candidates that politics is a domain better left to men, often discourage women from exhibiting or acting on political ambition.<sup>134</sup> Women take a multitude of criteria into account before making a decision to stand in an election. A few of the factors that women may take into consideration when deciding to run include assessing the associated risks and time involved, their access to political networks and potential financial contributors, their perceived status in society, their likelihood of winning, their degree of personal ambi-

#### Box 3.20:

##### The Fabian Women’s Network at Labour Party Conferences

The Fabian Women’s Network organizes awareness raising and capacity-building events on the margins of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party of the United Kingdom. These events are planned around the programme of the Conference itself, in the form of evening side events or breakfast gatherings. The Network seeks partnership with other party factions, government representatives and civil society organizations where appropriate.

In 2013, for example, the Network is organizing a panel on “The Role of Women in Business and Economic Growth” in co-operation with the Labour Finance and Industry Group, as well as an awareness-raising event on “Giving Birth in Austerity Britain: The Future of Maternal Health”, in co-operation with the Young Fabians Health Network.

A panel on “What Next for Women’s Rights and Foreign Policy” will feature women representatives from well-known NGOs as well as Members of Parliament.

Source: Fabian Women, <<http://www.fabianwomen.co.uk/2013/08/fabian-womens-network-at-labour-party-conference-2013/>>.

133 “Women can do it – an evaluation of the WCDI programme in the Western Balkans”, Gender in Norway, <[http://www.gender.no/renderSearchResults?search\\_string=%22women+can+do+it%22](http://www.gender.no/renderSearchResults?search_string=%22women+can+do+it%22)>.

134 Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, “If Only They’d Ask: Gender, Recruitment and Political Ambition”, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 72, No. 2, April 2010, pp. 310–326.

tion, the level of family and community support they enjoy and the number of family and community commitments they are already engaged in. The level of assistance that political parties provide, including in terms of helping women to balance their obligations, publicly supporting and encouraging women to run as party candidates and facilitating women's access to party and campaign resources, can make all the difference in a woman's decision to step forward as a potential candidate.

As part of this strategy, political parties can maintain a network of women who have run for election, whether or not their campaign was successful. Parties can take active steps to engage these women in party activities and positions, draw on their support to keep connected to constituencies, nurture their interest in contesting elections at a future date, request their support in organizing training and encourage them to stand as candidates in the future.

Political parties can also encourage women sections to organize side events at party congresses, as well as conferences on women's political contributions and achievements in the party (see Box 3.20). Furthermore, parties themselves might assist in organizing all-women congresses. In addition to recruiting new female members and re-activating former members, these events can be used for educational purposes and as voter-outreach initiatives.

### → Helping women to balance personal and professional life in political parties

Increased attention has been paid to supporting women (and men) in balancing their personal and professional lives in public institutions, including government and parliament, in a number of OSCE participating States. In Norway, for example, by law both parents have the right to a paid leave of absence during the first year of a child's life. To encourage more men to assume a greater share of care-giving responsibilities, ten weeks of parental leave are reserved for fathers.<sup>135</sup> In Austria, legislation ensures that both parents may change the scheduling of work hours until their child is seven years old, with a right to return to full-time work afterwards.<sup>136</sup> The Estonian Parliament allows both male and female MPs to submit an application to the parliamentary board to request a suspension of her/his mandate based on "the need to raise a child under three years of age".<sup>137</sup> In Sweden, the parliament has adopted Gender Equality Action Plans in order to support the establishment of gender-sensitive parliamentary practices. The Danish parliament does not allow voting after 7 p.m. on sitting days.<sup>138</sup>

Recognizing the challenges in applying labour regulations to political life, political party leaders can consider adapting legislative and public policy provisions regarding parental leave, working hours and working environments to political party contexts. For example, party leaders and equality advocates could 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 or allow for flexible work arrangements for parents. Parties could also develop party policies and provisions on personal, family or parental leave, tailored to the

135 "Parental benefits and paternity leave", Norway: the official site in the United Kingdom, <<http://www.norway.org.uk/aboutnorway/society/welfare/benefits/>>.

136 Bock-Schappelwein, J., Eppel, R. und Mülhberger, U., "Sozialpolitik als Produktivkraft, Study for the Austrian Chancellery", 2009, <[http://www.wifo.ac.at/www/jsp/index.jsp?fid=23923&id=35602&typeid=8&display\\_mode=2](http://www.wifo.ac.at/www/jsp/index.jsp?fid=23923&id=35602&typeid=8&display_mode=2)>; Rebecca Ray, Janet C. Gornick and John Schmitt, "Parental Leave Policies in 21 Countries. Assessing Generosity and Gender Equality", Center for Economic and Policy Research, September 2008/ Revised June 2009, <[http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/parental\\_2008\\_09.pdf](http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/parental_2008_09.pdf)>.

137 Sonia Palmieri, "Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice", Reports and Documents no. 65 (Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2011), <<http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf>>.

138 Ibid.

personal and professional needs of women (and men). Political parties could also consider the introduction of party funds to support parental leave.

### **3.1.3. Ensuring gender-equal access to financial resources and campaign funds**

Increased resource mobilization and a fair distribution of existing resources have been identified as central to achieving gender equality in political life. Women's unequal access to economic resources can restrict their political engagement, particularly when restrictions take the following form:

- ✓ Exclusion from certain circles of donors and other financial networks;
- ✓ Low economic status and limited financial independence; and
- ✓ Weak capacity to fundraise due to lack of confidence or information.

Depending on the political system, these restrictions can lower women's political competitiveness or even undermine their political career. Party leaders need to encourage women to overcome these limitations by sharing strategies on how to fundraise and helping them to raise enough money to win or at least compete on an equal playing field with men. Political parties and their leadership should be the most important supporters and natural sponsors of women candidates.

#### **→ Introducing transparent internal rules on the allocation of political party funds**

The 2012 ODIHR Survey participants indicated that the number one difficulty in getting nominated as a candidate by party leaders is their limited ability to "raise campaign funds". In fact, both men and women tended to identify financial limitations as the key challenge women face in their political advancement. This factor far outweighed other potential difficulties, such as having the confidence to run; gaining political expertise; having public speaking skills; and gaining support from local groups, the party and family and friends. Financial limitations thus represent a substantial obstacle for would-be political candidates.

Research has shown that limited access to funding is an issue disproportionately faced by women. The "gender wealth gap" describes the disparity in disposable financial resources and economic independence between men and women. Research finds that not only do women earn less than men in the workplace, but they also own less of the world's wealth. This is caused by men and women having unequal access to work and social benefits, such as paid vacation days, health and unemployment insurance, tax credits, social security and welfare. Motherhood is another cause of the gender wealth gap, as mothers are more likely to have primary caregiving responsibility, resulting in decreased opportunities for wealth accumulation. As a result, while women now earn around 78 per cent of their male counterparts' income, they only own 36 per cent as much wealth.<sup>139</sup> In the context of campaign funds, this may mean that women candidates have fewer finances to dedicate to political activities, reducing the likelihood that they will run for and win an elected office position.

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<sup>139</sup> Mariko Lin Chang, *Shortchanged* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 3.

**Box 3.21:**  
**Pay Women Candidates Back!**

The New Democratic Party (NDP) in Canada has a financial-assistance programme that allows women and minority candidates to be reimbursed up to C\$500 for child care expenses incurred in seeking a nomination, C\$500 for travel costs in geographically large ridings and an additional C\$500 for costs incurred in seeking nomination in ridings where the NDP incumbent is retiring.

Such assistance programmes can help women candidates not only cover some of their campaign expenses, but also help balance their professional and personal life.

*Source: Lisa Young, Chapter on Campaign Finance and Women's Representation in Canada and the United States in Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns in the Americas. (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2005), p. 137. <<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/en/node/175>>*

To create an enabling environment for women to participate in politics, political parties should make a conscious effort to facilitate women candidates' access to party and/or campaign funds. Introducing internal rules concerning the allocation of political party funds and resources is a key strategy that political parties can employ to support women in addressing the economic and financial obstacles to their political participation.

At the very least, internal party rules should require allocation of party resources based on principles of equity and transparency, ensuring equitable allocation of internal party resources to women and men candidates and equal access to fundraising and political networks. In particular, party leadership can introduce internal party funds to support women's sections or female candidates. Parties can also voluntarily suspend or lower nomination/registration fees for female candidates, or reimburse certain expenses for women while they hold public office or seek nomination (see Box 3.21). Finally, they can promote in-kind subsidies for women candidates, for example, additional free media time to women candidates to enable them to publicize their electoral platforms.

Specific initiatives party leaders can introduce to institutionalize party financial support to women party candidates and activists include:

- ✓ Waiving their internal candidate-registration fees or establishing a fund to pay the candidate-registration fees of female candidates (if fees are required by legislation);
- ✓ 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 candidates;
- ✓ Earmarking a portion of party finances (including public funds, if applicable) for women's groups, candidates and/or capacity-building training for women candidates;
- ✓ 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); and
- ✓ Providing training and advice on fundraising to help women develop the skills needed to raise money and campaign in a cost-effective way, as well as to build name recognition.

These actions could be initiated by either party leaders or gender-equality advocates. However, to take institutional effect, these initiatives will require the support of party leadership (including, possibly, party executive committee or congress as well as approval by the party treasurer). Party leaders and equality advocates should carefully consult internal party rules of procedure to determine how such measures can be institutionalized. Formalization of such measures in party regulations or by-laws is important, in order to avoid constant and informal bargaining, negotiating and/or the creation of one-off deals as well as dependency relationships between the beneficiaries and those approving these initiatives.



Taking the above into account, party leaders (in co-operation with equality advocates and party selectors) can further support women's campaigning efforts by:

- ✓ Putting women in races which do not require enormous financial resources, ideally in safe district seats or in high positions on party lists;
- ✓ Enhancing the centralization and professionalization of campaigns, for example by producing template party campaign materials at a discounted rate to help women to run professional and cost-effective campaigns;
- ✓ Providing assistance to female candidates in financial difficulty by offering funds for or helping with child care and domestic duties; and
- ✓ Convincing private financial institutions to establish a special line of credit for women candidates, offering them privileged access to funds and repayment strategies.

Women may feel more capable and confident to compete if they are not paralyzed by the financial limitations associated with the high costs of politics (further concrete strategies for equitable allocation of funds to women are discussed in Chapter 4).

### **3.1.4. Making gender a part of a party's electoral strategy**

Incorporating gender into a party's electoral strategy can be an effective campaigning technique, and even a winning one. For example, during the 2012 presidential elections in France, the winning candidate, François Hollande, prepared a list containing 40 obligations he would undertake as future president to ensure equality between men and women (see Box 3.22).<sup>140</sup> Likewise, in his 2004 electoral campaign in Spain, José Zapatero promised to give a greater voice to women in public life and to combat violence against women and domestic violence; six months' following his election as Prime Minister, Zapatero stated that "I am not just anti-machismo, I'm a feminist." His first legislative act upon entering office was to strengthen the legal framework to combat gender-based violence; he introduced a ministry for equality, and installed Europe's first cabinet composed of 50 per cent women and 50 per cent men, including Spain's first female minister of defence.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>140</sup> François Hollande, "40 Engagements Pour L'égalité Femmes – Hommes", Laboratoire de l'Egalité, 2012, <[http://www.laboratoiredelegalite.org/IMG/pdf/40\\_Engagements\\_pour\\_l\\_egalite\\_F-H\\_Francois\\_Hollande.pdf](http://www.laboratoiredelegalite.org/IMG/pdf/40_Engagements_pour_l_egalite_F-H_Francois_Hollande.pdf)>.

<sup>141</sup> See, for example: "Jose Zapatero's feminist agenda", *The Guardian*, 1 April 2011, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/apr/01/jose-zapatero-feminism-spain>>; and <[http://www.euroresidentes.com/Blogs/archives\\_news/2004\\_04\\_18\\_](http://www.euroresidentes.com/Blogs/archives_news/2004_04_18_)>.

**Box 3.22: 2012 France's Winning Presidential Candidate: François Hollande**

On April 13 2012, then presidential candidate François Hollande made public his 40 commitments in favour of equality between women and men. Among these, some provisions directly targeted the government. Commitment number 1 foresaw the creation of a Ministry of Women's Rights, which would be placed under the authority of the Prime Minister. Its main tasks would be to develop, monitor and evaluate public policies and their effects on gender equality. In the same vein, under commitment number 2, a department in charge of gender equality would be created within each ministry, attesting to the transversal character of gender issues. Finally, François Hollande promised gender parity in his future government (commitment number 22).

A specific provision concerned funding for political parties. Commitment number 23 explicitly stated that political parties that do not present as many women as men in legislative elections would have their party funding suppressed. Other commitments promoting gender equality focused on non-accumulation of elected offices (number 24) and the introduction of a proportional share in the National Assembly (number 25). The NGO Laboratory for Equality helped the candidate develop this programme (for more information on this NGO's work, see Chapter 5). Since assuming elected office in 2012, Hollande has appointed a gender balanced cabinet, with the same number of women as men in the 34-member body.

Source: "François Hollande 2012. Election présidentielle 22 avril 2012 40 Engagements Pour L'égalité Femmes – Hommes", 2012, <[http://www.laboratoiredelegalite.org/IMG/pdf/40\\_Engagements\\_pour\\_l\\_egalite\\_F-H\\_Francois\\_Hollande.pdf](http://www.laboratoiredelegalite.org/IMG/pdf/40_Engagements_pour_l_egalite_F-H_Francois_Hollande.pdf)>; Agnès Poirier, "Hollande's cabinet shows Sarkozy how to do gender equality – see, easy", *The Guardian*, 17 May 2012, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/may/17/hollande-france-gender-equality>>.

Ahead of the 2010 general elections in the United Kingdom, the Labour Party launched a "Winning for Women" campaign. On the leaflet produced, the Labour Party listed all their achievements in what the party has delivered for women.<sup>142</sup> The 2010 General Elections in the United Kingdom resulted in the highest ever number and proportion of women elected to the House of Commons<sup>143</sup>: women out of 650 MPs; 81 women represent the Labour Party.<sup>143</sup>

In the United Kingdom, the Conservative Party's website describes, in detail, the stance of the party on gender issues and the party's past achievements, as well as future plans, in promoting the cause of women, as elaborated in Box 3.23.

<sup>142</sup> "Winning for Women. A guide to what Labour has delivered for women", United Kingdom Labour Party, 2010, <<http://www.labour.org.uk/uploads/746d1524-6792-d714-252f-e40e1e93b64d.pdf>>.

<sup>143</sup> "Women MPs & parliamentary candidates since 1945", United Kingdom Political info. A source for voters, students, journalists and politicians, <<http://www.ukpolitical.info/FemaleMPs.htm>>.



### Box 3.23: United Kingdom Conservative Party's Commitments to Women

The United Kingdom Conservative Party's official webpage has a section dedicated to women. In this section, the party states its **general commitments**:

- We are committed to breaking down the barriers that still exist to gender equality.
- We are also taking action to bring an end to violence against women.

These are then followed up by **more specific commitments**:

- Increasing female representation in the top companies
- Reducing the gender pay gap
- Encouraging female entrepreneurship
- Introducing flexible parental leave
- Tackling violence against women

Each commitment is followed by a description of the **party's actions to date and planned actions** in this regard, for example:

#### **Tackling violence against women**

##### **Actions to date**

- We have launched a cross government strategy to combat violence against women.
- We have put the funding of rape crisis centres on a long-term stable footing by providing £9.8 million per year.
- We have extended the definition of domestic violence to cover 16 to 18 year olds and to include coercive, controlling behaviour.
- We have criminalized stalking and stalking where there is a fear of violence.
- We have consulted on the criminalization of forced marriage.

##### **Planned actions**

- We are currently piloting a "Clare's law" scheme to test methods used by the police to help victims of domestic violence. We will consider the outcomes from the pilot scheme very carefully before deciding on next steps.
- We hope to introduce new legislation to criminalize forced marriage in 2013/14.

Source: "Women", Conservatives, <[http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where\\_we\\_stand/women2.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/women2.aspx)>.

### → Integrating gender equality into a party's political communication

A picture is worth a thousand words. Therefore, another effective tool to increase women's presence in the party and in elected office is to move beyond rhetoric and make women visible in campaigning. Women candidates, campaign managers and party activists often remain behind the scenes in electoral campaigns, while party leaders (usually men) dominate campaign posters, party propaganda and media time.

Making women visible in campaigns and promoting the name recognition of female candidates can be achieved by actively featuring them on party websites; campaign posters; television, video and radio messages; printed media; and online social networks. Other strategies include giving women candidates the floor during political rallies and campaign events, as well as inviting their participation in televised electoral debates and during political party broadcasts.

Political parties should, further, make an effort to use political communication methods to engage in voter-education initiatives, particularly initiatives aimed at encouraging women to vote and informing women about their political rights. Such campaigns can garner voter support for parties, while simultaneously serving to educate the electorate more broadly. Voter-education initiatives targeting women specifically should take into account literacy levels of women; pervasive electoral irregularities that can affect women, such as family or proxy voting; and the broader socio-cultural and socio-economic environment of the country in question. Voter-education campaigns organized by political parties should naturally involve women in the planning, development and implementation of these campaigns.<sup>144</sup> Similar voter-education

<sup>144</sup> *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

and information programmes could be developed for male voters, encouraging them to consider voting for female candidates.

→ **Providing a secure environment for female candidates, campaign managers, election observers and female voters**

Women around the world are playing increasingly important roles in electoral processes as voters, candidates, supporters and protesters. The electoral campaign, the election day and the day that the election outcomes are publicly announced are some of the most sensitive moments in a country's domestic political life.<sup>145</sup> As noted in a recent study, if previously women were victims of electoral violence through their associations rather than their actions, "the evolution of women's roles in democratic political processes has diversified the roles in which women become victims of electoral violence."<sup>146</sup> As a result, women are often the first victims of electoral violence, both in their roles as political party candidates and as supporters and voters.

Electoral violence is still an issue in a number of OSCE participating States, even though states are required to provide a secure environment for both male and female candidates, campaign managers, election observers and voters. Ensuring the safety of female political actors, in particular, can encourage more women to run as candidates while at the same time minimizing the number of votes lost due to electoral violence for a given party.

There are several entry points for political parties themselves to minimize the number of votes lost due to electoral violence, whilst ensuring a safer environment for women candidates. The first step is for the party to make public statements calling on all participants in elections to abstain from electoral violence. A second step can be for parties to call on all their members and supporters to abstain from electoral violence, and for each party to internally monitor this process. In addition, a political party could form a special task force, which could work closely with national law-enforcement agencies, who are mandated to provide security both to candidates and voters during the electoral process. Moreover, political parties could appeal to private security agencies, tasking them to provide security to women candidates, should they desire to do so.

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<sup>145</sup> Gabrielle Bardall, "Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence", International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), White Paper Series, December 2011, <<http://www.ifes.org/Content/Publications/Articles/2011/Breaking-the-Mold-Understanding-Gender-and-Electoral-Violence.aspx>>.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

### → Avoiding superficial efforts to increase the number of women within a party

Avoiding superficial efforts to increase the number of women in a political party is important in developing and maintaining a good image of the party, thereby strengthening a party's electoral position. The *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties* guide identifies a number of “superficial” efforts a political party may employ,<sup>147</sup> including:

- Establishing women's wings that lack institutionalized power or resources;
- Selecting female “placeholders” to occupy positions on candidate lists simply to comply with legal quota provisions;
- Placing women candidates in districts or constituencies where they cannot win;
- Removing women from positions on candidate lists at the last minute;<sup>148</sup>
- “Encouraging” women to give up their seats shortly after an election, whereupon the seats are subsequently occupied by male candidates; and
- Ignoring women officials once they are elected.

Such actions may be undertaken by parties that adopt the rhetoric of gender equality in an effort to win support or votes, but are not truly dedicated to women's political empowerment.

### 3.1.5. Promoting gender-responsive governance at the national level

This section looks in more detail at what parties can do to continue promoting gender equality once in power, either as a ruling party, as part of a coalition or as representatives of the parliamentary opposition. Once a party has won power, it is time to use it!

### → Initiating gender-friendly reforms of legislative bodies

Despite the adoption of policies and legislation to support women's rights and gender equality in all OSCE participating States, public institutions – including parliaments – remain highly “gendered” institutions. That is, parliaments still operate according to rules and procedures that reflect gender-based roles and responsibilities, introduced during times when men alone stood as representatives of public office. Initiating gender-friendly reforms of legislative bodies is critical to addressing the gendered nature of parliaments.

Even when elected, women often retain primary household responsibilities. Studies based on interviews with MPs have highlighted that more consideration should be given to parental leave provisions, parliamentary sitting times, parliamentary calendars, the geographic location of the parliament and the provision of child-care facilities as a means to support women MPs.<sup>149</sup> Conducting a survey on or gender audit of the institutional culture, operating procedures and the political climate of the parliament can help identify and highlight parliamentary practices that are not conducive to women MPs' active participation.

<sup>147</sup> *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*, UNDP/NDI, 2011, p.25, <<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/empower-women-political-parties.html>>.

<sup>148</sup> “Democracy and the Challenge of Change. A Guide to Increasing Women's Political Participation” (Washington: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), 2010), <[http://www.ndi.org/Democracy\\_and\\_the\\_Challenge\\_of\\_Change](http://www.ndi.org/Democracy_and_the_Challenge_of_Change)>.

<sup>149</sup> Sonia Palmieri, “Gender-Sensitive Parliaments. A Global Review of Good Practice”, Reports and Documents no. 65, Inter – Parliamentary Union, 2011, <<http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf>>.

Image 3.24: Italian MP Licia Ronzulli and her daughter at the European Parliament



Source: <<http://grradio.tistory.com/2>>.

Once elected to public office, parliamentary political parties can take leading roles in championing the introduction of gender-friendly parliamentary policies and practices, such as aligning parliamentary calendars with school calendars, encouraging parental leave (rather than maternity leave alone), providing childcare facilities and scheduling meetings that do not run late into the evening or on the weekends. These initiatives are practical means of demonstrating the commitment of the party to gender equality in elected office. They may also help fulfil party promises made during the electoral campaign to support women's participation in politics.

In the Swedish Riksdag, for example, a working group was established to draft proposals for making the parliament more gender-sensitive. The working group developed the document *15 Proposals for Gender Equality in the Riksdag*, indicating that parliamentary leadership needs to play a key role in driving reform processes in favour of gender equality forward. In 2006, the speaker of the parliament renewed the "Speaker's Reference Group on Gender Equality" bringing together representatives of each political party represented in parliament. It has helped develop specific Gender Equality Action Plans (one for 2006–2010, a second for 2010–2014), detailing specific actions the parliament can take to institutionalize gender equality.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> See Hillevi Engström, "Gender Sensitive Parliaments: The Swedish Experience", in *Is Parliament Open to Women? An Appraisal*, Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, 28–29 September 2009, Available at: <<http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnog-e.pdf>>.

## → Enhancing gender-equality legislation at the national level

In addition to the introduction of parliamentary reforms in support of greater gender equality, parties can advocate for the introduction or further implementation of gender-equality legislation, as a means to uphold gender promises made to the electorate during the campaign.

Parties can also lobby for the introduction of gender assessments of legislative initiatives and draft laws as a parliamentary practice. Gender impact assessments help identify the potential impact of draft laws on both men and women, boys and girls. In addition, parties could initiate or support the establishment of mechanisms to ensure that decisions and policy positions taken by cross-party women's networks or caucuses are channelled to the speaker of parliament, and that these decisions inform the parliamentary agenda. Lastly, parliamentary parties can launch and promote gender-equality information campaigns, by encouraging the translation into local languages of international gender-related commitments.

### Box 3.25: Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

The Inter-Parliamentary Union has published a comprehensive guide to support parliaments and parliamentary leadership in undertaking gender-sensitive reform of parliament, based on global good practices and lessons learned, entitled *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice*.

Source: Sonia Palmieri, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Reports and Document No. 65, 2011. Available at: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf>.

Additionally, depending on the current status of gender-related legislation, the parliamentary parties could propose:

- Gender-equality laws;
- Legal gender quotas for elected office and the public sector, to be introduced into the constitution or respective laws (on political parties, civil service, etc.);
- Increases in state funding for gender-sensitive political parties, including not only financial incentives, but incentives for providing free access to state media during the electoral campaign;
- The creation of independent gender-equality mechanisms, vesting them with power and providing them with financial resources; and
- The introduction of monitoring mechanisms to facilitate monitoring of implementation of legislation.

## → Strengthening the regulatory framework for public funding to political parties

Institutional design and regulations matter when it comes to party finances and the allocation of resources to male and female party members. For example, in some OSCE participating States, such as Canada, election laws allow candidates to use campaign funds to pay for childcare, family care and other domestic duties.<sup>151</sup>

Additional mechanisms to promote gender equality in politics are available in countries where parties are publicly funded (see Table 3.26). Laws that attempt to neutralize gender disparities

<sup>151</sup> Canada Elections Act § 409(1) "Personal expenses of a candidate are his or her electoral campaign expenses, other than election expenses, that are reasonably incurred in relation to his or her campaign and include (a) travel and living expenses; (b) childcare expenses; (c) expenses relating to the provision of care for a person with a physical or mental incapacity for whom the candidate normally provides such care; and (d) in the case of a candidate who has a disability, additional personal expenses that are related to the disability". <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&document=index&dir=loi/fel/cea&lang=e>.



caused by unequal distribution of financial resources often target one of three issues: the costs women uniquely or disproportionately face when deciding to run; political parties' receipt and allocation of public funds; or restrictions on large contributions and spending limits.

Well-designed political finance systems can be a woman's best friend, in that dependence on large private donations (which men alone usually have access to) is replaced by a system of direct public funding to political parties, creating a more level playing field for male and female party candidates that is not linked to their personal wealth or fundraising capabilities. Such external political party regulations can be complemented by internal party regulations, for example, where political parties allocate public funding to party candidates based on merit, need and opportunity, or create initiatives to support specific groups of party candidates, such as women, that do not enjoy access to well-established networks of patrons and benefactors.

Further, governments can introduce gender-friendly conditions to the receipt of public funding, for example, restricting access to public funding to those parties that include a certain proportion of women on party lists. In France, parties receive a fine from regulatory bodies proportional to the degree to which they violate the quota requirements of 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female candidates. This approach, however, 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.<sup>152</sup>

Recent reforms introduced in Ireland reduce state funding to political parties by half, if less than 30 per cent (later rising to 40 per cent) of their general election candidates are women.<sup>153</sup> In Georgia, the 2012 Election Code introduced financial incentives to "qualified political parties" – defined as those winning at least four per cent of the vote in the last parliamentary elections and at least three per cent of the vote in the last local elections – to encourage them to recruit female candidates for both national and local elections. A party with at least two women among every ten candidates on its list of candidates received an additional ten per cent of state funding, for which it became eligible if it cleared a five per cent threshold.<sup>154</sup> As these financial incentives had limited impact on larger parties during the October 2012 parliamentary elections in Georgia, in 2013 the political parties agreed to revisit this provision and increase the amount of additional funding provided to parties. In August 2013, amendments to the law on political unions were made to include a provision increasing the requirement to at least three women among every ten candidates of a party list and increasing additional funding from 10 per cent to 30 per cent (now referred to as the 30/30 rule: at least 30 per cent women candidates translates into 30 per cent additional public funding).<sup>155</sup>

152 Rainbow Murray, *Parties, Gender Quotas, and Candidate Selection in France* (London: Palgrave, 2010).

153 "Political Finance data for Ireland", International IDEA, *Political Finance Database*, <<http://www.idea.int/political-finance/country.cfm?id=102>>.

154 Article 30(71), Organic Law of Georgia on Political Union of Citizens, 1997. See "Political Finance Database", Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), <<http://www.idea.int/political-finance/question.cfm?id=281>>.

155 See "Change of Party Funding Rules Proposed", Civil Georgia, 23 July 2013, <<http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=26299>>.

**Table 3.26: OSCE participating States where public funding of political parties is connected to gender equality among candidates**

Countries	Q1	What are those provisions?	Q2 (%)
<b>Serbia</b>	YES	The election law demands that parties submit lists in which at least one third of the candidates are of each gender. Parties not complying cannot participate in election processes and consequently cannot obtain state funding.	33
<b>Portugal</b>	YES	Parties that do not have a balance between the genders among its candidates can lose between 25 per cent and 80 per cent of their public funding.	29
<b>France</b>	YES	If the gender difference among candidates is larger than 2 per cent, the public funding is reduced by 3/4 of this difference.	27
<b>Croatia</b>	YES	For each elected Member of Parliament representing an under-represented gender, political parties shall be entitled to a compensation totalling 10 per cent of the amount envisaged for each Member of Parliament.	24
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	YES	10 per cent of public funds are distributed to parties in proportion to the number of seats held by the “less represented gender”.	22
<b>Ireland</b>	YES	Parties lose 50 per cent of their funding if they have less than 30 per cent of candidates of any gender (rule introduced in 2012). The law states that the 30 per cent will increase to 40 per cent at some time after 2020).	15
<b>Italy</b>	YES	For European Parliament elections in 2004 and 2009, neither sex should exceed 2/3 of candidates selected for the party lists. If this provision was not implemented, the public campaign subsidy to the political party was reduced in proportion to the number of candidates exceeding the maximum allowed (up to 50 per cent). The withheld amount was disbursed as a ‘premium’ to those parties adhering to the law.	22
<b>Georgia</b>	YES	A provision was introduced in December 2011 giving parties with at least 20 per cent of either gender on its list an additional 10 per cent in state funding.	12
<b>Romania</b>	YES	State funding will increase in proportion to the number of seats obtained in the election of women candidates.	11

**Q1:** Is the provision of direct public funding to political parties related to gender equality among candidates?

**Q2:** Percentage of women in parliament.

Source: “Political Finance Database”, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), <<http://www.idea.int/political-finance/index.cfm>>; “Women in national parliaments”, Inter-Parliamentary Union, December 2012, <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>>.

In addition to connecting public party funding to gender equality on candidate lists, political party reformers can take a step forward and further specify the destination of public funds. For example, in Finland, the law specifies that: “All parliamentary parties must use 12 percent of their annual party subsidy to fund [party] women’s wing[s]”, while in Ireland and Italy, the requirement of political parties to invest in the promotion of women’s participation is included in direct public-funding provisions.<sup>156</sup> Section 18 of Ireland’s Electoral Act states that “The funding received is also deemed to include provision in respect of expenditure by qualified

<sup>156</sup> “Political Finance Database”, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), <<http://www.idea.int/political-finance/question.cfm?id=281>>.

parties in relation to the promotion of participation by women and young persons in political activity.”<sup>157</sup>

Lastly, regardless of the provisions in place, political party leaders should demand a clean campaign environment, including compliance with financial reporting requirements for both party and campaign financing. Transparent and accountable funding of political parties in the long term will contribute to more democratic and participatory political processes that benefit both women and men.

### Conclusion to Chapter 3

This chapter has explored different voluntary strategies and measures political parties can adopt in order to promote women’s political participation and advancement in different party processes and structures. Starting from the recognition that political parties serve as the main gatekeepers of political participation, this chapter explored in detail the different party policies, processes, procedures and practices that can facilitate or hinder women’s political advancement. It focused on processes of eliminating direct and indirect discrimination against women in internal party regulations and institutionalizing gender equality in party founding documents. The chapter then looked at specific party processes, including party recruitment, candidate selection, party promotion and allocation of resources, exploring a number of concrete measures that party leaders can introduce to support gender equality in each of these processes. The chapter ended by examining the electoral strategies of political parties, as well as what parties can do to promote gender equality in politics through governance processes. The next chapter will look more specifically at how women themselves can support their own political advancement, and that of other women, as well as encourage political party leaders and decision makers to support the institutionalization of gender equality in a party’s day-to-day functioning.

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.





# Women in Political Parties

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## Introduction to Chapter 4

Women are entering politics in ever greater numbers across the OSCE region. Nonetheless, the achievement of parity in women's representation is very much a work in progress. In the twenty-first century, women's representation in top positions in political parties and in legislatures in many OSCE participating States remains disappointing. Currently, only a handful of political parties are chaired by women and few parliaments are chaired or co-chaired by a female speaker or deputy speaker (see Chapter 2).

As discussed in the previous chapter, political parties are increasingly recognized as the main gatekeepers of women's participation in political and public life. Where parties introduce measures to encourage more women to become politically active and to institutionalize fairness, transparency and equity as principles governing parties' operating procedures and culture, they play a key role in enhancing women's participation. By contrast, where the rules, procedures and practices of political parties are not transparent, or where they directly or indirectly discriminate against women, women may continue to be marginalized.

Chapter 3 focused on strategies and measures political parties, and particularly party leaders, can introduce to make parties more open, welcoming and equitable for women. This chapter explores strategies that women themselves can adopt to facilitate their political advancement. Specifically, it looks at strategies individual women can apply, collective strategies that encourage women to work together and strategies that women, together with men, can introduce in order to institutionalize and formalize gender equality within political parties.

This three-pronged approach is crucial for addressing the challenges that women continue to face in achieving parity in public office, as well as equality within party structures and processes. It also takes into account the different strategies that women (and men) have applied in the historical struggle for women's rights in all spheres of political and public life.

The historical subordination and exclusion of women from public life has left a disheartening legacy. Women continue to confront gender-based stereotypes in all OSCE participating States. These stereotypes and perceptions, combined with discriminatory practices, leave women less prepared and equipped than many men to function effectively in the political arena – not because they lack the skills or competence, but because they confront an unequal political playing field. These challenges are complicated by the reality of how politics work. Competitive politicians navigate between formal and informal “rules of the game”. Due to their limited exposure and access to politics, women often lack the knowledge of how politics works “in practice”. To be successful in politics, women must learn, therefore, not only the technical, formal aspects of the political system, but also how the game of politics is played within and among different political parties.

Significantly, the legacy of marginalization means that *women themselves* have internalized many of the gender stereotypes perpetuated in and by society. Some women may believe that politics is a “man's” responsibility, that women lack the required capacities or qualities to become a successful politician, that politics is a “dirty business” unsuitable for women or that

### Box 4.1: Challenges Women Face in Politics

- Lack of awareness on the part of male party leaders about the need to increase women's political participation, and limited support.
- Women's lack of influence in the development of party policies and platforms.
- Women's absence from or limited representation in party executive bodies;
- Women's absence from leadership positions.
- Marginalization of women's wings within parties.
- Limited awareness of the informal “rules of the game” of how politics operate.

*Source: Adapted from Assessing women's political party programs: Best practices and recommendations, Washington: NDI, 2008.*

campaigning and fundraising involve improper behaviour on the part of women. Likewise, women may feel uncomfortable asking for money from donors or fighting over scarce party resources.

**Box 4.2:**  
**Why Women do not go into Politics**

- **Institutional** factors, which include rules and procedures of eligibility, electoral and party systems and legislative arrangements.
- **Social** factors, which include women's levels of employment and education and the division of labour in the family.
- **Cultural** factors, which include beliefs about appropriate gender roles in relation to politics and to the public sphere more generally.

Source: Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* (London: Hansard Society, 2005), p.78.

As a result, many promising and motivated women who work in difficult political conditions and know the political situation well are often reluctant to take up political appointments or run for elected office, considering themselves to be unsuited for politics. This lack of confidence continues to keep the numbers of women aspiring to political office well below those of aspiring men.

How can women challenge both the gender-based stereotypes they face in society and those they internalize? The lessons of history are illustrative. In the political sphere, individual women pioneered the political fight for women's voting rights, becoming role models for generations. Women across Europe and North America were instrumental in lobbying for the right to vote, including the United Kingdom's Emmeline Pankhurst and Marion Coates Hansen, the United States' Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Victoria Woodhull and Susan B. Anthony, as well as Marianne Hainisch in Austria, Clara Zetkin in Germany, Anna Haslan in Ireland, Anna Maria Mozzoni in Italy, Aletta Jacobs in the Netherlands, Aleksandra Kollontai in Russia and Signe Bergman in Sweden. Today, we associate these names, and many more, with the historical struggle for women's political rights.<sup>158</sup>

Yet it was only when their actions were taken up by larger groups, and this collective assumed a critical mass and urgency, that sustainable political change occurred. The suffrage movements that appeared across established and emerging democracies demonstrate the power of such a strategy, succeeding in winning women the right to vote around the world.<sup>159</sup> Most importantly, institutionalizing universal suffrage in constitutional and legal frameworks at the national level ensured that women's right to vote would be secured for future generations. Today, the equal right of women and men to participate in all spheres of political and public life is enshrined in international treaties and formalized in national legal frameworks across the OSCE region.

