

**Interactions between party and statutory quotas:
Gendered political recruitment after quota adoption in Portugal and Spain**

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Abstract

In the mid 2000s, both Portugal and Spain enacted statutory gender quotas. Whereas in Portugal the share of women deputies significantly increased, in Spain it stagnated at pre-quota levels, though women's representation is still higher in the latter. The simultaneous implementation of party and statutory quotas raises questions on the potential interactions between these two types of candidate quotas. Specifically, this paper surveys the extent to which the impact of statutory quotas is shaped by gendered party practices and norms embedded in candidate selection processes. Following a feminist-institutionalist approach, we examine the party institutional context in which candidates were selected before and after the adoption of statutory quotas in order to assess the degree of change experienced by political parties. The empirical analysis focuses on the two largest parties in each country, which have adopted opposing strategies on equal gender representation throughout the whole democratic period.

– PRELIMINARY DRAFT. PLEASE DO NOT QUOTE WITHOUT PERMISSION –

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1 - Introduction

Party strategies are crucial for the nomination of more women candidates and eventually the election of higher numbers of women deputies (Lovenduski and Norris 1993). An increasing number of political parties have voluntarily assumed gender quotas in the last decades, be they ‘strong’ –codified in party rules – or ‘soft’ – non-written targets or recommendations (Krook et al. 2006). If effectively implemented (Verge and Kenny 2013), voluntary quotas may allow some parties to lead women’s representation and even instill a ‘contagion’ process across their respective party systems (Matland and Studlar 1996). More recently, legislative electoral quotas have been introduced in several countries, especially in Latin America and post-conflict contexts (Krook 2009). In Europe, however, statutory quotas present a modest penetration – just eight countries. In 2013, women’s representation in European national parliaments reached 29.5% where quota laws are applied and 25.5% where only party quotas are used. Despite this narrow gap, in the latter the percentage of women elected shows stagnation while progress is observed in the former (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2013: 11).

The simultaneous implementation of party and statutory quotas in some countries raises questions on the potential interactions between two types of candidate quotas sharing the same goal – granting gender equality in political representation (Kunovich and Paxton 2005: 534; Reiser 2014: 56). This paper examines these interactions in Portugal and Spain, two countries where party quotas had been in place for almost two decades when quota laws were passed. The comparison is intriguing since both measures have produced dissimilar results. Specifically, this paper surveys the extent to which gendered party practices and norms in candidate selection processes persist, are challenged or are eventually eliminated after the introduction of quota laws.

Following a feminist-institutionalist approach, we explore how gender is embedded in the party institutional context in which candidates are selected after the enactment of statutory quotas in order to assess the degree of change experienced by political parties with opposing strategies on equal gender representation. Formal and informal institutions shape the outcome of quota reforms (Kenny 2013) but these reforms can also bring about institutional change (Zetterberg 2013; Verge and de la Fuente 2014). The paper focuses on national parliaments and examines the two largest parties in each country, namely the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party/*Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) and the Popular Party/*Partido Popular* (PP) in Spain and the Socialist Party/*Partido Socialista* (PS) and the Social Democratic Party/*Partido Social*

Demócrata (PSD)¹ in Portugal. While the PSOE and the PS have used party quotas since the late 1980s, the PP and the PSD have always rejected affirmative action.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 outlines our theoretical expectations regarding the interaction between party and statutory quotas and presents the case selection and methods used. Section 3 describes the evolution of women's representation in both countries, outlining the development of party quotas and statutory quotas. Section 4 evaluates how the implementation of legislative quotas is shaped by the party organization and qualitatively examines the role of gendered informal practices in explaining dissimilar results. The final section highlights the main findings and reflects on further avenues for comparative research.

2 - Interactions between party quotas and legislative quotas

Statutory electoral gender quotas oblige parties to include a minimum percentage of women candidates in their electoral tickets, but quota provisions rarely translate into similar levels of women deputies (Murray 2004; Meier 2011). Although the effectiveness of quotas depends on their design (Schwindt-Bayer 2011), political parties play a crucial role in their correct implementation (Htun and Jones 2002). Political parties contain the 'practical institutions' that ultimately rule over candidate selection (Krook 2009). When quotas do not match current party practices and norms, they may produce marginal effects on the number of elected women (Verge 2013) and 'contagion' processes might be limited (Kenny and Mackay 2013).

In this section, we elaborate on the interactions between party and statutory quotas in contexts where these measures are used simultaneously. Given that party quotas are a strong predictor of parties' outcomes on women's representation (Caul Kittilson 2001), we might expect that, when statutory quotas are enacted, parties avoiding or rejecting voluntary quotas are likely to experience greater change in their candidate selection processes than those already using them (hypothesis 1a). Yet, some studies have shown that quota laws may stimulate the introduction of further party measures and/or incentivize some parties to surpass the legally imposed proportions (Meier 2004: 595). In a similar vein, other studies have found that the introduction of statutory quotas does not completely blur the differences between parties with varied

¹ Due to the revolutionary nature of the Portuguese transition to democracy, all parties adopted progressive names that did not necessarily match their core principles, as it is the case of the PSD, which integrates the European People's Party and the Centrist Democrat International.

commitments to equal gender representation. Parties with long-established gender quotas tend to achieve higher levels of women's representation than those using recent quotas, targets or goals (Verge 2010). Since in post-quota settings latecomers on women's representation might catch up the innovators or early-adapters, parties already using gender quotas are expected to outperform their prior records to continue championing gender equality (hypothesis 1b). As a result, the degree of change in candidate selection processes experienced by parties with and without voluntary quotas might be rather similar, thus nuancing our first hypothesis.

