



# Party Law in Modern Europe

The Legal Regulation of Political Parties in Post-War Europe

## Women in High-Level Politics: The Role of Path Dependence in Closing the Gender Gap

by

Ekaterina R. Rashkova  
(Leiden University)

[rashkova@fsw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:rashkova@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

The Legal Regulation of Political Parties

Working Paper 28

January 2013



European  
Research  
Council



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

© The author(s), 2013

This working paper series is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC research grant RES-061-25-0080) and the European Research Council (ERC starting grant 205660).

**To cite this paper:** Rashkova, Ekaterina R. (2013). 'Women in High-Level Politics: The Role of Path Dependence in Closing the Gender Gap', Working Paper Series on the Legal Regulation of Political Parties, No. 28.

**To link to this paper:** <http://www.partylaw.leidenuniv.nl/uploads/wp2812.pdf>

This paper may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

ISSN: 2211-1034

## Women in High-Level Politics: The Role of Path Dependence in Closing the Gender Gap<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Gender inequality is a known phenomenon in many spheres in life; yet, it is especially conspicuous in high-level governmental positions. Men tend to get elected more and more often to posts of vast political importance. In comparison to established democratic countries, the gender gap in high-level political positions is larger in developing democracies. Extant scholarship suggests however, that the gender gap is reduced by democracy and democratic practices of inclusion and equality. If true, this would indicate that we should see a closing of the gender gap as democracies mature. Further, if such a relationship does not exist, this would suggest that factors other than democratic practices are at play when it comes to choosing between a man and a woman for high-level office. The hypothesis is tested on data from new and established European and Latin American democracies. The results show that the time since the first woman was elected to office and the number of women in parliament are the two strongest predictors of the appointment of female ministers, as well as the percent of female cabinet members. Additionally, the analysis demonstrates that women are more likely to be appointed to ministerial posts when political parties are more heavily regulated, while economic and party system variables seem not to have a real effect.

On May 16, 2012, a BBC Europe news article<sup>2</sup> announced that French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault named the new French government. A surprise for some, PM Jean-Marc Ayrault who is an old Hollande ally according to the press, kept the pre-electoral 'women's promise' that President-elect Hollande had given, that women would make up half of the new cabinet. As promised, the new cabinet consists of 34 ministers, 17 of whom are female. Despite the criticism of the media that while gender parity has been reached in numbers, parity within the power distribution is yet to be desired (as the ministry of justice is the only 'hard-policy' ministry among the ones that were allocated to women), this is quite an achievement and something most countries still have to strive

---

<sup>1</sup> Paper prepared for delivery at the SPSA Annual Conference, Orlando, Florida, January 3-5, 2013. The author would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of the European Research Council (ERC starting grant 205660) in the preparation of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> BBC News Europe, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18084978>.

for. The only other non-Scandinavian European state that can proclaim to have achieved a gender-balanced cabinet, at least in numbers, is Spain with Zapatero's 2004 and 2008 cabinets. Galligan and Buckeley (2011) report that the average of female ministers in the EU15 in 1994 was a merely 16 percent, and this number has risen to 26 percent by January 2009 after the inclusion of the 12 new member states.

At the same time, there are states which are no where near parity, nor even close to 20 percent, which as the current world average of the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament, is considered an acceptable benchmark (Rashkova and Zankina 2012). The current Egyptian cabinet sworn by the newly-elected President Mursi, has only two women, despite promises for an inclusive government with women and Christians represented.<sup>3</sup> There are also plenty of examples of countries which democratized earlier (if the Arab Spring can be termed another wave of democratization), yet have very few women on board – Slovakia, Slovenia and Poland in 2005 had respectively 0, 6.3, and 5.9 percent women holding ministerial posts. In Latin America, Uruguay, one of the most developed countries in South America and among those with the highest human development in the region, had no female ministers in 2005, and Chile, the regional leader, had only 16.7 percent women in ministerial posts.

The under-representation of women in politics, and especially in high-level politics is a clear and observable phenomenon despite a world where women make roughly half of its population. Paxton et al. (2007) note that while women's fight for formal representation is mostly won (as Saudi Arabia remains the only country with an electorate still only comprised of men, despite promises to allow women to participate and stand elections<sup>4</sup>), gender inequality in elected and appointed positions persists. A long tradition in the literature studies women's representation in national legislatures, looking for explanations of its still unsatisfactory low level. The literature on gender that focuses on explaining variations in the number of women elected to parliaments, otherwise known as women's descriptive representation, is 'more mature' (Wangnerud

---

<sup>3</sup> BBC News Middle East, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19075291>.

<sup>4</sup> The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/25/saudi-arabia-women-vote-elections>.

2009, 52) in comparison to studies focusing on the question of do and how women matter, or women's substantive representation (Celis 2006; Celis and Childs 2011).

Explanations of the low percentage of women legislators are linked to the institutional context of the competitive space – the electoral system, the party system, the legislative competition – and to the party context, especially party ideology or party organization (Norris 1993). Women's election to parliamentary office is shown to be improved by more permissive electoral systems (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton et al. 2007), by more elections and greater number of years since women were first allowed to stand for office (Reynolds 1999). A significant amount of work looks at gender quotas, identifying them as one of the most effective tools addressing women's under-representation in national parliaments. While a lot of the research on gender quotas focuses on explaining different paths in their adoption (Caul 2001; Krook 2006), an increasing number of studies use quotas to explain the success of female candidates in municipal (Schmidt and Saunders 2004) and provincial elections (Jones 1998), or women's political engagement (Zetterberg 2009). Jones (2009) argues that the effectiveness of gender quotas in enhancing women's representation in parliament is not conditioned *a priori* but depends on how well they are designed. In a comparative study of the election of women in Latin America, he shows that gender quotas work better in closed vs. open-list PR systems, that *Left* parties (for Europe, see Caul Kittilson 2006) increase the chance of women getting elected, and that despite conventional expectations, public attitudes toward the election of women, do not have a significant impact on how many women are elected.