What conclusions can be drawn from history? First and foremost, women themselves need to actively choose the political path; men cannot and should not make this choice for women. Secondly, numbers do matter, at least insofar as numbers allow women to form alliances and partnerships and shape political agendas. Women's political advancement can be greatly facilitated when individual female political activists consciously work together. Lastly, women are most often the initiators and drivers of processes to institutionalize gender equality in policy and legal frameworks, as well as in day-to-day procedures and practices, because they have often suffered the most from gender inequality.

In the political party context, this may entail establishing structures to support women's advancement, introducing policies to prohibit gender-based discrimination, developing strate-

<sup>158</sup> "List of suffragists and suffragettes", Wikipedia, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_suffragists\\_and\\_suffragettes#American\\_.28United\\_States.29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_suffragists_and_suffragettes#American_.28United_States.29)>.

<sup>159</sup> "Timeline of women's suffrage", Wikipedia, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_women%27s\\_suffrage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_women%27s_suffrage)>.

gies and measures to create a level playing field for male and female party members, or initiating advocacy on key social issues of particular concern to women. The burden of introducing gender equality into political party processes should not rest on women's shoulders alone, however. The institutionalization of gender equality within political parties requires the commitment of political party leaders, decision makers and both male and female party activists and members.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognize that politics, at its roots, is a competitive game. Opportunities for collaboration are rare, as each and every politician – man or woman – is driven by a key objective: to achieve success at the ballot box in order to obtain political power and use this power to effect change. Therefore, several points are important to keep in mind when reading this chapter. Firstly, female politicians themselves must be the initiators of some of these strategies, and they may confront a great deal of opposition from both men and women in the party when doing so. Importantly, this chapter does not go into detail into the strategies that women can apply to challenge other women, including senior women, who oppose their advancement. ODIHR intends to address this issue in greater detail in subsequent updates of the handbook. Secondly, as noted, politics is a competitive profession, governed by formal and informal rules. Women may find that they confront a political environment where, in attempting to introduce more fairness, transparency and equity, they lose out in the short-run. This may be the case where political processes are dominated by negative campaigning or electoral fraud, or where money determines success at the ballot box.

Lastly, engaging in “rule changing” or policy reform will require time and energy, leaving less time for individual women to advance their career or devote to their political campaigns. However, it is important that women become involved in policy-reform processes, to ensure that women's views and perspectives are taken into account and that policy provisions and practices that discriminate against women are identified and expunged. It will be much more difficult for women to advance in politics if the institutional, policy and legislative framework governing this sphere does not enshrine equality of rights and opportunities for both women and men.

Some of the strategies contained in this chapter can support women in addressing these kinds of political challenges. However, a number of other tactics outlined here are long-term strategies, aimed at effecting change in how political parties are run and the extent to which they empower both women and men as political actors.

#### **4.1. What strategies work?**

This chapter is focused on actions that women in political parties can take individually and collectively to increase women's substantive participation and gender equality in political parties. To do so effectively, aspiring women politicians should focus on:

- Planning their political careers and promoting themselves through the ranks of politics;
- Building partnerships with other women and acting collectively on issues of mutual concern; and
- Institutionalizing gender equality in political party policies, processes and practices, and engaging men as partners and gender advocates.

As in the previous chapter, it is important to pick and choose the strategies that are most appropriate, depending on the type of political office or position women wish to obtain, their specific circumstances and the broader political environment.

#### **4.1.1. Building a successful career and promoting women through the ranks of politics**

This section focuses on individual measures and initiatives that women political activists can take to support the advancement of their political careers. It begins with women choosing to join a political party, and then proceeds to present strategies for getting to know how political parties actually operate. This knowledge forms the critical foundation for a woman to plan her advancement through the political ranks as well as access the resources needed to support her advancement – whether she wants to become a candidate for public office, a key player in political campaigns or a party decision maker. The section ends by looking at what practical actions women can take to put their plans into action, focusing on running political and electoral campaigns.

##### **1) Becoming a member of a political party**

Regardless of where a woman lives in the OSCE region, there is a chance that she is already politically active – whether as a party supporter, a political observer, a volunteer for a charity or association, a civil society activist, an active member of her community or as a voter – though not necessarily politically active in a formal sense. In fact, some research indicates that women make up as much as 80 per cent of civil society organizations in the United States (although recent data shows that women head only 12 per cent of the NGOs with the largest budgets in the United States).<sup>160</sup> Likewise, in the United Kingdom, it is estimated that women make up 68 per cent of the membership of civil society organizations, although women head only 27 per cent of NGOs with the largest budgets.<sup>161</sup> This indicates that there already exists a large pool of women that have developed skills, experience, expertise and values that could be transferred to politics.

Accordingly, this section contains an overview of actions women can take once they decide to formally enter the political arena.

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<sup>160</sup> “Women in civil society: Breaking the glass pyramid”, 7 March 2013, Council for International Development, <<http://www.cid.org.nz/news/women-in-civil-society-breaking-the-glass-pyramid/>>. Leadership statistics from “Women in leadership: It’s not going to work the way we’re doing it”, The Guardian, 1 August 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/aug/01/women-in-leadership-international-ngos>>.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

## → Getting to know the criteria for recruitment

One of the most important entry points for establishing a woman's presence in politics is by joining a political party. Choosing a party means identifying the values, ideology and/or policy perspectives that one agrees with, and finding a party that best matches one's personal preferences. Once an appropriate party is identified, it is important to keep in mind that political parties may recruit members for a variety of different reasons and based on a variety of different criteria. Accordingly, one of the first steps a woman can take is to learn about the **party's recruitment criteria**. These criteria may include:

- ✓ Age requirements;
- ✓ Citizenship requirements;
- ✓ Educational qualifications;
- ✓ Residency requirements;
- ✓ Employment requirements (for example, not a member of the military or civil service);
- ✓ Payment of a membership deposit upon recruitment or on a regular basis; and
- ✓ Adherence to the party's ideology and/or values, or acceptance as a member by the party.<sup>162</sup>

International good practice governing party recruitment dictates that none of the above criteria should be disproportionate, or result in any citizen – woman or man – not being able to join the party due to overly burdensome requirements regarding resources or qualifications.<sup>163</sup> Further, these criteria should be spelled out in a party's statutes, by-laws or on its website. Where possible, women should obtain copies of the necessary documents or access the relevant party site in order to become familiar with the provisions for recruitment.

Alternatively, it may be the case that women already know about the party that they wish to join, through business connections, family or social or educational circles, and consider knowledge of recruitment criteria unnecessary. Likewise, political parties themselves may look for potential members that fulfil criteria not listed in the party statutes, or may apply different values to different kinds of qualities. In the ODIHR survey conducted in the five pilot countries of Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova, for example, respondents noted that political party leaders often recruit members from among business networks or colleagues, university peers or persons of high reputation in communities.

### Box 4.3: Party Recruitment in the Five Pilot Countries

The pilot countries of the "Women in Political Parties" project all indicated that parties recruited members and candidates that:

- Are known to the party leadership (friends or family);
- Enjoy high-standing in the community;
- Possess resources, such as name recognition or funds; and
- Demonstrate loyalty to the party leadership.

In any case, it is important for women to be aware of both formal and informal criteria for party membership recruitment. Knowing the criteria will also allow women, once they are party members, to assess whether the party leadership and decision makers are applying these criteria in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

162 See: OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, para. 116; and "Parties and candidates", ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, <<http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/pc/onePage>>.

163 OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, para. 116

### → Making contributions to the community matter

It is important to demonstrate to a party the added value, skills and knowledge that a potential new recruit will bring. A woman's **contribution to the community** outside the formal sphere of politics can be used to demonstrate the qualities that most political parties seek when recruiting members. Involvement in local charities, for example, demonstrates civic engagement and commitment to public service. Likewise, participation in professional associations can help women develop expert skills and qualifications. Other forms of community service – contributing to the parent-teacher association in a child's school, coaching a local sports team, chairing local associations or volunteering for community events – can be used to highlight a woman's commitment to a local community and its growth, as well as the important skills she has developed as a result, such as management, fundraising or volunteer mobilization. Attendance at local council or town hall meetings can demonstrate interest in and dedication to civic participation, as well as knowledge of local politics.

Participation in the community not only allows women to showcase their values and qualities, but also provides an opportunity for women to make their skills, qualities and contributions better known to community and/or party leaders. These qualities and skills are what women should “sell” to the party they are interested in joining.

### → Contacting or volunteering for the local branch of a party

#### **Box 4.4:** **Dutch Election Campaign 2012:** **European Green Party**

The efforts of volunteers for the European Green Party during the Dutch parliamentary elections of 2012 did not go unnoticed.

The Party created a blog (<http://europeangreens.eu/blogs/dutch-election-campaign-2012>) to spotlight the activities of volunteers and ensure their work was properly recognized.

Source: European Green Party, <<http://europeangreens.eu/blogs/dutch-election-campaign-2012>>.

In the United Kingdom Conservative Party's nine-step plan for women to join the party, the first step encourages women to contact the **local branch** of the party in the constituency in which they live.<sup>164</sup> Accordingly, women interested in joining a party should seek out local party members to find out more about the party and the type of members they are looking for, in terms of qualifications, background, education, profession and skill sets. Such meetings can be useful to determine where women meet the criteria the party is looking for, and whether there are existing gaps in the party membership that women – and their skills – can help fill. Women can also seek to meet with other female members from the local branch. This is an excellent way to build contacts; get a better sense of the party's values, culture and activities; and assess the party's attitude towards women and their political advancement.

Women should also take advantage of any public recruitment drives that parties initiate in order to recruit new members. These may take place at universities (to attract younger party members), in civic or cultural centres, in sports arenas, in business forums or in other public spaces. Parties that are newly established may be particularly eager to hold such recruitment

<sup>164</sup> See “Women2Win” programme, <<http://www.women2win.com/being-mp>>. The resources and examples referenced in this handbook are included owing to their value as effective good practices for the promotion of women's participation in political parties. As such, their inclusion in no way represents an endorsement of or agreement with the policy agendas or political platforms of the organizations, platforms and political parties that produced them.



drives, as occurred in 2011 in the Czech Republic, when a newly-formed party publicly advertised its recruitment drive for members following its secession from an established party.<sup>165</sup>

### → Volunteering for an electoral campaign

One of the most effective ways to get noticed by a potential political party is to **volunteer** for the upcoming election campaign. Across the OSCE region, parties at national and local level depend upon volunteers to provide support during their electoral campaign. The jobs will vary and may include door-to-door campaigning; answering telephone calls; reaching out to donors; developing, mailing or distributing campaign materials; voter outreach; or assisting with fundraising events. There can be many entry points for political engagement at the local level – through elected councils, local associations, party branches or caucuses – which can create opportunities to be recognized by party leaders or decision makers.

## 2) Getting to know the party and its leadership

Once a woman has successfully become a member of a political party, it is very important for her to get to know how her party operates. This may mean acquainting herself with the official rules and procedures regarding how parties are organized; how candidates are recruited and selected; how members are promoted; how leadership is nominated, appointed and/or elected; and how decisions are taken. Or it may mean getting to know the “informal” rules of the game, in terms of how political deals are made in practice. Either way, for women planning their political careers, increasing their knowledge about how their parties function is an essential first step. This section presents strategies to enhance this knowledge.

### → Learning about the party and how it operates

To advance her political career – whether a woman wishes to be a campaign manager, a political adviser, a candidate or a party leader – she needs to get to know how several important **party procedures and processes** operate. These include:

- ✓ How party members are **recruited**;
- ✓ How **decisions and policies are made** (and by whom);
- ✓ How candidates are **nominated** or selected;
- ✓ How members are **promoted**;
- ✓ How party resources (funds, access to property and airtime) are **allocated**; and
- ✓ How parties liaise with the **media**.

The checklist found in Annex 2 can be a useful starting point for assessing and recording what is known about the above processes. The sources for research can include official party documents, such as political party statutes and constitutions; party regulations, including rules of procedure, by-laws and/or codes of conduct; party policies and strategies, such as work plans, annual reports or policies on non-discrimination; the political and electoral platform of the party; campaign documents, including party slogans, media articles and campaign messages; and other documents, such as the various speeches of party leaders and candidates. These documents can help women better understand how the party operates both formally and informally. Alternatively, women may wish to engage in a **gender audit** or assessment along the

165 Brian Kenety, “Billionaire’s new party ANO 2011 in recruitment drive”, Checposition.com, 29 May 2012, <<http://www.ceskapozice.cz/en/news/politics-policy/billionaire%E2%80%99s-new-party-ano-2011-recruitment-drive>>.

lines of the activity described in Chapter 3, to determine how the party functions and whether any of its policies, procedures or processes directly or indirectly discriminate against women.

Once knowledge is gathered about party procedures in particular, women are in a better position to lobby for greater transparency, fairness and equity in how these procedures are implemented. For example, women can advocate for the inclusion of recruitment or promotion criteria in the legal documents of the party. If such procedures are not written down, women can lobby for the development of legal documents for the party and for their formalization in writing. Likewise, women can also advocate for the adoption of equity and/or gender equality as a principle governing key party procedures, as well as for the use of gender-sensitive language in all official and unofficial party documents.

### → Identifying how the party leadership and the paths to promotion operate

Getting to know the **party leadership** and the rules guiding its work are equally important. These rules, both formal and informal, written and customary, govern how leaders take decisions regarding political party strategic goals, human resource management, recruitment, promotion, selection of candidates and electoral platforms. Such rules also inform how parties co-operate with the media, and how they interact with other political entities.

International standards and good practice emphasize that men and women have the right to equal opportunities for political advancement in their parties and the right to participate in party decision-making at all levels. Therefore, whether a woman wishes to be selected as a candidate or advance her career within the party, it is important to get to know the party's **promotion process**. Information to collect may include:

- ✓ What are the different decision-making positions available? Are these elected or nominated?
- ✓ When and how often do such positions become available? Are there specified periods when positions will open up?
- ✓ Whether appointed or elected, what are the criteria for selection? Are these written down?
- ✓ Are there any measures in place to ensure equal opportunities for men and women to be promoted?
- ✓ Who makes the decisions regarding promotion and how?
- ✓ When do promotion processes take place – on a regular basis, during the party congress or conventions or when required?
- ✓ What is the procedure for participating in the party congress? Are there any measures or targets in place to ensure women attend and enjoy voting privileges?
- ✓ What are the current and future openings in terms of positions within the party?

Good practices in internal party democracy highlight that principles of transparency, fairness and equity should apply not only to procedures of candidate recruitment and nomination, but should also apply to processes of promotion within parties. In the five pilot countries, a majority of both men and women perceived the processes of party promotion to be fair and transparent. However, in terms of fairness and transparency, women gave their parties lower scores than their male colleagues. It is important to note that this survey was conducted among women (and men) that can already be deemed politically successful (e.g., serve as elected parliamentarians) in transition countries. Nonetheless, the gap between the responses of men and women indicates that, even among politically-successful women, there is a perception that party recruitment and promotion processes benefit men more than women.

**Table 4.5: Perception of fairness and transparency of promotion process**

	% Women	% Men	Gender gap (% difference)
Fairness of promotion process within party (% 'Very' or 'quite' fair)	85	96	-11
Transparency of promotion process within party (% 'Very' or 'quite' clear)	77	95	-18

Source: OSCE/ODIHR Women in Political Parties Survey 2012.

Furthermore, in the five pilot countries, more women than men indicated that “good relations with the party leadership” is critical to promotion within the party and that gender mattered in this respect. However, both women and men found that “continuous work and dedication to the party” is even more important.

**Table 4.6: Perceptions of what helps to be promoted within the party**

	% Women	% Men	Gender gap (% difference)
Education	81	59	+22
Continuous work and dedication to the party	81	73	+8
Standing in the community	70	67	+3
Length of time as a party member	54	44	+10
Good relations with the party leadership	50	33	+17
Monetary donations	50	50	0
Gender	29	6	+23
Family links to the party leadership	13	10	+3

Source: OSCE/ODIHR Women in Political Parties Survey 2012.

### → Getting to know more about the women (and men) in the party

As a female party member, it is important to know about the **other female (and male) members of a party** – at what level they are active, what positions they occupy and what skills they possess. While fellow party members may be ideological or political allies to a certain extent, they are also a woman’s potential competition for party positions, particularly decision-making positions and candidacies for public office. Women may wish to start by mapping the other female (and male) members of their party and at what level they are active, in order to identify their potential allies or competitors.

The information to collect includes the level at which women are active (local, regional or national party branches), what decision-making positions they hold (for example, members of party executive committees or boards, members of the delegation to the party congress, campaign management position and/or leaders of party bodies such as factions, groups or women’s sections) and what elected positions they hold (local or city councillors, mayors or MPs). What are the chances that these women will seek re-appointment or re-election when party posi-

tions and party candidatures open up? What level of name recognition do they enjoy within the party, among party leaders and within constituencies? Lastly, it is important to build knowledge of other women's educational and professional qualifications, skills and expertise.

This information can be used to build coalitions, networks and solidarity among women or, for example, to establish internal party women's wings or women's caucuses. Likewise, other women may turn out to be allies in advancing positions on certain issues within parties, assisting women in obtaining a decision-making position or supporting other women to run for political office.

**Table 4.7: What is known about the women in the party?**

How many party members are women?
What is the breakdown of women members at local, regional and national levels?
How many women are presidents of local party branches?
How many party activists are women?
What is the percentage of women elected as councillors?
How many women mayors does the party have?
How many women in the party are elected MPs?
What is the percentage of women leading city party organizations?
Does the party have a woman minister?
How many women are members of the party's main decision-making bodies?
How many women are members of the party's executive body at national level?
How many women in the party are nationally visible politicians?
How many women attend party congresses?
How many women attending party congresses hold voting rights?
List the seven most important positions in the party:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
Which ones are held by men and which by women?
What is known about women members as individuals: how old are they; how educated; are they employed, self-employed, unemployed; do they need social assistance? In what fields are they experts?
What is the share of women among the party voters?

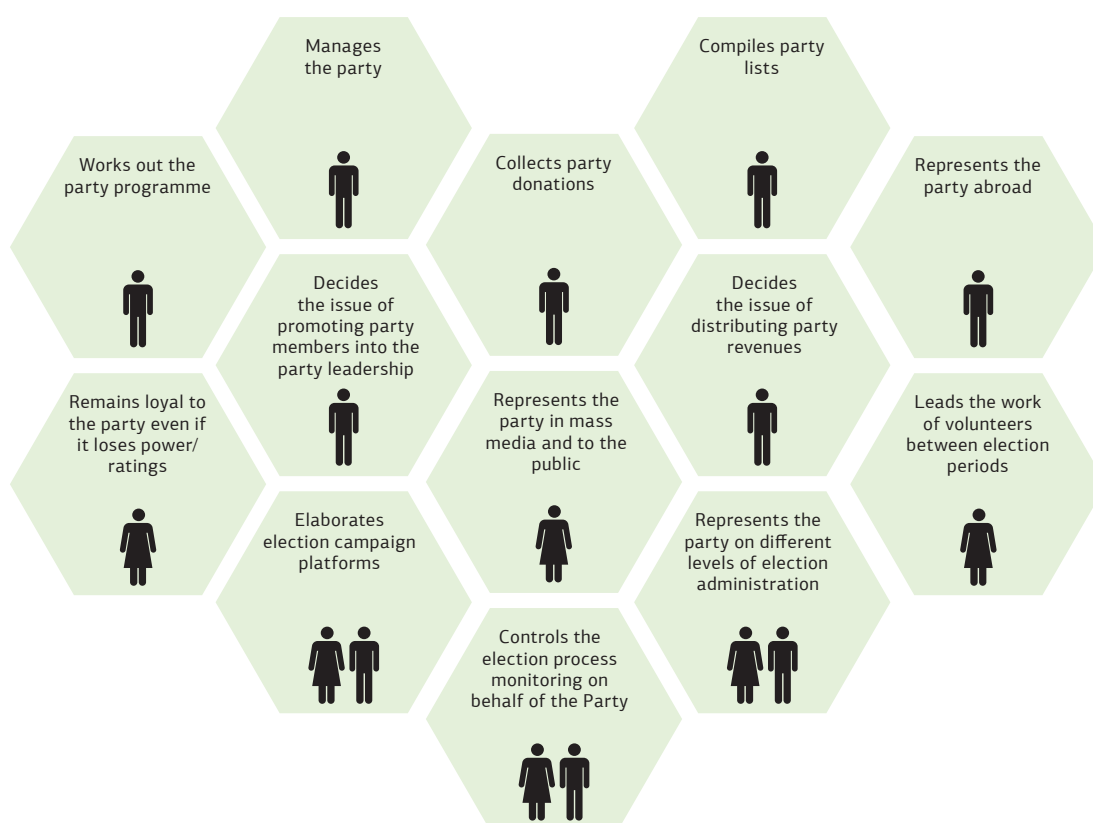
Source: Adapted from materials developed by Sonja Lokar for this handbook.

### → Identifying the positions women (and men) tend to occupy within parties

After determining how many women (and men) are active in the party at different levels, it can be useful to identify what kinds of positions women and men tend to hold and why. In Georgia, for example, experts mapped the roles that women and men play within parties.<sup>166</sup> The study found that men tend to hold the decision-making positions, especially those relating to resources, party management and platform development. Women, on the other hand, usually hold the position of party spokesperson, but at the national level only; men tend to represent the party internationally. Women are also most likely to be engaged at the grassroots level, organizing and/or working as volunteers, and, incidentally, tend to be more loyal to the party even when the party loses.

Women – possibly with the help of official party women’s wings – should consider undertaking a similar mapping, to determine what kinds of positions men and women tend to hold within the party. This knowledge can be helpful in developing a more strategic approach to the advancement of a woman’s career, but may also be useful in shedding light on how the **gendered division of labour** is re-constructed in political party hierarchies. This process will also shed light on the range of party positions available, current and future openings, as well as whether there is a gender bias evident in the distribution of party posts.

**Figure 4.8: Political Party Positions According to Sex in Georgia**



Source: Tamar Bagratia, Medea Badashvili, David Jijelava and Irakli Khmaladze, “Developing intra-party democracy from a gender perspective”, in *Intra-party democracy and local governance* (Tbilisi: NIMD Georgia, 2012).

<sup>166</sup> Tamar Bagratia, Medea Badashvili, David Jijelava and Irakli Khmaladze, “Developing intra-party democracy from a gender perspective”, in *Intra-party democracy and local governance* (Tbilisi: NIMD Georgia, 2012), p. 13.

### 3) Planning a political career

The previous section focused on the basic information that can help women get to know how their party operates, both formally and informally. This section looks at how to apply this knowledge in order to better plan a political career. In many training materials and handbooks, emphasis is usually placed on the actual process of political and electoral campaigning – the barriers women face in accessing resources and building name recognition, as well as the techniques women can apply in order to address these obstacles. Developing political campaign skills is, of course, essential if more women are to run – and run successfully – for public office.

However, too often, not enough attention is placed on political *planning*. A political career does not just happen once a woman decides to become, or is selected to be, a candidate. Women who plan carefully what they want and how they will get it are most likely to be successful in advancing their political career in the long-run. Women should think of the planning period as a process of **intelligence gathering** about the electoral and political system in which they are operating, and about the likely competition they might face from both men and women. This information can be used to inform a woman's political career plan in the short – and long-term, and as such, it will help women stay one step ahead of their competition. Accordingly, this section looks at some of the key factors women should consider when planning their career advancement within political parties and/or in preparation to run for public office.

#### → Getting to know the political positions available, and when they will become available

From the start, it is important to remember that a successful political career does not only mean getting elected to public office. There are a number of **positions** within parties, at different levels, where women can develop and demonstrate their political leadership skills. Such positions may include:

- ✓ Candidate
- ✓ Candidate-Selection/Nomination Board Member
- ✓ Campaign Manager
- ✓ Chair/Deputy Chair/Member of a Women's Section
- ✓ Donor Relations or Fundraising Officer
- ✓ External Relations Officer/International Officer
- ✓ General Secretary
- ✓ Leader of Youth Organization or Wing
- ✓ Member of Party Congress
- ✓ Party Spokesperson/Communications Officer
- ✓ Party Leader of national party branch
- ✓ Party Leader of local/regional branch
- ✓ Policy/Political Adviser or Strategist
- ✓ Treasurer

The electoral and political system in place will often inform the timing of political advancement. In certain systems, party positions will become available with greater frequency than in other systems. For example, in mature and stable party systems, where incumbents usually dominate electoral campaigns, party positions will open up at specific points during the electoral cycle, and only when an incumbent decides not to run. In fragmented party systems with many new parties appearing on the political spectrum, openings may become available more often, especially at the local level, as the force of incumbency is weakened.

Women interested in running should try to find out more about the selection criteria and desired qualifications for the positions they are interested in, as well as if and when such positions may become available. Women can use the mapping of women in party positions as a basis for identifying current and future openings (see Table 4.7 and Figure 4.8 above). Alternatively, it may be discovered that there is no selection criteria for these positions, and that decisions regarding who will occupy specific posts are taken spontaneously by party leaders, without consulting other party members. One concrete action women can take is to challenge this ad hoc, non-transparent approach. Or, as noted in the previous section, it may be discovered that certain functions have always been occupied by men, or are considered to be best suited for men. Often, such positions will be those associated with taking strategic decisions, managing financial resources or representing the party nationally, internationally and in the media.

Women can consider challenging this practice as well. History offers plenty of examples of women who call into question traditional divisions of labour within parties. For example, Angela Merkel<sup>167</sup> became the first female leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party, and subsequently the first female Chancellor of Germany, and is now considered one of the most powerful woman in the world.<sup>168</sup> During her career, Merkel not only challenged the roles women usually played within political parties, but also actively confronted party leaders on dishonest party practices.<sup>169</sup>

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167 "Angela Merkel", Wikipedia, in German, English and Russian, <[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela\\_Merkel](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Merkel)>.

168 "The 100 women who run the world. The World's 100 most powerful women" 2012, <<http://www.forbes.com/power-women/>>.

169 "Меркель, Ангела", Wikipedia, <<http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/>>; Gerd Langguth, "Germany's Schreiber Affair: The Scandal that Helped Merkel Become Chancellor", <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/germany-s-schreiber-affair-the-scandal-that-helped-merkel-become-chancellor-a-640938.html>>; "The scandal that rocked the government of Helmut Kohl", 2010, <<http://www.dw.de/the-scandal-that-rocked-the-government-of-helmut-kohl/a-5137950-1>>.



**Box 4.9: The Rise of Angela Merkel**

**1954:** Born in Hamburg.

**1989:** Enters politics in the wake of the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe; briefly serves as the deputy spokesperson for Lothar de Maizière's democratically-elected East German government prior to German reunification.

**1990:** Elected into Bundestag, representing the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

**1991:** Becomes the Federal Minister for Women and Youth in Helmut Kohl's fourth cabinet.

**1994:** Becomes the Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety in Helmut Kohl's fifth cabinet.

**1998:** The worst electoral outcome for CDU since 1949. From ruling party, CDU becomes an opposition party. Wolfgang Schäuble is elected the new chairperson of the CDU; Angela Merkel becomes Secretary – General of CDU. Helmut Kohl is elected the honorary party chairperson.

**1999:** Successful electoral outcome for CDU in the local elections.

**1999:** Scandal erupts regarding allegations of illegal financing of the party, bypassing the law on political

parties, which forbids parties to accept anonymous donations. Kohl refuses to provide the names of the donors and disclose the amounts received. Angela Merkel writes an open letter, published in the nationwide *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in which she criticizes Helmut Kohl for bypassing the law and calls on the party to change the "old guard".

**2000:** The party's ruling body requests Kohl resign unless he discloses the names of the donors and the amounts contributed. Kohl resigns from the post of honorary chairperson. Schäuble provides contradictory information on the party's finances, and is forced to resign as well, leaving the party without a leader for several weeks. As Secretary-General of CDU, Angela Merkel takes part in the scheduled regional conferences of the party branches around Germany. Enjoying a clean reputation and associated with the powerful letter published in the newspaper, she manages to consolidate the party forces and is elected the new party chairperson, the first woman elected to this post.

**2005:** Merkel elected Chancellor of Germany, becoming the first woman to hold this position.

Sources: "Angela Merkel", Wikipedia, in German, English and Russian, <[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela\\_Merkel](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Merkel)>; Gerd Langguth, "Germany's Schreiber Affair: The Scandal that Helped Merkel Become Chancellor", <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/germany-s-schreiber-affair-the-scandal-that-helped-merkel-become-chancellor-a-640938.html>>; "The scandal that rocked the government of Helmut Kohl", 2010, <<http://www.dw.de/the-scandal-that-rocked-the-government-of-helmut-kohl/a-5137950-1>>.

### → Planning advancement to decision-making positions within the party

To plan her political advancement, it is critical that a woman knows what positions are available, when they will become available and the required qualifications of the position she desires. Executing a career plan will then require taking a series of strategic steps. The National Federation of Social Democratic Women in Sweden, the women's wing of the Social Democratic Party, produced a leaflet entitled the "Power Booklet",<sup>170</sup> serving as a guide to women in **gaining power in a political party**. This booklet, addressed to female party members, summarizes several key steps to achieve this goal:

- 1) Learn the rules of the game;
- 2) Get women to top the lists;
- 3) Volunteer as a member of the nomination committee;
- 4) Take over as chair of the nomination committee;
- 5) Launch women candidates; and
- 6) Take over within the party.

As noted, the first step is to get to know how positions are allocated within the party – both formally and informally (the "rules of the game"). Next, it is important that women put themselves forward (or be nominated by supporters) as candidates for specific posts, so that party

170 "Power booklet", Swedish Social Democratic Party, S-Kvinnor Sveavägen, Stockholm, 1995.

leaders are aware that women are interested in the positions. The third strategy is based on the recognition that women are often under-represented in party decision-making structures. Supporting the nomination of women party members to decision-making positions, such as on selection boards, can facilitate other women's promotion paths. The fourth step calls on women to aim for leadership positions within the party hierarchy, such as the chair of nomination or selection boards. Once women and their supporters occupy decision-making positions within the party, women can open the way for other women to be promoted, either as candidates (the fifth strategy) or as party decision makers and leaders (the sixth strategy).

Women party members and activists could consider making a similar pamphlet that reflects the particular political context of the country in which the party is operating. The pamphlet could identify the current opportunities within the party for advancement and provide concrete guidance on how to obtain these positions, updating the booklet on a regular basis or as needed. Individual women interested in key positions could also consider whether she should build alliances with any key party members or activists (either men or women), in order to increase her chances of promotion.

### → Defining a woman candidate's "added value" to the party

The argument is often made that women have limited contributions to make to politics, or that their skills and competences are not appropriate. Women's ideas are often left unsaid or unheard, even when women are present during discussions and decision-making processes. To address this challenge, it is important that women know what **contributions** they can make to the party and what the party will gain from their political advancement. Then women must ensure that these contributions are made known and visible to other party members, decision makers and, especially, the party leadership.

The first step in defining a woman's added value is determining what it is. One useful strategy consists of conducting a SWOT analysis to identify political **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**, as noted in Box 4.10. It is important to make this a targeted analysis. This is not a general review of a woman and her capacities, but a detailed assessment of what makes her a valuable political actor to her party and in what areas she may wish to improve.

Women should consider framing their SWOT analysis in reference to the criteria party selectors and leaders look for when identifying potential party candidates, if these are known. As described in Chapter 3, the process of candidate selection varies from country to country, and from party to party. Therefore, women need to learn what qualities, skills and qualifications their party leadership deems important for a candidate or a party decision maker to possess.

Regardless of the criteria that may be included in party statutes for candidate recruitment and selection, it is likely that party leaders will identify and support candidates that they believe will help the party maximize its electoral performance; in other words, candidates that will help the party win. In this case, the party may value *qualities*, such as loyalty and political experience; *capacities*, such as the ability to access funds or to make contact with opinion makers and societal power brokers; or *possessions*, for example, wealth, social standing or connections.

Therefore, before attempting to match qualifications and skill sets to the qualities the party is looking for, women must first get to know what the official and unofficial criteria for recruitment and selection are. It may be that women will need to initiate a lobbying process to ensure such criteria are clearly written into party documents, are themselves fair and equitable and are applied during recruitment and selection processes. In the end, the selection criteria may be a mix of different qualities, skills and attributes. The important point, however, is to ensure that no criterion directly or indirectly discriminates against women, and that the criteria are made known to both women

and men members aiming to advance their political careers. Box 4.10 below gives a fictionalized account of a SWOT analysis undertaken by a woman member interested in political advancement.

#### Box 4.10: Applying the SWOT Analysis

**Strengths:** Determine what you bring to the party in terms of your skills, qualifications and hobbies. How can these benefit the party?

- *Kataryna is a paediatrician by profession. She is a member of two professional paediatrician associations (one national and one international) and serves as the treasurer for a volunteer association that supports at-risk youth by organizing local sports events. She enjoys basketball, and has acted as basketball coach for the at-risk youth association for the last 12 years. She is interested in becoming more active in local party politics.*
- **How should Kataryna present herself to political parties?**
  - » Emphasize her **qualities**: loyalty and dedication to the community, the volunteer association and her profession;
  - » Highlight her **capacities**: budgeting and fundraising (treasurer of volunteer association), education (professional qualifications and skills), community outreach and networking (active in professional and volunteer associations; can connect with youth demographic); and
  - » Note her **possessions**: name recognition (well-regarded in the community, including youth).

**Weaknesses:** What are your weaknesses? How can you present these as strengths, or what can you do to address these weaknesses?

- *Kataryna does not have political experience per se. She is quite busy given her ongoing engagements.*

- **How to present these weaknesses as strengths?**

*Kataryna has developed transferable skills as a result of her professional career and her volunteer work that are applicable to politics, including fundraising, budgeting, community outreach and networking skills. She is eager to use her existing professional and personal networks to advance her political career and that of the party.*

**Opportunities:** What are the opportunities offered by your party – for example, unoccupied decision-making positions, upcoming elections where additional expertise may be needed or capacity-building training offered by the party or externally – that you can exploit to build your skill set?

- *The local party branch that Kataryna is interested in joining is looking for someone with budgeting skills that can assist the party in bolstering its coffers. The party organizes regular networking events that feature well-known political speakers to share experiences, good practices and lessons learned; many of Kataryna's contacts would be excellent panellists for these events.*

**Threats:** What or who can threaten your advancement? Think in terms of political developments, your competition or opponents to women's political advancement within the party.

- *Some party members are resistant to women's political empowerment and do not want women occupying positions of power or decision-making. The party experienced a recent scandal, when one of its male members criticized a female members using offensive and degrading language. Some of Kataryna's other activities may suffer if she joins the party.*

In 2005, the United Kingdom Conservative Party identified six core competencies they looked for in a candidate:

- ✓ Communication skills (listening as well as speech making);
- ✓ Intellectual skills (taking on board/distilling complex information);
- ✓ Relating to (different kinds of) people;
- ✓ Leadership and motivation (enthusing, supporting, enabling);
- ✓ Resilience and drive (avoiding arrogance); and
- ✓ Conviction (to conservative ideas and commitment to public service).<sup>171</sup>

Defining added value in terms of what the party is looking for in a potential candidate, leader or decision maker will make a woman's candidacy more attractive to party leaders. This assumes, of course, that the party makes such criteria known. If it does not, it is even more important that women deploy alternative strategies, such as arranging personal meetings with

<sup>171</sup> Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* (London: Hansard Society, 2005), p. 32.

party decisions makers, identifying the skills and backgrounds of previous party candidates and/or analysing existing party documents, in order to get a better idea of what party leadership looks for.

### → Mobilizing and expand support networks

Success in politics depends to a great degree on the way political parties function in the country in question and upon the skills and experience politicians bring to the table. However, if women do not have **support networks** in place, and particularly the support of their closest family members, it will be very difficult to advance a political career. Even if women do succeed in reaching higher political echelons, the experience will most likely not be a very rewarding one. Such networks can help women balance competing priorities and learn the political ropes, and can provide guidance and support to a woman's candidacy.

In planning career advancement, women should pay special attention to utilizing existing and potential resources, but also in cultivating network support. Support networks can be envisaged in three ways:

- ✓ **Existing personal networks:** These include family (children, spouses, parents, siblings, extended family), friends and social networks and neighbours;
- ✓ **Professional networks:** These include professional associations (workplace, but also associations bringing together professionals in a given sphere of work), charities, local community bodies, student networks or parent-teacher associations. These can also include ideological or religious networks reflecting a woman's values and principles. Such networks can include people with whom women do business, the type of individuals who might become potential campaign donors. Lastly, political mentors can be part of professional networks, and can assist women interested in running for elected office or advancing within a party; and
- ✓ **Potential networks:** These include local business councils, local governance bodies, volunteer or charity associations, party-affiliated groups, professional associations, media and communications groups or value-based associations that reflect a woman's own values and beliefs – organizations that may help bring women into contact with potential donors and/or campaign supporters.