The second set of hypotheses goes beyond numbers and addresses the interplay between formal and informal institutions in candidate selection processes. The frequent mismatch between the proportion mandated by the statutory quota and gender outcomes (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008) indicates that the effectiveness of legislative quotas largely depends on the willingness of party actors (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Holli et al. 2006). Research on quota adoption and implementation shows that certain party actors often resist innovation, especially local party selectors (Tremblay and Pelletier 2001; Cheng and Tavits 2012) through a variety of informal practices and norms (Kenny, 2013). Resistant party actors might take advantage of both informalized recruitment processes (Norris and Lovenduski 1995) and electoral system characteristics (Matland 2005; Norris 2004). Whereas in SMD candidates' success depends on candidates fighting for safe seats, under PR with closed party lists the ordering of candidates is key to getting elected, especially in districts where party magnitude is low.

Firstly, we can argue that the longest a party has been using gender quotas, the lesser the impact of informal practices on the selection of candidates will be. Highly institutionalized quotas are routinely accepted and applied whereas those that are less institutionalized are regularly challenged and heavily debated within parties (Reiser 2014: 62). As argued by Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2011: 192-5), party quotas increase the formalization of candidate selection processes by strengthening rule-boundedness and by encouraging deliberative action on allocation of safe seats or rank orders in party lists. This is particularly important since gender quotas coexist with other rules on group representation in list-building (Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008), and their simultaneous application might produce conflict (Reiser 2014: 56). Therefore, the more institutionalized party gender quotas are, the more compliant parties are likely to be in the implementation of statutory quotas (hypothesis 2a).

This prediction is, of course, conditional on party rules ‘being followed’ (Matland and Montgomery 2003: 32). Some traits of the party organizational setting are paramount to fight (or at least reduce the effect of) informal institutions that prevent an effective quota implementation. On the one hand, centralized candidate processes allow quotas to be imposed in a top-down fashion giving central elites the power to persuade local and regional branches to implement and enforce quota policies (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Murray 2010; Kenny and Verge 2013). In these cases, the party leadership has the ability to coordinate district-level nominations as if a national list was being drafted (Caul Kittilson 2006; Threlfall 2007). Conversely, in informally-centralized selection processes party leaders’ attitude towards equality in representation has the strongest influence (Norris and Lovenduski 1995: 200).

On the other hand, success in gender-balanced representation is highly dependent on quota-friendly agency (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Dahlerup and Leyenaar 2013). Women’s presence in the party leadership grants more feminized candidate lists (Kunovich and Paxton 2005: 535; Caul Kittilson 2006: 37; Verge 2010: 182). Party women’s sections also play a crucial role in pressing parties for an effective quota implementation (Kolinsky 1993; Freidenvall 2013). However, their lobbying capacity depends both on their position in the party hierarchy and the strategies they are able to develop (Caul Kittilson 2006; Verge and Kenny 2013) as well as on party gatekeepers being sympathetic to their demands (Davidson-Schmich 2006: 223-28). Accordingly, we posit that informal practices affecting quota implementation will have lesser impact in parties with more centralized candidate selection processes and successful intra-party women’s mobilization (hypothesis 2b).

In order to examine the interaction between party and legislative quotas we have adopted a small-n comparison focusing on Spain and Portugal. Intriguingly, in both countries, when the legislative quota was passed, party quotas had already operated for two decades in social democratic parties (PSOE and PS). This two-case comparison allows us to control for the main socioeconomic and cultural factors affecting gender equality as well as for the most relevant systemic factors, such as electoral system and party competition. At the onset of their transitions from authoritarian rule, these third-wave parliamentary democracies shared a strong penetration of Catholicism, a heavy inegalitarian socialization, and a familialistic approach to welfare (González et al. 2000). As to political factors, the combination of PR with closed lists has allowed parties to tightly control candidate selection. Moderate multi-party competition prevails at the

national level with one of the lowest effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) in Western Europe – 2.8 in Portugal and 2.4 in Spain. While mean district magnitude is higher in Portugal (10.4) than in Spain (6.4), the median values similarly fall between 4 and 6 seats² (Carey and Six, 2009), causing that in over 70% of districts only the two largest parties usually obtain seats. The PSOE and the PP in Spain and the PS and the PSD in Portugal have traditionally held about 80% of seats altogether in the national parliament. For this reason we will exclusively focus on these parties.