While literature on the causes and consequences of women's parliamentary representation abounds, the same is not the case for women in high-level politics. Few works to date study the conditions of electing women to high office. Reynolds (1999) is one of the first to include an analysis of the determinants of the percentage of women in the executive. In a world study of women's involvement in government in 1998, he shows that the percent of women in the legislature is the best predictor for the amount of women cabinet ministers. Finding also that some religions are less likely than others to

correlate with choosing more women ministers and that coalition governments which do not have a left-oriented partner suppress the promotion of women to cabinet positions, Reynolds concludes that if institutions do not seem to matter for women's inclusion in cabinet, culture and ideology clearly do (1999, 570). Looking specifically at women prime ministers, Jalalzai (2004) examines the puzzling observation that in comparison with more liberal states, a larger amount of women have achieved head of government positions in countries with a conservative culture about gender roles, as is the example of Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, who in 1960 became the first woman prime minister. Within a span of 40 years and a worldwide survey of female prime ministers and their paths to power, Jalalzai concludes that familial ties and kinship constitute a central explanation for the phenomenon. Her study also shows that 73 percent of women prime ministers entered office in parliamentary systems, while only 23 percent came from presidential systems. The parliamentary vs. presidential system debate and its effect on women's election to high-level posts is discussed also in Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2004, 2009) and Reynolds (1999), where the former argue that women ministers have a higher chance of appointment in presidential system since the president is not threatened by a vote of confidence as prime ministers in parliamentary systems are, while the latter finds no relationship between presidentialism and the proportion of women in the executive. Reiterating previous work, Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2004) find that the number of women in the legislature and Left presidents appoint more female ministers.

Building on these studies, this article explores the questions of what determines the appointment to an executive post of a woman vs. a man and what conditions increase the proportion of women in ministerial positions? The theory offered here is based on the normative notion that democracy and democratic practices bring about equality and inclusion. The paper studies the effect of political – systemic, institutional, and cultural – and economic variables on women's election to cabinet. It reports the results of a survey of 18 Latin American and 34 West and East European states in 2005. The study is by no means the last word on the subject, but with newer and more

comparative data than Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2004), it sheds new light on our understanding of what conditions make a difference in electing women to executive office. The results show that the two strongest predictors for electing women to ministerial posts are the number of women in the legislature and the time which has passed since the first woman was elected to parliament. There is also evidence (although due to data availability this is only limited to the countries in Europe) for a positive correlation between state regulation of political parties and the proportion of women holding cabinet posts.

### ***What gets women in government? Theoretical justification***

This article explores the problem of the appointment of women to cabinet posts and looks for conditions which increase the number of women ministers, as well as explanations to its current non-parity status. Making up for half of the world's population women should by nature have an equal say with what goes on around them. Yet, everyday we are confronted with facts that point to gender inequality and to unequal treatment of men and women. While the ultimate goal of equality activists is to have full gender parity when more interesting issues to study will be what, who and how do women represent, the first step is to increase the number of women in power. Thus, although the descriptive representation of women in executive office is only a component of the complex problem of women representation, studying what influences it is of extreme importance as "absence is not merely a sign of disadvantage and disenfranchisement, but the exclusion of women from positions of power also compounds gender stereotypes and retards the pace of equalization" (Reynolds 1999, 549).

The explanations for the number of women in politics are diverse, yet they can all be attributed to Norris's conceptualization of demand and supply of political recruitment (1987). Women's involvement in politics is first and foremost influenced by the supply of female politicians, which in turn depends on women's desire and ambition to pursue political carriers. Starting from the assumption that women have ambition for high-political office, socioeconomic and cultural factors will then affect the supply of women. One of the largest obstacles to electing women to high-office is the social perception that

the election of women is something extravagant or unusual. Reynolds (1999, 550) argues that while women find it much more difficult to break into electoral office en masse due to being socioeconomically disadvantaged as a result of poor health care, poor child care, and un/underemployment, these barriers can be overcome in time and with voters' acceptance of the legitimacy of electing women to positions of power. Thus, the involvement of women in politics and the passing of time are two key factors which are expected to influence the appointment of women to cabinet positions. As Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2005) note, similarly to Reynolds, Davis (1997, 64) expects the increased number of female legislators to create "an irreversible process of change" in attitudes toward women in high political office. Additionally, the longer the time since women first entered parliament, the more socially accepted that women can do what is traditionally seen as a 'man's job' will be if we accept that ideas mature with time. Further, having more women in parliament provides the necessary larger pool of highly-skilled female politicians who are eligible for minister posts. Two testable hypotheses can be drawn from here:

H1. We would see a higher chance of a woman's appointment to cabinet and a larger proportion of cabinet portfolios being allocated to women, when the number of women in parliament is higher.

H2. The longer the period since the first woman was elected to parliament, the greater the social acceptance of women holding political office, and therefore the higher the chance of a woman being chosen over a man for a ministerial post and the larger the proportion of female cabinet appointments.

Ministers are usually highly-skilled professionals with a lot of experience and expertise. We can expect that politicians, who are eligible for the appointment of ministerial positions, have made careers in high-level and well-paid jobs. Thus, additional factors such as the percentage of women holding senior officials or managerial jobs, and data on female economic activity as a whole can help us understand the supply of qualified women. When more women are employed, there is a higher chance that some may choose to pursue a political career. The monetary reward also plays an important role in



career choice and development. A difference in pay between male and female workers, for instance, may work against the supply of women if they are paid lower than men, as women may not see it worthwhile to pursue better careers if they face discrimination in the reward. We can therefore expect that:

H3. The percent women ministers and the chance that a woman is chosen over man for a cabinet post increases as the number of women with highly-ranked positions goes up.

H4. When there are more women in the workforce, we can expect more women in the cabinet.

H5. We can expect more female members of cabinet when the wage discrimination between male and female workers is low.

The demand side of cabinet recruitment reflects characteristics of the political sphere and how they affect political competition in whether women are chosen over men to serve ministerial posts. Most of the arguments here refer to type of electoral system, type of governing system, as well as regulation setting different rules for the game. It has been long argued in the electoral politics literature (Duverger 1954, Rae 1979, Lijphart 1990) that more permissive electoral systems produce more balanced representation of society. As Wangnerud (2009) contends, the conventional wisdom stemming out of the electoral politics laws is that women are more likely to be elected in proportional representation systems versus systems of first-past-the-post. This, of course, reflects the assumption that a woman will not be a party's first choice, something plausible based on parties' choices thus far. Related to proportional representation, the district magnitude, or the number of parliamentary seats that each electoral district allocates, is also expected to affect women representation. Jones (1998) shows that larger district magnitudes are positively correlated with the percentage of women elected in Argentine provinces. Another political factor which affects the demand for women in politics, and thus for women ministers, is the number of parties. The larger parties are, the higher the chance that there will be more women to choose from, and therefore the higher the chance that a woman may be chosen for a minister over a man.

Political parties are also subject to a great deal of regulation which governs not only their establishment and dismissal, but often how they are internally organized, their recruitment processes, as well as their funding opportunities. The role of party organization and recruitment on the number of women entering politics has been stressed by Norris (1993), yet party regulation has as of now not been used to explain the percent women ministers. Living in an era of increased emphasis on regulation, and an ever stronger connection between the parties and the state (van Biezen 2004), the increasing regulation of political parties has been to a large extent an answer to an international attempt to enhance transparency and lower corruption, especially in the area of public funding. While not directly regulating parties in terms of their involvement in gender equality practices, many party laws set thresholds for membership, for standing elections, or encourage the setting up of sections representing specific groups within the party structure – all factors which can increase the incentive for widening not only a party's constituency but also a party's rank-and-file members to include more women.