### → Balancing professional and personal life

Support networks can also help both women and men balance their professional and personal life; it is essential that both men and women consider the impact of a political career on their personal life. Politics is an all-consuming profession, requiring travel and long hours. Both men and women need to keep this in mind when embarking on political careers. Balancing professional and personal life is a process that is usually listed last in training and other resource materials aimed at building political and political campaigning skills. However, this issue, like enjoying the support of family and friends, can make all the difference in how and whether a woman's political career advances and how rewarding the experience will be.

Women and men need to be aware of the realities they may face at different stages of life and at different stages in their political careers. Major events, such as enrolling in higher education, getting married, having a family, supporting parents, helping children through college, changing jobs and re-locating from one city to another, are all processes that many men and women experience at some point in their lives. Assessing what a woman's priorities are and what family and friends may expect of her at different stages will help a woman more realistically assess how to plan and execute her political advancement.

**Box 4.11:**  
**2012 ODIHR Survey Says**

Getting support from family and friends is the easiest issue to address when deciding to or being chosen to run for political office, both women and men say.

**Importantly, however, while no man reported balancing family and professional life as a difficulty, a number of women identified this as a key challenge when pursuing a political career.**

**Box 4.12:**  
**The Challenge of Balance:  
 Women in French Local Elections**

In the run-up to the French local elections in 2008, many incumbent female councillors decided not to stand for re-election, stressing difficulties in balancing their professional and family lives with political assignments.

*Source: European Commission, Women in European Politics, Time for Action, 2009.*

Furthermore, due to the traditional gender-based division of labour that persists in many OSCE participating States, it can be argued that it is more difficult for women than for men to achieve this balance. Women are expected to fulfil many prescribed roles. In every country, no matter how progressive, women are the primary caretakers of home and children. This often constitutes a barrier to women's pursuit of public office. Balancing professional careers with a personal lives needs to be central to political career planning for women interested in advancing within political parties.

Likewise, stereotypes continue to be applied to women who do not choose to get married and/or have a family, or who seek alternative life paths. In the political sphere, women can be denigrated for their life choices or the situations in which they find themselves (by choice or otherwise), particularly when life choices or situations run counter to traditional values and paths. Criticism and judgments may be passed, for example, when a woman chooses not to or cannot have children, bringing into question her feminine attributes and her values. It is important that women are prepared for such negative feedback, whether or not they choose to address any such criticisms or judgments.

In Poland, sexist and degrading comments made by male politicians to their female colleagues are recorded on an Internet site, including the name of the politician, a photo, the text of their remarks and the date.<sup>172</sup> Women who find themselves attacked on the basis of their career decisions or life choices could consider a similar strategy of “naming and shaming” politicians who make a habit of degrading individual women in politics, to raise public awareness and to send the message that such language and behaviour should not be tolerated in politics or society at large.

#### 4) Mastering political resource management

Once a career plan has been developed, the next step is to put it into action. This section looks in more detail at the resources needed in order to execute the action plan for a woman's political career. “Resources” refer not only to finances, but also to access to other party resources, such as human capital and expertise, party property and media sources.

<sup>172</sup> See (in Polish only): <<http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/prasa/seksistowskie-zarciki-politykow/2vk4t>>.

## → Engaging in financial planning

Just as parties should develop a plan to strengthen the fairness and transparency of resource allocation, as discussed in Chapter 3, female party members must also take the initiative to engage in **financial planning**:

- Women politicians need access to donor networks, and should, therefore, create plans or strategies for building such connections. Women can request copies of donor databases or lists of party benefactors or, if these are not written down, informally request these from party leaders or trusted colleagues with access to party decision makers.
- Women need to assess and plan access to campaign funds. Access to early money at the beginning of a campaign is crucial, so that when others are fundraising, women are already campaigning and communicating with voters rather than with donors.
- Women must use personal resources wisely. Depending on the political system, politics can be either a well-paid profession or an expensive personal endeavour. Women should therefore evaluate in advance how much they can afford to spend and how much they are willing to spend on their political careers.

Regardless of the electoral system in place and the legal regulations governing the allocation of state or public funding to political parties, women need resources to fund different phases and activities in their political careers. Knowing what these expenses might be, and planning appropriately, will provide women with important budgeting and resources management skills that will be critical during key moments in their political careers, particularly when running for public office. Expenses might include, for example:

### Box 4.13: The Importance of Cash

*"Money is the mother's milk of politics."*

Jesse Marvin Unruh, prominent United States Democratic politician and the California State Treasurer

- 1) **Pre-selection process and primaries:** Even before the nomination and selection process begins, most hopeful candidates will already have begun voter-outreach activities aimed at increasing name recognition, requiring resources for travel, materials and events. In addition, in some electoral systems, such as the United States, elections are preceded by primaries, requiring additional expenses by candidates; this is why "early money" is considered such a critical factor to the success of a candidate.
- 2) **Selection process interview and nomination costs:** In some OSCE participating States, applicants seeking to run for a parliamentary seat initially are faced with a number of selection-related costs. These could include travel to successive meetings in different constituencies, clothes for interviews, overnight or weekend accommodation and/or attending political meetings and party conferences, which are usually paid for personally. Although some level of compensation may come from parties, initial interview costs have sometimes proven sufficient to deter some women from continuing in the process.<sup>173</sup>
- 3) **Pre-campaigning activities:** Once selected, the next phase that requires spending is the pre-campaign period. During this period, costs will be associated with increasing name recognition. This may include conducting local public opinion polls, recruiting campaign staff, travelling to meetings or engaging in social events to influence decision makers and opinion shapers.

<sup>173</sup> Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski, *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 145.



- 4) Campaigning:** Campaign costs will include all resources required to keep a campaign in the public eye, such as costs to purchase advertising space (television, print, internet or radio), develop campaign materials and a personalized website, conduct direct mailing and telemarketing activities and cover travel costs within constituencies or nationwide (depending on the electoral race), as well as hotel and food costs during travel and public campaign events (venue, catering and materials).
- 5) Permanent political communication:** A political career does not begin or end with elections alone. To succeed in politics requires constant communication with supporters and outreach to secure new supporters. Such communication necessitates funds to support regular travel, awareness-raising, upkeep of an office and staff, as well as outreach to the electorate and donors.

It is worth keeping in mind that the higher the position in a structure of political power, the stronger and more competitive the electoral contest and, consequently, the greater the importance of financial resources. One should also keep in mind that the cost of campaigning depends on the electoral system, the size of the electoral district and the length of the campaign period.

#### → Identifying the party's financial resources and how to access them

In the five pilot countries, and in many other OSCE participating States, both men and women find that the most difficult challenge to being nominated and elected is raising campaign funds. According to the 2012 ODIHR Survey, 63 per cent of women and 67 per cent of men indicated that “raising campaign funds” was the most difficult step in getting nominated as a candidate.

**Box 4.14:**  
**2012 ODIHR Survey Says:**

In all five pilot countries, political actors – both men and women – indicated “lack of access to resources” as the number one challenge confronting women wishing to run for public office in their country.

The gender wealth gap can put women at a distinct financial disadvantage, making them particularly reluctant to start a political career because of the financial burden it is perceived to involve.<sup>174</sup> Research has shown that the gender wealth gap and women's limited access to adequate funds constrains their ability to run for political office or advance their political careers in other ways. In addition, women often lack access to corporate and business networks, further compromising their ability to raise money for political campaigning. Likewise, many women are excluded from existing fundraising mechanisms within political parties and are not close to party fundraisers and their donor networks. All of these factors result in women lacking adequate skills and experience to fundraise, making them reluctant to aggressively ask for money.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>174</sup> “Democracy and the Challenge of Change. A Guide to Increasing Women's Political Participation”, Washington: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), 2010, <[http://www.ndi.org/Democracy\\_and\\_the\\_Challenge\\_of\\_Change](http://www.ndi.org/Democracy_and_the_Challenge_of_Change)>.

<sup>175</sup> *iKNOWpolitics*, Summary of E-Discussion: Forum on Financing Women in Politics, October 2008, <<http://dev.iknowpolitics.org/files/E-disc%20Forum%20on%20Financing%20Women%20in%20Politics%20EN.pdf>>.



In addition, the majority of the top positions in business are also held by men.<sup>176</sup> As a consequence, men are more likely to become donors to campaigns and can thereby more easily support candidates who represent their views in politics – candidates who often look like themselves. Men surpass women in this regard, with income being the key factor determining who gives to whom and how much is given, both in numbers of donors and amounts of donations.

As noted in Chapter 3, political parties possess a pool of financial resources, coming from private and public sources, in addition to party membership fees and dues. The majority of political parties in OSCE participating States receive substantial public funds, often amounting to as much as 80 to 90 per cent of party budgets. International good practice indicates that political parties should ensure that, internally, both women and men have equal access to party resources – including funds for campaigning and access to party property and campaign materials.<sup>177</sup>

To determine whether parties are allocating resources in line with international standards and good practices, women should become more knowledgeable about:

- ✓ What public resources parties are eligible to receive and how much the party receives;
- ✓ What other sources of party financing there are (including membership dues, regular private donations and campaign donations);
- ✓ What the internal rules of procedure for allocating funds are, and whether these are written in the party statutes, in other key party documents or are not governed by formal rules;
- ✓ Who controls the allocation of these funds; and
- ✓ What activities party funds are financing.

Armed with this information, female party members will be in a better position to lobby for more equitable distribution of party funds, particularly if funds are currently being used to finance activities that predominantly benefit male party members or the campaigning activities of male party members. However, it is also important to remember that parties are not only financed through state funds, but also from private funds, including individual donors and companies. Accordingly, as noted above, it is important that women identify whether databases of party donors and benefactors exist, and how to gain access to these.

#### **Box 4.15: Helpful Guides in Dealing with the Media**

A number of organizations have developed handbooks, guides and other resources to support women candidates in working with the media. These include:

- **EMILY's List, *Thinking of Running for Office: A Guide for Democratic Women Candidates*, 2003:** <<http://emilyslist.org/sites/default/files/TORFO.pdf>>.
- ***She Should Run, Name it, Change it: A Candidate's Guide to Sexist Media Coverage*, 2012:** <<http://www.sheshouldrun.org/assets/documents/name-it-change-it-candidate-guide.pdf>>.
- **Women's Media Centre:** <<http://www.womensmediacenter.com/>>.
- **Political Parity, *Media Coverage of Women Candidates*:** <<http://www.politicalparity.org/research-inventory/media-coverage-of-women-candidates/>>.
- **UNDP and NDI, *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties*, 2011:** <<http://www.undp.mn/publications/Empowering-women-for-stronger-political-parties-eng.pdf>>.

<sup>176</sup> Stephanie Coontz, "The Myth of Male Decline", The New York Times, 2012, <[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/opinion/sunday/the-myth-of-male-decline.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/opinion/sunday/the-myth-of-male-decline.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)>; Catherine Rampell, "Women Earn Less Than Men, Especially at the Top", The New York Times, 2009, <<http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/16/the-gender-pay-gap-persists-especially-for-the-rich/>>; "Women on Boards report", Lords Select Committee, House of Commons, 2012, <<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/eu--internal-market-sub-committee-b/news/gender-balance-report-and-evidence/>>.

<sup>177</sup> See OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010, paras. 179–180.

### → Identifying the party's media and property resources, and how to access them

Political party resources include not only money, but also other valuable capital, such as media contacts; access to public and private media sources; access to free public airtime; access to databases of television, radio and print journalists; access to advertisers and public opinion makers; as well as access to and coverage of candidates through social media and new technologies (for some helpful guides, see Box 4.15). International good practice indicates that parties should operate democratically in the allocation of resources, including by ensuring that both women and men party members have equal access to media sources enjoyed by political parties.

The importance of media access and coverage depends, to a certain degree, on the type of electoral system in place. For example, in proportional representation systems, the party leadership will mostly likely shape all party contact with the media and the messages it wishes to send. Therefore, even in countries where a woman occupies the position of spokesperson, the message she will communicate is that of the party (and the party leadership), rather than that of individual candidates, unless there is a particular candidate the party wishes to promote. In general, women are usually much less visible in campaigns, but this is especially true in those run by political parties. It can thus be more difficult for women – who will often be challenging male incumbents – to utilize media and other public relations resources in ways that increase their name recognition and visibility amongst voters.

In majoritarian systems, in contrast, individual candidates will play a greater role in interacting with the media. Here, it is important for women to utilize all existing channels to present their messages, including news print, press releases, op-eds, news conferences, Twitter, blogs, Facebook and letters to the editor.

Regardless of the system in place, women should lobby their party for equitable allocation of party resources, including access to:

- ✓ Party property for campaigning or holding campaign events;
- ✓ Party property for mobilizing volunteers, assembling campaign materials or fundraising;
- ✓ Party resources for financing campaign materials;
- ✓ Party leaders (for photo opportunities, attendance at campaign meetings);
- ✓ A party's database of media contacts at national and local levels;
- ✓ A portion of the free public airtime provided to political parties by the state;
- ✓ Public debates organized between party candidates nationally or locally; and
- ✓ Journalists covering party campaign events.

### 5) Planning victory: Getting elected or promoted

The previous sections looked in detail at the longer-term preparations women can and should engage in to successfully advance their political careers. This section explores what female party candidates can do to increase their chances of electoral success.

#### → Identifying the right moment to start political campaigning

Running for political office (or advancing within a party) requires time and planning. This handbook has included strategies that encourage women to take strategic, long-term approaches to their political advancement. Ideally, if parties plan their candidate recruitment and selection processes in a timely manner, party members interested in running for public

office will know their candidacy status well in advance. In a best case scenario, such candidates will enjoy at least a year or more to plan and launch their campaign.

However, not all political environments provide male and female candidates with the luxury of time. In many participating States in the OSCE region, including the pilot countries surveyed by ODIHR, potential candidates are approached very late or at the last minute; in cases, they are informed of their candidacy only a month before a scheduled election. Candidates may not even know their position on the party list and, hence, may not be sure of the true viability of their campaign. This last-minute, ad hoc approach can make it difficult for women (and men) to plan successful political campaigns.

In such environments, women may need to initiate campaigns within parties requesting that party leaders select candidates at least three months before the scheduled elections. Women should consider pursuing such initiatives well before scheduled elections – for example, one to two years before elections are due to take place – to give the party leadership time to consider the proposal before political campaigning begins in earnest.

At the same time, women can already begin implementing the strategies noted in the sections above, namely, getting to know how key party processes operate, mapping party competition, pinpointing political strengths and weaknesses, identifying existing party resources and building support networks.

### → **Determining the right constituency for launching a political campaign**

Success in a political race depends not only on whether voters choose a candidate over others, but whether the candidate has chosen the **right constituency** of voters (see Box 4.17 for tips on how to research a constituency). The EMILY's List guide for women candidates contains a number of questions a woman should ask in order to determine the best constituency in which to stand as a candidate. Useful questions include:

- ✓ Are your views consistent with those of the voters in the constituency?
- ✓ Is this an open seat or will you challenge an incumbent?
- ✓ If an incumbent, what are his or her vulnerabilities?
- ✓ Who are the likely opponents in the electoral race?
- ✓ What are your opponents' messages, and why are your messages/perspectives better?
- ✓ Do you have a natural base of voters, based on your identity, values or interests?
- ✓ What is your party's success rate in this constituency?
- ✓ Where are the high voter turnouts, and are you known there?

#### **Box 4.16: EMILY's List:**

##### **Guide for Democratic Women Candidates**

EMILY's List is an American NGO established to support the election of women to elected office.

The name **EMILY's List** is an acronym for "Early Money Is Like Yeast" (it "makes the dough rise"). The saying is a reference to a convention of political fundraising that receiving lots of donations early in a race is helpful in attracting other, later donors.

The *Guide for Democratic Women Candidates* produced by EMILY's List provides women candidates in majoritarian systems with a practical overview of the key steps to take once they have decided to run for political office:

1. **Getting started:** Raising money and assessing your candidacy.
2. **Determining the right race for you:** Assessing your readiness and choosing the right district.
3. **Raising the money:** Finding donors and funds for your campaign.
4. **Building your message:** Developing your political identity.
5. **Research:** Developing an evidence base for your views, as well as of your opponents' views.
6. **Putting together your campaign team:** Identify supporters to help you get elected.
7. **Voter Contact:** Reaching out to the voters you will need to secure your victory.

Source: EMILY's List, *Thinking of Running for Office: A guide for Democratic Women Candidates*, 2003.

**Box 4.17: Access to Voter Information**

Information about voting trends, such as voter turnout, incumbency rates, history of party success and voter demographics, can be critical to a woman candidate's success. Data can be collected from:

- Polls or surveys of voter preferences;
- Central election commissions (CEC);
- Local and regional branches of CECs
- Polling stations;
- National and local statistics offices;
- NGOs and research think tanks; and
- International organization reports (e.g., OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Reports).

- ✓ Are other electoral races being held at the same time (e.g., local and parliamentary elections), and could this affect voter turnout?
- ✓ What are the demographics of the district; do you have any ties with the demographic group?
- ✓ What is the political environment in the constituency, and do any current trends benefit you?
- ✓ Where will you get the votes to win the election?<sup>178</sup>

The power to choose which constituency a candidate will run in will most often lie with the party leadership. For this reason, the data and information a woman collects will be critical to influencing party leadership of the chances of her – and her party's – success against opponents. A woman can use this data to build convincing arguments as to why she would be successful in a given constituency. These arguments may secure a woman the constituency or district she wishes to contest in majoritarian systems, or may convince party leadership to place her higher on the party list in a given constituency in proportional representation systems. Learning

about the constituency in which a candidate will run will, in any case, yield important information about how an electoral campaign should be waged.

### ➔ Getting to know the formal and informal rules of fundraising

Electoral and party systems can influence to what extent a candidate is responsible for her own fundraising and how fundraising can be undertaken. Knowledge about **formal and informal rules of fundraising** is key to a successful political career. Knowing how much is needed, when to fundraise and for what and from whom to solicit funds are the secrets of politics in any regime.

Before approaching donors, it is important to first identify the rules of fundraising, both those set by electoral, political and campaign-related legislation, as well as those determined through internal party rules and procedures. External fundraising regulations may include provisions regarding registration and accounting rules, contribution and spending limits, timeframes and funding sources, reporting and disclosure, as well as sanctions for non-compliance. Likewise, internal party regulations may govern issues such as nomination fees, allocation of party funds for campaigning, campaigning fees and/or access to party donors.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>178</sup> EMILY's List, *Thinking of Running for Office: A Guide for Democratic Women Candidates*, 2003, <<http://emilyslist.org/>>.

<sup>179</sup> See OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010.

**Table 4.18: Fundraising Regulations, Rules and Procedures**

Formal Rules	Informal Rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the registration and accounting requirements?</li> <li>• Who is allowed to contribute and how much can donors contribute to a campaign (do permissible donors include individuals, citizens, legal entities)?</li> <li>• How much money can candidates donate to their campaign?</li> <li>• How much money can a candidate spend on his or her campaign?</li> <li>• When can candidates start and finish collecting/spending money on their campaign (e.g., the campaign period)?</li> <li>• How and when must candidates report and disclose campaign contributors and expenditure?</li> <li>• What are the sanctions for campaign finance violations?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the party's own resources allocated?</li> <li>• Is fundraising within the party centralized or decentralized?</li> <li>• Who is responsible for fundraising and allocation of party funds?</li> <li>• Are candidates required to pay a nomination fee?</li> <li>• Are candidates required to contribute to a national campaign fund?</li> <li>• Is the production of campaign materials subsidized?</li> <li>• Are there any internal spending limits or restrictions?</li> <li>• Are the party's donor lists accessible to individual candidates?</li> </ul>

Source: OSCE/ODIHR and CoE Venice Commission, *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, 2010

### → Identifying external and internal funding sources

As noted above, **funding for an individual campaign** can come from external donors or the party itself. As highlighted in Chapter 3, it may be that regulations governing the allocation of public funding require parties to earmark a portion of public funding to support women, as in Ireland, Finland or Italy. In addition, some parties have established specific funds to support women candidates in running for public office; these funds may be used to cover the costs of candidate registration, campaign travel or promotional materials. Alternatively, political party women's wings may establish special programmes to provide support to female candidates (see section 4.2.2 below).

More likely, however, the biggest source of campaign funds will be external private donors and a candidate's own funds. Therefore, a successful politician needs to understand who potential donors are and what will motivate them to support one politician over another. In general, donors can be classified within five "circles of benefits" (see Figure 4.19 below).<sup>180</sup>

These circles of benefits each reflect a different type of political donor, beginning with those closest to the candidate (a candidate's family and friends) and a candidate's immediate networks (community groups, business contacts, support networks and connections developed based on shared values), and ending with donors possessing power, influence or standing within society (powerful business owners, professional associations or special interest groups). Each circle will have different reasons to support a candidate. Accordingly, it is important that women get to know what will motivate a potential donor to support her politically and financially, in order to tap into different pools of campaign funding.

A woman should consider whether she has the ability to attract female donors specifically. As women are under-represented in managerial and leadership positions in companies, many female donors will have faced similar hurdles to achieving success in business as women do in

<sup>180</sup> *iKNOWPolitics*, Summary of E-Discussion: Forum on Financing Women in Politics, October 2008, p. 5, <<http://dev.iknowpolitics.org/files/E-disc%20Forum%20on%20Financing%20Women%20in%20Politics%20EN.pdf>>.

politics.<sup>181</sup> By demonstrating a commitment to gender equality and a potential to act as a role model for other women, a woman can tap into funding from female donors who share her concerns and realize the challenges confronting women candidates specifically.<sup>182</sup>

**Figure 4.19: The Five “Circles of Benefits”**



Once the formal and informal rules governing fundraising and potential funding donors, as well as their motivations and criteria for supporting politicians, are identified, women will be in better positions to engage in the actual process of fundraising. While this handbook does not go into detail about fundraising techniques, there are a number of valuable resources that provide concrete, step-by-step guidance for women candidates on this topic (see Box 4.20 for more details).

181 Currently women make up just 4.2 per cent of CEOs listed among Fortune’s top 1000 companies. “Women CEOs of the Fortune 1000”, *Catalyst* 1 January 2013, <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-ceos-fortune-1000>.

182 *iKNOWPolitics*, Summary of E-Discussion: Forum on Financing Women in Politics, October 2008, p. 5, <<http://dev.iknowpolitics.org/files/E-disc%20Forum%20on%20Financing%20Women%20in%20Politics%20EN.pdf>>.



### → Developing a political identity for the electorate: increasing name recognition

Some say that the only verification of success in public life is how many people know one's name and one's work.<sup>183</sup> **"Name recognition"** refers to the number of people who know of a given politician, regardless of the reason. It is considered one of the most important factors influencing the outcome of an election.

A 2011 study found that "individuals not only favor candidates with more familiar names, but also perceive candidates with more familiar names to be more viable. Name recognition matters in low-information races because people want to support likely winners."<sup>184</sup> When voters lack other information about a candidate – such as whether he or she is an incumbent or a challenger in a given race – they often rely on familiarity as the deciding factor in choosing whom to vote for. In other words, familiarity is used to make an "educated guess" in the absence of other data, forming the basis of decisions, inferences and judgments that voters make regarding a candidates' viability and suitability. In this way, name recognition serves as a proxy for other attributes of the candidate that may normally influence a voter's decision, such as political beliefs and values, spending habits, personal qualities, public image and/or performance.<sup>185</sup>

Successfully increasing name recognition among the electorate should be part of the process of developing a woman's political identity. If a woman is well-known in another sphere of public or community life – for example, in business, sports, the arts or the media – she will probably already enjoy name recognition among certain groups of voters. In this case, she must translate her achievements in a given field of expertise into political capital that will appeal to other sets of voters.

Alternatively, if a woman is not well-known in her community or in the district or constituency in which she wishes to run, it will be important to develop a political identity that encompasses her position on key policy areas; reflects her political, ideological and personal values; and/or highlights what she can do for her electorate. To develop a political identity, women should think about the values they wish to project and the political messages they wish to send. Developing

#### Box 4.20: Resources on Campaign Fundraising for Women Candidates

Many organizations have developed guides, handbooks and resources to support women in raising campaign funds. Some examples include:

1. **Global Fund for Women, Fundraising for Change: A Practical Guide for Women's Rights Organizations.** <<http://www.globalfundforwomen.org/storage/images/stories/downloads/Handbook2007.pdf>>.
2. **We Do, Women Candidates and Campaign Finance.** 2007. Available online: <[http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/Women/Election\\_Toolkit\\_for\\_Women\\_The\\_Candidates\\_Guide\\_to\\_Municipal\\_Elections\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/Women/Election_Toolkit_for_Women_The_Candidates_Guide_to_Municipal_Elections_EN.pdf)>.
3. **Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Election Toolkit for Women.** Available online: <[http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/Women/Election\\_Toolkit\\_for\\_Women\\_The\\_Candidates\\_Guide\\_to\\_Municipal\\_Elections\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/Women/Election_Toolkit_for_Women_The_Candidates_Guide_to_Municipal_Elections_EN.pdf)>.
4. **Political Parity, Political and Leadership Resources.** Available online: <<http://www.politicalparity.org/political-and-leadership-resources/>>.
5. **NDI, Campaign Fundraising.** Available Online: <[http://www.ndi.org/files/1925\\_gy\\_candidateskills\\_010104\\_251\\_308.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/1925_gy_candidateskills_010104_251_308.pdf)>.

Additionally, there are certain websites and portals that contain different resources for women candidates:

1. **EMILY's LIST:** <<http://emilyslist.org/>>.
2. **KNOW Politics:** <<http://iknowpolitics.org/en>>.
3. **International IDEA Political Finance Database:** <<http://www.idea.int/political-finance/>>.

183 Cindy Kam and Elizabeth Zechmeister, "Name Recognition and Candidate Support", Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University, April 2011, <<http://www.princeton.edu/csdp/events/Kamo4282011/Kamo4282011.pdf>>.

184 Ibid.

185 See, for example, Louis H. Abramowitz, *The United States, its people and leaders* (New York: Globe Book Co, 1975).



**Box 4.21:**  
**Increasing Political Name Recognition**

There are multiple ways candidates can increase their name recognition during the campaign, including through radio, television and print advertisements; media coverage of campaign events, including social media coverage; spotlight articles or clips on candidates; campaign materials such as yard signs, posters and leaflets; or campaign mementos, such as pens, pins or buttons, stickers, t-shirts, coffee mugs, mouse pads or other items.

and refining a political identity can be facilitated by considering the following questions:

- ✓ Why do you want to enter politics?
- ✓ Do you have a natural base of supporters in your community, based on your identity, values or interests?
- ✓ What are your views on your party's policy positions? Would these views be supported by members of your community?
- ✓ What are the pressing social, economic or political issues that are of greatest concern to you and the electorate, and how would you propose to address these?
- ✓ What are your positions on key policy or legislative initiatives currently under debate or reform?
- ✓ What message do you wish to send as a political actor – and how would you use a political platform to do so?
- ✓ What is your personal standing in your community?
- ✓ Are you viewed as a credible political actor or leader?<sup>186</sup>
- ✓ Where do you see yourself in ten years' time?

→ **Creating a campaign team**

After funding sources are identified and a political identity is developed, it is time to start recruiting supporters who can help women implement their campaigns. No single candidate is able to run a campaign entirely on her or his own. Creating a **campaign team**, regardless of its size and whether it is paid or voluntary, can help women implement organized and efficient political campaigns.

Candidates with limited financial resources will most likely rely on networks of volunteers and supporters (such as family, friends and professional colleagues), as well as on campaign managers (paid or voluntary), to organize political campaigns. The size of a campaign team may be determined by a number of other factors as well. These include the:

- **Electoral system:** In majoritarian electoral systems, where individuals run for constituency seats, it is often important to have a campaign team, particularly when party resources for campaigning are limited. In proportional representation systems with closed lists, on the other hand, it is the party that will run the campaign, decreasing the need for a large campaign team, while retaining the need for volunteers/supporters who can engage in voter outreach;
- **Size of constituency:** The bigger the constituency, the greater the number of supporters a candidate will need, particularly to engage in voter outreach activities, such as making telephone calls, engaging in door-to-door campaigning and organizing public relations events; and
- **Competitiveness of the race:** In a race where a woman candidate confronts an incumbent, or where the race is particularly competitive, she will need more support to beat her political competition. Once again, a campaign team will be needed to engage in voter outreach, fundraising and building a female candidate's name recognition.

<sup>186</sup> See EMILY's List, *Thinking of Running for Office: A Guide for Democratic Women Candidates*, 2003, <<http://emilyslist.org/>>.

The following section outlines the different types of positions that can make up an ideal campaign team (for a summary, see Box 4.22). Women can consider hiring or recruiting individuals to voluntarily fill any or all of these positions. As noted above, a campaign team is most relevant for women who are: 1) running as independent candidates; and/or 2) running competitive races in majoritarian electoral systems. In proportional representations systems with so called “closed list” or in particularly important races (e.g., senate, city mayor), the party might assume responsibility for supporting candidates. With this in mind, the following provides an ideal snapshot of a campaign team in a majoritarian electoral system, and is provided for information purposes, in order to get a better idea of the different dimensions of electoral campaigns.

A campaign team should be led by a **campaign manager**, who is there to provide strategic advice to the candidate and for communicating the candidate’s message, including by liaising with the media and by attending fundraising events. A **financial adviser or fundraiser** will help a candidate raise and manage the funds needed to run a campaign, including developing a budget, identifying donors, making fundraising calls, organizing fundraising events and following up as necessary.

A **legal adviser** is a candidate’s legal advocate, who will ensure that all campaign events and activities are run in accordance with current national legislation and rules. To effectively build an electoral message and political identity, and also publicize these messages through various media channels, a candidate may benefit from having a **media/press officer**. The media/press officer will act as a candidate’s spokesperson and can also help with issue research, polling and other types of research, particularly in the early stages of a campaign. A **field officer** can be recruited to facilitate contact between a candidate and his/her voters and oversee direct campaign activities, such as door-to-door canvassing, voter outreach and encouraging voter turnout. Candidates may also consider recruiting a **volunteer co-ordinator**, who will supervise all volunteers and volunteer activities, including volunteer recruitment and voter outreach. Lastly, a **logistics support officer/scheduler** will have the important job of managing a candidate’s schedule, and making sure a candidate shows up where he/she is supposed to on time.<sup>187</sup>

As noted, a woman may not be able to afford to hire many different staff members; in this case, the most important task is to concentrate on finding a qualified and experienced campaign manager. To fill other positions, a woman could mobilize support networks – both personal and professional – to identify those who may volunteer to assist her at different stages of the campaign. Alternatively, a party’s campaign funds could be used to support the costs of hiring campaign team members.

**Box 4.22:**  
**Possible Members of a National or Parliamentary Campaign Team**

1. **Campaign Manager:** To manage the entire campaign.
2. **Financial Adviser/Fundraiser:** To help raise funds.
3. **Media/Press Officer:** To act as spokesperson and facilitate media coverage.
4. **Legal Adviser:** To ensure that the campaign is in accordance with the law.
5. **Field Officer:** To co-ordinate campaigning activities on the ground.
6. **Volunteer Co-ordinator:** To recruit and supervise volunteers.
7. **Logistics Support:** To ensure candidates are where they are supposed to be, when they are supposed to be there!

Source: EMILY’s List, *Thinking of Running for Office: A Guide for Democratic Women Candidates*, 2003.

187 Adapted from: “Thinking of Running for Office: A Guide for Democratic Women Candidates”, EMILY’s List, 2003, <<http://emilyslist.org/>>.

### → Using the latest techniques and stay abreast of current developments

Across the OSCE region, new forms of **social media** are changing the way campaigns – and politics in general – are run. Web-based applications are helping to create new channels of communication among politicians, political institutions and voters.

Social media sources and techniques may include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Blogs
- Social networking sites
- Mobile SMS functions

**Box 4.23:**  
**Improving the Democratic Image of a Candidate and her Party through Social Media**

In the United States in 2008, Barack Obama's campaign took advantage of social media and social networking opportunities not only to spread the word, but also to make the Democratic party appear more in tune with the public mood and more connected with the lives and realities of voters.

The website contains a multitude of interesting web-based activities, applications and techniques that candidates can consider in order to reach out to the electorate.

Source: <<http://www.barackobama.com>>.

Women should seize the opportunity to utilize these new forms of political outreach. Firstly, they can be a cost-efficient way of making contact with the electorate, and thereby reduce the amount of travel necessary for candidates. Secondly, social media offer an opportunity for direct contact between candidates and voters that is not conditioned by the amount of airtime a party or a media source allocates to a candidate or the amount of funds a candidate has to launch campaigning activities. Thirdly, directly reaching out to voters through emerging social media applications can be used to demonstrate a woman's understanding of and respect for younger voters, who are those most likely to be using web-based social media sites.

Women who do not wish to engage fully in these emerging trends, or for whom such mechanisms are not available, can utilize more conventional web-based activities, such as websites. Party websites, for example, can be used as platforms for women to publicize policy positions of interest to their constituents. It is important to keep in mind, however, that in many OSCE participating States, access to the Internet is limited, especially among women. Social media can support but should not replace traditional forms of campaigning, including direct door-to-door campaigning, public meetings, direct mailing and traditional activities such as local fundraising and media events.

### → Building the institutional memory of one's campaign

Social media and other web-based applications are practical and sustainable ways to develop and build the **institutional memory** of a woman candidate's campaign. This strategy is particularly important in countries where the percentage of women in office remains low. Good practices, as well as lessons learned from the campaign trail, can be collected and shared in order to support, mobilize and motivate other women candidates. For example, throughout her electoral campaign, Iryna Unzhakova, an independent candidate in the 2007 Kazakhstan local

elections, kept an on-line diary,<sup>188</sup> in which she reported on an almost daily basis about her campaign, as well as the obstacles she faced. Her diary was eloquently entitled: “I am running, and it is NOT scary, painful, shameful, or funny”. Although she was ultimately not successful in her run, she nevertheless provided useful information, advice and inspiration for other prospective candidates, both female and male.

Documenting a woman’s candidacy – whether she is successful or not – may also be useful for when it comes time to run again. A woman can analyse this information in order to determine what worked and what did not work, and adjust her electoral strategy accordingly.

### → Learning to identify gender-based political manipulation

Analysis of how women – and opponents – run political campaigns and behave in the political arena more generally can yield important insights on how to better navigate and advance political careers. Getting to know methods of **gender-based political manipulation**, for example, can help a woman address and/or withstand challenges to her political career and electoral candidacy.

#### *i) Get to know the methods of political dominance*

Many parties and politicians, consciously or unconsciously, use methods to ensure male dominance in society, particularly in the political realm. According to one study on this topic,<sup>189</sup> these methods can include: making women invisible, belittling them, withholding information from them or burdening them with guilt and shame about their political activities.

In some parties, women’s views, opinions and perspectives are not taken seriously.<sup>190</sup> This is especially the case when women articulate perspectives on issues of specific importance to them, based on their particular roles and responsibilities within the family and society. Male party members can make women feel invisible by failing to recognize or validate women’s opinions and perspectives, or by openly displaying disinterest in issues raised by their female counterparts and rendering these topics “women’s issues”. This is the technique of making women **unimportant and invisible**. Making women look **ridiculous or belittling** them in other ways is another method of dominance that can be employed by men, as well as by other women. Making reference to a woman’s appearance, age and emotional nature are examples of this method.

Consciously or unconsciously, men often **withhold information** from women by making deals amongst themselves outside formal settings or discussions, or considering themselves empowered to take decisions on behalf of women, due to their experience. This method of withholding information not only deprives women the opportunity to express their points of view and influence the decision-making process, but also reinforces the stereotype that women

188 Ирина Унжакова, “Смотрите, Я Баллотируюсь – И Это Совсем Не Страшно, Не Больно, Не Стыдно И Не Смешно. Даже не победив, можно чувствовать себя выигравшей” Народный сетевой журнал: про женщин и мужчин. [Irina Unzhakova. “Take a look, I am running, and it is not scary, painful, shameful or funny. Even if you are not elected, you can feel yourself a winner”. People’s web journal: about women and men], 2007, <[http://caucasia.at.ua/publ/iz\\_zhurnala\\_quotdialog\\_zhenshshinquot/dnevniki/vybory\\_kandidatskij\\_dnevnik\\_iriny\\_unzhakovoj\\_2007/6-1-o-8](http://caucasia.at.ua/publ/iz_zhurnala_quotdialog_zhenshshinquot/dnevniki/vybory_kandidatskij_dnevnik_iriny_unzhakovoj_2007/6-1-o-8)>.