In order to survey the formal architecture of candidate selection, we have examined party rules regulating candidate selection process. We have also analyzed its degree of centralization – whether the candidate tickets drafted by constituency parties need to be approved by central party bodies – and identified the intervening actors, paying especial attention to the role played by women’s sections. With a view to mapping the ways in which gender is created and recreated through informal institutions in contexts where party and statutory quotas interact, we have interviewed several women party officials in the two social democratic parties (see appendix).

3 - Women’s representation in Portugal and Spain

Women’s representation remained below 10% until the late 1980s in Spain and until the mid 1990s in Portugal, as can be seen in Graph 1. Whereas the 1988 elections in Spain inaugurated an incremental track, in Portugal progress has been much slower (Verge 2013). This dissimilar path merits special attention since party strategies had initially converged. In 1988, the PSOE and the PS led the introduction of party quotas by assuming a minimum 25% quota in both party bodies and electoral tickets (Espírito-Santo, 2006; Verge, 2012).

[INSERT GRAPH 1 ABOUT HERE]

In the PSOE the party quota soon began producing significant effects. As Table 1 shows, women candidates augmented from 12.5% in 1986 to 26.8% in 1989 and women deputies rose accordingly from 7.1% to 17.1%. Henceforth the PSOE acted as the catalyst of a ‘macro-contagion’ process within the party system. The PSOE translated its quota provisions into a similar proportion of women deputies since the mid 1990s and subsequently expanded them, as summarized in Figure 1. In 1994, the PSOE

² The 52 districts in Spain range from 1 to 36 seats. In Portugal, the 22 districts range from 2 to 48 seats.

established that the quota would rise an extra 5% in party branches with over 25% of female membership –introducing in practice a 30% quota. In 1997, the PSOE endorsed a gender-neutral quota that entitled either sex to neither less than 40% nor more than 60% of positions in both party offices and electoral lists (Verge, 2012).

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

While competition with the post-communist United Left/*Izquierda Unida* (IU) may have partially pushed the PSOE towards an incremental race, quota reforms are chiefly explained by successful lobbying led by the party women’s section in concurrence with feminist social mobilization and by emulation from other European parties (Threlfall 2007; Valiente 2005). In response to PSOE’s steps, the PP, despite its vocal opposition to affirmative action, increasingly nominated more women and even adopted a vague goal for gender balance. This notwithstanding, until the legislative quota was passed the distance between the PSOE and the PP regarding both women candidates and deputies was significantly large, as shown in Table 1.

[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

In Portugal, although the percentage of women elected by the PS slowly increased since 1987, its parliamentary group was not particularly feminized, as can be seen in Table 2. The Portuguese Communist Party, with no party quota whatsoever, elected a higher number of women deputies in the first decade of Portuguese democracy (Viegas and Faria 1999: 73). The difference between the PS and the PSD only took off in 1999, when the PS started honoring its own quota (Meirinho Martins and Pequito Teixeira 2005: 150). PS’s shift owes much to the rise of the Left Block/*Bloco de Esquerda* (BE) as a competitor on the left flank (Baum and Espírito Santo, 2012: 335), which fielded about 40% women candidates in its lists. In 2002, the PS passed into opposition, and in 2003 its party quota was enlarged to a third of positions in party organs and electoral lists for either sex (Figure 1). The percentage of women candidates significantly rose, reaching over 34% in 2005. Cross-party contagion, although weaker than in Spain, is also found in Portugal. Once the PS started complying with its gender quota the PSD increasingly nominated more women candidates, also incentivised by party women’s mobilization (Espírito-Santo 2006: 72).

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

In both countries, the first attempts to pass a legislative quota took place in the late 1990s. In Spain, the PP parliamentary majority blocked the discussion of the bills submitted by the PSOE in 1999 and 2000 (as it did in 1996 and also in 2000 with the bills submitted by IU). When the PSOE won the 2004 elections, the bill revived and in 2007 the Law for the Effective Equality of Women and Men (known as the ‘Equality Law’) introduced the principle of ‘gender balanced presence’ in political representation (Verge 2012: 401-3). PP’s appeal before the Constitutional Court failed to succeed. In Portugal the constitution was amended to enable legislative quotas. The constitutional reform was passed in 1997 but the conservative majority in the national parliament blocked the bills presented by the PS in 1998, 2000 and 2003 and by the BE in 2001 and 2003. In 2006, when the PS held the majority of seats, the *Lei da Paridade* was finally passed (Baum and Espírito-Santo 2012: 323).

While the Portuguese legislative quota aimed at fixing poor levels of women’s representation, in Spain it sought to consolidate the incremental track already in motion (Verge 2013: 442). These quota laws present remarkable differences. In Spain, candidate tickets must include a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 60% of either sex – a proportion to be met too in each stretch of five candidates. In Portugal, party lists must include at least 1/3 of candidates of each sex, and the placement mandate establishes that neither sex shall occupy more than two consecutive positions. Whereas in Spain party lists failing to meet the quota proportions are withdrawn by the electoral authorities, in Portugal financial penalties are applied³.