Finally, the type of governmental system is also important. There are competing arguments here, where some contend that under presidential systems women are more likely to get elected to high-office because presidents are not liable to confidence votes and are therefore more free in their cabinet appointments (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2005). Others argue the opposite. In her world survey of female ministers, Jalalzai (2004) found that there were women ministers in three times as many parliamentary countries than in states with presidential systems, while Reynolds (1999) illustrates that there is no statistically significant relationship between the type of government system and the number of women appointed to the executive. Jalalzai's argument in favor of parliamentary systems posits that since in such systems the party is voted upon, as opposed to the individual, a woman still has the chance to circumvent a socially conservative electorate. However, given that both a president and a prime minister have to choose from a pool of qualified women, it is unlikely that the incentives proposed by both sides will have any real effect on how many women get appointed to

cabinet. We can summarize the hypotheses for the demand side of women's inclusion in government as follows:

H6. Proportional electoral systems will elicit cabinets with a higher percentage of women.

H6a. Higher district magnitudes are to be associated with a higher chance of a woman to be appointed to cabinet, or for more women appointees in cabinet overall.

H7. The higher the effective number of parties (which signifies that power is spread among more and smaller parties), the lower the likelihood of women being chosen over men and the fewer women promoted to ministerial posts.

H8. As the regulation for political parties increases, so will the involvement of women in high-level politics.

H9. The type of government system will have no specific effect on the number of women ministers.

Other variables such as whether the government is a coalition government or not, the size, fractionalization and ideology of the government, as well as formally adopted gender quotas which may also influence the number of women sent to cabinet, are presently left out from the analysis.

#### *Regulatory Framework of Political Parties*

Before proceeding with the data and operationalization of the variables, a brief discussion on the development and scope of party regulation in European states is due.<sup>5</sup> Party regulation scholars maintain that a major role in the establishment and the existence of political parties is played by the public law (Biezen and Rashkova forthcoming; Casal Bertoa et. al 2012; Molenaar 2012; Pacini and Piccio 2012; Rashkova and Spirova 2012). As parties have become increasingly subject to regulations, the liberal principle of non-intervention in parties' internal affairs which existed since the very emergence of political parties as organizations in Europe (and elsewhere), is no longer dominant (Casal Bertoa et al. forthcoming). Furthermore, while non-binding, the European Commission's directives on state actors adopted by the Venice Commission encourage the greater involvement of the state in political party matters. Party regulation is multi-faceted and

---

<sup>5</sup> The data collected and coded for the party regulation variable used here, is only for the European democracies included in the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties in Post-War Europe* project (with the exception of Macedonia). In future iterations of this paper, it is hoped to be able to quantify a measure of party regulation also for the countries of Latin America.

as documented in Biezen and Rashkova (forthcoming) it encompasses dimensions from the more abstract question of the democratic principles, rights and freedoms of political parties, to the more specific rules on party registration, party finance, party activity, and party organization. Table 1 gives an overview of the regulation of political parties in post-war Europe. It shows the scope and intensity of regulation, i.e. what is regulated and how much, based on the coding of Party Laws collected and analyzed under the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties in Post-War Europe* research project.<sup>6</sup> The data in table 1 reveals that the two most regulated sub-categories in modern Europe are the 'reporting & disclosure' and the 'private funding' of political parties. Not only these sub-categories make up for the largest amount of rules, but also they seem to be of biggest concern to almost all of the states – table 1 shows that Serbia and Latvia are the only states which devote more regulatory attention to other fields.

While gender or gender equality are hardly mentioned *per se*, it can be argued that how political parties are regulated affects the demand side of the involvement of women in politics. Under the extra-parliamentary domain, for example, a number of categories deal with the internal procedures, the organizational structure, the membership and the legal registration requirements for political parties, all of which can be said to pertain to women. The two most conspicuous ones are membership requirements, which are also linked to the allocation of public funding in some countries (as in the Netherlands), and supporting signature requirements which are more often required for registering a political party but in some cases also for allowing competition in an electoral race. The presence of these legal requirements directly or indirectly gives parties the incentive to broaden their recruitment and include more women. Getting more votes, on the other hand (which is not only linked to the incentive to qualify for public funding, but also to enter parliament), pushes political contestants to expand their constituency, and in addition to making specific political claims, representing the under-represented assures a larger voter pool. For these reasons, the paper argues that party

---

<sup>6</sup> Detailed country information and a searchable database of party regulation can be found on our website, [www.partylaw.leidenuniv.nl](http://www.partylaw.leidenuniv.nl).

regulation plays an important role in women representation, and as such must be also considered as a factor influencing the number of female ministers.

### ***Data, Measurement and Findings***

Data for this project was assembled for 34 European and 18 Latin American democracies for 2005. The survey of the 52 states found that there were on average about 20 percent of women ministers within the sample, with the European states at 21.7 percent and Latin American democracies 5 percent lower, at 16.7. Figure 1 shows the overall distribution. Not surprising, the Scandinavian countries where the tradition of gender parity has been long established, show to have the most balanced cabinets with Sweden leading at 52.4 percent cabinet appointments being given to women. Finland, Norway and Germany follow closely at 47.1, 44.4, and 46.2, respectively. In Latin America, Colombia is leading the race with 35.7 percent of the ministers being female, closely followed by El Salvador at 35.3. Interestingly, the Latin American states with the highest human development, fare quite poorly at gender parity in cabinet appointment – Chile with only 16.7 percent women and Uruguay with none. The countries which have no female ministers in 2005 in Europe are Cyprus and Slovakia.

[Figure 1 about here]

Two dependent variables are used in the paper – a dichotomous variable denoting whether a particular country's cabinet is comprised of at least 20 percent female members, and a continuous variable measuring the proportion of female ministers. Data for both comes from the UNDP Human Development Report (the exact figures can be found in the data appendix included at the end of the paper). The independent variables which constitute the supply of women – the percent women in the legislature, the time since the first woman was elected to political office, the proportion of women in highly ranked position, the number of women engaged in the workforce, and wage discrimination – are also based on data from the Human Development Report. The percent of women in the legislature denotes the number of seats in parliament held by women as of March 1, 2005. The prediction here is that when there are more women in parliament there will be higher chances for women to be appointed to cabinet posts, as

the pool of qualified women is larger and the appointment of women to high-level political positions is more socially accepted. The time since the first woman was elected to political office reflects the number of years between that instance and 2005. The time variable is a proxy for the maturity and the acceptance of the idea of gender parity in a given country. Age of democracy could be an alternative measure, yet, it can be argued that while democracy as a whole is believed to deepen equality and increase representation, none of these things happen if social perceptions say otherwise. In that sense if we have two hypothetical democracies with the same age and one elected a woman prior to the other, it is more likely that we see more women in the first rather than the second.