189 Professor Berit, as cited in “Power Booklet”, Swedish Social Democratic Party, S-Kvinnor Sveavägen, Stockholm, 1995, p.13.

190 “Assessing women’s political party programs: best practices and recommendations” (Washington: NDI, 2008).

**Box 4.24:**  
**Methods of Dominance in Politics**

- ✓ Making women invisible;
- ✓ Making women ridiculous or belittling women;
- ✓ Withholding information;
- ✓ Double punishment of women; and
- ✓ Burdening women with guilt and shame.

Source: "Power Booklet", Swedish Social Democratic Party, *Power booklet*, S-Kvinnor Sveavägen 68 O.O. Box 70458, S-107 26 Stockholm, 1995.

do not have the experience, knowledge or capacity to make decisions. The **double punishment of women** refers to the challenges women face in balancing personal and professional lives. Often, women who attempt to balance both family and a career are accused of not devoting sufficient time to either. They are viewed as lacking ambition by their bosses and colleagues, and judged as neglecting their family by both family members and society more broadly. Lastly, given the role of caretaker that they have been conditioned to play, women often feel guilty about not fully succeeding in either the family or professional sphere and can take responsibility for mistakes and errors over which they have no control. In certain contexts, men may reinforce this feeling by applying the method of **burdening women with guilt and shame**.

Two additional techniques that can be mobilized against women are allowing men to speak just for the sake of speaking (and taking time from women who may have substantive input to add to the topic under discussion), and having a man repeat what a woman has just said, but giving the credit to the man for articulating the idea. Getting to know these techniques of dominance, and developing strategies to address these, can help women navigate their political careers more effectively.

**ii) Whatever the pressure, do not give up a parliamentary seat**

Following elections in some OSCE participating States, it has been observed that women have been put forward as candidates by political parties only to fulfil legal requirements, acting as "gender tokens". The OSCE/ODIHR's *Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections* refers to gender tokenism as the practice which "results from putting forth a mixed candidate list merely to satisfy filling requirements or to appear to have a balanced list but then abandoning it through withdrawals or resignations of women after election day."<sup>191</sup>

Evidence of such practices has been found in some of the pilot countries surveyed as part of this handbook, and may exist in other participating States of the OSCE region.<sup>192</sup> In some cases, there were indications that female candidates were required to submit pre-signed letters of resignation before being included on the list. This phenomenon may be more pronounced in countries where a legal gender quota has been recently introduced, but where regulatory mechanisms are weak or non-existent.

It can be extremely difficult for a woman to resist the pressure to give up her seat. Strategies to address this pressure include mobilizing support networks within the party, such as women's wings, if these have been established. Likewise, women can reach out to women from other parties to determine if others have been subject to the same practice. Cross-party co-operation can be very effective in raising awareness about this specific issue. In addition, a woman can reach out to external supporters, such as women's groups and NGOs, who may advocate on her behalf to raise awareness of this issue among the electorate. Women or equality advocates may consider involving the media to publicize this practice, in the form of editorials or news articles, or request discussions or debate on this topic on local or national television or radio

<sup>191</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections*, 2004, p. 31.

<sup>192</sup> Findings from the 2012 ODIHR Survey in the five pilot countries.

networks. Fellow female candidates and gender advocates within a party can be organized to lobby party leaders to officially prohibit this practice in party statutes and by-laws. Lastly, a woman may wish to organize a long-term campaign to lobby the party leadership to introduce a provision into official party documents whereby any seat that is vacated by a woman must be taken up by another woman. Women can partner with reform-minded journalists to publicize this practice, and build public support for political reform to prohibit this practice.

Of course, not all resignations by female parliamentarians are due to pressure by political stakeholders. There are times when a woman must resign her position in parliament, for example, in order to take up a post in the government cabinet or assume another official position. In this case, before leaving, a woman may consider spearheading a campaign, as mentioned above, to persuade party leaders to introduce an official policy whereby any seat vacated by a woman is filled by another woman.

**Box 4.25:**  
**Resisting Pressure to Give Up One's Seat**

1. **Mobilize support of women's wings** and gender advocates within the party to exert pressure on party leaders to prohibit this practice.
2. **Exert pressure** on party leaders to prohibit this practice in party statutes and/or by-laws.
3. **Launch long-term campaign** to introduce provisions whereby a seat vacated by a woman is given to another woman.
4. **Involve the media** to highlight instances of this practice or to raise awareness of this issue as a broader political trend.
5. **Engage civil society/women's groups** to implement public awareness-raising campaigns on this issue through public debates, media articles and information campaigns.

**iii) If a seat or race is lost, do not give up a political career**

Everyone loses at some point in their lives – especially in politics. The most important lesson is not to give up. Politics is a process of many small failures and a few key victories. Therefore, women need to turn their experiences – both positive and negative – into the building blocks of knowledge for their next race. Women should analyse carefully the race they ran and the results – where can they improve in terms of knowledge, skills or contacts? What positive experiences do they take from the experience that they should expand upon?

It is also important not to be bitter or accusatory towards opponents, the party or the party leadership. Importantly, how a woman loses can be a powerful indication to her party of her qualities. Likewise, a determination to keep going will be viewed as commitment to the cause and loyalty to the party. However, a woman must also know the limits of her loyalty: if a party consistently places a woman in positions or districts where she cannot possibly win, she may need to consider whether her party is the best forum through which to advance her political career. In Albania, for example, a woman party activist was consistently overlooked during the candidate-selection process for local and national elections. Following a sustained period of being ignored by party leadership, she left the party, ran as an independent and ended up winning a seat in the next local elections.<sup>193</sup>

**4.1.2. Co-operating with other women and acting collectively on issues of mutual concern**

The previous section looked in detail at the different steps women can take to advance their political careers – whether their goal is to become candidates for public office, to obtain key roles in the campaign of other candidates, or to move up in the ranks of the political party. For

<sup>193</sup> OSCE/ODIHR Interviews with women politicians in Albania, June 2012.



the most part, it focused on strategies, actions and initiatives that women as individuals can apply or introduce.

This section looks in greater detail at how women acting in partnership with other women – and men – can further develop their political careers, as well as help create the foundations for introducing greater gender equality into political party practices.

**Box 4.26:**

**Anita Gradin, Gender-Equality Advocate**

Anita Gradin, a Swedish MP, always carried a little black notebook in which she made notes about the women she had met during different seminars, public hearings and events. Women who had impressed her with interesting presentations or analysis were listed in her book. Whenever the party was asked to nominate candidates for various posts, she looked in her notebook. Her notebook served as a database of qualified professional women; therefore, she was able to identify potential women candidates for her party and, importantly, could always counter arguments made by party selectors that **“there are no women who are interested”** in running for public office.

Gradin later became a Minister in the Swedish government, establishing a national commission on gender balance in state committees. She also became the Chair of the Socialist Internationalist Women, in which she introduced the idea of gender quotas in Labour parties across the world, and served as a Commissioner in the European Commission from 1995 to 1999.

➔ **Recruiting other women into politics**

One simple but effective collective strategy women can engage in to enhance women’s representation is to **recruit more women** into the party. This may be viewed as simply expanding women’s competition for scarce party resources and positions. However, it is important to consider the benefits of increased representation of women in a party, particularly in leadership positions, and how increased representation can support or facilitate a woman’s own political advancement.

Given the low representation of women in politics, especially at decision-making levels, it is vitally important to identify and promote potential female candidates and leaders in the political sphere. The example of Anita Gradin is an excellent case in point (see Box 4.26). Women may consider creating and sharing similar databases with other women in their parties in order to expand the pool of eligible women for political career advancement. Similarly, a woman can keep a diary of impressive women she meets on key occasions, and think about how such women may be tapped in the future. This is also an important strategy to implement for women active at the local and regional party branch levels who might be put forward for consideration in local and/or municipal elections.

➔ **Being mentored and mentoring other women within a party**

Mentorship is critical at every stage of a woman’s political life. **Political mentorship** can be defined as a supportive relationship, established between two persons to share experience, skills and knowledge, and to help address challenges, perceived and real, in their political career.<sup>194</sup> Mentorship should always be seen as a two-way relationship, in which both individuals involved benefit.

Mentorship can take different forms and should ideally be an on-going activity. In **traditional forms of mentorship**, a more experienced and more knowledgeable individual acts as a personal guide and trusted counsellor, who can provide advice, guidance and support to an individual with less experience. This type of mentorship can develop naturally over time.

194 *Rising through the ranks: A Young Woman’s Guide to Leadership and Political Party Engagement*, Part III, Chapter 4, “Mentoring and Nurturing Your Network of Support”, 2011, p. 62.



However, a woman can also ask the party leadership to assign her a mentor who has experience relevant to her interests and goals in the party, ideally as soon as she joins the political party.

**Peer-to-peer mentorship** involves mentorship between people of the same level of experience and, often, of the same age. In such mentorships, colleagues share personal experiences, good practices and ideas about political career development and about political issues more generally. Here, peers provide support to one another at particular stages in their careers and learn from each other's experience. **Inter-generational mentoring** is also a mutual relationship, where older, more experienced colleagues can learn from younger colleagues who have been exposed to emerging political ideas, trends, technologies, practices and developments, and younger colleagues can learn from the experience of older party members. More experienced women politicians, for example, can learn about the newest trends in social media from younger women, just as new female members can learn from the experience and knowledge of more experienced mentors. In this type of mentorship, both partners become mentors and mentees, depending on the topic under discussion. Lastly, **resource mentorship** can be a useful tool for identifying and eventually pooling the knowledge, resources and skills that different women politicians bring to the table.

**Box 4.27:**  
**Types of Mentorship**

- a) Experience mentorship:**  
A colleague with more experience acts as a personal guide and counsellor.
- b) Peer-to-peer mentorship:**  
Experience-sharing among colleagues with similar levels of knowledge and at similar stages in a political career path.
- c) Inter-generational mentorship:** Learning from colleagues with less experience, but more exposure to new ideas, technologies and political strategies, or vice versa.
- d) Resource mentorship:**  
Identifying ways to pool resources, particularly knowledge and skills, for mutual benefit.

Although mentoring is a practice that can benefit politicians throughout their entire political careers, mentoring of first-time candidates is particularly valuable. It is important to stress, in the context of this handbook, that mentorship could and should involve mentoring politicians of the same sex (woman to woman) as well as mentoring between politicians of the opposite sex (women to men or men to women). In particular, in political parties where the majority of leadership positions are still occupied by men, but where there is a genuine interest of party leaders to promote more women, high-ranking male party members can transfer a great deal of knowledge and experience to female politicians, especially newcomers to the party.

Mentorship is practiced by many political parties across the OSCE region, and some have institutionalized mentorship as part of the parties' internal training programme activities. For example, the United Kingdom Conservative Party provides mentorship as part of its "Women2Win" programme. The programme outlines a nine-step plan for women to become an MP for the United Kingdom Conservative Party (see Box 4.28).<sup>195</sup>

Likewise, the Fabian Women's Network affiliated with the United Kingdom Labour Party established a Fabian Women Mentoring Scheme on International Women's Day (March 8) in 2011. The scheme encourages Fabian women interested in developing a career in politics or public life to apply to be mentored by senior women politicians over a period of ten months. Women mentees take part in training, networking and intensive skill development activities, as well as study trips to the Parliament in London and the European Parliament. Senior women politicians are also invited to become mentors. As a result of the programme, one woman has been selected as a parliamentary candidate, another has been shortlisted as a parliamentary

<sup>195</sup> See Conservative Party "Women2Win" programme, <<http://www.women2win.com/being-mp>>.

**Box 4.28:**  
**Nine Steps to Get Elected as**  
**a Conservative MP:**

**The Conservative Party's**  
**Women2Win Programme**

1. Contact and volunteer for the local branch of the Conservative Party or for local charities to demonstrate your commitment to the party and public service.
2. Consider and develop an action plan for how you will address your weaknesses or skill gaps.
3. Determine whether a full-time political career is right for you, and whether you can accept uprooting your family and adapting to a challenging campaign lifestyle.
4. Write to the local Council headquarters, explaining why you wish to become a candidate and enclose your CV.
5. Include in your cover letter information about your involvement in local associations, professional groups, charities or the local community more broadly.
6. Identify and include three references who can attest to your character and professional abilities.
7. Pay the membership fee for the Parliamentary Association Board (PAB) once you've been accepted as a Conservative Party member for at least three months.
8. Be prepared to be interviewed by the PAB (day-long assessment by senior party members)
9. Once approved as a candidate, identify a vacant constituency, and be prepared for competition.

Source: Conservative Party, Women2Win programme at <<http://www.women2win.com/being-mp>>.

candidate, and a number of other women have become active as school governors or as trustees on the boards of charities.<sup>196</sup>

Mentorship can also be undertaken at a regional or international level, among members of similarly-minded political parties. For example, the International Republican Institute's Women's Democracy Network (WDN) helps aspiring female leaders learn from the experiences of senior practitioners in politics, civil society and government.<sup>197</sup> In this capacity, mentors provide guidance and leadership skills to less experienced women politicians through country-based WDN Chapters.

➔ **Building alliances and solidarity within the party**

Women are often portrayed – and portray themselves – as effective communicators, consensus-builders and connectors. However, men, too, are effective builders of **political networks**, often through informal means. Methods to network and build coalitions in politics include:

- ✓ Developing connections with entrepreneurs and the business community;
- ✓ Exploiting existing work connections, or using work connections to expand circles of acquaintances;
- ✓ Meeting socially at clubs, pubs, gyms or other arenas;
- ✓ Attending gatherings where donors or patrons are present;
- ✓ Making informal “deals” that are mutually advantageous; and
- ✓ Exploiting media presence to present one's views or achievements.

Each meeting – whether social or work-related – is usually taken as an opportunity to sell one's image, achievements and political perspectives.

At an individual level, a woman interested in advancing her political career should, thus, begin to see every meeting and event as an opportunity to communicate her message and contributions; to build contacts with influential decision

makers and opinion shapers; and to create a network of supporters who can potentially assist her in advancing her political career. Collectively, creating a formal or informal network of supportive women – and men – can be used to raise awareness about the number of qualified women ready for career advancement that the party has at its disposal, for building solidarity

196 See the Fabian Women website, <<http://www.fabianwomen.co.uk/2013/03/the-fabian-womens-network-is-recruiting-for-its-201314-mentoring-programme/>>.

197 Women's Democracy Network (WDN) is an initiative of the International Republican Institute. See: <<http://www.wdn.org>>.

and co-operation on issues of concern to women party members and for creating a space for women to articulate their concerns, issues and the challenges they face in a safe and supportive environment.

### → Co-operating with women across party lines

In addition to building solidarity and dialogue among women within parties, women can also **work across party lines** on issues of common concern. For example, women can co-operate across party lines on raising awareness of gender-based discrimination in society. There have been many campaigns in the OSCE region that focus on raising awareness among voters and public officials regarding the current lack of gender balance in the political sphere and the need to elect more women for the sake of democracy. A particularly effective example is that of the Parity Parliament initiative implemented in Portugal, an activity spearheaded by three female members of the European Parliament (EP) in the run-up to EP elections in 1994. The three women MPs invited 115 female politicians and 115 male politicians to a one-day parliamentary session to discuss democracy, the role of women in public life in Portugal and citizenship and parity. Partially funded by the European Commission, the event sought to provide an example of what policymaking processes would look like with 50 per cent of the seats filled by women and 50 per cent of the seats occupied by men.<sup>198</sup>

Equally, women can co-operate on campaigns aimed at increasing the number of women entering into politics. A media campaign funded by a multi-partisan parliamentary committee in Iceland between 1997 and 2002 aimed to increase the proportion of women entering politics through humorous advertisements, alongside training courses, education networks, public meetings and mentoring programmes. The advertisements sought to challenge stereotypes at the top levels of government and to frame gender balance as an issue affecting both women and men. In one poster, a woman MP is shown shaving her face while in another, the Foreign Minister at the time (a man), is shown holding a pair of pantyhose, with the captions reading “Half the nation is not reflected democratically in the parliament”; and “Some experiences are beyond our reach”, respectively.<sup>199</sup>

Moreover, women can work on enforcing gender-equality rules in parliaments. Issues such as working hours, childcare facilities for women with small children, access and working conditions for women with various disabilities, as well as allocation of time to speak in plenaries, could unify women for collective action. Co-operation among women across party lines is particularly beneficial when constructed around specific issues. In Austria in 2011, for example, women from dif-

#### Box 4.29: Ukrainian Women’s Fund Survey: Women in Politics

The NGO Ukrainian Women’s Fund undertook a survey to determine attitudes towards women in politics across Ukraine.

Slightly more than 20 per cent of women stated they prefer to vote for a woman, while slightly less than 20 per cent of men stated they preferred to vote for a woman. Just over 10 per cent of women stated they preferred to vote for a man, compared to just over 20 per cent of men.

Most interestingly, roughly 60 per cent of both women and men stated that sex did not matter, while on average only 10 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that “women are not capable of politics”.

Source: Ukrainian Women’s Fund, <[http://www.uwf.kiev.ua/en\\_news\\_261010.htm](http://www.uwf.kiev.ua/en_news_261010.htm)>.

198 Alison Woodward, *Going for Gender Balance. A guide for balancing decision making* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), p. 34.

199 Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook, “Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan” (Warsaw: OSCE, 2011), <[www.osce.org/odihr/78432](http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432)>.

ferent parliamentary groups successfully campaigned to change the national anthem; the anthem's text, which referred to Austria's "sons", was reworded to include the term "daughters".<sup>200</sup>

Yet another example of cross-party co-operation could be developing joint statements on special occasions marking women's achievements in moving towards gender equality. In many OSCE participating States, International Women's Day (8 March) is widely celebrated. This occasion could be used to promote the work elected women are doing to advance the cause of women in the country, as well as to point out the challenges that still remain.

**Box 4.30:**  
**The Women's Party in Poland**

In 2006, women's under-representation in politics became a hot topic in public debate thanks to the social movement "Poland is a Woman", which was later transformed into the Women's Party (WP) (*Partia Kobiet*) funded by a famous female writer, Manuela Gretkowska.

The WP gathered well-known women from business, art and music and enjoyed a high degree of visibility in the media. It expected to receive support from both left-wing and right-wing political parties, but the party leaders did not fulfil their promises. Nonetheless, WP decided to retain its party status and to run independently in seven districts.

The Women's Party had a budget of PLN 30,000 (7,500 Euros) for their election campaign. With such limited resources and only a couple of months until elections, the WP did not have the opportunity to build party structures across Poland. As a result, members decided to campaign on a quite controversial poster showing the party-founders naked, with the slogan – All for the Future, nothing to hide – Women's Party. Despite these efforts, the party did not pass the five per cent threshold in the 2007 elections, and the Party won no seats in the Sejm or the Senate.

Source: M. Druciarek, M. Fuszara, A. Nizynska, J. Zbieranek, *ISP and ODIHR, Women on the Polish Political Scene*, Warsaw, 2012.

→ **Creating "women-only" parties**

A less common strategy for raising public awareness about gender equality, women's marginalization in the political sphere and women's political priorities is to establish **women's parties**. Sometimes, women's parties are established in times of deep disenchantment with traditional politics or during overall political regime change. As a rule, they often grow out of women's movements that seek to stand "above" existing political parties while giving a voice to women.

A case in point is the Women of Russia party, established as a political movement in 1993. In the 1993 national parliamentary elections, the Women of Russia party won 10 per cent of the vote, translating into 25 seats in the Russian State Duma. Altogether, women held 51 out of 130 seats in the first State Duma (1993–1995).<sup>201</sup> Subsequently, the party became active on a number of issues, including opposition to the military campaign in Chechnya that began in 1994. In the 1995 national parliamentary elections, Women of Russia chose to retain its platform unchanged, emphasizing social issues such as the protection of children and women, rather than entering into a coalition with other liberal parties. The party failed to reach the five per cent threshold of votes required for proportional representation in the new State Duma, gaining only three seats in the single-seat portion of the elections. The party considered running a candidate in the 1996 presidential election but in the end remained outside the crowded field.

A smaller organization, the Russian Women's party, ran as part of an unsuccessful coalition with several other splinter parties in the 1995 elections. A few women, such as Ella Pamfilova of the Republican Party of Russia – People's Freedom Party, the Socialist Workers' party chief Lyudmila Vartazarova and the Democratic Union leader Valeriya

200 "Austrian anthem to give daughters a mention", 14 July 2011, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14155830>>, <<http://state.rin.ru/cgi-bin/main.pl?r=287>>; "Bundesgesetz über die Bundeshymne der Republik Österreich (1758/A)", 2011, <[http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/A/A\\_01758/index.shtml#tab-Uebersicht](http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/A/A_01758/index.shtml#tab-Uebersicht)>.

201 "Государственная дума Федерального собрания Российской Федерации I созыва", Wikipedia, <<http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/>>.

Novodvorskaya,<sup>202</sup> have since established themselves as influential political figures. Pamfilova has gained particular stature as an advocate on behalf of women and elderly people.

Another example is that of the Lithuanian Women's party, headed by the former Prime Minister, Kazimira Prunskienė.<sup>203</sup> It was founded in 1995 by 13 women's organizations, 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, shocking the traditional political party establishment.<sup>204</sup>

In Northern Ireland, the Women's Coalition party played a very influential role in the peace process. Created in 1996, the party's ultimate goal was to ensure that women's perspectives, opinions and views were not marginalized during the Northern Ireland multi-party peace talks. At first, members of the Women's Coalition were the only women among the party delegates present at the peace talks. It has been argued that the Women's Coalition helped bring an end to violence in Northern Ireland and secured women's presence at official negotiating tables.<sup>205</sup>

Overall, women-only political parties can help raise awareness in civil society about the situation of women and the particular challenges they face. Moreover, women's parties can strengthen solidarity and confidence among women politicians. Lastly, women's parties can alert the public to specific issues of concern to women and/or about specific circumstances affecting women that are currently not being addressed by politicians. Furthermore, women's parties can serve as stepping-stones into politics for politically active and interested women.

However, women's parties tend not to be sustainable in the long run for several reasons. First of all, such parties tend to exclude, by default, half of the electorate (men) from their potential voters. Secondly, the issues raised by women's political parties are often trivialized, and only their work on women's issues – or their novelty status – is emphasized by the media, while other issues on which they campaign are likely to receive less attention. Thirdly, unsuccessful women's parties add to the popular stereotype that women are not suited for political office and arm opponents of gender equality with strong arguments against women's participation. Furthermore, the existence of electoral thresholds, as well as unequal public funding systems which favour larger parties, are often a major obstacle to the success of women's parties.

202 The Democratic Union and the Socialist Workers' Party are unregistered parties, <[http://www.russiasvotes.org/duma/list\\_parties\\_2003\\_2007.php](http://www.russiasvotes.org/duma/list_parties_2003_2007.php)>.

203 "Kazimira Prunskienė", Wikipedia, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazimira\\_Prunskien%C4%97](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazimira_Prunskien%C4%97)>.

204 John T. Ishiyama, "Women's parties in post-communist politics." *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2003, pp. 266–304; Alison Woodward, *Going for Gender Balance. A guide for balancing decision making* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002).

205 Carmel Roulston, "Inclusive Others: The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition in The Peace Process", *Scottish Affairs*, Vol. 26, winter, 1999.



#### 4.1.3. Institutionalizing gender equality in political party policies, processes and practices

**Box 4.31:  
Moving Beyond the Number  
of Women in Politics:  
Understanding “Critical Mass”**

The concept of “critical mass” in the sphere of gender, women and politics refers to the number of women required to substantively influence political behaviour, institutions and public policy. It indicates the threshold at which women no longer constitute political “tokens”, but rather substantively influence political debates. The widely-accepted percentage for critical mass to be achieved is **30 per cent**.

It is increasingly recognized, however, that numbers alone do not guarantee substantive representation in politics. It is, therefore, important to consider what factors or opportunities are more likely to enable women to make substantive contributions. These include:

- ✓ Presence of women in positions of power (party leader, political adviser, head or member of a selection committee);
- ✓ Expertise (fundraising, legal, policy or legislative expertise of benefit to a party);
- ✓ Presence or absence of government gender machinery;
- ✓ Presence or absence of party gender machinery (women’s sections or wings; gender policies or strategies);
- ✓ External political environment (type of electoral environment); and
- ✓ Presence or absence of healthy civil society, including women’s groups.

Source: Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* Hansard Society, 2005.

The previous sections focused on the strategies women as political actors can develop and apply, individually or collectively, to support and facilitate their political advancement. Individual strategies ranged from initiatives aimed at learning more about how parties operate, what roles men and women play, how to access party resources and how to run a campaign. Collective strategies included those that seek to facilitate women’s political advancement, through co-operation among women within parties or across party lines.

These strategies reflect the reality that women and men do not enjoy a level playing field in politics. They can help women cope with this political reality, but will not necessarily result in the transformation of politics in a way that provides equal rights and opportunities to both women and men. Accordingly, this section looks at strategies that women – and, importantly, men – can employ in order to create more gender-friendly political parties, which institutionalize gender equality in a genuine and sustainable manner.

The institutionalization of gender equality is critical if men and women are to enjoy equal political rights and opportunities in practice. Increasing the number of women in politics and in political parties specifically will not achieve this institutionalization, although engaging more women in the political sphere should remain a key goal of gender advocates. In the absence of institutionalized structures, policies, programmes and processes that support women and gender equality, achieving the “critical mass” of 30 per cent women’s representation in politics recommended by the United Nations will not alone transform how politics is done.

As noted in a study on women’s substantive representation in the United Kingdom,<sup>206</sup> to make politics more gender-friendly requires the establishment of relevant structures, such as governmental gender-equality machinery and women’s sections within political parties; conducive electoral and political environments, including non-discriminatory laws, rules and regulations and sanctions for non-compliance; opportunities for women to occupy decision-making positions and exercise influence over decision-making processes; and the presence of a genuine civil society, including active women’s groups (see Box 4.31).

206 Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski, *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 145.

This section presents a number of strategies that women party members, in partnership with men, can lobby for in order to facilitate the process of institutionalizing gender equality within political parties.

### → Determining the “gender-friendliness” of a party and party leadership

Before identifying the best activities to implement in support of formalizing gender equality within political parties, it may be helpful to determine the existing degree of a party’s **gender sensitivity**. One way to classify a party’s approach to gender equality is by using the following three broad categories:

- ✓ A party that is *openly hostile* to gender equality;
- ✓ A party that is *gender-friendly* and proves it; and
- ✓ A party that adopts the *rhetoric* of gender equality for political gain.<sup>207</sup>

i) A party that is **openly hostile** to gender equality and/or women’s political advancement may apply different methods to discriminate against members based on gender, for example by limiting opportunities for women to advance within the party or applying rules or regulations that openly prohibit women from participating in different party activities or processes.

ii) A party that **truly supports gender equality** and women’s advancement will demonstrate it. This might not mean that women will be promoted automatically or selected as candidates. However, there is a much better chance that the party will provide a more equal playing field for men and women to compete for political advancement. A party that supports gender equality will not only promote women’s advancement in theory and in rhetoric, but will also back it up by introducing, where possible, measures to support women, like capacity building, training and provision of resources to female candidates or women’s sections.

iii) A party that adopts the **rhetoric** of gender equality may be the trickiest to identify: it will support women’s political advancement if it is politically expedient, but not necessarily out of principle. Such parties may openly promote gender equality, while behind closed doors undermining women’s chances of advancing, either by withholding information or preventing women from participating in or exercising influence over party decision-making processes.

Once a woman is aware of the type of party she has joined, it will be easier to develop strategies that are tailored to the environment in which she will be working to advance gender equality.

It is worthwhile keeping in mind the strategies that parties interested in diversifying their candidates can apply, as discussed in Chapter 3: *equality rhetoric* (including equal representation in party platforms, electoral campaigns and the speeches of party leaders); *equality promotion* (implementing concrete actions, such as training or financial assistance to encourage women to enter into politics); and *equality guarantees* (adopting actions at party policy level to increase the number of women candidates on party lists, such as party gender quotas). Depending on which group the party falls into (if any), women can work together to move their political party from adopting equality rhetoric, to adopting equality promotion actions, to implementing equality guarantees.<sup>208</sup>

207 Sonja Lokar, materials developed for the OSCE/ODIHR training “Women in Political Parties”, held in Tirana, Albania, 19–20 June 2012

208 See: Joni Lovenduski, *Feminizing Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); and Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, “Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?”, (London: Hansard Society, 2005).



### → Building solidarity among gender-equality advocates (both women and men)

It is important to identify and get to know both allies and opponents in promoting gender equality within a party. Who among the party leadership is a “gender champion” or supporter of gender equality? Who opposes it, and why? Which male members are known supporters of gender equality, and which women? Which male members are not supportive of gender equality, and which women? What are their reasons?

Women should identify both male and female party members that support gender equality. These people are a woman’s natural allies both in supporting her political advancement, and in her efforts to make her party a more gender-sensitive body that provides equal opportunities to both men and women.

### → Institutionalizing gender equality in political party statutes and policies/codes of conduct

#### **Box 4.32: The Concept of Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for ensuring that women’s and men’s concerns and experiences are considered and represented in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Source: “Democracy and the Challenge of Change. A Guide to Increasing Women’s Political Participation”, NDI, 2010.

It is important to institutionalize gender equality as a principle and value governing how a party operates, particularly in core party documents such as statutes and/or constitutions. If the party leadership has made statements on gender equality, women can collect these together and use this language to create an amendment to existing party documents. Women can then identify a delegate to the party congress, male or female, who will agree to introduce a motion to approve the inclusion of a commitment to gender equality in the party’s statutes, platform or constitution. Likewise, women can apply this strategy when seeking to introduce provisions regarding gender-balanced representation in party processes, structures and decision-making bodies.

If the party has not developed policies regarding the conduct and behaviour of party members, including codes of conduct or policies prohibiting discrimination or sexual harassment, women can consider initiating or recommending the establishment of a working group to develop such documents. There are a number of examples of parliamentary codes of conduct that can serve as a model (see Chapter 3 for more on developing codes of conduct for political parties).

### → Lobbying for the development of party programmes and training to support gender equality

Individually and collectively, women can lobby parties to include gender equality as a topic in each and every induction course organized for new party members. These modules can be delivered by members of the women’s wing (if one exists), a prominent gender advocate in the party or an external gender and political expert. Party leaders and decision makers could also be required to attend such a module at least once, as the success of any gender-mainstreaming initiative depends on political will and support emanating from leadership and management.

If the party has developed a capacity development or training programme for party members, women might consider lobbying to include mandatory training for members on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Likewise, they might explore whether there are criteria determining who is able to attend such training, in order to ensure that both women and men are equally provided opportunities for career training within the party. Women can also lobby the

party leadership to consider funding advanced courses on gender mainstreaming or gender budgeting for interested members, to develop the expertise of party members to apply these strategies to all party processes, procedures and practices. Such an approach will also help build in-house expertise on a given gender-equality topic.

→ **Demanding party accountability for implementation**

Consider mobilizing gender activists (both women and men) in the party to ask the party leadership how it intends to realize its commitments to gender equality. Or use the women's section, if it exists, to analyse these statements of commitment and develop a plan of action for implementing them that the party leadership can adopt.

→ **Mobilizing supporters outside the party to challenge party leadership on gender equality**

In line with the strategy above, women should consider using outside sources – such as the media, women's groups, NGOs, influential voters or opinion makers – to challenge the party on its gender-equality statements, and ask what the party intends to do to realize the gender-equality commitments or messages it has articulated. Likewise, party, media and civil society allies might be tapped to help monitor the party's progress in implementing promises made during the election to support gender equality and women's political participation.

→ **Joining or establishing women's wings or sections within the party**

Women's party organizations, also referred to as **women's sections, women's caucuses or women's wings**, are internal party organizations composed of female party members. Women's wings can serve different purposes, providing a forum for women to articulate their policy priorities, conduct advocacy on joint issues of concern, facilitate capacity development and support for women's career advancement and/or raise awareness of gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination. Some women's sections also conduct research and assessments, such as gender audits, lobby for changes to party statutes, by-laws, policies or programmes in support of greater gender equality and balance, and contribute to the development of party platforms. This is the case of the secretariat for gender-equality policy established within the Spanish Socialist Worker's party (PSOE), institutionalized at the federal executive level of the party as the women's secretariat already in 1984. The secretariat was successful in adding provisions regarding women's rights to the congress resolutions, electoral programmes and official documents of the PSOE.<sup>209</sup>

Women's sections have been established within political parties across the OSCE region and engaged in initiatives to promote women's political advancement within parties. For example, female members of the British Liberal Democrats in the late 1990s 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 the gendered roles and responsibilities normally undertaken by women, such as child and elder care, and to help cover women's travel expenses (to provide cash). The Fund also developed a programme that allowed women to shadow MPs (to promote confidence), and

209 See Celia Valiente, "Spain at the Vanguard in European Gender Equality Policies", 2006, <[http://e-archivo.uc3m.es/bitstream/id/22095/spain\\_valiente\\_2008\\_ps.pdf](http://e-archivo.uc3m.es/bitstream/id/22095/spain_valiente_2008_ps.pdf)>.

encouraged the construction of a skills database to recruit spokeswomen and candidates (to combat male-dominated culture).<sup>210</sup>

In Albania, where efforts to establish a cross-party parliamentary women's caucus have proven too difficult, women members of several political parties have established women's forums, including the Democratic Women League of Albania, established within the Democratic Party, and the Socialist Women League of Albania, established within the Socialist Party. Both forums seek to advance women's interests and participation within their respective parties. In Georgia, women's sections have been established in most of the major political parties, both at national and regional/district levels. Research into the women's sections that have been established in political parties in Georgia reveals that these bodies serve different functions (see Table 4.33), are institutionalized to different degrees and promote different objectives.

**Table 4.33: Women's Section in the Political Parties of Georgia**

Political Party	Activities of the Women's Section
<b>United National Movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a <b>department of gender equality</b> in 2010.</li> <li>No mention of the department in the party statutes; party's gender-equality values established in the party's charter.</li> <li>Department objectives are to promote gender balance at national and local levels and in executive structures; protect equal rights of women and men; and promote the idea of equality in all spheres of Georgian society.</li> </ul>
<b>New Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created a <b>women's club</b> in 2001, at the time of the party's registration.</li> <li>No provision regarding the club in the party's statutes</li> <li>The original purpose of the club was to promote the active participation of women in political and social life; to enhance women's political education; and to take measures to improve the situation of younger people – both boys and girls.</li> <li>Since 2005, the women's club has focused on engaging new party supporters; increasing women's political participation; developing the skills of women party members to increase their active participation in party and elected bodies.</li> </ul>
<b>Christian Democratic Movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a <b>women's organization</b> as a structural sub-unit of the party.</li> <li>Party statutes do not make reference to the organization, but include a general provision providing for the establishment of sub-units.</li> <li>The objectives of the women's organization is to activate women's political participation; to provide support to women in promoting and advancing their political careers; to support women to actively participate in decision-making; and to achieve gender parity.</li> </ul>
<b>Republican Party</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a <b>gender-equality group</b> within the party to work on gender issues.</li> <li>The party charter recognizes the principle of universal equality and equal rights of all regardless of sex, but does not make reference to the group specifically.</li> <li>The group has drafted a strategy entitled "Increasing the role of women in party activities as an indicator of intra-party democracy".</li> <li>Procedures for the selection of women candidates are being elaborated.</li> <li>The objective of the group is to ensure balanced participation of male and female candidates in elections.</li> </ul>
<b>Labour Party</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <b>council of women</b> functioned within the party until 2003.</li> <li>Plans are underway to re-establish a gender-equality mechanism.</li> <li>During its existence, the council monitored the impact of state-run social security programmes and state expenditures within this programme.</li> </ul>

<sup>210</sup> Alison Woodward, *Going for Gender Balance. A guide for balancing decision making* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), p. 40.

<b>Industry Will Save Georgia*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a <b>women's club</b> in 1999, the same year of the party's founding.</li> <li>Represented at central and district levels of the party.</li> <li>Objectives include focusing on socially-vulnerable strata of Georgian society. District-level clubs engage in research on socio-economic issues.</li> <li>Other goals include supporting educational programmes to build women's political knowledge and skills and to promote women's active political participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Our Georgia – Free Democrats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The party currently has no women's section; the party charter includes provisions regarding gender parity.</li> </ul>
<b>Georgia's Way</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The party currently has no women's section, and there is no mention of gender in the party's charter.</li> </ul>

Source: Tamar Bagratia, Medea Badashvili, David Jijelava and Irakli Khmaladze, "Developing intra-party democracy from a gender perspective", in *Intra-party democracy and local governance* (Tbilisi: NIMD Georgia, 2012), pp. 10–11. Information for those parties marked with an asterisk (\*) taken from Ghia Nodia and Álvaro Pinto Schlotbach, *The Political Landscape of Georgia: Political Parties: Achievements, Challenges and Prospects* (Delft: Eburon Delft, 2006).