In Spain, in 2008 (the first post-quota election) female candidates experienced a 30% increase rate in the PP compared to 9% in the PSOE, as shown in Table 1. In both parties increases on women candidates were modest from the first (2008) to the second (2011) post-quota elections, with percentages already close to 50% of either sex. The statutory quota had already been used as ‘party law’ for a decade by the PSOE but the threat to have non-compliant lists withdrawn left parties opposing quotas, such as the PP, with no margin of maneuver to fail to meet the required proportions. Indeed, no lists had ever been withdrawn. In Portugal, the statutory quota also produced a stronger effect in the PSD than in the PS. While in the latter, the increase rate in female

³ Parties’ public subsidy for the electoral campaign shall be halved when either sex fails to attain 20% of positions, and reduced to 25% when the proportion is between 20-33% and when parties do not comply with the placement mandate. The PSD, who controlled the presidency of the Republic, vetoed the initial draft, which established the withdrawal of non-compliant party lists, and traded ratification for a softer sanction (Baum and Espírito-Santo 2012: 324).

candidates between 2005 and 2009 was around 1%, in the former, it reached 78%. Even though the PSD did not reach the 33% mark of each sex in its lists (when all districts are considered together, Table 2), there have never been official cases of non-compliance at the legislative level. In the second post-quota election (2011), both parties slightly increased the feminization of their lists. Overall, parties with no previous quotas experienced deeper change in their share of women candidates than those already using such measures, thus confirming hypothesis 1a.

As regards elected women, higher quota proportions have brought about a more feminized parliament in Spain than in Portugal although in neither case the minimum quota proportions for candidates of either sex have reached an equivalent share of women's representation. In the Spanish case, the percentage of women deputies has stagnated at pre-quota levels around 36%. In Portugal, women's representation boosted from 21.3% in 2005 to 27.8% in 2009, although in 2011 it decreased to 26.5% (Graph 1). In Spain, the PSOE has clearly outperformed the PP both before and after the enactment of the quota law although PSOE's comparative advantage was reduced to less than 2 percentual points in 2011, as shown in Table 1. Yet, while the PP failed to attain parity in its parliamentary group (36.6% women) after obtaining its best electoral result ever, the PSOE did not attain it by a small margin (38.2%) although the party lost 59 seats. In light of the dramatic impact of electoral misfortune on women's representation, as we will discuss in the next section, in 2013 women's intra-party mobilization managed to reform the gender-neutral 40/60 party quota into a zipping system whereby women and men alternate throughout the party lists⁴.

Conversely, as seen in Table 2, in Portugal while prior to the introduction of the statutory quota the PS consistently elected more women deputies than the PSD, from 2009 onwards that is no longer the case. In 2011, the PS was even surpassed by the PSD – partially explained by the latter's better electoral result. The only party overcoming the quota law proportions in terms of deputies is the *Bloco de Esquerda*, which reached 37.5% in 2009 and 50% in 2011. So, hypothesis 1b is only confirmed in the Spanish case, where the PSOE has sought to continue championing gender equality, while in Portugal the statutory quota did blur cross-party differences.

⁴ This was approved in 2013 in a programmatic conference. This quota has already been applied to draft the party list for the 2014 European elections.

4 –Party quotas and gendered informal institutions

The mismatch between statutory quota provisions and percentages of women elected has endured in the two elections held after their enactment in both Portugal and Spain. The parties under examination, though, hold a dissimilar responsibility for this result, as seen in the different outcomes obtained in both women candidates and deputies. This leads us to examine more closely the degree of institutionalization of party quotas in the PSOE and the PS, the differentiated impact of gendered informal practices and the broader party organizational setting in which they are embedded.

Institutionalization of party quotas

Although both social democratic parties have now been using party quotas for almost 30 years, their degree of institutionalization significantly varies. This owes much to the fact that in the PSOE, the quota was extensively supported by party members in an internal consultation (67% of positive votes) held in 1986 and ratified by the party conference in 1988. The firm support by the respective party leaders since its very same introduction has been coupled with intra-party awareness-raising campaigns on gender equality and a close monitoring of the progress made towards parity by national party organs. According to the PSOE interviewees, the party is proud to “*have enriched Spanish democracy with its commitment to gender equality in representation*” and they highlighted that quotas are now regarded as “*formal rules*” and that “*parity is internally assumed*”. Quotas are thus routinely accepted and applied. The interviewees also argued that the strategic selection of women to meet a double quota (women and young, or women and independent candidates) has progressively vanished and that women’s higher turnover has also been gradually reduced.

In sharp contrast, the PS party quota was introduced by its general-secretary Victor Constâncio, lobbied by some key female figures (Baum and Espírito-Santo 2012: 326). It still remains quite unpopular, predominantly among men but also among those women elected before quotas were enforced, which explains the party’s low commitment with compliance. Although none of the PS interviewees expressed overt opposition to quotas, many of them did not strongly embrace them either, depicting them as “*a necessary evil*” and suggesting that gender equality should be alternatively addressed by strengthening “*women’s competency and capacity to hold political positions*”. The implementation of the quota law by the PS may be routinized but it is described as an “*obligation*”. As one interviewee pointed, “*people are resigned to it*”.