The proportion of women in highly-ranked positions gives the percent of women who were employed as legislators, senior officials, and managers. Data refer to the most recent year available during 1992–2003 (HDR 2005, 303). The number of females in highly-ranked positions is included to control for the proportion of qualified women and is expected to have a positive effect on female minister appointments. The other variable dealing with the size of the supply of women is the number of women engaged in the workforce. This is operationalized through the 'female economic activity' variable of the Human Development Indicators, which provides the rate of employed women, aged 15 or above. The data is from 2003. Similarly to the proportion of highly-ranked females, this variable is expected to have a positive effect on the number of women ministers, as it increases the amount of women working and thus the chance that more women chose a political career. The last supply-side variable, wage discrimination, is measured with the HDR's ratio of estimated female to male earned income based on data for the most recent year available during 1991–2003. When the ratio of female to male income increases, it is expected that the number of women ministers will increase as well since there will be a stronger incentive for women to pursue positions of power.

As stated earlier, the number of women in cabinet is influenced also by the demand of women for such posts. The variables which comprise the demand-side of women's involvement in politics – electoral system, party system, state regulation, and

system of government - have a more political nature. The electoral system is operationalized through a dummy variable denoting proportional representation and via the district magnitude, where the log of the average magnitude is used. Both variables are expected to yield a positive relationship with the number of women ministers, as the logic is that more permissive electoral systems, allow for more political parties to compete, therefore increase the chances for representation of women and minorities. The effective number of parties (Laakso and Taagerepa 1979) is operationalized as the number of competing parties weighed by the size of their vote share. The data is for the last election before or during 2005 and come from Gallagher and Mitchell (2008). It is expected that the effective number of parties (ENP) variable has a negative relationship with the number of women ministers, given that a higher ENP means more and smaller political parties.

Party regulation is also expected to affect the appointments of female ministers as discussed in the previous section. The expectation is that the more heavy regulation of political parties creates an incentive for the inclusion of more women. How parties are regulated is measured via the Party Regulation Index (PRI), developed by the author and also used in Biezen and Rashkova (forthcoming). PRI is similarly constructed to Fish and Kroenig's (2009) index of parliamentary power and assesses the amount of regulation of political parties in all post-war European democracies which have a Party Law. The index provides a snapshot of the level of regulation of political parties in each European country taking into account the regulation of 12 categories as coded in the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties in Post-War Europe* project dataset. The categories determine whether, and to what extent, democratic principles or matters of party finance, for example, are regulated within the Party Law. The index varies between 0 and 1, with 0 meaning no regulation and 1 meaning that a given country regulates in every category. The formula used to calculate the index is:

$$PRI = \frac{\sum \text{regulated categories}}{\text{Total number of categories}}$$

The final political variable which the literature on women representation points to is the type of governmental system. This variable is operationalized with a dummy denoting whether a presidential system is in place. The literature offers competing expectations for the parliamentary vs. presidential system debate. Here, I follow Reynolds (1999) in not expecting a specific effect of the government system on women's cabinet appointments.

Ordinary least squares and probit regression are used to estimate the models. Tables 2 thru 4 summarize the results. Six models have been fitted to discover what determines higher levels of women minister appointments using the percent women ministers as a dependent variable. Clearly, the overall winner and strongest determinant for how many women take part in the cabinet is the percent women in the legislature (table 2). The variable yields positive and statistically significant coefficients in all variations of the model. The results demonstrate that for each percent increase in the amount of women parliamentarians, the percent of women ministers increases by as little as 0.59 percent (model 4) to as much as 1.02 percent (model 6) – both of which confirm and improve the findings reported by Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2005) and Reynolds (1999). This outcome is of great significance, not only because it is robust to different model specifications, but also because it shows that substantively for every percent increase of women's representation in parliament, there is a chance for up to 1.02 percent increase in the proportion of women governing the country – about three times higher than previous research reports. The relationship between the percent of women in legislative office and the percent of women ministers is also illustrated in Figure 2. Despite the variation among countries which exists for both variables (depicted by the multiple spikes), it can be observed that countries with lower share of female legislators, also have a lower share of women ministers, for example Brazil, Chile, Italy, and vice-versa (Sweden, Norway, Germany).

It would not be a far stretch to note that increasing the number of women demanded by political parties, will increase the number of women appointed to cabinet positions. The effect of party regulation on the percent women ministers emphasizes just that. Model 5 and 6, illustrate that as the amount of regulation for political parties



increases by one unit, the proportion of women holding cabinet posts goes up with 0.14 percent. Moreover, the explanatory power of these two models is significantly higher than all the rest – explaining, respectively, 76.7 and 74.5 percent of the variation. While not as stark as the effect of women in legislature, the results confirm the hypothesis that the effect of regulation pushes up the incentive of political parties to recruit and stage more women.

Another identifiably important factor for the increase of women in cabinet positions is the maturity of the social perception that that is ok. All models reveal a positive and significant relationship between the time a woman was first elected to parliament and the year of study, illustrating that for every additional year that passes women's appointments to cabinet increases by 0.19 percent (model 1). While the present study is not nearly as encompassing as Reynolds' world survey of women's political involvement in 1999, it does show that the result is present and stronger in two regions of the world and half a decade later.

The importance of the 'time variable', as well as that of the proportion of women in the legislature for women's cabinet appointments, is re-iterated in models 7 to 11 (table 3). While probit coefficients are not easily interpretable, as they state how a change in a given covariate affects the z-score of the dependent variable, the positive and significant effect of both the time since the first woman was elected to the legislature and the amount of women in the legislature, can be clearly observed. Again, the model which performs best in terms of explanatory power, is the model including party regulation (model 11), although the later is not significant in this specification.

The rest of the variables – both on the supply and the demand side – do not exhibit statistically significant relationships with the women ministers' variable. Neither proportional representation, nor higher district magnitude show to have the expected positive effect on the number of women ministers. Given that the coefficients do not reach statistical significance, all that this analysis can conclude is that there is no relationship between the electoral system and the proportion of female ministers. This could be partially a result of the fact that the appointment of women ministers tends to

be much better explained by supply-side factors. Table 4 portrays the demand vs. the supply-side explanatory variable and it is clear that the supply-side model offers not only more explanatory factors which prove to be statistically significant, but it also explains 43 percent of the variance in the model, compared to the 4.7 percent of the demand-side model. Presidentialism carries a negative and statistically significant coefficient here, which would mean that if a country's executive is a president (as opposed to a prime minister), the amount of women appointed to cabinet decreases by 8.65 percent. This finding has not been substantiated by the models 4 and 10, and therefore, needs to be taken with caution although the persistency of the negative sign is pointing in a direction favoring Jalalzai's (2004) argument rather than the caveat for studying only presidential democracies offered in Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2005).