Internal women's sections can be formal structures – with regularly scheduled meetings, resources provided by the political party leadership, a mandate and set of objectives that inform activities, and clear criteria for membership (for example, women only, or allowing both women and men as members). Alternatively, such structures can be informal, gathering women together as needed, on an ad hoc basis. The approach chosen should reflect political party dynamics, the perceived need for formality and the ultimate objectives of the structure. Cross-party co-operation should not be ruled out; where cross-party structures have not been established at the parliamentary level, these bodies can be established between political party representatives to engage in issue-based advocacy or support women candidates in upcoming elections.<sup>211</sup>

Sometimes, multiple women's sections can co-exist within a political party, serving different purposes. For example, an issue-based women's caucus or section could be established to advocate on specific policy or party issues, such as equal access to employment; such a body would involve only those members interested in lobbying on this issue (both male and female). This could exist side by side with a voluntary network or club bringing together all female party members, or a gender-equality caucus bringing together both women and men to advocate for gender-sensitive party policies. Likewise, a profession-focused women's section could bring together women of certain professions, such as those in education, health services, the judiciary or law services, or a women's network could be primarily concerned with co-operating with international party networks (for example, Socialist Women International).

### → Establishing partisan think-tanks or NGOs to support women party members

In addition to or instead of establishing women's party organizations inside the political party, women could opt to establish grassroots, independent organizations outside party structures. For example, the main political parties in the United States do not have women's wings. Instead, women members of the Republican Party are united under the umbrella of the National Federation for Republican Women (NFRW). Once an auxiliary of the Republican National Committee, today, the NFRW is financially and organizationally independent. The NFRW's objectives are to promote the principles, objectives and policies of the Republican Party; elect Republican candidates; inform the public through political education and activities; and increase the effectiveness of women in the cause of good government. In working toward these objectives, the NFRW concentrates its efforts in the areas of educating, communicating, recruiting, campaigning, fundraising, training and legislative action.<sup>212</sup>

211 For more on structures for women established within parliaments, see *A Comparative Study of Structures for Women MPs in the OSCE Region*, OSCE/ODIHR, 2013, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/105940>>.

212 For more information on the National Federation for Republican Women, visit <<http://www.nfrw.org/>>.

**Box 4.34:**  
**Women's Sections**

**Women's sections: list of tasks**

- Formulate party politics on gender-equality issues.
- Draft a party strategy to target women voters.
- Recruit new women party members.
- Organize capacity building and mentoring of women members, activists, functionaries and candidates, and support party women in elected office.
- Connect party women to women in sister parties abroad and to international women's associations and respective international political foundations.
- Create mechanisms to facilitate dialogue between women civil society groups and party women's sections, connecting civil society to government and parliamentary actors as appropriate.
- Connect party members with women in other parties at different levels so that they can form issue-based coalitions and carry out joint advocacy and lobbying on issues of mutual interest.

**Women's sections:  
do's and don'ts**

**DO:**

- Make sure the agenda is transparent and the working plan is clear.
- Make meetings open to male party members.
- Be active and engage in constructive dialogue with male party members.
- Support male initiatives if they are in line with gender equality.

**DON'T:**

- Antagonize male party members.
- Enter into conflicts with the party leadership.
- Become a quasi-NGO, dealing with charity and humanitarian work on behalf of the party.

*Source: Developed by Sonja Lokar for this handbook.*

The National Federation of Democratic Women (NFDW) is the official women's organization of the Democratic Party. The NFDW works to encourage women to make their voices heard in their communities, support them to run for office, as well as educate women and voters on important issues such as health care, medical aid and pay equity.<sup>213</sup>

➔ **Engaging men as political partners and gender advocates**

Many women are already staunch advocates of women's political participation; so too are many men. However, attracting more men to the gender-equality cause and making their contributions visible is still a challenge. By engaging the resources and support of men, women's sections can enhance the impact of their activities, while female politicians can gain broader support for the issues they campaign on. At the same time, if female politicians enjoy the support of men on issues of gender equality, this will weaken charges that they only focus on women's issues. In fact, achieving gender equality is equally relevant to men, while also carrying benefits for male politicians. To build up this coalition successfully, it is crucial to identify gender-equality issues on which both women and men are capable and willing to build consensus.

**Conclusion to Chapter 4**

This chapter has looked in detail at strategies, measures and initiatives that women – sometimes in partnership with men – can undertake to facilitate their advancement within political parties. The chapter focused on individual strategies that women can implement to establish and develop their political careers. It focused on measures that can: help women get recruited into the party of their choice; assist women in learning more about how their party operates; support women in planning their career advancement; and facilitate the process of campaigning. The chapter also explored strategies requiring collective action or co-operation, which can pave the way for greater equality of opportunity for women within parties more generally. The chapter ended by presenting strategies women can initiate or support in order to institutionalize gender equality within party structures, policies, programmes and practices. The next chapter looks in greater detail at how civil society organizations can further support political parties and women politicians in promoting gender equality in party processes, policies and activities.

213 National Federation of Democratic Women (NFDW), <<http://www.nfdw.com/>>.



# Civil society organizations and other actors

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## Introduction to Chapter 5

Over the last several decades, civil society has played a vital role in supporting transitions to – and in monitoring the resilience of – democracy across the OSCE region. As a result, there is increasing recognition that the existence of an active, diverse and inclusive civil society is an integral component and important indicator of a mature democratic society.

The transitions to democracy that swept across a vast part of the OSCE area in the 1990s provided unique opportunities for groups of citizens to take advantage of increased personal, civil and political freedoms to advocate for the greater inclusion of men and women in national and international affairs. Since then, many participating States in the OSCE region have witnessed regular cycles of democratic elections and spearheaded important institutional reform processes. Civil society organizations have played a key role in these processes at local and national levels in many participating States that have undergone transition, and continue to make valuable contributions to the consolidation of democracy across the OSCE region as a whole.

Civil society organizations have become increasingly active at the international level and in OSCE affairs in particular, participating in key OSCE regional events. These include the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the largest annual gathering of human rights activists in the OSCE region, as well as thematic meetings of the OSCE, such as Human Dimension Seminars and Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings. Their on-going work has influenced national decision-making processes and generated wider recognition of civil society's contributions to policy – and decision-making processes at the national and international levels.

Promoting gender equality as an integral aspect of a democratic society has become a key area of activity for many civil society organizations, particularly in the sphere of politics. In this regard, civil society groups can contribute to democratic consolidation by strengthening governance mechanisms in support of gender equality and promoting open, transparent and inclusive decision-making processes. Nationally and regionally, civil society organizations also play a key role in promoting women's rights and principles of gender equality by monitoring women's participation in elections, preventing violence against women and assisting the victims of domestic violence, combating human trafficking and bringing perpetrators to courts. They also advocate for the increased presence of women in political and public life, including in key elected and appointed positions. In addition, civil society organizations are instrumental in supporting the work of national mechanisms for the advancement of women and providing input into, as well as monitoring the implementation of, international treaties and national legal frameworks.

Civil society organizations can play a key role in promoting women's political participation and gender equality in political life by encouraging women to enter into politics and supporting their candidacies; by raising awareness among the electorate and political stakeholders about

*Civil society organizations, also often referred to as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), are legally constituted organizations created by natural or legal people that are not a part of a government, operate independently from any form of government and are not conventional for-profit businesses.*

*In the cases where NGOs are funded totally or partially by governments, the NGO maintains its non-governmental status by excluding government representatives from membership in the organization. The term is usually applied only to organizations that pursue wider social aims that have political aspects, but are not openly political organizations, such as political parties.*

*Source: "Non-governmental organization", Wikipedia, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil\\_society\\_organisation#Track\\_II\\_Diplomacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_society_organisation#Track_II_Diplomacy)>.*

*Civil society is the arena outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests.*

*Source: CIVICUS Civil Society Index Methodology, <[http://www.civicus.org/new/media/CSI\\_Methodology\\_and\\_conceptual\\_framework.pdf](http://www.civicus.org/new/media/CSI_Methodology_and_conceptual_framework.pdf)>.*

the barriers women face in political and public life; by educating the public about women's political contributions; by working to combat gender-based stereotypes about women's political capacities; by promoting dialogue among political stakeholders; and by undertaking analysis and research to inform and reform policy and legal frameworks in support of gender equality.

### 5.1. What strategies work?

This chapter presents strategies that can be employed by both partisan and non-partisan civil society organizations to promote women's political participation and enhance their role in political parties. It focuses on strategies that can be effective in creating broader awareness of the need for more women in politics and achieving increases in women's political representation by stimulating both the "supply" of women interested in pursuing elected office, and the "demand" for female candidates on the part of political elites, political party leaders and voters. The chapter includes strategies that can be introduced and applied not only by civil society organizations, but also by the media and academia, recognizing the critical role that both the media and academia play in raising awareness and in combating the gender-based stereotypes that often prevent women from entering the political sphere in the first place.

The chapter is organized according to six areas of activity in which civil society can support women's political participation and greater gender equality in political parties:

- Supporting **women to enter into politics** and advance their political careers;
- Working with **political parties to support women candidates**, and promoting greater gender equality in party structures, policies, processes and practices;
- Shaping **positive attitudes towards women in politics** through awareness-raising;
- Working with the **media to combat gender-based stereotypes** and promote gender-balanced reporting;
- Partnering with **academia to educate and inform the public** and political stakeholders about the positive impact of women's political participation; and
- Engaging with **executive and legislative powers to support the institutionalization** of gender equality in structural and policy frameworks.

The chapter begins with strategies that civil society organizations can introduce in order to recruit more women into politics and political parties and to support women's political advancement once they are politically active, including by facilitating access to resources. Likewise, while civil society organizations and political parties often find themselves at odds with one another, given their different roles in the political process, these organizations can support political parties in increasing their political power and appeal. This is particularly the case with partisan civil society organizations (those that share a mandate or values similar to those of certain parties), or those that work on policies, issues or causes with which political parties share a similar stance. Parties that adopt a platform in favour of gender equality, gender-sensitive reforms or greater gender balance in public life, for example, can be supported by women's groups, associations or NGOs, who may campaign on behalf of the political party.

The work of civil society in promoting gender-equality issues can be most effective when it engages and involves the media and academia. The media have played an important role in the democratic process. Facilitating a free flow of information, ideas and opinions remains a critical element in maintaining fully functioning democracies and supporting transitioning ones.

Nevertheless, the image and representation of women in the media has long been a subject of concern. The media are often accused of reinforcing gender-based stereotypes, fortifying dis-

criminatory perceptions in society about the proper roles of women and men, and under – or misrepresenting women in their political and social roles.<sup>214</sup> Research shows, for example, that television often reinforces sexist notions about traditional male and female roles; fewer women than men are represented in almost all forms of mainstream media, and those who do appear are often portrayed in stereotypical ways.<sup>215</sup>

While its role in democratization is often overlooked, academia also serves to support democracy's core tenets of a representative government, free elections, the rule of law and a free press.<sup>216</sup> Academia sustains democracy in four ways: 1) by providing a protected arena for free expression and nurturing innovative thinking; 2) by cultivating an appreciation of democracy and a disposition to public service; 3) by offering individuals a chance to discover and develop their talents; and 4) by fostering economic growth and, thus, individual opportunity. Promoting gender equality in academia and integrating academic research on gender issues into policymaking are key elements for the successful empowerment of women in politics. As the media and civil society organizations can play similar roles in stimulating democracy, joint efforts between representatives of the media, academia and civil society organizations are often the most effective and influential.

Lastly, civil society can engage with or target legislative and executive bodies, including parliaments, ministries, national human rights mechanisms and gender-equality machinery, to facilitate the adoption and implementation of non-discriminatory legislative and policy frameworks in support of gender equality. While civil society often plays a “watchdog” role in monitoring the behaviour and actions of national authorities, civil society organizations can also work with reform-minded officials to raise awareness of women's rights and gender equality across the public sector more broadly.

The six strategies described above are explored in more detail in the following sections.

### **5.1.1. Encouraging women to enter politics and advance their political careers**

As noted, women remain under-represented in elected office in all OSCE participating States. Fewer women than men are selected by parties to run for office. At the same time, research demonstrates that when women do run for office – regardless of the position they seek – they are just as likely as their male counterparts to win their races.<sup>217</sup> In Ukraine, survey research undertaken by civil society representatives found that voters are more supportive of gender parity than political party representatives, indicating that gender is not a factor in determining voter preference (see the section on academia below).<sup>218</sup> Nevertheless, as noted in previous chapters, barriers remain that prevent women from entering politics in the first place, while

214 Julia T. Wood, “Gendered media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender”, <<http://www.udel.edu/comm245/readings/GenderedMedia.pdf>>;

215 Jean Kilbourne, *Two Ways a Woman Can Get Hurt: Advertising and Violence, Rereading America* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), pp. 455–75.

216 Richard M. Freeland, “Academia's Role in Strengthening the Foundation of a Democratic Society”, *Solutions for our future*. Org, 2006, <[http://www.solutionsforourfuture.org/guest\\_RichardMFreeland.htm](http://www.solutionsforourfuture.org/guest_RichardMFreeland.htm)>.

217 Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Melinda Henneberger, “Why women don't run for political office” *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2012, <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/post/why-women-dont-run-for-political-office/2012/03/25/gIQAxlTtZS\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/post/why-women-dont-run-for-political-office/2012/03/25/gIQAxlTtZS_blog.html)>.

218 Ukrainian Women's Fund, *Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: A Strategy Paper*, Kiev, 2011, p.13.

women continue to confront challenges in accessing the resources they need to compete on a level playing field with men.

This section looks at how civil society organizations can support women's entry into politics and facilitate their political advancement. The strategies presented include civil society initiatives to support the recruitment of women into politics, develop women's political capacity, enhance women's access to political resources and increase women's political solidarity.

### → Recruiting more women into political parties

Recruiting more women into political parties, and politics more generally, is an important process that civil society organizations are well placed to initiate and support. Recruitment programmes and initiatives include those aimed at recruiting more women into political parties, preparing women to assume leadership and/or managerial positions and persuading women to come forward as candidates for elected or appointed office.

**Figure 5.1: The 2012 Project**



**“Don’t Get Mad, Get Elected”**

Source: Centre for American Women in Politics, Rutgers University, <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/>.

Several good examples of political recruitment initiatives exist in the United States, where numerous civil society groups are dedicated to the goal of motivating women to run.<sup>219</sup> In particular, a recruitment campaign that gained national prominence was the “2012 Project”, a non-partisan campaign initiated by the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.<sup>220</sup> The Project focused on the year 2012 because, following the 2010 census, every congressional and state legislative district was in the process of being redrawn, thereby creating a number of new and open seats. The campaign, which included a video titled “Consider this Your Invitation”,<sup>221</sup> was 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 targeted older women on the grounds that women of this age are more likely to be at the top of their professions, hold fewer family responsibilities (as children may be older) and be financially independent. Women interested in taking the next step toward candidacy were connected to leadership institutes, think tanks, campaign training programmes and fundraising networks designed to help them succeed in their own states.

219 “Political and Leadership Resources for Women”, Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, <[http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education\\_training/trainingresources/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/trainingresources/index.php)>. The resources and examples referenced in this handbook are included owing to their value as effective good practices for the promotion of women's participation in political parties. As such, their inclusion in no way represents an endorsement of or agreement with the policy agendas or political platforms of the organizations, platforms and political parties that produced them.

220 See: <[http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education\\_training/2012Project/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/2012Project/index.php)>.

221 See: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Mn6o1QUwPo>>.

By contrast, an organization named “Running Start” 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.<sup>222</sup> The “Young Women’s Political Leadership Program”<sup>223</sup> aims to introduce high school girls to the importance of political leadership, and runs intensive, five-day workshops on the topics of public speaking, networking, on-camera media training and message and platform development. Within the framework of this programme, the “Path to Politics”<sup>224</sup> initiative consists of a series of meetings held throughout the year featuring young women legislators, candidates and campaign experts as speakers. Speakers encourage audience members to consider running for office, and provide practical advice on topics ranging from fundraising and voter outreach to establishing credibility as a young female legislator.

**Box 5.2:  
Running for Office – Women  
versus Men**

Women are 50 per cent less likely than men to seriously consider running for office, less likely than men to run for office and far less likely to run for higher office – despite being similarly qualified.

Source: Jennifer L. Lawless, Richard L. Fox. *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don’t Run for Office*. Cambridge University Press, 2005; Melinda Henneberger, “Why women don’t run for political office” *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2012.

In a similar vein, the “Running Start/Wal-Mart Star Fellowship”<sup>225</sup> programme invites up to 14 college women to Washington, DC, each year to learn about politics first-hand. The programme places these 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. As a follow-up to the above-mentioned programme, the “Running Start Next Step”<sup>226</sup> initiative is a five-day, intensive professional development programme geared towards young women aged 23 to 27, with two to four years of work experience and a passion for politics. During the workshop, political experts provide practical, hands-on training aimed at developing professional confidence and fostering the advancement of the next generation of women political leaders.

Two other civil society initiatives in the United States are “She Should Run” and “Appoint Her”. Inspired by statistics that demonstrate that women are much less likely than men to think about becoming candidates (see Box 5.2),<sup>227</sup> the “She Should Run” initiative is an online nomination tool and resource that allows citizens to submit the name of a woman they believe should run for office someday. The programme guarantees that the nominated women receive positive encouragement, connections and the resources necessary to take the next step.<sup>228</sup> Similarly, the “Appoint Her” project, organized by the United States Women’s Campaign Fund, provides a national resource for women seeking elected office by informing women of available positions, sharing skills and traits of women currently in office and discussing how such women launched their own careers.<sup>229</sup>

222 “Running Start. Bringing Young Women to Politics”, [runningstart.org](http://www.runningstartonline.org), <<http://www.runningstartonline.org>>.

223 “Young Women’s Political Leadership Program”, [runningstart.org](http://www.runningstartonline.org), <<http://www.runningstartonline.org/programs/young-womens-political-leadership>>.

224 “Path to Politics”, [runningstart.org](http://www.runningstartonline.org), <<http://www.runningstartonline.org/blog/path-to-politics-networking-lunch>>.

225 Running Start/Wal-Mart Star Fellowship”, [runningstart.org](http://www.runningstartonline.org), <<http://www.runningstartonline.org/programs/star-fellowship>>.

226 “Next Step”, [runningstart.org](http://www.runningstartonline.org), <<http://www.runningstartonline.org/programs/next-step>>.

227 See Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don’t Run for Office* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Melinda Henneberger, “Why women don’t run for political office”, *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2012, <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/post/why-women-dont-run-for-political-office/2012/03/25/gIQAxlTtZS\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/post/why-women-dont-run-for-political-office/2012/03/25/gIQAxlTtZS_blog.html)>.

228 “She should run”, [sheshouldrun.org](http://www.sheshouldrun.org), 2011, <<http://www.sheshouldrun.org/>>; the nomination form can be found at: <[http://support.wcfonline.org/site/Survey?ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI\\_ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=1420](http://support.wcfonline.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=1420)>.

229 “Women’s Campaign Fund”, 2011, [wcfonline.org](http://www.wcfonline.org), <<http://www.wcfonline.org/>>.



In a similar fashion, the “Women for Election” initiative in Ireland was established to inspire and equip women to succeed in politics. In its information pamphlet, it includes a postcard that is meant to be sent by individuals to women they feel should run for public office (“You inspire me, I know you would inspire voters” is the key message on the postcard). This “Get on the Ticket” initiative is aimed at expanding the supply of women willing to run for elected office at local and national levels across Ireland.<sup>230</sup>

**Figure 5.3: Get on the Ticket Initiative: Ireland**



**Box 5.4:**  
**Political Recruitment – Who is the target group?**

When initiating or supporting the recruitment of women politicians, a civil society organization should consider what kind of woman they are targeting. Criteria may include:

- Age group
- Profession
- Economic background
- Education
- Ethnic heritage
- Location (regional or national initiative)
- Family status
- Political interest group

As the above examples demonstrate, the targeting of women of specific age groups and professional profiles can be an effective means to tailor political recruitment initiatives to women with different backgrounds and experiences. At the same time, it is important to consider the obstacles that women face at different stages of their political careers and to customize campaigns accordingly. A political recruitment initiative with a broad remit is perhaps less likely to succeed than one that attracts a specific group of women or identifies a particular issue that women face, be it a lack of resources, skills or awareness. When choosing a target group for a women’s political recruitment campaign, it may be useful for a civil society organization to consider the different social profiles of its target group, including economic background, ethnic heritage, age and professional specialization, in order to fill gaps left by pre-existing recruitment initiatives in the country (see Box 5.4).

**→ Implementing capacity-development initiatives**

Across the OSCE region, civil society organizations play a critical role in preparing and empowering women for public office and political advancement through the organization of capacity-

<sup>230</sup> See “Women for Election”, [womenforelection.ie](http://www.womenforelection.ie), <<http://www.womenforelection.ie>>.

building initiatives. The OSCE/ODIHR's country partners in each of the five pilot countries<sup>231</sup> all provide customized training for political stakeholders on the issues of gender equality and women's promotion in political affairs.

In Kazakhstan, the Association of Businesswomen regularly organizes a school of political leadership,<sup>232</sup> while the Foundation of Parliamentary Development runs special sessions on women's electoral rights.<sup>233</sup> The Moldovan Women's Club 50/50 also uses this training programme, which focuses on encouraging women to participate in political and public life and cultivating women's ambition to run for elected office.<sup>234</sup> The Slovenian civil society organization Central and Eastern European (CEE) Network for Gender Issues<sup>235</sup> adapted the Norwegian Labour Party-designed "Women Can Do It" training course as a basis for the training programmes the CEE Network regularly organizes in several southern and eastern European countries. In Ireland, the Women for Election civil society organization regularly organizes the INSPIRE programme, a fee-based initiative that seeks to build the confidence and skills of women interested in entering into politics.<sup>236</sup>

Not all capacity-development programmes target women exclusively. The school of political management run by the American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan targets both male and female participants. Likewise, the Moldovan Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT)<sup>237</sup> organizes a Leadership School for Young Political Leaders on a regular basis.<sup>238</sup> The Association works with representatives of the youth wings of all political parties to encourage youth members to consider running for public office, as well as to promote democratic values and political pluralism in the country. While these programmes provide opportunities for men and women to learn together and jointly develop political leadership skills, targeting women candidates only can prove useful in tackling the specific political capacity issues facing women, especially in countries where women's access to education is restricted.

Over the years, several German partisan civil society groups have developed training and awareness-raising activities targeting women and the broader public. These initiatives include discussions with prominent women politicians, presentations of research publications and/or skill development workshops. For example, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung<sup>239</sup> has held "Equal Pay Day" events and organizes occasional lectures addressing the progress of women under social-

231 The relevant partner organizations in each country are as follows: Women in Development/Millennium Women Network ([www.albania-mwn.org](http://www.albania-mwn.org)) (Albania); Women's Information Center ([www.wicge.org](http://www.wicge.org)) (Georgia); Feminist League ([www.empowering-women.kz](http://www.empowering-women.kz)) (Kazakhstan); Alliance of Women Legislative Initiatives (AWLI) / Social Technologies Agency STA (<http://www.awli-kg.org>) (Kyrgyzstan); Partnership for Development Centre PROGEN ([www.progen.md](http://www.progen.md)) (Moldova).

232 "Женское политическое лидерство", Ассоциации деловых женщин Казахстана, ("Women's political leadership", Association of Business Women of Kazakhstan), [businesswomen.kz](http://www.businesswomen.kz/zhenskoe_poiticheskoe_liderstvo/), 2007 – 2012, <[http://www.businesswomen.kz/zhenskoe\\_poiticheskoe\\_liderstvo/](http://www.businesswomen.kz/zhenskoe_poiticheskoe_liderstvo/)>.

233 "Фонд развития парламентаризма в Казахстане" начал проект "Женские политические права", [forum.gender.ru](http://www.forum.gender.ru), 11 December 2011, <<http://www.forum.gender.ru/node/7175>>.

234 Sonja Lokar, "The Shift in International Actors' Approach to the Situation of Women in Conflict and Post-conflict Regions 1999–2008: The Case of the Balkans" in Erhard Busek / Björn Kühne (eds.), "From Stabilisation to Integration. The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe". Vol. 1, pp. 65–74.

235 European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, <<http://www.euopenforum.net/gendernetwork>>.

236 See "Women for Election", <<http://www.womenforelection.ie/>>.

237 Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT), <<http://www.e-democracy.md/en/>>.

238 "Leadership School for Young Political Leaders", Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT), 2009–2010, <<http://www.e-democracy.md/en/liderismpolitic/>>.

239 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, <<http://www.fes.de/>>.



**Box 5.5:**  
**League of Women Voters'**  
**Face to Face Guide**

*Face to Face* is a guide developed by the League of Women Voters to help officials, the media and civil society organize effective, fair and interesting candidate debates. This guide offers practical advice to women candidates, and could be used as a reference to other civil society organizations wishing to organize debates with female candidates.

Source: *Face to Face. The League of Women Voters' Guide to Candidate Debates*, 2007, <<http://www.lwv.org/files/Face%20To%20Face.pdf>>.

democratic leadership.<sup>240</sup> The Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung<sup>241</sup> has offered a series of lectures entitled “Strong women, strong words”<sup>242</sup> within the framework of its programme “Politics and education”. Meanwhile, the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung runs an International Academy for Leadership and an e-Academy, targeting young women interested in politics.<sup>243</sup> These activities form part of the long-term programming of these organizations to build women’s capacity to enter and advance in politics, and have been particularly successful in facilitating networking among women from different communities.

Training initiatives are also well-developed in the United States. The “Emerge America” initiative is a seven-month intensive training programme currently organized in nine states for women who want to run for elected office.<sup>244</sup> Similarly, the “White House Project” offers interactive leadership development to women through two – to three-hour online and

in-person training, full-day conferences and three-day summits.<sup>245</sup> The “WinforWomen” programme, implemented by the National Federation for Republican Women, delivers campaign training courses for women interested in running for office.<sup>246</sup>

Further, the United States-based League of Women Voters<sup>247</sup> regularly organizes training programmes, candidate debates and forums aimed at preparing women for organizational growth opportunities and maximizing their visibility.<sup>248</sup> It also develops resource materials for women interested in running for public office. The *Face to Face* guide, for example, provides guidance to women on participating in candidate debates (see Box 5.5).

The efforts of national civil society organizations are often supported by a variety of international governmental and non-governmental organizations, including those that are aligned with specific political parties, as well as those providing support to parties from across the political spectrum. For example, as noted in Chapter 4, the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), several German party foundations, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) all work in various OSCE participating States, providing capacity-building programmes for women in political parties. In addition, UN entities and OSCE field operations also work on supporting political parties to promote women into politics. National civil society organizations can think about participating in training run by international foundations to observe their capacity-building practices, and/or seek co-operation with international governmental and non-governmental organizations when creating similar programmes for female political candidates.

240 The 2013 event, held on March is entitled: “From Bluestocking to Minister”, <[http://www.fes.de/sets/s\\_ver.htm](http://www.fes.de/sets/s_ver.htm)>.

241 Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, <<http://www.hss.de>>.

242 “Starke Frauen Starke Worte. Im Gespräch mit Charlotte Knobloch”, 2012, <<http://www.hss.de/politik-bildung/themen/themen-2012/starke-frauen-starke-worte-im-gespraech-mit-charlotte-knobloch.html>>.

243 Friederich-Naumann-Stiftung, <<http://www.freiheit.org/>>.

244 Emerge America: Women leaders for a democratic future, 2011, <<http://www.emergeamerica.org/home>>.

245 The White House Project, 2012, <<http://thewhitehouseproject.org/>>.

246 The National Federation for Republican Women, <<http://www.nfrw.org/>>.

247 League of Women Voters, <<http://www.lwv.org/>>.

248 “FAQ’s Candidate Forums-Debates”, League of Women Voters, <<http://www.lwv.org/content/faqs-candidate-forums-debates>>.

The criteria listed above in Box 5.4 are also relevant when choosing a target group for women's political capacity-building. As the political knowledge of women from different backgrounds may vary considerably, choosing a target group carefully will help civil society organizations tailor capacity-building programmes accordingly.

### → Initiating or supporting mentoring programmes for women politicians

Just as political parties can support the establishment of formal or informal mentoring schemes, civil society organizations at national and international levels have initiated mentoring programmes for women interested in entering or advancing in politics. Popular in the business sector, political mentoring programmes are actually a relatively new phenomenon, and have grown out of more established business networking and/or capacity-building initiatives.

The Danish NGO Kvininfo (Danish Centre for Gender, Equality and Ethnicity)<sup>249</sup> has been at the forefront of supporting the establishment of mentoring initiatives for women politicians in Denmark, including in collaboration with municipal authorities. It has also partnered with the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) to support the sharing of mentoring methodologies with women politicians from other countries.<sup>250</sup> Based on these successful initiatives, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) launched its European Political Mentoring Network<sup>251</sup> in 2013, within the framework of its 50/50 Campaign. The first programme of its kind at European level, 11 Members of the European Parliament (MEP) from a broad range of political parties represented in the European Parliament have agreed to act as mentors to politically-active women from ethnic minority backgrounds in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Within the framework of the programme, mentors and mentees will meet regularly and participate in three capacity-building sessions. Mentees will have the opportunity to shadow their mentors in the European Parliament in Brussels as well as during a plenary session in Strasbourg.

### → Facilitating women's access to political resources

Providing women with resources to advance their political careers and run for office can make a big difference in women's prospects for success. A growing number of civil society organizations have developed fundraising initiatives to encourage female candidates and ensure that they have the resources necessary for waging successful electoral campaigns. Removing financial obstacles is especially important in countries where campaigns are resource intensive and public funding is not available for women candidates, or for political parties more generally.

Perhaps the best-known civil society organization providing financial support to women running for public office is the United States-based EMILY's List, a group that recruits and trains women candidates, publicizing their names in order to solicit campaign contributions from supporters across the country (see Box 5.6).<sup>252</sup> Since its foundation in 1985, EMILY's List has helped to elect over 100 women to the House of Representatives, 19 to the Senate, 10 governors and over 500 women to state and local office.<sup>253</sup> Based on the EMILY's List model, similar fund-

<sup>249</sup> See: <<http://www.kvininfo.dk/side/661/>>.

<sup>250</sup> See, for example, the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, "DIPD and KVINFO team up on mentoring for women in political parties in Bhutan, Malawi and Tanzania", <<http://dipd.dk/2013/02/dipd-and-kvininfo-team-up-on-mentoring-for-women-in-political-parties-in-bhutan-malawi-and-tanzania/>>.

<sup>251</sup> See European Women's Lobby, <<http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article4862>>.

<sup>252</sup> See EMILY's List, <<http://www.emilyslist.org>>.

<sup>253</sup> Testimonies from some of these women are available at: <[http://emilyslist.org/who/we\\_are\\_emily/](http://emilyslist.org/who/we_are_emily/)>.

**Box 5.6:**  
**How does EMILY's List work?**

EMILY's List identifies female candidates and connects them to supporters via four steps:

1. Using a rigorous selection process, EMILY's List finds the top Democratic women candidates for the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as for the position of governor.
2. EMILY's List recommends these women to its more than one million members across the country and asks these members to give directly to these women's campaigns.
3. EMILY's List members receive detailed profiles about each candidate's views, backgrounds and campaigns — letting them decide whom they wish to support.
4. One-hundred per cent of members' contributions go directly to the campaigns, providing maximum political impact and delivering a bigger cash boost for EMILY's List candidates.

Source: EMILY's List,  
<<http://www.emilyslist.org/>>

raising organizations have been established in other OSCE participating States, including the United Kingdom and Italy, as well as in Australia, an OSCE Partner for Co-operation.<sup>254</sup>

As EMILY's List focuses on electing “pro-choice” women representing the Democratic Party to political office in the United States, its success spurred the establishment of fundraising groups for “pro-life” women politicians. The “Susan B. Anthony List” was created in 1993 as a counterpart to EMILY's List and is dedicated to electing candidates and pursuing policies to end abortion, with an emphasis on the election, education, promotion and mobilization of pro-life women.<sup>255</sup> Founded in 1992, a group known as “WISH List” (Women in the Senate and House) is meant to provide strategic advice, training and financial support to Republican women running for local, state and national offices across the country.<sup>256</sup>

Overall, to make fundraising campaigns more successful, it is essential to raise awareness and knowledge among both women and men of the importance of campaign finance as a means to increase women's political participation. Concrete fundraising strategies for women are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, while initiatives political parties can introduce to make allocation of resources more equitable are explored in Chapter 3.

## → Building solidarity between civil society groups on common issues

While civil society organizations often reflect different identity groups within society and, more often than not, find themselves in competition with one another for government or other funding, establishing permanent or temporary issue-based coalitions can be a very effective method of supporting gender equality in political life. This is a strategy that has proven effective across the OSCE region. For example, in Kyrgyzstan an alliance of national NGOs elaborated an ambitious Joint Action Platform to increase the number of women represented in parliament, given that the 2005 parliamentary elections resulted in no women being elected to the legislature. In this case, the complete lack of women's legislative representation created a window of opportunity for Kyrgyz women's NGOs to work together on an issue of urgent concern. Based on their collective, concerted action, the NGO coalition managed to achieve a 27 per cent increase in women's representation in parliament in less than five years (see Box 5.7).

254 See: <<http://www.emilyslist.org.au/>>.

255 The Susan B. Anthony List, <<http://www.sba-list.org/>>.

256 The WISH List, <<http://www.thewishlist.org/>>.

### Box 5.7: Kyrgyzstan: From 0 per cent to 27 per cent Women in Parliament in Three Years

Following the 2005 elections in Kyrgyzstan, no women MPs were elected to the country's parliament. This outcome was predicted by women political activists and gender NGOs who, before the elections, called for amendments to election laws to promote women's candidacy for public office.

In 2005, the women's movement of Kyrgyzstan developed a Common Action Platform to be implemented by 2010. One of the priorities included lobbying for the introduction of legislative gender quotas. However, the set of amendments proposed by civil society organizations was criticized by many MPs: the latter preferred postponing the issue to the next sitting of parliament, knowing that their mandates might potentially be at risk should such amendments be introduced.

In response, women's organizations decided to enlarge the scope of their activities and use creative means to advocate on the issue. The NGO Social Technologies Agency and the national women's network "Women Can Do it All", with the support of the OSCE/ODIHR, developed a comprehensive media strategy. The strategy included two priorities: to enhance solidarity among women's groups in promoting women's leadership, and to publicize women's vital contributions to society and promote their leadership potential.

The following activities took place in 2006–2007 within the framework of the OSCE/ODIHR-supported media campaign:

- A symbolic action titled "Alternative 8th of March", establishing an International Day for Solidarity to highlight challenges to gender equality and to fight for economic, social and political equality.
- Meetings in front of the parliament on the topic of "Say NO to polygamy! Say YES to secular Kyrgyzstan!"
- A symbolic action titled "Мамаи разные нужны и в политике важны!" (Mothers are important in politics) as part of Children's Day, celebrated on June 1.
- Small-scale press-conferences held by the parliament, highlighting the necessity to introduce temporary special measures into the Electoral Code.
- The collection of signatures from voters across the country and distribution of fax messages to MPs to

lobby for the introduction of special measures into the Electoral Code. The pressure was so strong that many MPs started to lobby for gender quotas in public.

- Parliamentary hearings on amendments to the Electoral Code. As a result, 16 out of 18 MPs attended the hearing remarked on the necessity of including special measures in the Electoral Code.
- Action "Zebra", whereby the parity principle on party lists was highlighted by the participants of the National NGO Forum 2007. To show solidarity with the motto "Women + Men = Strong Parliament", participants wore badges and headscarves with black and white stripes and zebras, which symbolized a principle of alternation of male and female names on the party lists.
- During a meeting of the NGO Steering Committee with the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the NGO representatives highlighted that it was necessary to reintroduce gender quotas into the Electoral Code.

As a result of these initiatives, the movement gained the attention of the president, and a new Electoral Code was drafted that reflected some of the demands made. On 21 October 2007, a referendum was held, in which both the Code and an edited version of the Constitution were adopted. The new Constitution states that parliamentary elections must be organized according to the proportional system through party lists. Meanwhile, Article 72 of the new Electoral Code includes provisions for a double gender quota (indicating not only the proportion of women, but also requiring alternation of candidates on the list), as well as quotas for ethnic minorities and youth.