Since the Spanish and Portuguese statutory quotas match PSOE's and PS's voluntary quotas, respectively, no relevant changes have been observed, according to the party women interviewed, with regards to candidate selection processes. Yet, whereas PSOE interviewees mentioned that the quota law has further consolidated the party quota, PS interviewees pointed that women candidates are now more scrutinized due to their higher visibility and asked higher credentials than their male peers. Do more institutionalized party quotas lead to more compliance with statutory quotas, as we posited in hypothesis 2a? As we will show below, this is indeed the case.

One way to assess the degree of institutionalization of party quotas is to look at rule-boundedness and deliberative action on allocation of safe seats or rank orders in party lists, the main informal practice preventing parliamentary groups from being gender-balanced. Party magnitude is particularly relevant for the allocation of safe positions, since most women get elected in districts with high magnitude. For instance, in the 2011 elections, the PS only elected more than five deputies in three districts – and even the winning party, the PSD, did so in five districts. In Spain, with a median district size between 4 and 6 seats, party magnitude is generally lower than the placement mandate established by the law – the 40/60 proportion in every stretch of five candidates. The number of women placed in safe positions is thus a clear sign of the party's commitment to women's election, especially when other non-formalized quotas are also used, as we will present.

In order to overcome the practice to rank women in lower positions in party lists, the PSOE extended the gender quota to safe positions in 1994, although surveillance on the effective implementation of this reform has been needed and is still of paramount importance in the event of electoral losses. As can be seen in Table 3, women candidates have occupied over 40% of the safe positions in party lists since 2004 and reached 44.5% of these positions in 2008, compared to 31.7% in the PP. In 2011 the share of safe seats allocated to women basically stabilized in the PSOE (43.8%) and it increased in the PP (35.9%). As to heads of lists, party differences are fairly small. In both parties, the lion's share of these positions is allocated to men – usually party officials with a strong hold in the district or an incumbent with prominent national public visibility. In the last election, though, women experienced a significant increase (38% in the PSOE and 30% in the PP).

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

In Portugal, parties tend to locate women every three positions on candidate lists (third, sixth, ninth...), which constitutes a clear barrier to the election of women, especially in small districts – 10 out of the 22 electoral districts elect five deputies or fewer. As a result, none of the parties located at least a third of women candidates in safe positions, as Table 4 shows. No significant differences between the PS and the PSD are found in this regard either before or after the implementation of the statutory quota but in the period 1999-2005. Similarly, very few women have been allocated as heads of lists in any of the parties throughout the whole democratic period and there is no clear trend in the feminization of this position. Like in Spain, heads of lists tend to be chosen in both parties for their national or district-level public visibility.

[INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

Centralization of candidate selection

In the PSOE, candidate selection is initiated at the province (a sub-regional division that matches electoral districts) in coordination with the regional branches. The interviewees pointed out that gender quotas are not the only quota taken into account in the composition of party lists. Other informal quotas, especially the ‘territorial quota’, are of paramount importance. In seeking to draft a territorially-balanced list, district-level (provincial) parties are lobbied by local branches to secure a winning position for their leader, usually men with long-established service in the party: *“If you have territorial support, it is hard to be removed from a party list”*. While gender quotas have largely feminized both public and party office, core positions remain gendered: *“Women are still absent of decision-making arenas where power resides. Thus, men administer quotas”*. Also informally, heads of list (who are usually men, as already said) exert influence over the ordering of candidates in the subsequent positions of party lists.

The candidate lists drafted by the district-level (provincial) parties are thereafter submitted for final approval to the central party bodies, which hold veto power. The national electoral committee, integrated by high party officials, remits its decision to the highest executive party body (Federal Committee) for final ratification. Given that all party secretary-generals have been robustly committed to gender quotas since their introduction, the strong centralization of candidate selection ensures that the strategic discrimination of resistant actors in list-building can be addressed at its final stage by reordering candidates with a view to securing the election of more women.

In Portugal, the recruitment process is equally centralized though less formalized. Although lists are ratified by the National Political Commission, interviewees stated that they had never heard of lists being rejected by these organs, implying that this ratification is a mere rubber-stamping and that rank orders are already decided beforehand. The National Political Commission can nominate 30% of the candidates in every district, who are usually placed in the highest positions, and has the right to decide their position on the list. For the remaining two-thirds of candidates, most decisions are made through informal contacts between the presidents of the district-level branches and the central bodies⁵ (Freire and Pequito Teixeira 2011). Heads of lists are usually chosen by the secretary-general. The 30% prerogative would allow central party leaders to address gender imbalances in candidate tickets, but they have rarely chosen to do so, which proves their low commitment with women's representation.