The coefficient of the effective number of parties variable, which was expected to yield a negative relationship with the percent women ministers, carries the hypothesized sign, yet the relationship is not statistically significant. The variable remains insignificant also in model 9 (table 3) and the demand-side model (table 4), thus we can conclude that the number of parties does affect whether and how many women ministers are appointed to cabinet. Finally, none of the economic supply-side variables seem to matter as none of them reaches statistical significance. This could mean that there is no relationship between the economic status of women and their involvement in high-level politics, but it could also be an indicator of better data.

### **Conclusion**

This paper addresses the question of gender inequality and it studies the determinants of women ministers in particular. Thus far, the literature on women representation has determined that a mix of institutions and perceptions best explains women's involvement in politics. We know fairly little however, about a specific type of women representation – that in high-level politics. The studies that look at the question of women's participation in the executive can be counted on one hand and so far they present some conflicting results. For example, it is still unclear whether and how the government system, the education level, or women's employment affect female cabinet appointments.

Setting out to examine the conditions which explain the choice of female executives anew, this study revisits some of the explanations provided before and adds new ones as well. For example, it has been long established that the more women members of parliament there are, the higher the chance of a woman to be chosen over a man for a cabinet appointment or the higher the proportion of female ministers. The current paper, employing data from 52 Latin American and European democracies in 2005, confirms this relationship as well. It is demonstrated that as the proportion of women in the legislature increases by 1 percent, the percent of women ministers can increase with up to 1.02 percent – a result which shows a greater impact than previous studies report.

The present analysis also finds that perceptions and the maturity of democratic ideals of equality also have an important impact on the number of female ministers in that the longer the time since the first woman was elected to political office, the larger the chance for a female being chosen over a male for a ministerial post, and the higher the proportion of women ministers overall. One of the new propositions that this study makes is that regulation of political parties is important for women's representation as well. The paper shows that party regulation has a positive and significant effect on the share of female cabinet appointments. While not regulating gender equality directly, Party Laws provide the rules by which political parties' internal organization, public funding, or campaign spending must be done, many of which are linked to requirements about membership levels or number of supporting signatures which need to be collected. It is argued, then, that as the regulation of political parties intensifies, there are more incentives for the latter to expand their constituencies, but also their membership base, thus encouraging them to include more women. The present study does not find support for the electoral or governmental systems' relationship with women ministers which some other works claim.

Provided the results of the analysis carried out here, there are several ways forward. A primary direction for further exploration is the relationship between women representation and party regulation. As a first step, quantifying the level of party

regulation in Latin American democracies will allow to test whether the relationship exists there as well or whether it is Europe-specific. A next step would then be to look into the specificity of the regulations themselves and test additional measures – for example, how the requirement to have women organizations within political parties affects women representation and the appointment of women ministers. Of course, gathering more data and employing additional measures such as government ideology, coalition type, and so on, to test the proposed hypothesis, are also always welcome.

## References

- Casal Bértoa, Fernando, Teruel, Juan Rodríguez, Barberà, Oscar & Barrio, Astrid. 2012. "Uneasiness with the Status Quo: Party Regulation and Party Finance in post-Franco Spain (1976-2012)", Working Paper Series on the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties*, No. 25.
- Biezen, Ingrid van. 2004. 'Political Parties as Public Utilities', *Party Politics*, vol. 10 (6): 701-722.
- Biezen, Ingrid van and Ekaterina R. Rashkova. (forthcoming). "Deterring New Party Entry? The Impact of State Regulation on the Permeability of Party Systems", *Party Politics*.
- Caul, Miki. 2001. "Political Parties and the Adoption of Candidate Gender Quotas: A Cross-National Analysis", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 63 (4): 1214-1229.
- Caul Kittilson, M. 2006. *Challenging Parties, Challenging Parliaments: Women and Contemporary Elected Office in Western Europe*. Columbus: Ohio University Press.
- Celis, Karen. 2006. "Substantive Representation of Women: The Representation of Women's Interests and the Impact of Descriptive Representation in the Belgian Parliament (1900-1979)", *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, Vol. 28 (2): 85-114.
- Celis, Karen and Sarah Childs. 2011. "The Substantive Representation of Women: What to Do with Conservative Claims?", *Political Studies*, published online first.
- Duverger, Maurice. 1954. *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Escobar-Lemmon, Maria and Michelle M. Taylor-Robinson. 2005. "Women Ministers in Latin America: When, Where, Why?", *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 49 (4): 829-844.
- Escobar-Lemmon, Maria and Michelle M. Taylor-Robinson. 2009. "Getting to the Top: Career Path of Women in Latin American Cabinets", *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 62 (4): 685-699.
- Fish, Steven and Matthew Kroenig. 2009. *The Handbook of National Legislatures: A Global Survey*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Gallagher, Michael and Paul Mitchell (eds). 2008. *The Politics of Electoral Systems*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Galligan, Yvonne, and Fiona Buckley. 2011. "Women's Political Leadership in Western Europe: the UK, Germany and Spain", paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Conference on Politics and Gender, CEU, Budapest, January 13-15, 2011.
- Golder, Matt. 2005. "Democratic Electoral Systems Around the World, 1946-2000." *Electoral Studies*. 24 (1): 103-121.
- Jalalzai, Farida. 2004. "Women Political Leaders: Past and Present", *Women & Politics*, vol. 26 (3/4): 85-108.
- Jones, Mark. 1998. "Gender Quotas, Electoral Laws, and the Election of Women: Lessons from the Argentine Provinces", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 31 (1): 3-21.
- Jones, Mark. 2009. "Gender Quotas, Electoral Laws, and the Election of Women: Evidence From the Latin American Vanguard", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 42 (1): 56-81.
- Kenworthy, Lane and Melissa Malami. 1999. "Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis", *Social Forces*, vol. 78 (1): 235-269.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2006. "Reforming Representation: The Diffusion of Candidate Gender Quotas Worldwide", *Politics & Gender*, Vol. 2: 303-327.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1990. "The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, 1945-85", *American Political Science Review* 84 (2):481-496.
- Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell (eds). 2008. *The Politics of Electoral Systems*, Oxford University Press: Oxford and New York.
- Molenaar, Fransje. 2012. "Latin American Regulation of Political Parties: Continuing Trends and Breaking with the Past", Working Paper Series on the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties*, No. 17.
- Norris, Pippa. 1993. "Conclusions: Comparing Legislative Recruitment," in Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris, eds., *Gender and Party Politics*, p. 320. Sage: Thousand Oaks, California.
- Pacini, Maria Chiara and Piccio, Daniela Romée. 2012. 'Party Regulation in Italy and its effects', Working Paper Series on the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties*, No. 26.
- Paxton, Pamela, Sheri Kunovich , and Melanie M. Hughes. 2007. "Gender in Politics," *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 33: 263-84.
- Rashkova, Ekaterina R. and Spirova, Maria. 2012. 'Party Regulation in Post-Communist Bulgaria', Working Paper Series on the *Legal Regulation of Political Parties*, No. 21.
- Rashkova, Ekaterina and Emilia Zankina. 2012. "Is it a Men's World? Comparative Analysis of the Effect of Regulation on Gender Representation in the Balkans," paper presented at the *Gender & Regulation Workshop* to be held in Leiden June 28-29, 2012.