In December 2007, parliamentary elections were conducted in accordance with the new rules. Only those parties whose party lists conformed to the indicated requirements could take part. Consequently, out of 12 participating parties, representatives of only three parties were elected to the parliament, including 24 women MPs (27 per cent). For the first time in the history of the country, a woman assumed the post of vice-speaker of parliament, and five parliamentary committees were headed by women, including the traditionally male-dominated committees of defence, security, law enforcement, judicial and legal reform, agriculture, ecology and emergency situations.

Source: Developed by Zulfia Kochorbaeva, Social Technologies Agency (STA) Kyrgyzstan, for this handbook.

### → Initiating or supporting cross-sector co-operation on women's political participation

In addition to establishing partnerships between civil society organizations, civil society can also mobilize broader sections of society in support of women's political participation and gender equality. Civil society organizations usually enjoy a certain level of legitimacy in the eyes of citizens, due to their role in representing the needs of different sectors of society, advocating for policies that respond to these needs and monitoring the implementation of these policies. One often underutilized form of mobilization in support of gender equality is reaching across different sectors of society to recruit gender-equality advocates. In sectors such as

business, the arts, media, publishing, sports, technology, science and medicine, women who occupy prominent positions can serve as role models, demonstrating women's capacities, skills and abilities. Bringing such women (and male gender advocates) together can send a strong political message.

For example, the Polish Congress of Women brings together women and men from across Polish society to celebrate women's achievements across a number of different sectors.<sup>257</sup> The Congress also serves as a political forum, as each Congress adopts a specific slogan and develops a specific set of messages targeting public officials. A number of Polish political party representatives and MPs have supported this initiative by developing a response to or stance on the messages developed by the Congress participants. The Congress represents a strategic way for political parties to demonstrate their support for women's advancement and gender equality in all sectors of political, social, economic and cultural life in Poland (see Box 5.8 below).

#### Box 5.8: The Polish Congress of Women

First established in 2009, the Polish Congress of Women gathers women (and men) from across all spheres of Polish society – politics, education, business, academia, media, civil society, the arts, science and trade unions – to advocate on behalf of women's interests and gender equality. In 2009, the Congress adopted the slogan "Women for Poland, Poland for Women" and gathered more than 4,000 women. The participants elaborated more than 135 demands, with the main demand calling for the introduction of a draft law on parity. Participants in the 2010 Congress continued their call for the introduction of special measures in the form of quotas, which were adopted by the Polish Parliament in January 2011.

In 2011, the Polish Congress of Women took advantage of the Polish Presidency of the European Union to host a European Women's Congress. This Congress gathered more than 6,000 experts and gender advocates from across Europe and Poland. The 2011 European Congress of Women organized parallel panels devoted to issues of primary concern to Polish and European women, including women's participation in politics and in business, domestic violence and combating cultural gender-based stereotypes.

The Congress had a significant effect on political parties contesting the 2011 parliamentary elections. During the 2011 elections, the amended Electoral Code (featuring the legislated gender quota) was applied and the number of women candidates doubled to 44 per cent. Political parties in many cases exceeded the required quota on their lists. Civic Platform registered the highest number of female candidates heading electoral lists (14 out of 41 districts). It was the only one among political parties present in the sixth term of the Sejm placing a female candidate in at least one of the three top positions on the list in all electoral districts – despite the fact that such an obligation is not required by the revised Electoral Code. In addition, as support for political parties differs depending on the region of Poland in question, Civic Platform guaranteed the highest number of top positions to women in "winnable regions" – 38 per cent.

Two good practices can be drawn from the Polish Women's Congress: first, the importance of taking advantage of political and other events (cultural, sporting) hosted by a country in order to put women's issues and gender equality on the agenda; and second, anchoring the initiative to a broad-based social movement, as opposed to affiliating it with a specific political party.

*Source: Malgorzata Druciarek, Malgorzata Fuszara, Aleksandra Nizynska and Jaroslaw Zbieranek, Women on the Polish Political Scene (Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs/ODIHR), 2012, p. 9.*

In June 2013, a Women's Congress was organized in Prague, bringing together women and gender advocates from civil society organizations, institutions, academia, the arts, media and the public and private sectors.<sup>258</sup> The Congress, the topic of which was "Women in the labour market", produced recommendations that Congress representatives officially presented to the Prime Minister on 19 June 2013 – International Equality Day. In the same year, the first ever Congress of Women was organized in Hungary. In preparation for the Congress, women from

<sup>257</sup> See "The Congress of Women", <<http://www.kongreskobiet.pl/en-EN/>>.

<sup>258</sup> See "Women's Congress: About Women, Not Only For women", kongreszen.cz, <<http://www.kongreszen.cz/o-kongresu/18>>.



Hungary held consultative meetings with civil society and gender advocates from a range of different sectors. Held in November 2013, the Women's Congress took advantage of the run-up to parliamentary elections in 2014 to highlight the low level of women's representation in elected office in the country, currently the lowest in the OSCE region at 8.8 per cent.

### → Mobilizing and co-operating with national and/or local women's movements

National women's movements can be ideal partners for civil society organizations in OSCE participating States. Sometimes, women's movements have already institutionalized themselves as civil society organizations or women's associations. In other cases, women's movements are loose affiliations of women activists and gender-equality advocates, who may represent the civil society sector alone, or who may also comprise representatives of the political and public sectors. Women's movements have emerged out of particular and specific country contexts, and have played different roles in the political and public life of OSCE participating States. As such, it is impossible to define women's movements in ways that make them representative of the OSCE region as a whole.

The Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS) has undertaken research on women's movements in a number post-industrialist states, 13 of which are OSCE participating States (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States).<sup>259</sup> It has defined women's movements as compositions of actors who present ideas for enhancing women's representation in public and social fora. Women's movements, in contrast to broader social movements, normally express an explicit identity with women as a group, and seek to represent women as women in public life.

In this respect, women's movements can be ideal allies in seeking to identify and support women as political actors. Indeed, many politically-active women have engaged in one way or another with women's movements, and/or have been successful precisely because of the support provided them by women's movements. In the Western Balkans, for example, many women politicians and MPs were and continue to be members of women's movements. In the Western Balkans, women's movements played – and continue to play – key roles in the transition to democracy in recent decades.

The research undertaken by RNGS demonstrated that women's movements in the 13 participating States included in the study have had an impact on areas of public policy touching on gender equality. Researchers reviewed the concrete activities and policy suggestions espoused by women's movements in these areas, tracked the evolution of policy debates in response to these suggestions over several decades (where possible) and noted the impact of the women's movement on both the style and substance of policy debate.<sup>260</sup>

Research undertaken on how policymakers and politicians respond to the political representation of women found that policymakers in the Nordic countries were most likely to respond positively to requests from women's movements. In the United Kingdom and France, considerable resistance was encountered, and successes were won gradually, over longer periods of time and following sustained action by women's movements. The findings suggest that women's movements can have an impact on public policy, particularly in the sphere of women's political representation. This impact can be felt not only in ensuring that policy is more

<sup>259</sup> See Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS), <<http://libarts.wsu.edu/pppa/rngs/index.html>>.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

gender-sensitive and gender-responsive, but also in creating a space for women and women activists to participate more meaningfully in policy-making.<sup>261</sup>

Providing a comprehensive overview of the actions of women's movements is beyond the scope of this handbook. Suffice it to say that a women's movement in any country should be considered as a potential ally, partner and source of support for any civil society organization working to enhance women's participation in political parties and politics more broadly.

### **5.1.2. Working with political parties**

Civil society organizations and political parties usually operate in separate spheres and, as such, adopt different aims and employ different tools to carry out their work. Political parties are able to represent, aggregate and negotiate interests in ways that civil society organizations cannot, and to channel these interests as public representatives of the electorate. In contrast, civil society plays an important "watchdog" role in the political and public sphere. However, the roles attributed to political parties and civil society organizations in democratic societies often overlap in important ways. This is particularly the case in the sphere of politics.

Civil society organizations or groups are increasingly engaged in activities performed by political parties, including identifying and preparing candidates for elected office, raising awareness on political issues and engaging in political-policy reform. This is the case in OSCE participating States where laws invite civil society organizations to be represented in parliament and where these organizations are allowed to put forward candidates for public office. For example, a coalition of prominent civil society organizations in Georgia can put forward their preferred candidate for the position of Public Defender, even though the final decision rests with parliament.<sup>262</sup> In 2012, a group of NGOs named their preferred nominee and, although their chosen candidate was not ultimately appointed, the initiative garnered a great deal of media attention, attesting to the influence of the organized civil society sector in the country. In some OSCE participating States, the civil society sector plays a highly political role in organizing constituents, taking on policy positions similar to political parties and impacting the policy agenda. At the extreme, some civil society organizations have become extensions of political parties, no longer serving independent or monitoring roles in the political sphere.

Indeed, many political parties start out as civil society organizations, by uniting around one or more pressing issues not addressed by any of the existing parties, as was the case with the Civil Platform in Russia. In such cases, civil society organizations have entered the political sphere in order to provide citizens with alternative means of political participation, as it was perceived that existing political parties failed to fully represent the citizenry and/or their concerns. Furthermore, many politicians and candidates are often former members of organized civil society, including women's movements, as noted previously. This is particularly the case in regions that have experienced democratic transitions, where former civil society leaders and reformists eventually run for political office. This suggests that there is plenty of scope for co-operation between political parties and civil society organizations, and the lessons learned and contacts derived from experiences in both spheres can be employed when promoting women's political participation.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> "Group of NGOs names preferred Public Defender", Civil Georgia, 11 October 2012, <<http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=25342>>.



Both a vibrant civil society and effective political parties are necessary for a sound democracy. An effectively functioning political system is one in which both sectors operate autonomously from one another, but simultaneously engage in a constructively critical relationship. To this end, civil society can support political parties in making the political sphere more gender-friendly and welcoming to female political actors.

Accordingly, this section looks in more detail at how civil society organizations can provide critical support to **political parties** in making their processes and practices more accommodating of female politicians. The section begins by presenting strategies on how civil society organizations can help make internal party policies and procedures more gender-friendly, and then explores how they can assist parties in integrating gender equality into party platforms and in mobilizing voters. The section ends with strategies that these organizations can apply to monitor political parties with reference to their gender-equality commitments.

### → **Assisting political parties in conducting an internal gender audit**

As noted in Chapter 3, in order to introduce more gender-friendly policies, procedures and practices, political parties must first identify the sources of possible discrimination against women. A gender audit or self-assessment is an ideal tool to this end. While political parties may undertake such exercises by themselves with, for example, the support of internal women's sections, parties can also commission civil society gender experts to assist them.

**Gender audits** first assess the readiness of an organization or body to undertake change, and then evaluate existing policies, procedures and practices to determine any direct or indirect sources of discrimination and identify existing commitments and practices to promote gender equality. Audits may also include interviews with party leaders and members to determine attitudes and perceptions towards women, and gender equality, more broadly. Once gaps, challenges and sources of discrimination are identified, civil society experts can assist parties in developing concrete gender action plans for addressing these, and develop monitoring processes whereby designated party activists or members can monitor progress. Engaging external civil society experts to help parties conduct a gender audit can increase the objectivity of the exercise, and can also be useful in uncovering gender biases or discriminatory practices that have been unconsciously accepted by party members, including gender-equality advocates.

#### **Box 5.9: Gender Audit: Step-by-step Process**

- Assess organizational readiness;
- Survey staff to understand perceptions of gender integration;
- Create a detailed action plan for integrating gender; and
- Monitor ongoing activities that achieve gender equality in the organization.

Source: "The Gender Audit Handbook, A Tool for Organizational Self Assessment and Transformation", InterAction, 2010, <<http://www.interaction.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20Audit%20Handbook%202010%20Copy.pdf>>.

#### **Box 5.10: The BANDIAR Project SWOT Analysis of Women's Political Participation**

BANDIAR's SWOT analysis framework includes the following questions that may be relevant for political party gender audits:

##### **Strengths:**

What have we done successfully and what resources are available to us in order to:

- mobilize women in political [party] life?
- make women visible in political [party] life?

##### **Weaknesses:**

What are the differences in the positions women politicians occupy [in parties] compared to men?

What resources are lacking to mobilize and make women visible in political [party] life?

##### **Opportunities:**

What are the opportunities to:

- mobilize women in political [party] life?
- make women visible in political [party] life?

##### **Threats:**

What are the major challenges and obstacles we face in mobilizing and making women visible in political [party] life?

Source: Adapted from BANDIAR Project SWOT Grid, <<http://www.balticfem.com/en/completed-projects/bandiar-2009>>.

**Box 5.11:  
Training Women Candidates and  
Leaders in the OSCE Region**

Within the framework of the Women in Political Parties project, the OSCE/ODIHR, in co-operation with its field operations and other partners, including NDI, IRI, NIMD, UNDP and UN Women, has organized leadership training for women candidates and women interested in advancing their political careers within parties.

Intensive training programmes have been organized in Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan.

For example, the non-government, inter-regional organization BalticFem undertook an assessment of women's participation in political life more broadly, in co-operation with local authorities and politicians in five European countries. BalticFem, based in Sweden, aims at enhancing gender equality in the Baltic Sea Region through regional initiatives and projects. In 2009, within the framework of the European Commission's "Europe for Citizens" programme, project BANDIAR was conceived by a consortium of local public authorities and NGOs from France, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden to promote women's political participation at local, regional, national and international levels in Europe.<sup>263</sup>

One of its project activities was to undertake a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in

each of the five partner countries to identify challenges to women's political participation, as well as entry points for increasing women's participation in the run-up to elections for the European Parliament. Although targeting political and public institutions in general, the SWOT analysis framework developed can be adapted by civil society organizations to support political parties in assessing their support for women's political advancement, and tailored to include more detailed questions regarding party processes, practices and procedures (see Box 5.10).

**→ Providing training to political party members on gender equality and skill development**

Training political party leaders, female and male candidates and political party activists is one of the most effective activities that civil society organizations can engage in with regard to promoting gender equality in elected office. Civil society organizations specialized in gender equality and gender mainstreaming can also be of assistance when political parties are unable to perform their own capacity-building activities for female politicians or do not have sufficient expertise to implement gender-equality training for party members.

As already noted, many OSCE participating States have established training institutes that provide courses in political leadership development. Some training academies run courses for parties interested in training their members, both men and women. Such political training academies and leadership schools have been established in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, among others. Other academies may be affiliated with a particular party, as is the case of the Political Academy of Central Europe, which serves as a training academy for the Union of Democratic Forces of Bulgaria.<sup>264</sup>

Political parties can also invest resources in "training the trainer" courses, whereby party members are trained on topics such as gender equality, and are then tasked with training other party members. Many international organizations and NGOs run such training-of-trainer activities in the political sphere. This is a sustainable and cost-efficient way of building internal party expertise on gender equality. Alternatively, political parties that organize induction courses for their new members on a periodic basis could consider including a module on gender

<sup>263</sup> See <<http://www.balticfem.com/en/bandiar-2009>>.

<sup>264</sup> USAID, Civil Society Groups and Political Parties: Supporting Constructive Relationships, 2004, <[http://transition.usaid.gov/our\\_work//democracy\\_and\\_governance/publications/pdfs/pnacu631.pdf](http://transition.usaid.gov/our_work//democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/pnacu631.pdf)>.

equality and what the parties are doing to support women's political empowerment and advancement.

In addition, an increasing number of political science institutes are introducing courses for young women leaders, or are incorporating modules on gender equality and/or women's political participation into their curriculum. This is the case, for example, with political science schools supported by the Council of Europe (see Box 5.12 for a list of Council of Europe Schools of Politics/Political Science). The OSCE/ODIHR has partnered with these and similar institutes targeting young and/or emerging political leaders, including the Polish School of Young Leaders, the Georgian School of Political Science (supported by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy) and the Ukrainian School of Politics (supported by the Council of Europe). Specific academic programmes on gender equality and women's leadership are explored in the section below on the role of academia.

Regardless of the type of capacity building sought, political parties must be willing to devote party resources to capacity development, whether the expertise required is to support women's political advancement or to assist parties in building gender-equality expertise.

**Box 5.12:**  
**Schools of Politics/Political Science in the OSCE Region**

Schools of Politics or Political Science have been established or supported by the Council of Europe and other organizations in a number of OSCE participating States, including:

- Albania
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Georgia
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Romania
- the Russian Federation
- Serbia
- Ukraine

Source: Council of Europe,  
<[http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/sps/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/sps/default_en.asp)>.

→ **Mobilizing voters and endorsing political parties during the election**

Civil society organizations are well known for actively initiating and engaging in voter-education campaigns. Through such voter-education programmes, these organizations can assist in encouraging the electorate to vote while raising awareness about voter rights. Alternatively, partisan civil society organizations may aim to secure votes for particular parties and/or candidates conforming to their political orientation and may engage in party-specific campaign activities. They can also maintain and mobilize voters between elections by providing services to constituents on behalf of political parties or raising awareness among target groups – including women – about their rights. Meanwhile, political parties with affiliated grassroots NGOs often provide educational support to (potential) constituents, in addition to disseminating information about voting rights. In the Western Balkans, for example, various civil society organizations work with Roma and Roma women specifically to raise awareness about their civic rights and to prevent phenomena such as family or proxy voting.

→ **Providing issue-based advocacy and research support to political parties**

Civil society organizations can play an important role in conducting evidence-based research on issues of concern to the electorate or specific identity groups. This research can be of immense use to political parties in developing issue-based electoral platforms and campaign messages. As noted during the previous strategy, civil society organizations can support particular political parties (a partisan approach), or adopt a multi-party approach, providing a research base to a range of political parties.

In either case, this research can be used to support political parties in developing a stance on a gender-related issue or on issues affecting the majority of women in a given constituency or district. Such research can include conducting gender-impact assessments of proposed policies

or legislation to determine the potentially differential impact of such proposals on men and women, boys and girls. In the political and governance sphere, engaging in a gender analysis of laws or amendments to laws relating to electoral regulations, political parties, party campaign financing and/or decentralization, for example, may reveal that certain provisions have differential impacts on the opportunities of men and women to seek public office.

### → Encouraging political parties to develop or sign up to platforms on gender equality

#### **Box 5.13:** **Ukraine “Garlic” Campaign:** **2012 Parliamentary Elections**

Through the “Garlic” Campaign, 56 NGOs and activists united to mobilize voters ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections in Ukraine, to inform them about the integrity of parliamentary candidates.

Candidates were judged according to six criteria:

- A clean human rights record;
- No involvement in corruption;
- Transparency in declaring income and assets;
- Personal voting in parliament;
- Loyalty to their party’s mandate; and
- Presence at plenary meetings and parliamentary meetings.

Based on these criteria, the movement evaluated 450 MPs and 2309 parliamentary candidates, of which 935 failed the above-mentioned criteria.

The coalition also allowed political parties to sign up to the campaign by signing memorandums of understanding, attesting to parties’ support of the campaign and its message of integrity in politics.

Source: Chesno Civil Movement, <<http://www.chesno.org>>.

Civil society organizations can also directly lobby political parties to develop platforms on gender equality or sign up to other civil society campaigns urging parties to commit to gender equality and balance in the political sphere. For example, in January 2012, the Laboratory for Equality in France, an organization established in 2010 to promote equal treatment in all sectors of French society, launched a “Pact for Equality” campaign, requesting candidates running for the presidential elections to commit to gender equality in governance.<sup>265</sup> The Laboratory of Equality, which boasts over 700 members, including men and women of different political orientations, engaged intensively in the 2012 electoral campaign, informing voters about which candidates had signed the pact, and which had not.<sup>266</sup>

In Poland, participants at the Polish Congress of Women,<sup>267</sup> an event held each year in Warsaw gathering women (and men) from across all sectors of Polish society, developed a manifesto that included 135 concrete demands of political parties to support women’s political advancement. The Civil Platform party responded by integrating a few of the strategies contained in the manifesto into its electoral platform, describing how the party would go about implementing these strategies once in power.

Similarly, many civil society organizations implement awareness-raising and monitoring campaigns aimed at tracking the electoral platforms and promises of political parties and/

or candidates and assessing the achievements of parties and candidates in different issue areas. For example, ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections in Ukraine, a civil society organization coalition was launched to highlight the issues of corruption and ghost-voting in parliament and to provide the public with information on the integrity of individual candidates. The coalition assessed candidates based on six criteria: a clean human rights record, no involvement in corruption, transparency in declaring income and assets, personal voting in parliament, loyalty to the mandate for which they were elected to parliament and presence at plenary meetings and parliamentary meetings (see Box 5.13).<sup>268</sup> Although commitment to

265 See Laboratoire de l’égalité, <<http://www.laboratoiredeegalite.org/>>.

266 Laboratoire de l’égalité, <<http://www.laboratoiredeegalite.org/spip.php?page=recherche&recherche=Pacte+pour+1%E2%80%99%C3%Aggalit%C3%Ag>>.

267 Polish Congress of Women, <<http://www.kongreskobiet.pl/en-EN/>>.

268 Chesno Civil Movement, <<http://www.chesno.org/en/background/>>.

gender equality was not included among the criteria against which candidates were evaluated, civil society organizations could consider conducting similar campaigns to help voters judge political parties and parliamentary candidates on their commitments to gender equality. The results would provide a valuable evidence base demonstrating what parties have achieved thus far and which parties in particular have committed themselves to gender-equality principles.

### → Auditing political party electoral platforms and/or organizing debates between political parties on gender-equality issues

Another concrete way in which civil society can encourage political parties and/or party candidates to disclose their views on gender equality and women's representation in politics is to organize public debates. These debates would ideally feature either political party leaders or party candidates. Participants could be requested to articulate their views on gender equality in politics, identify what they or their parties have done concretely to promote women's political advancement and share any commitment or campaign promises the party or candidate is willing to make in order to promote gender equality and women's representation in politics. Such events can be useful in revealing which parties and candidates have adopted women-friendly agendas, and those which have not. These debates can also be used to raise public awareness about the positions of parties and/or candidates, as well as mobilize the electorate to demand more action from parties on this topic. The OSCE/ODIHR has invited political party leaders and representatives to present their efforts to advance women politicians during roundtable events held in Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Poland.<sup>269</sup>

Alternatively, many civil society organizations have begun to audit the electoral platforms of political parties, to determine whether party leaders or party candidates address gender-related issues in their campaigns and, if so, what type of language is used. For example, the Fawcett Society in the United Kingdom, active in promoting women's rights since 1866, audits the manifestos of each party during the election period.<sup>270</sup> A similar initiative was undertaken by the European Women's Lobby ahead of the 2009 European Parliament elections (see Box 5.14).

#### Box 5.14: Gender Audits of Party Programmes at the European Level

On 20 May 2009, the European Women's Lobby 50/50 Campaign for Democracy published a *Gender Audit Report of Electoral Lists and Political Programmes*, just ahead of the June 2009 elections to the European Parliament.

The Gender Audit looked in detail at the political programmes and electoral lists for all parties contesting the elections, and evaluated each party's commitment to gender equality.

The Report concluded that the majority of political parties did not prioritize equality between women and men in light of the 2009 elections, despite the strong policy framework and standards developed by the European Union in this area.

Source: The Gender Audit Report can be downloaded from the European Women's Lobby (EWL) website at: <http://5050campaign.wordpress.com/>.

### → Monitoring political parties on implementing gender-equality commitments

Of course, it is not enough for a political party to develop an electoral platform or make campaign promises on gender equality, or to sign up to broader gender-equality campaigns. More importantly, parties must also *implement* their commitments and promises. In many OSCE participating States, civil society organizations have been instrumental in monitoring the implementation of party commitments and electoral promises, while tracking party progress in achieving gender balance.

<sup>269</sup> See the OSCE/ODIHR website on gender equality for selected News Items on these events: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/gender>.

<sup>270</sup> Fawcett Society, <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/>.



A concrete starting point for assessing a party's track record on gender equality and women's political representation is publicizing the composition of political party candidate lists according to gender, as well as the gender balance in seats currently occupied by the party in elected and appointed bodies. Civil society organizations may also analyse changes in the gender composition of party lists over a series of elections. Such information can be compiled into a list of the best and worst performing political parties in terms of women's participation on party lists and representation in elected and/or appointed office. For example, in the run-up to the 2010 United Kingdom parliamentary elections, grassroots organizations brought to the media's attention the significantly lower percentage of women MPs in the Liberal Democrat party compared with those in the Labour and the Conservative parties.<sup>271</sup> This brought the issue of women's representation into the public arena. Parties were subsequently forced to discuss the issue of women's participation in political parties and justify their own records.

In Moldova, the Center Partnership for Development (Progen) conducted gender monitoring for three national and two local elections in the last four years in order to better understand gender-equality issues within the election process.<sup>272</sup> To do so, Progen compared the level of women's representation on candidate lists and in election management positions of each political party. In addition, Progen monitored the media coverage of women candidates throughout the campaign. No previous election in Moldova had ever been monitored from a gender perspective; Progen thus provided useful data and research that was not previously available. Monitoring initiatives can – and should – be continued following elections as well, in order to track whether parties adhere to their electoral promises on gender equality. At parliamentary level, for example, civil society organizations can track the voting records of political parties on gender-related legislation.

### **5.1.3. *Shaping positive public attitudes***

In addition to raising awareness among political stakeholders – including political party leaders and women politicians – about the benefits of greater gender equality in politics, civil society organizations often play key roles in raising public awareness on key gender-related issues and topics.

This section looks at several examples of awareness raising campaigns developed by these organizations in different participating States to raise awareness about women's political underrepresentation, confront gender-based stereotypes regarding women's political capacities and shape positive public attitudes towards women in politics. This section is closely linked with the following section, which looks in more detail at the role of the media in influencing public attitudes on women's political participation.

271 "Election 2010: Where the Women Candidates are", A Report from the Centre for Women and Democracy, April 2010, <<http://www.cfwd.org.uk/uploads/pdfs/WomenCandidatesApril2010.pdf>>.

272 "Delivering on Gender Equality in elections", Center "Partnership for Development", 09 March 2010, progen.md, <<http://www.progen.md/index.php?pag=proiecte&opa=view&id=134&tip=&start=&l=en>>.

Image 5.15: Forum 50% Campaign in the Czech Republic



Source: Fórum 50%, <<http://www.5050democracy.eu/>>.

Image 5.16: Ka-Der Campaign in Turkey



Source: Laboratoire del Egalite, <<http://www.laboratoiredeegalite.org>>.

Image 5.17: Laboratory for Equality Campaign in France



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

## → Implementing awareness raising campaigns challenging the political status quo

In the Czech Republic, the civil society group “Fórum 50%” launched a poster campaign in the run-up to the 2006 parliamentary elections. The group placed posters in Prague’s subway and street network featuring a long row of pants or ties and the question: “Do you really have a choice?” The message implied that, while there were some differences among those running for political office, there was actually little true “choice”, as the majority of candidates were men (see Image 5.15).



In Turkey, the Association to Support Women Candidates “Ka-Der” has also 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 5.16).

In the run-up to local elections in 2009, Ka-Der 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.

The Laboratory for Equality, the French organization established in 2010 to promote equal treatment and representation in public sectors, developed an awareness raising campaign around the “Pact for Equality” initiative it introduced in the run-up to the presidential elections in May 2012. In addition to pressuring all presidential candidates to commit to the Pact for Equality, the group created posters showing men sitting on women, with the caption: “What place are we ready to give women?” (see Image 5.17).

**Box 5.18:**  
**March 8 – International Women’s Day**

International Women’s Day, widely celebrated on 8 March, was proposed by Clara Zetkin, a leader in the German Social Democratic Party, at the International Socialist Women’s Conference in 1910. Her party, which in 1910 boasted 82,000 women members, supported women’s rights, including universal suffrage and the right to organize politically as women. European women were then pouring into the workforce, where they held low-paid jobs.

She proposed that an International Working Women’s Day be set aside annually to recognize the worldwide struggle of women workers and to build solidarity both among women and between women and men. More than 100 women from 17 countries, representing trade unions, women’s organizations and European socialist parties, unanimously voted for Zetkin’s proposal. The 8th of March has been celebrated worldwide as International Women’s Day ever since.

Source: Kathy Durkin, “Women in struggle and solidarity”, 2009, <[http://www.workers.org/2009/world/women\\_0326/](http://www.workers.org/2009/world/women_0326/)>.

The Laboratory also produced a video suggesting that women are essentially invisible in society, with men ignoring their contributions and stepping in front of them in a variety of situations.<sup>273</sup> The posters, as well as excerpts from the film, were featured on news outlets and on the Internet, and the posters were mounted in public spaces, with the ultimate goal being to raise awareness and stimulate debate about gender equality in all aspects of French life, including politics.<sup>274</sup>

Additionally, civil society organizations can establish permanent or ad hoc coalitions to collectively engage in awareness raising on gender equality, facilitate networking between women politicians and civil society activists and/or issue joint manifestos, statements or other actions. In Ukraine, the “Garlic” campaign, mentioned in the previous section, achieved its success not only as a result of its catchy slogans and materials, but because civil society organizations worked together, pooling resources and expertise in order to reach out more widely to the public. Such organizations may consider issuing joint statements on politically significant national or international holidays in the country, for example International Women’s Day, Constitution Day or Independence Day (see Box 5.18). Another example of a successful, cross-sector awareness raising action is the global “One Billion Rising” initiative, which aimed at raising awareness about violence against women. In 2013, up to a billion people – men and women – danced in the streets and in front of public institutions to demand an end to violence against women; the same initiative will take place in 2014.<sup>275</sup>

273 “Laboratoire de l’égalité”, YouTube, 19 January 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7W8z5DTqwo>.

274 “Campagne de sensibilisation”, Laboratoire de l’égalité, <<http://www.laboratoiredeegalite.org/spip.php?rubrique67>>.

275 See <<http://www.onebillionrising.org/>>.

Taken together, these various awareness raising initiatives seek to cultivate a more conducive environment to the candidacy of women by making women's exclusion from the political sphere an issue of democratic legitimacy and credibility. As the next section will demonstrate, such awareness-raising campaigns can be particularly effective when media resources are mobilized.

#### 5.1.4. Working with the media

Media campaigns are still the dominant form of party and candidate communication for most electoral races in the OSCE region. Likewise, media sources themselves play a key role in covering electoral processes and in communicating information about competing parties and candidates to the public. In fulfilling this role, media sources usually filter and interpret the information they receive, particularly when stations or newspapers are known to be ideologically aligned with a party or groups of parties. Consciously or unconsciously, the media also plays a key role in reinforcing or challenging gender-based stereotypes.

The media can exercise the utmost influence on how society perceives men and women and their respective roles within it. In everything from advertising, television programming, newspapers and magazines, to comic books, popular music, films and video games, women are more likely to be shown in the home, performing domestic chores such as laundry or cooking; as sex objects; or as victims who cannot protect themselves. Men are also stereotyped by the media, where masculinity is often associated with machismo, independence, competition, emotional detachment, aggression and violence. Studies have shown that such polarized gender messages in the media have profound anti-social effects.<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, experts are beginning to research how stereotypical portrayals of women in the media on the one hand, and the absence or misrepresentation of women in media coverage on politics and political events on the other, is linked to the under-representation of women in political and public life. This relationship is explored, for example, in the recent documentary "Miss Representation" (see Box 5.20).

Accordingly, this section looks in more detail at how civil society organizations can work with the media in order to combat gender-based stereotypes about women in politics, promote gender-balanced media coverage of women and men politicians and enhance gender equality in political life.

#### Box 5.19: Gender-based Stereotypes

A **stereotype** is a view or a characterization of a person or a group of persons based upon narrow and frequently incorrect assumptions.

**Gender stereotypes** are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences and roles of individuals and/or groups. Gender stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about men and women.

Source: 'Stereotype', Wikipedia, <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stereotype>>; 'Gender stereotypes', Cliffs Notes, <[http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study\\_guide/Gender-Stereotypes.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26896.html](http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/Gender-Stereotypes.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26896.html)>.

#### Box 5.20:

##### Misrepresentation → Miss Representation

The award-winning documentary *Miss Representation* is a film directed by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, which explores how the media's misrepresentations of women have led to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence.

MissRepresentation.org is a non-profit social action campaign and media organization established to shift people's consciousness, inspire individual and community action and ultimately transform culture so that everyone, regardless of gender, age or circumstance, can fulfil their potential.

Source: *Miss Representation*, <<http://www.missrepresentation.org/>>.

<sup>276</sup> MediaWatch, <<http://www.mediawatch.com/>>.

## → Identifying gender-based stereotypes of women in politics portrayed in/by the media

Studies of the mass media in several OSCE participating States<sup>277</sup> have revealed that gender-based stereotypes in politics are created and reinforced by media sources. Beliefs that women should not run for political office, for example, are often informed by conventions that associate men with the public sphere and women with the private sphere.

Civil society organizations can play important roles in identifying and highlighting gender-based stereotypes that are used or reinforced by media sources. Common stereotypes can be collected and disseminated as the basis of public-awareness campaigns. For example, Liudmila Voronova, a Russian civil society and gender expert, engaged in research on prevailing myths about female politicians that are perpetuated by the mass media in Russia, creating a list of six common myths about women in politics reinforced through media sources and countering each myth with the reality or truth behind them (see Table 5.21).

**Table 5.21: Media Myths and Realities about Women Politicians**

Myths	Realities
<p>Myth № 1.</p> <p>Physical appearance is important for every woman. Does it matter what she says, if she looks amazing/repulsive?</p>	<p>Reality № 1.</p> <p>Physical appearance is important for any politician – as part of his/her image strategy.</p>
<p>Myth № 2.</p> <p>A woman should be a wife and mother. Is it really possible to combine a political career and family life? (“What will my husband say? With whom can I leave the children?”)</p> <p>Will she make a good “mother” and “faithful wife” for the citizens of the state?</p>	<p>Reality № 2.</p> <p>Any politician, especially women leaders, should celebrate the contributions of “ordinary” women and their role in society, and promote the active participation of women in public life.</p>
<p>Myth № 3.</p> <p>If a woman is allowed to access power, then she cannot afford to make a mistake. If she is a bad politician, it is because she is a woman. If she is a good politician, it is because she is not a true woman and does not have a personal life.</p>	<p>Reality № 3.</p> <p>A female politician is a woman. Her sex is and should remain a positive feature, not an obstacle preventing her from coming to power.</p> <p>Criticizing a female politician just because she is a woman is unfair.</p>
<p>Myth № 4.</p> <p>Politics is a dirty business, but a woman is so pure/clean... Is there a place for a woman in politics? Does a woman need a place in politics?</p>	<p>Reality № 4.</p> <p>Women politicians are not a unified/homogeneous group. They are very different, and there should be more of them in politics.</p> <p>An increase of women in politics is not always connected to the rise of feminism.</p> <p>In politics all should obey the same laws/rules, regardless of sex/gender.</p>

<sup>277</sup> “Imaginea Femeii si a barbatului in presa scrisa. Studiu de gen”, Center “Partnership for Development”, 2007, <[http://www.progen.md/files/4290\\_studiu\\_img\\_fb\\_presa.pdf](http://www.progen.md/files/4290_studiu_img_fb_presa.pdf)>; Людмила Воронова, “Женщины-политики в СМИ: мифы и анти-мифы”, (Liudmila Voronova, “Women-politicians in Mass Media: myths and anti-myths”) Mediascop, Vol. 2, 2009, <<http://mediascope.ru/node/345>>.

<p>Myth № 5.</p> <p>A woman is an exotic feature in politics, and hence the mass media stories should emphasize the uniqueness of the situation, underlining the difficulty of coming to power and the harassment suffered from male colleagues.</p>	<p>Reality № 5.</p> <p>Achieving equality and equity is the most important task of any state. Women politicians should no longer be considered exotic in politics.</p>
<p>Myth № 6.</p> <p>A woman cannot enter politics by herself: she must be supported by influential male politicians.</p>	<p>Reality № 6.</p> <p>A woman politician is an “agent of change”. She uses power to change her country (and the world) for the better.</p>

Source: Людмила Воронова, “Женщины-политики в СМИ: мифы и анти-мифы”, (Liudmila Voronova, “Women-politicians in Mass Media: Myths and anti-myths”) *Mediascop*, Vol. 2, 2009. <<http://mediascope.ru/node/345>>.