Women's sections

Women's agency has been pivotal in the PSOE for pushing the central-level party leadership to address imbalances in the distribution of safe positions and heads of lists. Despite recruitment process being equally centralized in the PS, the fragile position of its women's section is crucial in the lower institutionalization of party quotas. In the case of the PSOE, since the mid 1980s, the Secretaryship for Equality (previously named Secretaryship for Women), integrates the party highest executive body and is in charge of defining the equality policies included in electoral manifestos. All party branches (local, provincial, regional and state-wide) must include this secretaryship, although its influence is stronger at the central level. The women's section has also managed to mainstream parity in the political education courses offered to party members and set up women's training sessions in order to boost the pool of women candidates (Verge 2012: 400). The internal Equality Plan passed in 2002 has also been instrumental in raising awareness on the relevance of gender equality in political representation. The leader of the women's section is appointed by the party secretary-general, who usually selects a women public or party official experienced in gender equality policies and connected to the feminist movement. She sits *ex officio* in the national party executive as well as in electoral committees at all party levels and has

⁵ As in Spain, the rank-and-file plays an irrelevant role, although the 2012 amendments to the PS party statutes (not applied yet) seeks to slightly increase members' involvement in the process.

recently been upgraded in the party hierarchy, ranking fourth right after the party leader, the deputy party leader and the secretary of organization.

Women's agency has been particularly instrumental in upholding the principle of gender parity. In the three regions with a zipping quota in use in regional elections (Balearic Islands, Castille La Mancha and Andalusia, all introduced by PSOE regional governments), the women's section has also achieved its application by district-level party branches from these regions when drafting candidate tickets for national elections, thus obtaining higher women's representation than in regions where the 40/60 proportion is in use. Despite counting with a strong complicity from party leaders, the party feminist lobby has also employed extra-party means to push for parity.

In 2008, in the days previous to the ratification of party lists, it was filtered to the press that the increase of women deputies would be marginal despite the new statutory quota. One of the main statewide newspapers included in the front page the heading "*Political parties list-building annul the Equality Law*" (*El País*, 11th February 2008) and the special article denounced parties' "*tricks*" in the implementation of the quota, principally by "*abusing the minimum proportion for either sex [40%] as if it was a quota for women*". The PSOE had rallied around gender equality in all domains, including political representation, and in 2004 nominated the first parity cabinet in Spanish democracy. Thus, the champion of equality could not allow itself to fail to produce a gender-balanced parliamentary bench. The central party reacted immediately by including more women candidates in winning positions.

In 2011, election polls predicted PSOE's collapse and PP's majority. PSOE constituency-parties (provincial branches) had used the 2008 electoral results as the benchmark for allocating winnable seats and protected male incumbents and party officials in higher positions of party lists. On this occasion, party feminists and incumbent women deputies filtered to the press that women's representation in PSOE's parliamentary bench risked decreasing by 50% (*El País*, 23rd September 2011 and 5th October 2011). Again, women's agency was successful and the party secretary-general pulled rank to make both provincial electoral committees nominate more women as heads of lists and the national party electoral committee reordered candidates' lists. As can be seen in Table 3, while women made 24% of the party's heads of list in 2008 they represented 38% in 2011, a 58% increase rate. Failure to translate the party quota into the same proportion of women's representation for the first time since 1996 led the

women's section to initiate a quota reform to replace the 40/60 gender-neutral quota with zipping, which, as said, has been already approved by the party.

In contrast, in the PS, the Women's Department certainly has a more negative reputation than the very same quotas. The clearest sign (and cause) of this is the fact that the most powerful party women prefer not to play an active role in it. Although a critical step was achieved in 2003, when women party members directly elected the leader for the first time, some characteristics of the women's section and the way the party deals with it contribute to its fragility. Firstly, depending on who the leader is, the women's section might act in a more progressive (feminist) or in a more conservative way, a sort of dispute between those who claim to "*be for gender equality*" and those who "*are for the female condition*". Secondly, the relationship between the women's section and the party is rather informal. Party statutes specify that the leader of the Women's Department (at the national and district level) sits in the party's main bodies but do not establish a remuneration for her position nor allocate her a safe position in national elections. This implies that, if not elected to parliament, the leader of the women's section might only be able to devote a few hours to party work during evenings or weekends. Additionally, the chances of being nominated as candidate in national elections (and placed in a safe position) depend on her closeness to the secretary-general – which was always the case prior to the election of the women's section leader by affiliated female members.

PS interviewees sustained that the women's section plays no relevant (formal or informal) role in the recruitment process, even though, according to the party statutes, it is in charge of supervising quota implementation since 1998 (Espírito Santo 2006: 48). As mentioned above, party lists are mainly drafted in informal meeting and talks by a very restricted group of people, where the leader of the women's section is certainly not present. The lack of influence of the women's section may also be corroborated by this piece of anecdotal but remarkably illustrative evidence. When arranging an interview with the current leader of the women's section, her personal assistant asked what topic would be discussed. Her answer was: "*And what does political recruitment have to do with us? Do you know that you are calling the women's department?*".