- Reynolds, Andrew. 1999. "Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World", *World Politics*, vol. 51: 547-72.
- Schmidt, Gregory and Kyle Saunders. 2004. "Effective Quotas, Relative Party Magnitude, and the Success of Female Candidates: Peruvian Municipal Elections in Comparative Perspective", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 37 (6): 704-734.
- Wangnerud, Lena. 2009. "Women in Parliaments: Descriptive and Substantive Representation", *Annual Review Political Science*, Vol. 12: 51-69.
- Zetterberg, Par. 2009. "Do Gender Quotas Foster Women's Political Engagement? Lessons from Latin America", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 62 (4): 715-730.

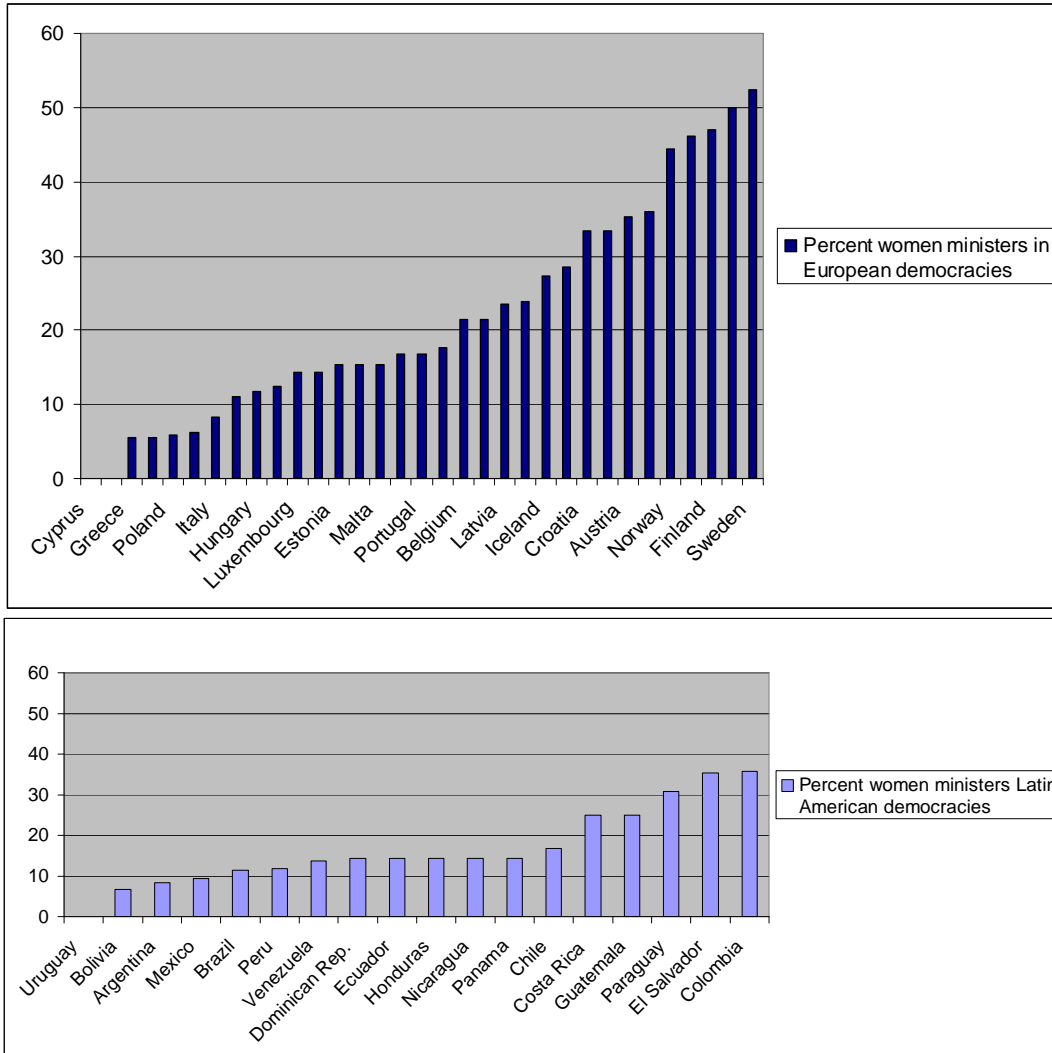
**Table 1. Dimensions of party regulation by country (%).**