### → Engaging in research on media coverage of women candidates

In line with the strategy above, civil society organizations can partner with academia and/or media institutes to conduct research on media coverage of women in politics, particularly during election campaigns. Existing research indicates that female politicians are often portrayed differently from their male colleagues. Women candidates tend to be described in reference to their physical appearance, marital status and family situation or feminine attributes, whereas men are more likely to be evaluated in terms of their political actions.<sup>278</sup>

Furthermore, according to some observers, journalists pose different questions to men and women, particularly regarding a candidate’s ability to balance personal and professional responsibilities. At times, journalists hold women politicians accountable for the actions of their husbands and children, though they rarely hold male candidates to account by the same standards.<sup>279</sup>

This is, of course, the case only when women politicians are actually portrayed in or covered by media sources. In many OSCE participating States, women politicians continue to be under-represented in the media, and media sources tend to prefer covering male candidates over female candidates, even taking into consideration male to female candidate ratios. The Polish Institute of Public Affairs conducted research on media coverage of candidates in the run-up to and during the 2011 parliamentary elections, uncovering a strong gender bias in favour of male candidates (see Box 5.22).

Likewise, in Serbia in 2008, the Gender Equality Institute and UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) supported the Novi Sad School of Journalism’s project “Female Candidates”, which aimed to monitor media coverage of female candidates for local and provincial elections in the Serbian region of Vojvodina in 2008. Within the framework of the project, students monitored

#### **Box 5.22:** **Poland: Systemic Discrimination against Women in Media Coverage of Campaigns**

The Polish Institute of Public Affairs conducted research on the media coverage of candidates during the 2011 parliamentary elections, recognizing the importance of a candidate’s image to his/her ultimate success in the elections.

Their findings confirmed a strong gender bias in the coverage of female and male candidates. First, women appeared in broadcasts on public television during free airtime less often than men. Second, most of the time, they were broadcast while speaking about family policy or acting in their traditional family roles. Third, none of the women were broadcast while speaking about foreign policy or other matters of national concern.

Source: E. Rekosz, “Women and men in television electoral campaign, Parliamentary elections of 2011”, *Institute of Public Affairs*, Warsaw, 2012.

<sup>278</sup> For example, see “Куда заведут ножки Кондолизы?”, *Московский комсомолец*, 8 February 2005.

<sup>279</sup> “Media Coverage of Women Political Candidates”, <<http://www.saddleback.edu/faculty/agordon/documents/WomanCandidates.pdf>>.

media coverage using both qualitative and quantitative monitoring methods in the days before the imposed period of election silence. The project findings, compiled in a report that was publicly launched, demonstrated the virtual invisibility of women candidates in these elections.<sup>280</sup>

### → Training journalists on gender-sensitive media coverage of women in politics

Given the persistence of gender-based stereotypes regarding women in politics, and the role of the media in perpetuating these, civil society organizations can play an important role in training journalists on how to objectively portray women in elections and electoral campaigns. Briefing journalists on the gender dimensions of electoral campaigns could encourage them to monitor gender-equality commitments made by political parties and leaders, and report on the progress (or lack thereof) of their implementation once parties are in office. With the help of mass media, civil society organizations can also publicly highlight specific challenges faced by female candidates, activists and voters during elections, while simultaneously emphasizing women's achievements. Furthermore, these organizations can organize media training for women journalists or women interested in becoming journalists, to support an increase in the number of women journalists active in political reporting.

### → Supporting the participation of women in public debates and events

Civil society groups can also prepare women for public political debates, by providing practical advice, support and training, as well as organizing simulations or public events in which women politicians can engage in policy debates on key topics, thereby raising their public profile. In addition, civil society organizations, in co-operation with media and gender experts and/or reform-minded media decision makers, can lobby broadcast media to provide more free-of-charge airtime to female candidates, as well as to parties that nominate the most women candidates and those that feature women in their electoral campaigns.

#### Box 5.23: Image of Women Politicians in the Media: IPU recommendations

- The media play a crucial role in shaping the image of politicians. Instead of acting as mere mirrors of social and cultural traditional patterns, the media should become agents of change, presenting positive images of women in politics.
- Media personnel at all levels, from editor to reporter, from publisher to columnist, should be made aware of the fact that the "stories" that sell often perpetuate gender-based patterns and stereotypes that undermine the strengthening of representative democracy.
- In a world in which financing is crucial in politics, good media coverage of candidates can partially compensate for a lack of access to financial resources.
- Women politicians have to understand the media better and learn how to get their message across through training on how to conduct media interviews and press conferences, make presentations, prepare press kits and communiqués, etc.
- Women have to be more assertive in presenting their ideas and achievements since, irrespective of sex, the media tends to cover individuals who stand tall and believe in their cause.
- The media tends to treat female politicians as women and objects rather than as political protagonists.
- Women politicians are not covered by the media as much as men politicians. Reporters should, when covering stories, ensure that they do not interview male politicians only.
- The media is less open to the concerns and achievements of female politicians than to those of their male counterparts.
- If media outlets understand that the integration of women into politics strengthens democracy, the media, which play a crucial and increasing role in the democratic process, should try to convey this message in all possible ways.
- Governments should restructure their communications policy so as to make them more gender sensitive and also to promote a fairer image of female politicians.

Source: *Women in politics*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/media.htm>>.

<sup>280</sup> For more information on this project and the report findings, see <[http://www.novinarska-skola.org.rs/NNS2/index\\_en.html](http://www.novinarska-skola.org.rs/NNS2/index_en.html)>.

### 5.1.5. Working with academia

Working with academia to promote women's political participation is less common in many OSCE participating States. Its potential impact is also largely underestimated by civil society, political stakeholders and female politicians themselves. Civil society organizations can partner with academic institutions to recruit and train women candidates, educate the population, carry out evidence-based research that supports women in politics and inform society about gender-based discrimination. Examples of successful collaboration are explored in more detail below.

#### → Initiating or supporting academic training programmes on politics and policy for women

Specialized academic training programmes have been established in some participating States to support women interested in becoming, or being nominated as, candidates for public office.

For example, the Centre for American Women in Politics of Rutgers University in the United States has established the New Leadership Programme, dedicated to expanding the political knowledge and participation of female university students through programmes serving educational institutions in 25 states.<sup>281</sup> The New Leadership Programme runs intensive six-day training workshops during the summer to educate female university students about politics and policymaking and to inspire them to become more politically active. The training is based on a six-point curriculum, providing a foundation that can be adapted to accommodate a wide range of political cultures, geographic regions, populations and institutions (see Box 5.24 for the Six-Point Curriculum).

Along similar lines, the University of Missouri-St. Louis hosts the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life,<sup>282</sup> an institute focused on making government accessible to all Missouri citizens by encouraging women's full participation in the policymaking process. The Institute aims to educate students on the need for women's political and public leadership through the 21st Century Leadership Academy. The Institute also maintains a talent bank database composed of women interested in serving in public office, educates officials on the willingness of women to serve and informs women on how to seek public office through the "Pipeline to Politics" campaign series.<sup>283</sup>

#### Box 5.24: United States New Leadership Programme:

##### Six-Point Curriculum

1. Teach students about the diversity of women's historical and contemporary participation in politics and policymaking.
2. Connect participants with women leaders who make a difference in the public sphere.
3. Help students explore the demands of leadership in a diverse society.
4. Cultivate participants' leadership skills.
5. Enable students to practice leadership through action.
6. Engage students in activities that will enhance their career development and expand their career opportunities.

Source: "New Leadership", Education and Training, Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, <[http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education\\_training/NEWLeadership/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/NEWLeadership/index.php)>.

281 "New Leadership", Education and Training, Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, <[http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education\\_training/NEWLeadership/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/NEWLeadership/index.php)>.

282 Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life, <<http://www.umsl.edu/sueshear/>>.

283 "21st Century Leadership Academy", Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life, <<http://www.umsl.edu/sueshear/21st%20Century%20Leadership%20Academy/index.html>>.



## → Compiling resources and research data to support women in politics and gender equality

Academic institutes are particularly useful for compiling and analysing data and statistics, as well as developing databases of helpful resources for citizens and potential politicians. For example, the Center for American Women in Politics of Rutgers University has developed an interactive database of country-wide resources to support women politicians. These resources range from non-partisan leadership development courses and campaign training initiatives to

### Box 5.25: Surveying Public Opinions on Women in Politics in Ukraine

A survey conducted for the NGO Ukrainian Women's Fund by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service found that:

- Ukrainian voters show greater support for gender parity in politics than political party representatives;
- 47 per cent of voters support increasing women's representation in local office, compared to 25 per cent who oppose it;
- 34 per cent of male respondents support greater participation of women in politics, while 34 per cent consider it "unnecessary";
- 53 per cent of respondents approve of legislative measures to support the equal representation of women and men on candidate lists (61 per cent of female respondents compared to 40 per cent of male respondents);
- Gender is not considered a factor in determining suitability for senior positions in political parties and political organizations; and
- Important suitability factors include having the "right virtues, skills, and abilities".

Source: Ukrainian Women's Fund, *Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: A Strategy Paper*, 2011.

partisan political action committees, existing at both national and state-wide levels. The database was developed within the framework of the "Political Parity" project,<sup>284</sup> a United States-based nonpartisan initiative of the Hunt Alternatives Fund. The Centre for the Advancement of Women in Politics, of Queen's University Belfast, focuses on compiling research and data on women in politics in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Its website features an "Observatory", a database of women representatives of national and devolved assemblies, as well as the proportion of each party's elected representatives that are female.<sup>285</sup>

A number of academic political science and related networks have been established that regularly publish reports, publications and statistics regarding gender equality and women's representation in politics. These include the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State,<sup>286</sup> the Political Studies Association,<sup>287</sup> the Women and Politics Group, the Standing Group on Gender and Politics of the European Consortium for Political Research,<sup>288</sup> the Gender and Politics Specialist Group of the Irish Political Studies Association Group<sup>289</sup> and the American Political Science Association, which hosts both a Women and Politics Group and a women's caucus. Some academics, such as Sarah Childs in the United Kingdom, regularly audit political party manifestos and electoral platforms from a gender perspective ahead of key elections.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE),<sup>290</sup> based in Lithuania, hosts on its website a variety of tools that might prove useful for grassroots organizations in their daily efforts to promote gender equality, fight discrimination based on sex and raise awareness about gender-equality issues. International IDEA, Stockholm University and the Inter-Parliamentary Union have developed a Global Database of

284 Political Parity, <<http://www.politicalparity.org>>.

285 Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics, <<http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/observatory.html>>.

286 Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS), <<http://libarts.wsu.edu/pppa/rngs/index.html>>.

287 Political Studies Association (PSA), <<http://www.psa.ac.uk/>>.

288 Standing Group on Gender and Politics, <<http://www.ecpr.eu/StandingGroups/StandingGroupHome.aspx?ID=8>>.

289 Gender and Politics Specialist Group, <<http://psai.ie/specialist/gender.asp>>.

290 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), <<http://www.eige.europa.eu/>>.



Quotas for Women,<sup>291</sup> a database that compiles the existence of legal and voluntary quotas in countries around the world, and is updated on a regular basis. Furthermore, several organizations provide annual ratings on gender equality. These include the:

- UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII);<sup>292</sup>
- World Economic Forum (WEF)<sup>293</sup> Gender Gap Report,<sup>294</sup> and
- IPU Global Parliamentary Report.<sup>295</sup>

Such resources are particularly useful for developing an evidence base for policy and legislative reforms in favour of greater gender equality and women's increased participation in political and public life. An evidence base is required in order to give credibility to policy proposals or reforms, and can be of great use to political parties that campaign on certain issues or policy platforms.

### → **Engaging in evidence-based research on women in the political sphere**

Civil society organizations can independently, or in partnership with research institutes, conduct public opinion polls and surveys on voter preferences and attitudes towards women in politics. In Ukraine, for example, the Ukrainian Women's Fund (UWF) partnered with the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service to conduct a national public opinion survey on voter attitudes towards women in politics, as well as gender-based voter preferences.

UWF found that Ukrainian voters support gender parity in politics in greater numbers than representatives of political parties. Interestingly, despite the pervasiveness of gender-based stereotypes in Ukraine, 53 per cent of those polled supported the introduction of legislative measures to ensure equal representation of women and men on party lists, although there was a substantial gender gap: 61 per cent of female respondents favoured such measures compared to 40 per cent of male respondents. Importantly, the study highlights that respondents did not consider gender as an important criterion when determining suitability to hold senior positions with political parties or other political organizations. Rather, respondents noted that the factors that should be applied to determine suitability for senior political positions include having the "right virtues, skills, and abilities".<sup>296</sup>

### → **Supporting research on gender dimensions of public policy to support policy reform**

In addition to civil society organizations and academic institutes, many think tanks play key roles in advocating for policy reform and liaising between citizens and public authorities on governance-related issues in OSCE participating States.

291 Global Database of Quotas for Women, International IDEA, Stockholm University and Inter-Parliamentary Union, <<http://www.quotaproject.org/>>.

292 "Gender Inequality Index (GII)", Human Development Reports, UNDP, <<http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/>>.

293 World Economic Forum (WEF), <<http://www.weforum.org/>>.

294 "The Global Gender Gap" World Economic Forum (WEF), <<http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>>.

295 Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), <<http://www.ipu.org/gpr-e/about/index.htm>>.

296 Ukrainian Women's Fund, Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: A Strategy Paper, Kiev, 2011, p.13.

ODIHR supports public policy think tanks in OSCE participating States in assessing the compliance of national political party legislation with international standards and good practices for political party regulation. This can include analysis of provisions relating to party registration, candidate registration, allocation of party and campaign financing, reporting requirements and the role of regulatory bodies. In the past five years, for example, ODIHR has partnered with the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD) in Georgia, IDIS-Viitorul in Moldova, the National Association of Political Scientists of Tajikistan (NAPST)

and the Agency for Legislative Initiatives (ALI) in Ukraine to analyse existing political party legislation for compliance with international standards.



Source: *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission, 2010), <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/77812>>.

Analysis of political party legislation and regulation can be useful in identifying both the legal and practical obstacles to women's political participation. For example, the *Guidelines on Political Party Regulation*, developed by ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, identify international gender-equality standards to which national political party legislation should adhere. Furthermore, the Guidelines highlight internal party mechanisms that parties can introduce to make internal processes and procedures more transparent, as well as more equitable and fair for both men and women. Public policy think tanks can work with civil society and gender experts to include an analysis of the gender dimensions of political party regulation (both internal and external), in order to identify gender-based discrimination in regulatory provisions or pinpoint provisions that may prevent women from participating in political processes on an equal basis with men.

ODIHR encourages think tanks to carry out impact assessments of political party regulations on women and women's political participation in the country concerned. In Tajikistan, for example, NAPST found that political party legislative provisions regarding candidate registration were potentially discriminatory towards women. The required candidate deposit for Tajikistan 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, it can be particularly detrimental to women, as women earn significantly less than men and are, therefore, placed at a greater disadvantage.

In a similar vein, Tajikistan's 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, for example, men in tertiary education outnumbered women by a ratio of 40 to 1.<sup>297</sup> 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.

297 "Ratio of female to male tertiary enrolment (%)", Data, World Bank Development Indicators, <<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ENR.TERT.FM.ZS>>.

### 5.1.6. Working with executive and legislative powers

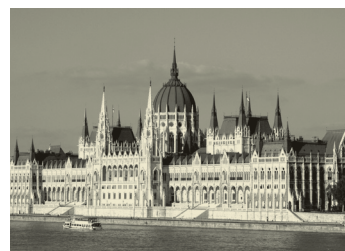
While civil society organizations usually monitor the actions of executive and legislative bodies, in order to hold officials to account for their promises and obligations, they can also work with likeminded public officials in support of gender-equality reform. Where sympathetic public representatives can be found to support such reforms, this partnership can be very effective in laying the institutional and policy foundations for gender equality. Accordingly, this section looks at the different governmental actors civil society organizations can work with in order to promote greater gender equality in political life in OSCE participating States.

#### → Working with parliament to promote gender-friendly institutional reforms

Working with parliament, including key committees, bodies and parliamentarians, is critical not only for increasing the substantive influence of women in elected office, but also for establishing the legislative basis for gender equality in society. In many countries, civil society organizations are able to obtain accreditation in order to attend parliamentary sittings when critical laws are being discussed in the chamber. Civil society organizations can also monitor the position of each party on legislative provisions relating to gender equality, and then inform the public about these positions. This information can also be used to cross-check the gender-equality stance taken by parties during electoral campaigns with the actual stance on gender equality that these parties advocate once in elected office.

Additionally, civil society organizations can monitor and report on the professional and ethical behaviour of elected officials during parliamentary sittings, focusing on interactions between female and male elected officials, especially during discussions on gender-sensitive issues. ODIHR published a background study on professional and ethical standards for parliamentarians in 2012. These standards can be useful in holding elected officials to account for their actions and their behaviour.

Another way to co-operate with national parliaments is by encouraging parliamentary leaders to undertake gender auditing and monitoring, aimed at surveying gender equality in the operational procedures of institutions. Rethinking parliamentary rules and procedures can potentially go a long way in creating a more equal playing field for men and women politicians. Elected assemblies should be encouraged to consider how their operating procedures may –



Background Study:  
Professional and Ethical Standards  
for Parliamentarians

OSCE  
ODIHR

Source: Background Study:  
Professional and Ethical Standards  
for Parliamentarians  
(Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2012),  
<<http://www.osce.org/odihr/98925>>.

#### Box 5.26: Permanent Commission of the Election Administration of Georgia Working on Gender- Equality Issues

The Central Election Commission of Georgia has established a “Permanent Commission of the Election Administration of Georgia Working on Gender-Equality Issues”, in order to enhance gender equality within the CEC as well as support electoral initiatives on gender equality in co-operation with other stakeholders.

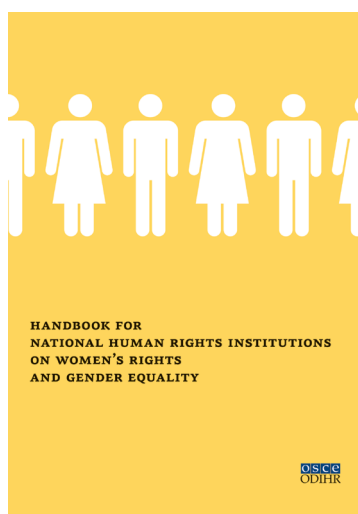
The Permanent Commission has been active in supporting the electoral reform process in Georgia, to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into the reform process and resulting documents. The Commission has sought to learn good practices in gender equality in EMBs by engaging in study tour visits to similar bodies in Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland, and meeting with civil society in addition to regulatory and parliamentary representatives.

directly or indirectly – lead both women and party leaders to view women’s traditional roles as incompatible with a political career.<sup>298</sup>

Professional co-operation between civil society and parliament can also take place via reciprocal education on gender issues. For example, to facilitate a better understanding of gender-related issues, the Feminist League of Kazakhstan produced several short cartoons, elaborating on concepts such as gender equality, unequal pay and women’s contribution to society. In addition to distributing these cartoons during numerous roundtable events organized to discuss the draft law on gender equality, the Feminist League also mailed a CD of these images to each Kazakhstani MP.

### → Co-operating with national election management bodies

The primary purpose of election management bodies is to ensure that citizens’ *right to elect and to be elected* is exercised and protected. To this end, these bodies play a key role in regulating electoral processes, ensuring compliance with international standards and educating voters. Civil society organizations can both co-operate with election management bodies and independently monitor their work. In terms of co-operation, civil society organizations and election management bodies can work together on voter-education projects to raise awareness among both female and male voters of their legal rights. Specific campaigns can be developed to combat gender-related electoral violations, like family voting, and encourage both men and women to vote, particularly in rural areas. Some election management bodies have established entities to work specifically on gender-equality issues, and can serve as a contact point for civil society organizations interested in organizing voter-education campaigns or other activities.



Source: *Handbook for National Human Rights Institutions on Women's Rights and Gender Equality* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2012), <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/97755>>.

Civil society organizations can also monitor the work of regulatory bodies by assessing their willingness to comply with international and national electoral standards. They can engage in expert analysis of governing electoral legislation and proposed amendments, including from a gender perspective. Civil society groups can also assess the electoral environment before, during and after elections, as domestic election observers, and/or evaluate the impact of EMB decisions on women candidates. For example, several NGOs in Russia, including the Russian Foundation for Free Elections, the Coordinating Committee on the Protection of Citizens’ Voting Rights, the Civic Monitoring Association and the non-profit partnership “Lawyers for Civil Society”<sup>299</sup> actively monitor electoral processes. However, civil society organizations, especially those with a political bias, must ensure that their representatives engaged in election monitoring respect pro-

298 See, for example: 15 förslag för en jämställd riksdag: Rapport från arbetsgruppen för en jämställd riksdag, [15 Proposals for a Gender-equal Parliament], Riksdagstryckeriet, Stockholm, 2005, <[http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Ovriga-dokument/Ovrigt-dokument/15-forslag-for-en-jamstalld-ri\\_GSA5URF1/](http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Ovriga-dokument/Ovrigt-dokument/15-forslag-for-en-jamstalld-ri_GSA5URF1/)>.

299 Statement by Ms. Tatiana Voronova, Member of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, at the supplementary human dimension meeting on democratic elections and election observation, 2012, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/92169>>.

visions prohibiting observer interference and maintain impartiality when carrying out observation.<sup>300</sup>

### → Working with national government gender-equality mechanisms/bodies

In view of the fundamental role these bodies play in addressing and implementing gender-equality standards, national gender-equality bodies and national human rights institutions are essential sources of co-operation for civil society organizations active in women's political empowerment. Co-operation between civil society organizations and national gender-equality mechanisms/bodies includes a wide range of activities: information exchange on women's rights and gender-equality issues, including identifying particular target groups; training of civil society organizations on handling gender-equality complaints in national and international fora; and collaboration on advocacy work to raise awareness of gender equality and women's rights.

Especially in countries where civil society organizations lack the funding and resources for advocacy at national and international levels, as publicly-funded institutions, national gender-equality bodies have the authority and means to raise issues identified by civil society organizations at the highest levels. Besides these activities, civil society organizations represent an essential outreach resource for national gender-equality mechanisms/bodies and national human rights institutions, allowing them to access complainants and identify issues on which to advocate. For more information on the importance of civil society organizations for national gender-equality mechanisms and national human rights institutions, please refer to the ODIHR *Handbook for National Human Rights Institutions on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*.<sup>301</sup>

#### 5.1.7. Staying abreast of latest developments

The twenty-first century is a century of fast developing technologies and innovations. The Internet, in particular, has increasingly become a useful tool for information sharing through online knowledge networks. Online knowledge sharing is a cost-effective and efficient means of communicating, learning and exchanging ideas. Online tools can also be used to raise public awareness, identify prospective female candidates and assist women in running successful campaigns.

One of the best-known online knowledge portals on how to empower women in politics is the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, or iKNOW Politics,<sup>302</sup> a website supported by a number of relevant stakeholders, including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UN Women, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA). The project can be 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 promoting women in politics (see Box 5.27). The iKNOW Politics project and other online platforms can serve as a valuable tool for civil society organizations, allowing them to scale up their techniques, maximize their outreach and strengthen the impact of their gender-equality campaigns.

<sup>300</sup> Please refer to the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, Georgia: Parliamentary Elections 1 October 2012, p. 24, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/98399?download=true>>.

<sup>301</sup> *Handbook for National Human Rights Institutions on Women's Rights and Gender Equality* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2012), pp. 55–59.

<sup>302</sup> International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics), <<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>>.

**Box 5.27: iKNOW Politics Website**

The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics) 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 undertaken by several organizations committed to improving women's status in political life, including UNDP, UN Women, NDI, International IDEA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The UNDP works in 166 countries to assist governments and citizens find 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.

NDI offers practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. Its Women's Political Participation Programs are dedicated to increasing the number of women in elected positions and improving women's leadership in parties and civil society.

International IDEA 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. Finally, 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.

*Source: International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics), <<http://www.iknowpolitics.org>>.*

**Conclusion to Chapter 5**

This chapter has focused on the important role that civil society organizations can play in supporting women in advancing their political careers, assisting political parties to promote women and gender equality and raising awareness among both the electorate and political stakeholders about women's political capacities and contributions. In addition, the media and academia were identified as key civil society actors that can be mobilized to empower women in politics. The media have a tremendous impact on how the public views and assesses women and their political capacities. As media sources often perpetuate gender-based stereotypes, media actors can be both the targets of civil society initiatives aimed at enhancing the gender-sensitivity of the media, as well as key partners in combating pervasive stereotypes of women in politics. Meanwhile, academia – including research institutes, training academies, issue-based NGOs and public policy think tanks – can all play crucial roles in engaging in evidence-based research in support of women's political leadership, while also providing training opportunities for women candidates. By diversifying the range of actors that they co-operate with and sharing resources with other organizations, civil society organizations can comprehensively address barriers to women's political participation and play an instrumental role in increasing women's participation in politics and political parties specifically.





# Conclusion

In a true democracy, **gender equality** in political office does matter. Advancing democratic governance requires creating an environment for inclusive and responsive political processes – an environment that engages and empowers women on an equal footing with men. Inclusive and representative governance systems that meaningfully engage both women and men are not only prerequisites for democratic governance, but also bring benefits to constituent political groups: voters, political parties and elected representatives.

OSCE participating States have committed themselves to providing equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of political and public life, as well as to integrating gender equality into policies and practices, recognizing that the full and equal exercise of women's rights is essential to achieving a more peaceful, secure and democratic OSCE region. As this handbook has demonstrated, however, women remain under-represented in decision-making bodies across the OSCE region. While the proportion of women in national parliaments is gradually rising, at the current rate of progress it will take 50 years to achieve gender equality in elected office in the OSCE region, without institutional intervention. Considering that the Helsinki Act promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms was signed in 1975, this progress is far from encouraging.

Furthermore, developments across the OSCE region are not even; major contrasts among the OSCE participating States are evident. Only a handful of countries have come close to gender parity in parliament and have managed to sustain these levels over a number of years, while a small number of other states have surpassed the 30 per cent threshold set by the 1995 UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. At the same time, a number of participating States lag severely behind these targets, with less than 15 per cent of women in their national parliaments. It is still less likely for a woman than a man to become a party leader, member of parliament, speaker of the parliament, minister or prime minister in the OSCE region. As a result, the equal participation of women and men in political life in the OSCE region is still very much a work in progress, both in terms of the number of women in political office and in terms of their role, influence and impact in the political arena.

This handbook has identified a number of target groups that must be involved for gender equality in political and elected office to be realized in practice. It has categorized the range of actions that each of these groups can undertake to address the significant under-representation of women in politics and support women's political advancement, primarily through reforms targeting political parties. The strategies presented are premised on the understanding that all OSCE participating States are committed to promoting equal opportunities for women to fully participate in all spheres of political and public life.

The main target group of this handbook is political parties, and **political party leaders** in particular. Political parties, as democratic associations, play a unique role in any democratic society: they exist to channel the will of the people they represent into public decision-making processes. Not only are political parties the “gatekeepers” of democracy; parties also serve as the gatekeepers of women’s participation in the political arena, facilitating (or sometimes hindering) women’s access to political power. This handbook has identified the various ways and means by which political party policies, processes and practices can serve either to support women’s political advancement or to discriminate against women and limit their political development.

Political parties, and political party leaders in particular, play a key role in ensuring that party policies, practices and rules promote genuine gender equality. Regulating the internal functioning of political parties in order to make parties operate more democratically is an important first step towards creating a more level playing field for male and female party members. Formal and informal party practices, the prevailing political party culture and persisting gender-based stereotypes can all create obstacles to women’s political advancement within a party and within the electoral arena, even when women achieve parity with men on membership and candidate lists. Lastly, ensuring women’s equal participation in party decision-making structures is essential for promoting gender equality within them – and, ultimately, within society as a whole.

Political parties need to do more to support women’s political empowerment. This handbook has demonstrated that parties have a variety of means at their disposal to further promote women’s empowerment within political parties and, consequently, in elected office. These strategies include creating the foundations for gender equality within political parties through founding and procedural documents; acting in a gender conscious manner with party candidates, members, supporters and voters; ensuring gender-equal access to political party financial resources and campaign funds; making gender a part of a party’s electoral strategy; and promoting gender-responsive governance at the national level.

Institutionalizing gender equality within political parties implies that policies and procedures adopted by a party are put into practice by party members, particularly the party’s leadership and elected members at local, regional and national levels. Political parties should consider developing, publishing, implementing and monitoring their own party gender action plans, specifying clear performance targets and time-sensitive goals. This might also necessitate reorganizing party structures, including creating or supporting the capacities of specialized committees, and/or appointing dedicated persons to ensure that resolutions and recommendations from women’s sections, women’s parliamentary structures and women party members inform policy development within the political party. The capacities of party members, both men and women, should be developed to undertake gender analyses of a party and its policies and procedures.

However, articulating policy commitments and even establishing concrete targets will mean little if they are not accompanied by concerted action by both women and men inside a party. As men dominate leadership structures in political parties and still make up the majority of representatives in most parliaments, they are essential partners for implementing change. The commitment and political will of party leaders is essential if women’s views, priorities and ideas are to be given as much consideration as those of their male counterparts. Likewise, party leadership plays a key role in supporting the continuous sensitization of party members to gender equality and equal opportunities, not only through party rhetoric and promises, but also through the party leadership’s actions.

Furthermore, this handbook has identified the benefits that can accrue to parties that support women's political empowerment and seek to institutionalize gender equality in party policies, practices and procedures. By openly, formally and continuously supporting women's political participation, political parties can generate new support bases, attract new members, increase the flow of public funding, alter public opinion and improve their international standing.

The second target group of this handbook is **women interested in political advancement**, whether as party leaders, campaign managers, candidates, elected members or party activists. When women have a real voice within political parties and elected office, they will be able to participate equally with men in public dialogue and influence the decisions that determine their own future and that of their families, communities and countries. Removing the barriers to women's participation is, therefore, crucial for creating gender-friendly political parties and parliaments that respond to the needs and interests of both men and women. While the support of men is, indeed, crucial for gender-equality initiatives to bear fruit, women themselves must be proactive in ensuring that gender-equality issues are properly channelled into political party procedures and are addressed by all parties at all levels.

The handbook explored a number of strategies that women, as individuals or in groups, can implement to facilitate their political advancement and support the institutionalization of gender equality within parties. Female party members often face barriers to their political advancement due to the non-transparent manner in which parties operate and their own ignorance of the actual rules of the game. This is particularly the case when party processes are not institutionalized in a clear and transparent manner in party documents, or when written procedures are not adhered to in practice. Accordingly, the handbook has included a number of strategies aimed at enhancing women's knowledge of how parties function; what party positions are available to women; and how to plan political advancement within the parameters of existing party policies and practices. Knowing how parties function and are governed in practice can facilitate women's access to party resources – such as campaign funds, donors and networks, media sources and party property – that are essential to their career development as candidates, campaign managers and party decision makers.

When women do achieve elected office, they most often enter a male-dominated environment, with rules and procedures developed to accommodate the priorities, views, needs and interests of men. Conducting a review of the procedures governing elected office through gender audits and assessments can help identify the specific challenges women face in advancing their careers and highlight what needs to be done to make representative institutions more gender-friendly. As representatives of political parties and parliament, women (and men) can work to change the political culture of legislatures. Issues such as political party schedules, sitting times in parliament, the location of facilities for women members and parental leave provisions can all lead to positive reforms to facilitate women's meaningful participation. Such gender audits and assessments can equally be conducted by parties themselves. In both cases, the results should lead political actors to develop concrete strategies and action plans to address the identified challenges and gaps to women's political participation.

The third target readership group of the handbook is **civil society** and particularly civil society organizations, who are able to exercise pressure on political stakeholders to initiate external and internal reform in support of gender equality and women's advancement. This handbook has emphasized that co-operation between political parties and civil society, as well as co-operation between women politicians and civil society, can be an effective method to advance policy agendas in support of gender equality. In many cases, particularly when parties seek to change constitutions or enact legislation to promote women's political empowerment, political parties are most effective when they work closely with civil society organizations.

In other cases, civil society organizations, including women's organizations can strategically target women party activists to advocate for their desired policy change. In both scenarios, civil society organizations are able to generate public demand for reform, thereby putting pressure on political parties and governments to bring their practices and procedures in line with international and national standards. The handbook also explored ways in which civil society organizations, together with media sources and academic institutions, can support women's political advancement through recruitment initiatives, capacity building of women candidates, awareness-raising to combat gender-based stereotypes of women in politics and evidence-based research to facilitate the introduction or amendment of policy and legislative agendas in support of gender equality.

This handbook has focused on providing the target groups with potential strategies for action for promoting women's participation in political parties, based on concrete examples of good practices that have been implemented by political parties, women politicians and civil society organizations across the OSCE area.

The diverse range of experiences to be found in OSCE participating States indicates that no single strategy or specific sequence of strategies will necessarily prove effective at all times and in all places. Each OSCE participating State is unique in its governance structure, and each political party is itself a unique entity with its own governing rules, procedures and practices. Therefore, each strategy presented in this handbook should be implemented taking into account the democratic experience of the country in question, its international commitments and national framework, its electoral and political system, as well as its socio-cultural legacy and current political challenges.

Regardless of the system in place, however, a number of strategies have proven effective in OSCE participating States in enhancing gender equality within political parties and supporting women's political advancement. These include the introduction by party leaders of measures to improve transparency, fairness and equity in internal party rules, procedures, policies and practices (all enhancing internal party democracy); the adoption of voluntary measures to support women's political participation, including party quotas, targeted capacity development for women and special initiatives to ensure women's access to party resources; the institutionalization of gender equality in party processes and policies, particularly in party founding documents; and the provision of support to gender-equality mechanisms established within the party, such as women's sections. Furthermore, the most effective strategies towards increasing women's participation in political parties are those that involve co-operation between male and female party members; co-operation across party lines on issues of mutual concern; as well as co-operation between political parties and external actors, including civil society organizations.

A commitment to democracy is hard to justify unless participating States, and key political actors within states, prove willing and ready to afford women the place in politics they rightfully deserve. Ensuring women's meaningful participation in politics is a goal to which more and more political parties are committing themselves, such that political actors that continue to discriminate against or marginalize women do so increasingly at their own risk. As this handbook has argued, the increased participation of women in political parties ultimately benefits all levels of party politics, as well as society more broadly. Effective implementation of these tried-and-tested strategies can help ensure that women's equal and meaningful participation in political office becomes achievable for all parties across the OSCE region.





# **Annexes**



## Annex 1: OSCE Gender-Equality Commitments

- **Madrid, 1983 (“Questions relating to Security in Europe”, paragraph 16)**  
[The participating States] agree to take all actions necessary to promote equally effective participation of men and women in political, economic, social and cultural life.
- **Vienna, 1989 (“Questions relating to Security in Europe”, paragraph 15)**  
(15) The participating States [...] will consider the possibility of acceding to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, if they have not yet done to.
- **Paris, 1990 (“Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law”, paragraphs 3 and 5)**  
We affirm that, without discrimination, every individual has the right to [...] freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of movement; everyone also has the right: to participate in free and fair elections, [...] to enjoy his [or her] economic, social and cultural rights.
- **Moscow, 1991 (paragraphs 40 to 40.13)**  
(40) The participating States recognize [...] that the full development of society and the welfare of all its members require equal opportunity for full and equal participation of men and women. In this context they will:  
(40.6) – encourage measures [...] to facilitate combining employment with family responsibilities for female and male workers; and will seek to ensure that any structural adjustment policies or programmes do not have an adversely discriminatory effect on women;  
(40.8) – encourage and promote equal opportunity for full participation by women in all aspects of political and public life, in decision-making process and in international cooperation in general;  
(40.9) – 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;
- **Istanbul, 1999 (Charter for European Security, paragraphs 23 and 24)**  
23. The full and equal exercise by women of their human rights is essential to achieve a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic OSCE area.
- **Sofia, 2004 (OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality)**  
44. Priorities  
(d) Ensuring equal opportunity for participation of women in political and public life  
— The ODIHR will assist participating States in developing effective measures to bring

about the equal participation of women in democratic processes and will assist in developing best practices for their implementation;

— The ODIHR and the OSCE field operations will assist, as appropriate, in building up local capacities and expertise on gender issues as well as networks linking community leaders and politicians;

— The ODIHR will continue to assist participating States in promoting women's political participation.