5 – Conclusions

This paper has sought to contribute to the literature on gender and politics by showing the degree of change observed in regards to gendered recruitment practices in countries

where party quotas have long been in use and a recent statutory quota has been passed. The analysis of the Spanish and Portuguese cases indicate that political parties with no previous quotas experience deeper change in their share of women candidates when statutory quotas are enacted than those already applying such measures. Nonetheless, the introduction of quota laws does not always push the innovator party to keep championing women's representation. While in Spain the PSOE assumed a new voluntary quota that overcomes the minimum requirements of the statutory quota, in Portugal the statutory quota blurred the differences between parties with dissimilar commitments to equal gender representation.

Regarding the effect of party quota institutionalization, the empirical analysis shows that it is not longevity of party quotas but rather consolidation within the party organizational setting which can reduce the impact of informal practices in the selection of candidates (such as the gender-biased allocation of safe positions) and produce a stricter compliance in the implementation of statutory quotas. Consolidation has been gained in the PSOE by a strong women's section and facilitated by a genuinely centralized candidate selection process. In Portugal the weak position of the women's section in the party organization and its irrelevant role in a rather informalized recruitment process, coupled with a superficial commitment to quotas by party leaders, explain PS' relatively poor results.

Our findings suggest that a few decades of quota implementation may not be sufficient to eliminate the gendered patterns of candidate selection processes. Further comparative analyses are needed to tease out how gender quotas are layered in the broader party organizational setting. While women's agency is crucial in unveiling and fighting the informal institutions that disadvantage women candidates, informalized recruitment practices might well trump the coercing power of centralized candidate selection processes, particularly when the party leadership does not enforce the party's own commitment with gender equality. The fact that women's sections present different levels of acceptance and effectiveness within political parties sharing similar ideological and organizational principles should also lead scholars to examine under what conditions women's agency can find the most advantageous settings to pursue their claims.

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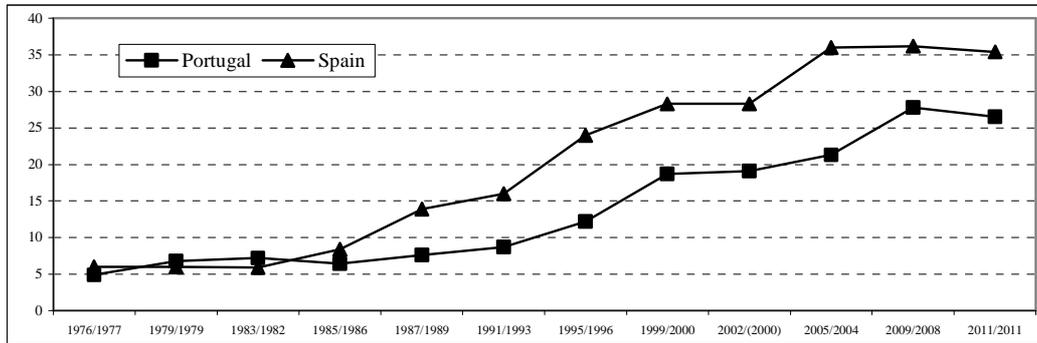
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Tables and Graphs

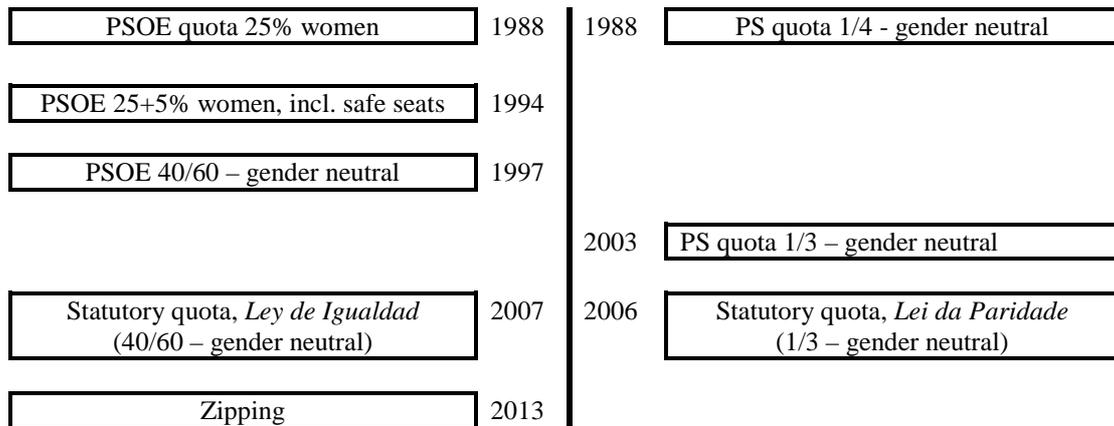
Graph 1. Women deputies, 1976-2011 (%)



Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: In the horizontal axis, the first year corresponds to the Portuguese general election and the second to the Spanish general election. The data reported here as well as in subsequent tables captures the percentage of women deputies elected at the immediate post-electoral period.