Category	Party Finance					Party Organization		Media Access	Party activity & identity
	Reporting & disclosure	Private funding	Direct public funding	Regulation of expenditure	Indirect public funding	Extra-parliamentary party	Electoral party	Allocation & restrictions	Activity & identity
Austria	<b>47.5</b> (19)	-	30 (12)	17.5 (7)	-	-	-	5.0 (2)	-
Bulgaria	<b>64.4</b> (58)	15.6 (14)	5.6 (5)	5.6 (5)	2.2 (2)	5.6 (5)	-	-	1.1 (1)
Croatia	<b>41.7</b> (10)	16.7 (4)	20.8 (5)	-	-	16.7 (4)	-	-	4.2 (1)
Czech Republic	<b>47.9</b> (23)	18.8 (9)	22.9 (11)	-	-	10.4 (5)	-	-	-
Estonia	<b>37.0</b> (10)	25.9 (7)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)	-	18.5 (5)	7.4 (2)	-	-
Finland	<b>60.0</b> (9)	-	13.3 (2)	-	-	20.0 (3)	-	-	6.7 (1)
Germany	<b>59.1</b> (65)	13.6 (15)	16.4 (18)	1.8 (2)	5.5 (6)	1.1 (1)	2.7 (3)	-	-
Hungary	<b>59.5</b> (22)	27.0 (10)	5.4 (2)	2.7 (1)	2.7 (1)	2.7 (1)	-	-	-
Latvia	26.1 (6)	4.3 (1)	-	4.3 (1)	-	<b>47.8</b> (11)	13.0 (3)	-	4.3 (1)
Lithuania	-	20.0 (2)	-	-	-	<b>50.0</b> (5)	-	30.0 (3)	-
Norway	<b>48.5</b> (16)	9.1 (3)	36.4 (12)	-	-	3.0 (1)	3.0 (1)	-	-
Poland	<b>36.2</b> (21)	27.6 (16)	17.2 (10)	10.3 (6)	-	5.2 (3)	-	3.4 (2)	-
Portugal	<b>28.6</b> (2)	-	-	-	-	14.3 (1)	<b>28.6</b> (2)	<b>28.6</b> (2)	-
Romania	-	-	-	-	-	<b>42.9</b> (6)	21.4 (3)	-	35.7 (5)
Serbia	14.3 (2)	-	-	-	-	<b>71.4</b> (10)	-	-	14.3 (2)
Slovakia	<b>53.2</b> (33)	22.6 (14)	8.1 (5)	1.6 (1)	-	14.5 (9)	-	-	-
Slovenia	<b>34.8</b> (16)	<b>34.8</b> (16)	17.4 (8)	-	-	10.9 (5)	2.2 (1)	-	-
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	16.7 (1)	16.7 (1)	-	<b>66.7</b> (4)
Ukraine	<b>25.0</b> (4)	<b>25.0</b> (4)	-	-	-	<b>25.0</b> (4)	-	18.8 (3)	6.3 (1)
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	16.7 (1)	<b>50.0</b> (3)	33.3 (2)	-
<i>Total magnitude</i>	316	115	92	24	9	81	19	14	16
<i>Mean magnitude</i>	34.2	13.1	10.1	2.4	0.5	19.7	7.3	6.0	7.0
<i>No. of countries</i>	16 (80%)	13 (65%)	12 (60%)	8 (40%)	3 (15%)	19 (95%)	9 (45%)	6 (30%)	8 (40%)

Note: Data is from current party laws. Raw counts (magnitude) are presented in parentheses. Bold entries represent the most regulated category within each country.

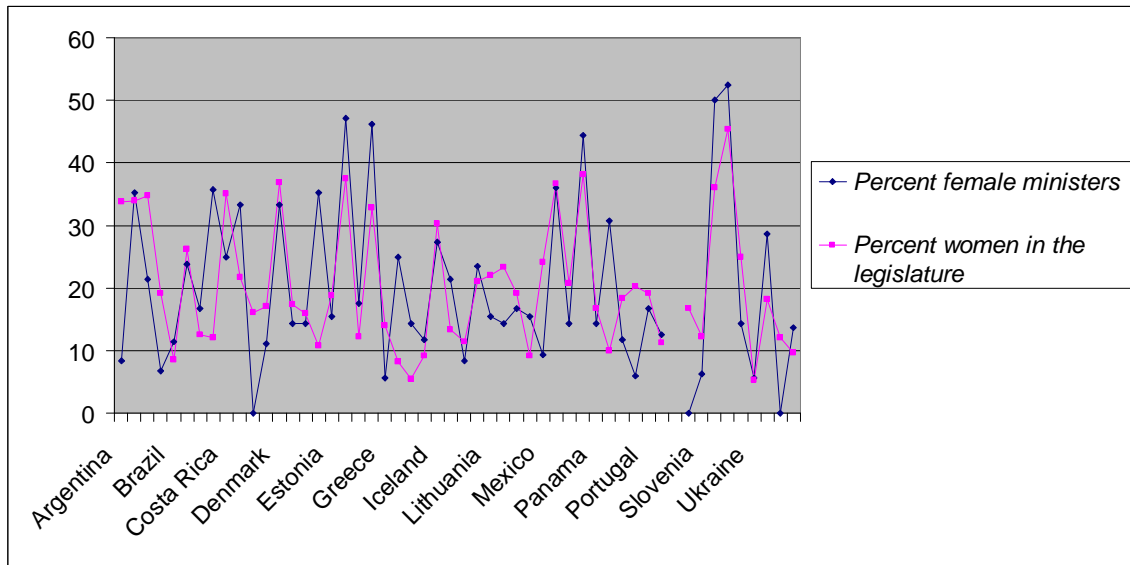
Source: Biezen and Rashkova (forthcoming).

**Figure 1. Distribution of women ministers in European and Latin American democracies.**





**Figure 2. Female members of parliament and cabinet in 52 European and Latin American democracies in 2005.**



**Table 2. Determinants of gender inequality in ministerial appointments in Europe and Latin America**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Highly-ranked positions	0.18 (0.35)	0.14 (0.35)	-0.001 (0.35)	0.15 (0.35)	-0.29 (0.41)	-0.08 (0.41)
Female economic activity	0.03 (0.33)	0.10 (0.35)	0.04 (0.33)	0.16 (0.35)	-0.28 (0.26)	-0.29 (0.28)
Women in the legislature	0.60*** (0.21)	0.61*** (0.21)	0.75*** (0.21)	0.59*** (0.21)	1.11*** (0.20)	1.02*** (0.21)
Proportional representation	0.28 (4.57)	--	--	--	-8.81 (5.24)	--
District magnitude	--	-0.89 (1.36)	-0.18 (1.42)	-1.19 (1.40)	--	-1.01 (1.17)
Wage discrimination	0.01 (0.22)	-0.01 (0.22)	0.03 (0.21)	-0.14 (0.26)	0.09 (0.20)	0.10 (0.22)
Time since 1 <sup>st</sup> woman elected	0.19** (0.08)	0.18** (0.08)	0.13* (0.08)	0.17** (0.08)	0.14* (0.08)	0.16** (0.08)
Effective number of parties	--	--	-1.34 (1.10)	--	--	--
Presidentialism	--	--	--	-4.59 (4.64)	--	--
Party regulation	--	--	--	--	0.14* (0.07)	0.14* (0.08)
Intercept	-9.41 (12.44)	-7.75 (11.6)	0.54 (11.9)	-1.52 (13.23)	10.3 (13.4)	-1.71 (11.5)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.414	0.421	0.466	0.420	0.767	0.745
N of observations	44	44	43	44	29	29

Note: Dependent variable is women appointed to cabinet positions (percent of total). Linear regression. Standard errors in parentheses. \*p<0.1, p\*\*<0.05, p\*\*\*<0.01. Models estimated in Stata 10.