- **Athens, 2009 (Ministerial Council Decision on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life)**

**Decision No. 7/09**

***Women's Participation in Political and Public Life***

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the OSCE commitments for the advancement of gender equality, non-discrimination and promotion of men's and women's equal right to participate in political and public life,

Mindful of the continued under-representation of women in the OSCE area in decision-making structures within the legislative, executive, including police services, and judicial branches,

Concerned that widespread discrimination against women, continues to undermine their effective participation in political and public life at all levels,

Recognizing that keeping OSCE commitments under review, including in appropriate OSCE fora, can help to develop more effective approaches and measures,

Reaffirming that the full and equal exercise by women of their human rights is essential to achieve a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic OSCE area,

Reaffirming the participating States' commitment to proactively implement throughout the Organization the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and recalling Ljubljana Ministerial Council Decisions Nos. 14/05 on women in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation and 15/05 on preventing and combating violence against women,

Recalling UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for full and equal participation of women in decision making with regard to conflict prevention as well as in post-conflict reconstruction, and stressing the importance of their full and equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security,

Taking note of UN Security Council resolution 1889 (2009), which urges international and regional organizations to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes,

Noting that 18 December 2009 marks the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which aims at ending discrimina-

tion against women in political and public life, and noting that 10 December marks the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Convention's Protocol for signature,

Recognizing that women may face additional barriers, beyond those based on gender, to their participation in political and public life,

Calls on the participating States to:

1. Consider providing for specific measures to achieve the goal of gender balance in all legislative, judicial and executive bodies, including security services, such as police services;
2. Consider possible legislative measures, which would facilitate a more balanced participation of women and men in political and public life and especially in decision-making;
3. Encourage all political actors to promote equal participation of women and men in political parties, with a view to achieving better gender-balanced representation in elected public offices at all levels of decision-making;
4. Consider taking measures to create equal opportunities within the security services, including the armed forces, where relevant, to allow for balanced recruitment, retention and promotion of men and women;
5. Develop and introduce where necessary open and participatory processes that enhance participation of women and men in all phases of developing legislation, programmes and policies;
6. Allow for the equal contribution of women and men to peace-building initiatives;
7. Take necessary steps to establish, where appropriate, effective national mechanisms for measuring women's equal participation and representation;
8. Support, as appropriate, non-governmental and research bodies in producing targeted studies and awareness-raising initiatives for identifying specific challenges in women's participation in political and public life and, in promoting equality of opportunities between women and men;
9. Encourage shared work and parental responsibilities between women and men in order to facilitate women's equal opportunities to participate effectively in political and public life.

Source: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), <<http://www.osce.org/>>

## Annex 2: Gender Audit of a Political Party – Template

### 1. RECRUITMENT OF PARTY MEMBERS

**How are members recruited into the party?**

- Friends of party leaders?
- Business colleagues?
- University peers?
- Members of family?
- Personal contacts of party leader?
- Standing in the community?

**Who is responsible for recruitment in your party?**

**Are recruitment procedures written down in party statutes?**

**Are procedures, as written down, applied transparently?**

**Is there a party induction course for newly-recruited men and women?**

### 2. ACCESS TO POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

**What is the procedure for nomination to the Party Congress?**

**What are the voting rights of party members to nominate i) party leaders, ii) delegates to the Party Congress and iii) party candidates?**

**What are the voting rights of delegates at the Party Congress to approve the budget?**

**What (voting) rights do delegates have to influence or approve the party platform?**

**Are these procedures written down in the party statutes?**

**What is the procedure for amending party statutes (e.g. to introduce a voluntary measure such as internal party quotas)?**

### 3. CANDIDATE SELECTION/NOMINATION

**How are members nominated/appointed to the Candidate or Nomination Board?**

- Personal decision of party leader?
- Appointed by party decision-makers or advisors?
- Selected according to procedure written down in party statutes?

**Is the procedure written down in party statutes?**

**Is the procedure, as written down, applied in a transparent manner?**

**How many women are members of the Selection Board?**

**Do women's opinions carry the same weight as those of male colleagues on the Board?**

#### 4. INTERNAL PARTY PROMOTION

**How are party members promoted within the party?**

- Decision of party leader
- Decision of party decision-makers or advisors?
- Personal connections of member with party leader/decision-makers?
- Loyalty, ambition, dedication

**Are promotion procedures written down in party statutes?**

**Are procedures, as written down, applied in a transparent fashion?**

**Are women and men provided equal opportunities for advancement in the party?**

#### 5. ACCESS TO PARTY RESOURCES

**How does the party fundraise for its activities?**

**Do party members (both men and women) have access to information about party donors and benefactors?**

**Do women party candidates have access to party donors to support their campaigns?**

**How does the party allocate resources to party candidates?**

- Party finances
- Access to party property
- Access to campaign materials
- Access to public airtime allocated to parties
- Access to public rallies, media coverage, public debates

**Is there a budget line for party member leadership development? If so, do women have equal opportunity to benefit from this budget?**

**Are procedures for allocation of resources written down in party statutes?**

## **Annex 3: Political Parties of Slovenia, Gender Action Plans**

*In July 2002 came into force the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (LEOWM) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/2002), which defines common grounds for the improvement of the status of women and the establishment of equal opportunities for women and men in political, economic, social, educational fields and other fields of social life.*

*Political parties that are included in the register of political parties shall adopt, in accordance with Article 31 of the Law, every four years, a plan in which they shall adopt the position on the issue of balanced representation of women and men and, in accordance with this position, determine methods and measures for the promotion of a more balanced representation of women and men within the bodies of the party, on candidate lists for elections to the National Assembly and to bodies of local communities as well as for elections of the President of the Republic.*

Executive Board of the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, pursuant to Article 31 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/2002), adopted at its 15th session on 10.11.2003 the following.

### **PLAN of the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia for balanced gender representation**

Gender-equality policy is part of the overall LDS policy. With its widely recognizable policy for active establishment of equality of women and men, LDS has undoubtedly committed itself to accelerating processes which lead to equal gender opportunities. LDS is committed to respect for human rights of women and men, their protection and exercise as well as undertaking necessary measures for full and comprehensive enjoyment of human rights in the implementation of the starting points of the LDS policy.

LDS is aware of the great problem concerning the under-representation or sometimes even lack of women in decision-making at different levels, and that supporting of equal participation of women and men in political and public life is part of social development. It is important for the society as a whole that both women and men participate in social decision-making processes.

For true gender equality, equal consideration must be given to interests of both women and men. LDS is aware that it can be done through eliminating any form of indirect or direct gender discrimination. An LDS Programme framework must be determined for the establishment

of such a system in which individual responsibility holders shall include the aspect of gender equality on permanent basis in policy planning, developing, implementing, monitoring and assessing. We are aware that for the creation of equal opportunities and enhancing gender equality, one-time individual measures or activities cannot be used any more, i.e. an overall, multidisciplinary process must be implemented. Besides providing equal consideration of women and men, equal gender opportunities, which can be achieved through different measures by which gender inequality based obstacles shall be eliminated, must be also created.

Certain positive measures for enhancing equal opportunities of women and men are already stipulated in Article 15 of the LDS Statute. These measures should be upgraded in the future by defining additional objectives and methods.

### **Plan objectives**

1. More room for women on candidate lists in elections to the National Assembly and local self-government bodies, and proposing women candidates in electoral environment where they have a realistic chance of getting elected;
2. Integration of the principle of gender equality in passing the national legislation, determining inter-departmental policies and inter-departmental national programmes as well as other important regulations;
3. Greater presence of women in the Party and its bodies;
4. Observing gender equality in determining the overall policy and regional Party's policies, and creating a culture within the Party based on and recognizable also by implementing the equal opportunity principle.

### **Methods**

1. Achieving gender parity in representation in compliance with the Party's Statute
2. Encouraging women candidates in elections to the National Assembly, local self-government and Presidential elections;
3. Encouraging women candidates for the bodies of the Party;
4. Organizing educational workshops and preparing written materials in order to provide to women additional knowledge for active participation in policy-making (e.g. in the sphere of communications, public presentation, etc.);
5. Educational programmes for training women for regional and other important positions within the Party;
6. Training seminars for men and women members of the Party with the following topics:
  - Balanced gender representation in the policy;
  - Gender equality and differences;
  - Importance of observing the gender aspect in determining regional policies;
  - Importance of observing gender related issues in national documents and important regulations.
7. Consideration of topics in the gender-equality sphere and equal opportunities in the Party's periodical;
8. Establishing regular cooperation and contacts among the Party's women members.

LDS EB Ljubljana, 10 November 2003



Slovenian People's Party  
**Slovenian Women's Union**

**ACTION PLAN 2004 – 2008**

of the Slovenian People's Party

for the implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

**REASONS FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE ACTION PLAN:**

1. **The Action Plan was adopted pursuant to** Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/02), which came into force on 20.7.2002, and stipulates in Article 31 that political parties shall adopt a plan every four years. Political parties shall adopt the position on the issue of balanced representation of women and men and, in accordance with this position, determine methods and measures for the promotion of a more balanced representation of women and men within the bodies of the party, on candidate lists for elections to the National Assembly and to bodies of local communities as well as for elections of the President of the Republic. Political parties shall submit the Plan to the Office for Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia within three months following its adoption.

However, Article 41 of the Law stipulates that political parties shall adopt their first plan within one year, i.e. at their first Congress after this Law takes effect, thus at their first Congress after 20 July 2003.

Article 35 of the Law stipulates that a political party shall be fined at least SIT 300,000 for a violation if it does not submit the Plan to the Office.

2. The European Union passed many directives which oblige the Member States to provide equal consideration to both genders. The Amsterdam Treaty, for instance, explicitly includes the equality between men and women among its fundamental objectives, and stipulates that all Member States must aim with all their activities to eliminate inequality.

Furthermore, The European Council adopted in 1996 a recommendation in which it calls upon strengthening of initiatives for more balanced inclusion of women and men in the decision-making processes, which was highlighted as necessary condition to ensure real democracy.

3. In the Parliamentary elections of 1992, 1996 and 2000 in Slovenia, only 31 FEMALE MPs were elected out of 270 Assembly seats, while their HIGHEST representation in Parliament is 13.3%. The average share of women in parliaments of the current 15 Member States in EU is 31%. In the local elections in 1998 in Slovenia, 11,9% of women were elected to the town, i.e. municipality councils, and only eight counties, i.e. 4,2%, while in the local elections 2000 the share of women increased only 1%.
4. In the Slovenian People's Party, according to assessments, there are a little more than 33% women members, while 6% of municipal boards are chaired by women. The Statute of the Party stipulates that of two vice presidents, one vice president shall be a woman; in Executive Board 1 woman was elected among ten elected members; while 6 women members were elected to the Council of the Party out of 25 elected members.

5. In the National Assembly the Party has no MPs in this mandate, neither does it have a women adviser in the National Assembly nor a woman minister in the Government.

## 6. **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PARTY**

The analysis of participation of women members in the Slovenian People's Party (SLS) in the bodies of the Party as well as in the state and local self-government bodies shows that women members in the bodies of the Party are under-represented. All the more, they do not attain even the proportional representation regarding the number of women members in the Party. Also, women members in SLS do not attain even the state average concerning the representation of women at the state and local level, and these numbers get even smaller when European average is in question.

### **ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES:**

With the adoption of this Action Plan the Party will undertake special measures for increased women membership in the Party and greater representation of women in the bodies of the Party as well as in candidate lists for elections to the European Parliament, National Assembly and local self-government bodies and Presidential elections. Thus, the Party will contribute to greater representation of women in the local self-government bodies and state and other bodies. In doing so SLS will directly contribute to better representation of women in Slovenia compared to the EU Member States.

### **MEASURES:**

#### **1. Developing and adopting amendments or adequate new provisions to the Party's Statute**

The Party will prepare, in cooperation with the Slovenian Women's Union (SWU) till the next Party Congress or adequate session of the General Board, when Statute amendments or new Party Statute are to be adopted, adequate amendments to the Statute or new Statute provisions.

#### **2. The Party will strengthen the SWU resources and funds within SLS**

Beside regular activities, SWU within SLS needs support of the Party for performing tasks related to measures adopted with the Plan, which is the reason why the Party will provide necessary resource support.

#### **3. The Party will create resource basis for the SLS female members**

The Party will establish, with the help of SWU, New Generation and Slovenian Peasant Union, Retired Persons Union and other clubs, unions and movements, a special members register for female personnel or candidates.

#### **4. The Party will within education of female and male candidates especially develop a programme for training of female candidates in cooperation with SWU and New Generation, and include in the education and informing of its members information and raising awareness on fair and equal representation.**

5. **The Party will determine and develop progressive inclusion of female candidates** in candidate lists for election to the National Assembly, European Parliament and local elections as well bodies of the Party. The Party will register female and male candidates according to the zip principle. In doing so, it will observe the provisions of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

#### **TIME LIMITS:**

The Party will begin to implement the measures determined in this Action Plan in 2004 and it will fulfill its commitment in a timely manner till the election to the National Assembly 2008.

The measure under No. 3 the Party will implement in 2004, while the measure under No. 4 the Party will implement in accordance with the training plan for its candidates.

#### **MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OVER THE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:**

The Slovenian Women's Union within SLS will report at least three times a year on the implementation of the Action Plan to the Party's Executive Board. The supervision over the implementation of the Action Plan will be performed by the Party's Council which will submit annual reports to the Office for Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia.

This Action Plan was adopted at the Congress of the Slovenian People's Party in Rogaška Slatina on 15. 11. 2003.

21 January 2005

## **ACTION PLAN OF THE UNITED LIST OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (ZLSD) FOR IMPROVING GENDER EQUALITY**

Pursuant to Article 31 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, political parties shall adopt every four years a plan, in which they shall determine their position on the issue of balanced representation of women and men; in accordance with this commitment that political parties shall undertake necessary measures for enhancing balanced representation of women and men in the party bodies, candidate lists for local self-government elections and elections to the National Assembly, the ZLSD Presidency adopts the following assessment and Action Plan.

### **ZLSD adopts the following position on the issue of balanced representation of women and men:**

For ZLSD the issue of balanced gender representation in public life and political decision-making at all levels of the process in which it is realized, is one of the fundamental democracy issues.

It is an issue concerning both content and form of democracy: the content, because both women and men bring into the policy their different historical and personal experiences and often have different views on political priorities and the manner how and when to implement them; their form, because there is no real democracy without balanced representation. This is the reason why women according to ZLSD must not be a discriminated minority, but half of the human race with irrefutable right to balance of power.

The obstacles that prevent women's equal access to political power are of historical and structured nature and it is possible to eliminate them only with solidarity and joint action by both women and men and by raising awareness on elemental democracy and capacity for action of various political parties.

Since its establishment ZLSD has always exerted efforts in order to improve equal opportunities of women and men within its own ranks and in political and public life in general. Since its establishment ZLSD has always had a specially organized women's group – 30% and later 40% share for both sexes for the election in all bodies of the Party, where the gender structure enables so, while as of 1995 the same share is also applied in candidate-selection procedures at the local and national levels.

ZLSD has been also consciously increasing the percent of female members proposed for the most responsible governmental and administration roles. ZLSD will continue such efforts until formal and full gender equality is achieved.

### **To this end, ZLSD adopts the following Action Plan:**

#### **Strengthening internal democracy in the Party:**

1. The Party will ensure in its annual work and financial programmes special funds, and gradually increase the constant funds for unhindered work organization of the Women's Forum (WF).
2. The Party will strengthen special training for its female members in order to raise their knowledge and self-confidence, mutual solidarity and relationships.
3. The Party will strengthen and introduce regular training of female members and male members of the MF on gender equality

4. The Party will at least once a year during the mandate period organize a special conference on equal opportunities (with assessment of work results and future measures)
5. The Party will strengthen training of all female and male activists, selected female and male candidates for election as well as all female and male officials for joint work in the gender-equality field.
6. The Party will introduce special forms of training for future female candidates, advisors, county officials, MPs, state secretaries and ministers.
7. The Party will equally include in its training activities both female and male members.
8. The Party will in all its election campaigns particularly emphasize the importance of balanced gender representation.
9. The Party will monitor all amendments of laws in the light of equal opportunities for women and men and encourage equal status of women and men with special emphasis on equal opportunities concerning employment, education, family policy and social policy.

#### **Media and equal opportunities:**

1. ZLSD will particularly encourage the promotion of women in public and media presentations, and take care during press conferences of balanced gender representation.
2. The Party will prepare a HR list of promising women personnel in various fields of social and public life to be promoted in public on the occasion of different professional topics.
3. The Party will always actively promote in public the policy of equal gender representation.

#### **Equal opportunities and candidate-selection procedures:**

1. At the next congress the Presidency will propose amendments to Articles 51 and 52, which will reflect the actual structure of the population and the Party, thus also the structure of the national and local lists.
2. When at the head of the Party is the President, the Party shall determine as mandatory that the Vice President is a woman and vice versa.
3. The Party will always apply the zip principle in the EU elections and elections to the National Assembly.
4. The Party will implement the zip principle at the local elections wherever it wins at least 10% of the votes.

#### **For gender equality in the Slovenian policy ZLSD will always:**

1. Do everything it can to implement in the electoral and other legislation equal opportunities for women and men and always try to achieve political agreement with other parties
2. The Parliamentary Group and the Party's ministers will always strive to amend the Electoral Law in order to eliminate electoral districts with negative impact on equal gender representation
3. The Parliamentary Group will propose that for all elections based on the proportional system strict observance of the zip principle shall apply
4. The Party will exercise its best endeavors to prevent in all personnel procedures accumulation of political titles, honors and offices (e.g. county and MP roles)
5. In the personnel procedures for membership in Executive Boards of public institutions, the Party will support in case of candidates of equal capacities, the candidate belonging to the minority when these roles are in question

#### **Women Forum in ZLSD**

1. Women Forum network will be strengthened again and local network of women's groups in the Party increased
2. The public will become acquainted at regular press conferences with the position concerning the most important social issues with particular emphasis on the gender equality in public life
3. WF will participate in organizing training courses for women, youth as well as the Party network for meeting conditions when gender equality is in question
4. WF will prepare a HR list of promising and successful women in different fields of economic and social life
5. WF members will create conditions for transition of the young and promising activists of MF to WF and ZLSD by direct support, training, registration and HR processes
6. At the local level the WF will pay particular attention to support of young women members in entering into local politics by putting them on candidate lists where they can be elected

Proposal prepared by: ZLSD Women's Council

Chaired by: Alenka KOVŠČA

## Annex 4: Four Main Challenges of the Candidate-Selection Process

### Challenge 1: Informal and unregulated candidate-selection processes

Informal and unregulated candidate-selection processes allow for the *non-transparent selection of candidates*. Even when the rules of recruitment into party membership are clearly described in party statutes – including minimal requirements such as legal age or requiring the recommendation of party members – the candidate-selection process often remains largely non-transparent, unregulated and obscure. While there are slight variations from party to party, there often exist no written, formalized or transparent processes for candidate selection.<sup>303</sup> There is plenty of room for informal and non-transparent selection of candidates when the necessary requirements, skills, qualifications or competencies of potential candidates are not formally described.

A further consequence of the lack of transparency is that outsiders or those not close to the party leadership remain in the dark as to who or which party body or committee is exactly responsible for candidate selection. Some parties in OSCE States have established candidate-selection committees or a candidate approval process that takes place through party congresses. However, it is clear that the composition, actual influence and working principles of these committees remain ambiguous. For example, there are no clear regulations on how selection committees are established at various party levels; how party members are nominated to these committees; what the actual level of independence of these committees is; or how the work of these committees is regulated, monitored or enforced.

As a result, when women are not members of candidate-selection bodies or procedures the candidate-selection process can easily become inaccessible, discriminatory and subjective, especially for potential female candidates. Informal and unregulated candidate-selection rules also increase the importance of informal networks of influence within the party, which tend to disadvantage women in male-dominated political cultures. In post-socialist countries where democracy is relatively new, the practice of male politicians strategizing and building alliances in order to promote male party members as candidates has already cropped up. This has meant that decision-making regarding candidate selection not only takes place behind closed doors, but also in physical locations and at hours not accessible or reachable to women.

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<sup>303</sup> Sarah Childs, Joni Lovenduski and Rosie Campbell, "Women at the top: changing numbers, changing politics", Hansard Society, 2005, <[www.hansardsociety.org.uk](http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk)>



## Challenge 2: Ad hoc selection processes

When the selection of candidates is carried out in an ad hoc and informal manner, this *undermines the democratic functioning of political parties and compromises their accountability to the electorate*. Due to the fact that political parties in some OSCE participating States frequently respond to changing political landscapes, shifting public opinion polls or momentary media influence, candidate-selection processes are mainly done on an ad hoc and last-minute basis. Emboldened by the lack of clear internal guidelines, party leaders can directly interfere in candidate selection, replacing individual candidates with others, or changing their placement on party lists or in particular constituencies. As a result, candidate lists are often finalized only shortly before official submission deadlines of lists to electoral authorities.

These dynamics affect women in particular because there is often a last-minute “down-shifting” in women’s positions on party lists. In some cases, female candidates proposed by the candidate-selection committees are excluded altogether from the lists presented to electoral authorities by party leaders. Alternatively, parties sometimes put forward lists containing female candidates so as to attract voters, but then “invite” female candidates to refuse the mandate and voluntarily cede her position to another party member, as has occurred, for example, in Kyrgyzstan. In some extreme cases, this “agreement” is already made prior to elections. Female candidates in this practice are often compelled to justify this decision by citing family duties and commitments, or other professional obligations.

A somewhat different example of the ad hoc and last-minute candidate-selection process is practiced by some parties in Kazakhstan, where the candidate-selection lists are submitted to the electoral commission in alphabetical order. The final list of winning candidates is decided only after the number of places in the parliament secured by the party is known. In other words, the ranking of party candidates is not determined beforehand, so not even candidates themselves are aware of their position on the party list. Again, while the practice affects both male and female candidates, it can be particularly discouraging for women candidates whose name recognition, finances or access to patrons may not be as influential as those of their male counterparts.

## Challenge 3: Top-down candidate-selection processes

Top-down candidate-selection processes *negatively affect the principles of internal party democracy while weakening party support at the grassroots level*. Where candidate-selection processes within political parties are largely top-down, candidate lists usually reflect the personal preferences of the leader and a closed circle of party advisers. This authoritarian decision-making style may lead to the distortion of the concept of loyalty to political parties, whereby the loyalty to the leader replaces the loyalty to the party and its electorate.

This non-consultative process also limits the possibilities for local and regional political party branches to influence candidate selection, and limits the rights of local level party members to a fair selection process. In particular, the occasional imposition of candidates nominated at the local level by the national party leadership shatters the standing of the party’s local branch leader. This in turn undermines the importance of the local party branch, together with the representativeness of the party more generally. In the short term, such actions might lead to decreasing party support at the local level. In the long term, they may contribute to local party members and voters questioning the true democratic commitment of the party, and spread mistrust towards the democratic system in general.

#### Challenge 4: Resource-driven candidate-selection processes

When the selection process is driven by resource considerations, this *drastically reduces the pool of the eligible candidates and diminishes the importance of meritocratic criteria*. “Resources” in this context refer to access to finances and name recognition, qualities that may come at the expense of more meritocratic criteria like professional skills, educational qualifications or service to the party. The aim to maximize voter outreach and attract new electorates can lead political parties to recruit and select prominent individuals to run as candidates, rather than selecting candidates from among the regular party membership. The newcomers usually bring with them their previous successes, popularity, and networks in other spheres of social or public life, facilitating “name recognition” among voters. While the political party may attract premium votes by selecting such celebrity candidates, this practice undermines the transparency and fairness of the selection process and limits the chances of regular, long-standing party members to be selected.

These trends are driven, to some extent, by the cost-intensive nature of electoral campaigns, leading political parties to attach particular importance to financial contributions made by its members and external donors. This results in a preference for selecting candidates who have significant financial backing of their own, with little regard for the candidate’s involvement in party work or politics in general. As a consequence, outwardly-articulated selection criteria, such as professional skills, talents, dedication and achievements, are sidelined.

Ironically, a resource-driven candidate-selection process of this type may be especially prevalent when legal quotas for the under-represented sex are introduced. In order to comply with the new rules, for example, parties may seek female candidates from outside the party, who bring with them resources in the form of networks, access to elites or personal finances. This practice can occur at the expense of female party members, further reducing their chances of securing a nomination to the candidate list. On the whole, resource-driven candidate-selection processes are clearly less favourable for women than for men, as women remain an economically disadvantaged group in the whole of the OSCE region, with less access to political networks and patrons.

Beyond the issues of tokenism, the low numbers of women on party lists, their limited presence in the electoral campaign and their often weaker campaign image can have a broader impact on female citizens at large, reinforcing the notion that women are less likely to be elected and discouraging women with little name recognition or financial resources to consider running for office.<sup>304</sup> This indicates that the lack of women, as well as the types of women promoted in the current system, can have a “feedback effect” in terms of reducing the confidence of women in pursuing a political career, regardless of the qualities and expertise they might bring to party politics.

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304 E. Rekosz, Women and men in television electoral campaign. Parliamentary elections of 2011 (Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs, 2011).

## Annex 5: Voluntary Party Quotas in OSCE Member States\*

Country	Party	Quota (% women)
Austria	The Greens-Green Alternative	50
	Austrian People's Party	33.3
	Social Democratic Party of Austria	
Croatia	Social Democratic Party	40
Cyprus	Movement of Social Democrats	30
	Democratic Rally of Cyprus	30
The Czech Republic	Social Democrats	25
Germany	Social Democratic Party	40
	Left Party	50
	Alliance 90/The Greens	50
	Christian Democratic Union	33.3
Hungary	Hungarian Socialist Party	20
	Politics Can Be Different	30
Iceland	Social Democratic Alliance	40
	Left-Green Movement	50
	Progressive Party	40
Italy	Democratic Party	50
Lithuania	Social Democratic Party	30
Luxembourg	Christian Social People's Party	33
	The Left	50
	Green Party	50
Malta	Labour Party	20
The Netherlands	Labour Party	50
	Green Left	50

Norway	Socialist Left Party	40
	Norwegian Labour Party	50
	Centre Party	40
	Christian People's Party	40
Romania	Democratic Party	30
	Social Democratic Party	30
Slovakia	People's Party	50
Sweden	Social Democratic Party	50
	Left Party	50
	Green Party	50
Switzerland	Social Democratic Party of Switzerland	40
The United Kingdom	Labour Party	50 (in winnable seats)

\*Does not include parties whose quota policies were superseded by the adoption of a legislative quota.

## Annex 6: A step-by-step guide to introducing voluntary measures for increasing women's political participation

### 1. Prepare yourself

- Find out the percentage of women party members, women voters for your party and women already in leadership positions, etc.
- Critically assess the underutilized potential, resources and benefits for the party that these women represent.
- Start by introducing informal gender-equality measures: ensure that both men and women are included in party negotiations, party events, training activities, international and other activities and among party speakers, as well as in party legislative initiatives, and make sure that women party members are featured in the media, etc.
- Empower women within the party by including them on decision-making boards, making them speakers and introducing a dual presidency of the party, with one female and one male president, etc.
- Evaluate these initiatives whenever something does not work out as envisioned and expected. Prepare a gender-balanced database of candidates.
- Review international commitments, including on gender equality, by which your country is bound.

### 2. Create a core team

- Discuss your ideas for enhancing women's representation in your party with trusted party members, describing the benefits of this measure for the party.
- Decide the following:
  - ✓ which measures you wish to introduce;
  - ✓ how you will name this measure;
  - ✓ which arguments you will use to promote this idea within the party;
  - ✓ who will assist you in achieving your aim; and
  - ✓ when you want to begin your initiative. Timing is important; therefore, it is suggested that you start building consensus within the party soon after a parliamentary/national election.

### 3. Mobilize internal party support

- Make sure you have the support of prominent and respected men politicians in your party.
- To achieve this, you may wish to start by mobilizing the support of women party members and leaders at all party levels.
- If your party contains a women's wing, you may wish to task them with mobilizing the women party members. Alternatively, you may wish to create a women's wing with the aim of introducing voluntary measures.
- The women's wing should also mobilize women political party leaders at all levels to promote increased participation of women in the party.
- If the party has a newspaper, mobilize the support of the readership by publishing articles on the role of women in political parties in other countries and building on the achievements of women members of your party, etc.
- Inform non-governmental organizations working on gender equality in political parties of your plan, and seek their support and advice.

**4. Build consensus**

- Ensure that there is consensus at all levels of the party regarding the exact form, shape and level of the new measures.
- If you are the first party in your country to introduce voluntary party measures to enhance women's participation, treat this as an advantage by publicizing your efforts and highlighting other parties' shortcomings in this area.
- If other political parties have already introduced similar voluntary measures, then you should aim to set higher levels than these parties.
- Whatever measure you decide to implement, we recommend that you formulate them in a gender neutral way!

**5. Institutionalize changes**

- Prepare an implementation plan for voluntary measures for increasing women's political participation within the party, including a detailed description of your targets and clearly-defined criteria to help you monitor your progress.
- Targets should be both quantitative (i.e., based on data such as the number of women on party lists) and qualitative (i.e., how party members perceive the changes introduced and their impact). The criteria for meeting those targets should be decided in advance, including how targets are to be measured.
- Call a meeting of the party leadership or other decision-making body (including women delegates) during the political party congress to approve this decision.
- Introduce voluntary measures for women's political participation into your party statutes and/or charter.

**6. Set out clear targets and a timeline**

- Apply voluntary measures at the first opportunity, including in the run-up to local, regional or national elections.
- Clearly specify the criteria according to which you will assess the success of these voluntary measures at the next election, including the minimum number of women and their order on the candidate list. You may consider applying the "zipper" method, whereby women occupy every other place on the candidate list, provided that the electoral system allows for this.
- Formalize the candidate-selection process. You can do so by applying the step-by-step approach, not only with regard to the under-represented gender, but also with regard to other marginalized groups (for example, national, ethnic and religious minorities and people with disabilities) to strengthen the democratic claim of your platform. This may help to attract new groups of voters and supporters, including donors.
- Apply the rule that a woman should be replaced by another woman, be it in internal party decision-making bodies, on candidate lists, in parliament or in any other position of elected office.

**7. Review your progress**

- Conduct a periodic review of the implementation of the plan every 3–6 months. This review should include a quantitative and qualitative measurement of the targets, as set out in point 5.
- Identify any challenges your party has faced in meeting its targets, and assess the reasons for these challenges and what steps can be done to counter them. Determine who or what in your party is obstructing progress, as well as whether your party has set aside sufficient and appropriate resources to meet its targets.
- Conduct regular discussion groups within your party to gauge opinions on the impact of the progress made and to determine what additional criteria might be included.

**8. Communicate your success and receive feedback**

- Keep your party members informed about your successes and challenges in introducing voluntary measures for women's political participation.
- Conduct a party-wide discussion of your findings and results, and encourage party members to provide feedback.
- If you are confident of your success, then publicize the results of your measures to the electorate, including via email, social networking sites, your party's webpage, television and through non-governmental organizations.
- Share the results of your measures with your political party counterparts abroad, as well as with international organizations (such as OSCE/ODIHR) and international research institutes and think-tanks (including International IDEA). This will help others build on your experience of introducing voluntary measures for increasing women's political participation.

**9. Consider your next steps**

- Develop education programmes for new and experienced party members.
- Encourage women and men party members to be role models and to assist others. Be aware of the "queen bee" syndrome, whereby women's participation in the party is dominated by one woman who is reluctant to share her experiences and help other women to succeed.
- Make it clear that quotas are not the only way to increase women's participation in political parties.
- Encourage all party members to come up with other proposals which will help ensure gender-balanced work within the party.
- Proactively seek out potential women party members and candidates for elected office.
- If your country does not have yet a legislated quota of women in political parties, consider proposing the creation of such a quota at local, regional and national levels.
- Where the state provides public funding for political parties, try to link state funding to women's representation in executive structures and on the party lists. If such a system already exists, then make sure that your party fulfils the required level of women's representation to receive funding.

Source: Developed by ODIHR staff and based on various materials including: UNDP and NDI, *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties. A Good Practices Guide to Promote Women's Political Participation*. UNDP/NDI. 2011; and "Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan", OSCE/ODIHR, 2011, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>>.



## **Annex 7: Selected Academic Research Institutes on Gender Equality and Women's Political Participation**

The **European Institute for Gender Equality** (EIGE, <http://www.eige.europa.eu/>) in Lithuania is the European Union agency that promotes gender equality and works to raise awareness about gender-equality issues.

One of the current EIGE initiatives is the “**Women Inspiring Europe**” Resource Pool which contains information about women from all over Europe, who act as role-models and a source of inspiration for others. This resource pool is intended to serve as a basis for the Institute's Resource and Documentation Centre, which works to gather the experiences of women in Europe and highlight their achievements. For more on this initiative, see: <http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/women-inspiring-europe>.

The **Rutgers University's Center for American Women and Politics** (<http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/>) is recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about American women's political participation in the United States. A part of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, the Center promotes greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government, and aims to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life.

At the time of writing, the Center is conducting two education and training programmes: the “NEW Leadership” programme and the “Ready to Run Campaign Trainings for Women”. Ahead of the 2012 presidential election, the Center established a nation-wide non-partisan campaign, the “2012 Project”, which aimed to increase the number of women in Congress and state legislatures.

The **Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies** (MIGS, <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/>) in Cyprus is a non-profit organization promoting social, political and economic projects relating to gender, with an emphasis on the Mediterranean region. As part of its mission, the institute engages in research, advocacy and lobbying, as well as trainings, conferences and other activities. One of their current education and leadership programmes is aimed at young women and entitled, “Young Women Fit for Politics!”

The **Women's Campaign School at Yale University** (<http://www.wcsyale.org/>) is an annual summer leadership school aimed at increasing the role and the numbers of women in elected and appointed office in the United States and around the globe. Focusing on the com-

mon needs and experiences of women in politics as opposed to the differences among them, the school programme is designed to address the particular cultural challenges faced by women in politics. Open to men, this school hires top experts from both leading political parties in the United States to teach at this programme.

The **Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics** at Queen's University Belfast (<<http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/aboutus.html>>) addresses emerging issues and questions concerning the status and impact of women in politics and leadership positions. In particular, the Centre focuses on researching public attitudes towards women in politics and public life, media representations of women in politics, gender-sensitive debates on political representation and women in parliaments. The Centre aims to bring a critical feminist perspective to women's political and public participation in the UK and Northern Ireland.

The **European Academy for Women in Politics and Business** (EAF, <[www.eaf-berlin.de](http://www.eaf-berlin.de)>) in Berlin, Germany, is an independent non-profit organization. The EAF aims at inspiring women for politics, empowering them in their civic involvement and advancing their professionalization. With their training and mentoring programmes, the non-governmental organization supports all female politicians in planning and succeeding in their careers. At the same time, the organization provides candidates with technical and strategic assistance in accessing their political work.

In addition, the EAF consults federal ministries, political parties and civil societies on their recruitment processes and qualification requirements for women, on their equal opportunities policies and on their assistance to women employees in helping them balance their professional and family lives. In summary, the EAF conducts research, provides advisory services to clients in politics and business and conducts professional-development projects.

The **LSE Gender Institute** (<<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/genderInstitute/about/home.aspx>>) is the largest research and teaching unit of its kind in Europe, combining theory and practice with an interdisciplinary and transnational scope. This institute offers several graduate programmes in gender issues broadly understood, including Master of Science programmes in Gender, Development and Globalization and in Gender, Policy and Inequalities.

The **Research Network on Gender Politics and the State** (<<http://libarts.wsu.edu/pppa/rngs/index.html>>) is a network of researchers, and represents a long-term research project on women's movements and the state that has led to a series of books, a database, as well as many applied projects and publications. RNGS completed its research work in 2012. Its website serves as a record of the RNGS project and a research source for all who are interested in gender politics and the state.

Based on an initial collaborative book on women's policy offices, entitled *Comparative State Feminism*, RNGS was formed in 1995 by 20 scholars from universities in Western Europe and North America at a conference at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. The network has subsequently grown to include 38 researchers from 16 post-industrial countries as well as 164 associates.

In addition to the above, a number of academic networks specializing in political science and related subjects regularly publish reports, publications and statistics regarding gender equality and women's representation in politics. These include the "Women and Politics Group" of the

Political Studies Association,<sup>305</sup> the “Standing Group on Gender and Politics” of the European Consortium for Political Research,<sup>306</sup> the “Gender and Politics Specialist Group” of the Irish Political Studies Association Group,<sup>307</sup> and the American Political Science Association, which hosts both a “Women and Politics Group” and a women’s caucus. Academics, including Sarah Childs in the United Kingdom, are regularly involved in auditing political party manifestos and electoral platforms from a gender perspective ahead of key elections.

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305 Political Studies Association (PSA), <<http://www.psa.ac.uk/>>.

306 Standing Group on Gender and Politics, <<http://www.ecpr.eu/StandingGroups/StandingGroupHome.aspx?ID=8>>.

307 Gender and Politics Specialist Group, <<http://psai.ie/specialist/gender.asp>>.



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