Figure 1. Party quotas in social democratic parties



Source: Own elaboration.

Table 1. Women candidates and deputies (%), Spain

Quota type	Election year	PSOE	PP	PSOE	PP
		Candidates	Candidates	Deputies	Deputies
--	1977	10.3	11.5	6.8	6.3
--	1979	10.2	15.1	5.0	11.1
--	1982	8.3	9.9	6.9	0.9
--	1986	12.5	13.0	7.1	5.9
PQ	1989	26.8	15.3	17.1	10.4
PQ	1993	28.9	19.3	17.6	14.9
PQ	1996	38.1	23.0	27.7	14.3
PQ	2000	46.4	30.9	36.8	25.1
PQ	2004	44.1	35.8	46.3	28.4
PQ + LQ	2008	48.1	46.6	42.3	30.5
PQ + LQ	2011	49.8	47.1	38.2	36.6

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: PQ, party quotas; LQ, legislative quota.

Table 2. Women candidates and deputies (%), Portugal

Quota type	Election year	PS	PSD	PS	PSD
		Candidates	Candidates	Deputies	Deputies
--	1976	8.0	7.2	4.7	2.7
--	1979	10.0	---	5.4	---
--	1980	8.4	---	2.7	---
--	1983	9.6	5.2	5.0	9.3
--	1985	7.2	6.4	1.8	5.7
--	1987	11.2	7.6	6.7	6.8
PQ	1991	13.5	10.0	9.7	7.4
PQ	1995	14.3	11.7	12.5	8.0
PQ	1999	24.8	16.1	20.0	13.6
PQ	2002	24.8	14.8	23.2	17.1
PQ	2005	34.4	17.8	28.9	8.0
PQ + LQ	2009	34.8	31.7	29.1	26.9
PQ + LQ	2011	37.8	33.4	24.3	28.7

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: PQ, party quotas; LQ, legislative quota.

Table 3. Women in safe seats and heads of lists (%), Spain

Election year	PSOE		PP	
	Safe seats	Head of list	Safe seats	Head of list
1979	2.3	0.0	8.3	1.9
1982	1.4	0.0	14.3	1.9
1986	2.9	3.8	8.4	3.8
1989	16.2	5.9	7.5	11.5
1993	14.9	7.7	11.3	9.6
1996	35.2	15.4	11.6	13.5
2000	32.2	17.3	13.7	15.4
2004	40.8	23.1	28.4	26.9
2008	44.5	24.0	31.7	18.0
2011	43.8	38.0	35.9	30.0

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4. Women in safe seats and heads of lists (%), Portugal

Election year	PS		PSD	
	Safe seats	Head of list	Safe seats	Head of list
1976	--	0.0	--	--
1979	3.7	0.0	--	--
1980	4.1	0.0	--	--
1983	4.1	4.5	--	13.6
1985	2.0	4.5	6.7	9.1
1987	7.0	9.1	5.7	0.0
1991	8.3	9.1	6.8	0.0
1995	12.5	0.0	9.6	13.6
1999	18.8	4.5	13.6	13.6
2002	22.6	4.5	17.3	22.7
2005	27.1	9.1	10.5	13.6
2009	28.9	13.6	25.3	9.1
2011	28.9	9.1	27.1	9.1

Source: Own elaboration.

Appendix: List of interviewees

Portugal

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews carried out in March 2014:

- Sónia Fertuzinhos (PS, President of the Women's Department, 2003-2005; sitting MP);
- Catarina Marcelino (PS, President of the Women's Department, 2011-2013; sitting MP);
- Ana Catarina Mendes (PS, member of the National Political Commission, sitting MP);
- Isilda Gomes (PS, member of the National Political Commission, President of the Council of Portimão, former MP, previous Regional Prefect of Algarve);
- Lurdes Castanheira (PS, member of the National Political Commission, current President of the Women's Department in Coimbra, President of the Council of Góis).

Spain

Semi-structured phone interviews carried out between February and March 2014.

- Purificación Causapié (PSOE, current leader of the Secretaryship for Equality, 2012 onwards; 2000-2004 coordinator of the Secretaryship for Equality; 2004-2012 director-general in the Andalusian regional government);
- Micaela Navarro (PSOE, former leader of the Secretaryship for Equality, 1997-2004; former local councilor 1991-1996; former senator 1996-2000; MP 2000-2008);
- Cándida Martínez (PSOE, 1996-2008 regional MP; 2008-2011 MP; member of the Federal Political Commission);
- Laura Seara (PSOE, 2001-2010 regional MP in Galicia; 2009-2011 director of the statewide Women's Office; current member of the party's Federal Committee and leader of the Secretaryship for Equality in Galicia);
- Lourdes Muñoz (PSOE, leader of the Secretaryship for Equality in PSC – PSOE's sister party in Catalonia – and member of PSC's National Council since 1993; local councilor 2001-2004; MP 2004-2011).