**Table 3. What gets women appointed to cabinet?**

	<b>Model 7</b>	<b>Model 8</b>	<b>Model 9</b>	<b>Model 10</b>	<b>Model 11</b>
Highly-ranked positions	0.02 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.06)	0.01 (0.05)	--
Female economic activity	0.05 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	--
Women in the legislature	0.07** (0.03)	0.07** (0.03)	0.08** (0.03)	0.07** (0.03)	0.17** (0.07)
Proportional representation	0.66 (0.74)	--	--	--	--
District magnitude	--	-0.11 (0.23)	-0.13 (0.25)	-0.15 (0.24)	-0.50 (0.38)
Wage discrimination	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.05)	--
Time since 1 <sup>st</sup> woman elected	0.03** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.04 (0.03)
Effective number of parties	--	--	-0.01 (0.17)	--	0.48 (0.66)
Presidentialism	--	--	--	-0.48 (0.72)	--
Party regulation	--	--	--	--	0.01 (0.02)
Intercept	-5.06 (2.23)	-4.02** (1.97)	-3.44 (2.28)	-3.29 (2.16)	-7.47 (5.37)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.401	0.386	0.422	0.394	0.658
N of observations	44	44	43	44	31

Note: Dependent variable is a dummy of whether women were part of government (equal to 1 if more than 20% of cabinet appointments were given to females). Probit regression. Standard errors in parentheses. \*p<0.1, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p<0.01. Models estimated in Stata 10.

**Table 4. Women's involvement in high-level politics: demand vs. supply**

	<b>Demand-side model</b>	<b>Supply-side model</b>
District magnitude	-1.43 (1.65)	--
Effective number of parties	-0.51 (1.13)	--
Presidentialism	-8.65** (3.97)	--
Highly-ranked positions	--	0.18 (0.34)
Female economic activity	--	0.03 (0.33)
Women in the legislature	--	0.60*** (0.20)
Wage discrimination	--	0.01 (0.21)
Time since 1 <sup>st</sup> woman elected	--	0.19** (0.07)
Intercept	28.3*** (5.81)	-9.11 (11.4)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.047	0.430
N of observations	49	44

Note: Dependent variable is a dummy of whether women were part of government. Probit regression. Standard errors in parentheses. \*p<0.1, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p<0.01. Models estimated in Stata 10.

## Data Appendix

Country	Percent Women Ministers, 2005	Year 1st woman elected to parliament	Percent Women in Legislature, 2005	Female Economic Activity (% ages >=15), 2003	Female Highly-Ranked Positions	Wage Discrimination Index (WDI)	Average Magnitude	Party Regulation Index (PRI)	ENEP
Argentina	8,3	1951	33,7	37,2	25	37	5,29		8,94
Austria	35,3	1919	33,9	44,2	27	35	4,26	0,58	3,02
Belgium	21,4	1921	34,7	40,3	31	54	7,5	0	8,84
Bolivia	6,7	1966	19,2	48,6	36	45	3,8		2,62
Brazil	11,4	1933	8,6	43,7		43	19,7		9,28
Bulgaria	23,8	1945*	26,3	55,8	30	67	7,7	0,75	5,8
Chile	16,7	1951	12,5	39	24	39	2		6,58
Colombia	35,7	1954	12	49,3	38	51	4,88		
Costa Rica	25	1953	35,1	37,9	29	37	8,14		4,52
Croatia	33,3	1992	21,7	49	26	56	5,6	0,58	5,93
Cyprus	0	1963	16,1	49,3	18	47	5,83	0	3,76
Czech Republic	11,1	1992	17	61,3	26	64	14,3	0,67	4,82
Denmark	33,3	1918	36,9	61,8	26	73	7,9	0	5,19
Dominican Republic	14,3	1942	17,3	41,2			5		
Ecuador	14,3	1956	16	33,7	26	30	5		5,45
El Salvador	35,3	1961	10,7	47,6	32	44	6		4,09
Estonia	15,4	1919*	18,8	60,1	35	64	9,2	0,75	5,42
Finland	47,1	1907	37,5	56,8	28	72	13,3	0,42	5,65
France	17,6	1945	12,2	49,3		59	1	0	5,22
Germany	46,2	1919	32,8	48	36	54	1	0,58	4,46
Greece	5,6	1952	14	38,7	26	45	5,14	0	2,66
Guatemala	25	1956	8,2	37,7		33	6,87		4,62
Honduras	14,3	1957	5,5	41,6	22	37	7,11		2,69
Hungary	11,8	1920	9,1	48,7	34	62	1	0,5	2,94
Iceland	27,3	1922	30,2	66,7	29	69	9	0	3,94
Ireland	21,4	1918	13,3	38,3	29	41	4	0	4,13
Italy	8,3	1946	11,5	39	21	46	5,96	0	6,32
Latvia	23,5	-	21	59	40	62	20	0	6,78
Lithuania	15,4	1920*	22	57,3	39	68	1	0,75	5,78
Luxembourg	14,3	1919	23,3	38,3		39	15	0	4,26
Macedonia	16,7	1990	19,2	50,1	27	56	20		4,13
Malta	15,4	1966	9,2	26,5	18	39	5	0	2,02
Mexico	9,4	1952	24,2	40,6	25	38	1		3,19
Netherlands	36	1918	36,7	46	26	53	150	0	4,99
Nicaragua	14,3	1972	20,7	48,5		45	4,12		2,18
Norway	44,4	1911	38,2	60,3	30	75	8,26	0	5,11
Panama	14,3	1946	16,7	44,3	40	51	1,78		2,94
Paraguay	30,8	1963	10	37,5	23	33	4,4		4,23
Peru	11,8	1956	18,3	35,6	23	27	118		6,6
Poland	5,9	1919*	20,2	57	34	62	16,7	0,67	5,83
Portugal	16,7	1934	19,1	51,8	32	54	10,5	0,83	3,13
Romania	12,5	1946	11,2	50,3	31	58	7,9	0,67	3,9
Serbia							250	0	6,43
Slovakia	0	1992	16,7	62,6	35	65	150	0,58	8,87
Slovenia	6,3	1992	12,2	54,3	33	62	11,25	0,67	6,02

Spain	50	1931	36	38,5	30	44	6,86	0,67	3
Sweden	52,4	1921	45,3	62,8	30	69	13,9	0	4,51
Switzerland	14,3	1971	25	51,1	28	90	9,1	0	5,44
Ukraine	5,6	1990	5,3	55,3	39	53	450	0,75	6,98
United Kingdom	28,6	1918	18,1	53,5	33	62	1	0,42	3,59
Uruguay	0	1942	12,1	48,9	35	53	5,2		2,49
Venezuela	13,6	1948	9,7	44,2	27	42	6,9		2,19

*Source:* Most data come from the Human Development Report of the UNDP, found here ([http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05\\_HDI1.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05_HDI1.pdf)). The Party Regulation Index is calculated by the author. The Effective Number of Parties (ENEP) variable comes from Gallagher and Mitchell (2008), and the District Magnitude variable comes primarily from Golder (2006).

*Note:* \*For all post-communist states where the first woman was elected prior to the communist era, the time since the first woman was elected to parliament has been adjusted to reflect the time since that happened in the democratic history of the state (usually coinciding with the first democratic election after the change).