

## **Feminizing Political Parties: Women's Party Member Organizations within European Parliamentary Parties.**

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In established democracies the history of women's participation in political parties frequently dates from the time of mass enfranchisement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Women were often key mobilizers of the newly enfranchised, and of course, would ultimately constitute half of the universal vote. An early form of women's party participation **was** the 'ladies auxiliaries'. These were party organizations of women who undertook political housekeeping, and supported the party in its everyday activities (Young 2000, 134; Childs and Webb 2012). Later, some second wave feminist engagement with political parties took place, but this was uneven across different polities and parties, not least because some feminists questioned the desirability of engagement with electoral politics (see Lovenduski and Norris 1993). Today, as Evans' contribution in this special issue suggests, contemporary feminist activists may eschew more systematic or collective engagement with electoral politics and parties in favour of more individualized relationships with women party politicians.

Contemporary research on party women's organizations is unfortunately rather limited. Comparative party research too rarely adopts a gendered approach, and the politics and gender literature has focused much of its attention on party recruitment practices, and women in legislatures over the last twenty years or so. What literature that does exist posits two competing scenarios for party women's organizations in the contemporary era. The first, derived from the gender and politics literature, and largely based on a small number of single case studies, contends that contemporary party member women's organizations remain organizations *of women*, but that they are now also acting *for women*, even as they might still fulfill their traditional function (Childs and Webb 2012; Willliarty 2010; Allen and Childs 2014). In these accounts party women's organizations are found to constitute an important site from which women are making gendered political demands of their party. These demands are underpinned by an explicit group identity engendered by the women's participation in their party women's organization. A second scenario, deriving more from contemporary comparative party

literature, points not to a new function but to their abolition. Wider developments in the form of political parties have seen moves towards greater intra-party democracy (IPD) and professionalization. Maintaining structures for particular groups of members is said not to be a feature of such modern political parties (see for example, Cross and Katz 2013; Young and Cross 2002)). In the context of such limited and seemingly contradictory analysis, this article seeks (1) to provide a more systematic, large N study of the existence of party women's organizations and (2) to contribute to the debate about the form and function of women's party organizations. Our primary focus is to map their prevalence across a range of European industrialized countries. Based on new data of 17 European countries, generously provided by Susan Scarrow, Thomas Poguntke, and Paul Webb, we are able to confirm the extent to which party women's organizations exist in the political parties of today, and, moreover, what kinds of political parties are associated with them.<sup>i</sup> We find that almost half of the parties – notably, the traditional parties - have a party member women's organization, refuting claims, implicit or explicit, in the contemporary IPD literature of their demise. But what role do party member women's organizations play in respect of the descriptive and substantive representation of women within parties? If women's presence is restricted to their participation in a party women's organization we would suggest that their descriptive representation is limited. Accordingly, and again making use of the new comparative data, we examine the relationship between party women's organization and internal gender quotas for a party's executive body (which frequently take the form of reserved seats on a party's NEC), women's presence in party leadership positions, and the presence of gender quota rules for parliamentary candidates.

The new survey data also importantly permits us to begin to address the claim made in recent years by a number of gender and politics scholars, namely, that party women's organizations constitute at least a *potential* site for the substantive representation of women.<sup>ii</sup> Substantive representation is usually studied by looking at the actions of political actors, parties or governments frequently in terms of legislative interventions and outputs, policy pledges and public statements (see Childs and Lovenduski 2014). Here we are interested in the role played by party women's organizations as actors of substantive representation, and, more precisely, whether the party women's organization is

included in (at least some of) the sites where party policy is determined. We accordingly reflect further on the relationship between the presence of party member women's organization, gender quotas for the top party leadership body (NEC), women's presence amongst the party leadership, and candidate quota rules, taking these as surrogate measures of women's substantive representation. In other words, if the presence of women's party member organizations is associated with women's marginalization within the party, then the potential for women's substantive representation would be – all other things being equal – reduced. Our data shows little evidence that women are so marginalized, even if it does not find evidence for higher numbers of women's presence in the party leadership either.

In the final section of the article we sketch out a new comparative research agenda. We do this cognizant of having established the ongoing prevalence of party member women's organization across a large number of European cases, in acknowledgement of the limitations of current survey data, noting the lacuna in extant research, and with regard to the burgeoning gender and politics scholarship on gender and political institutions. We also take note of the wide array of party women's organizations, and look to provide for a more precise consideration of the relationship between the substantive representation of women and women's party organizations. To better evaluate party women's organization three criteria - institutionalization, powers, and accountability – are presented, along with associated empirical measures. Ultimately, we contend that this research framework should enable determination of the 'good' women's party organization; it certainly begs subsequent empirical research.

### *Women's Party Organizations*

As key representative actors in democratic politics, political parties constitute an important, albeit not sole, site for the political representation of women – descriptive, substantive and symbolic (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Young 2000; Childs 2008). The comparative literature on political parties has, regrettably, too often ignored gendered analysis, at least until very recently (Cross and

Katz 2013; *Representation* 2013; Rahat 2013). And feminist research on political parties *qua* parties is more limited than one might have expected given the foundational edited collection dates from the early 1990s (Lovenduski and Norris 1993). The nexus of gender and party can be examined at multiple sites within party politics (Kittilson 2013). Women may be party supporters, voters, members, activists, participants, workers, as well as, elected representatives. The gender and politics literature which has specifically focused on parties has frequently been characterized by single or small N case studies (eg Young 2000; Willliarty 2010; Childs and Webb 2012), or discussed parties as part of a wider national account of women and politics (Childs 2008). The latter provides a broad overview of women's interventions and participation in parliaments and politics, often as representatives of political parties, with extensive study of the actions of women representatives 'for women'. The former provides in many instances very rich description, documenting the ways in which women have entered parties, become active therein, and effected (or sought to effect) gendered change (Young 2000; Willliarty 2010; Childs and Webb 2012). This scholarship establishes that political parties are highly gendered institutions, structured by, and constitutive of, gender relations. Whether in their formal rules, norms and, or wider relations,<sup>iii</sup> gender is manifested throughout party processes, structures, norms and ideologies; there is a complex web of shared practices that differentially impact women and men.<sup>iv</sup>

We can conceive of a *feminized* political party as one that both (i) includes and integrates women as political actors and (ii) addresses women's concerns (following Lovenduski 2005). The first dimension of feminization has two components: the integration of women as parliamentary elites, and the integration of women party members via party women's organizations (Childs 2008). The second dimension refers to the integration of women's issues and perspectives. Parties can make one of six responses, as Table 1 below shows. Crucially here, feminized parties are not the same as feminist political parties, as parties do not have to respond in a feminist fashion on either dimension of feminization.

Party member women's organizations often called women's sections or federations (Kittilson 2011, 76) are internal to the party structure and may operate at the party's branch and/or central levels. Party women's organizations can take a number of forms. The following is illustrative:

- A formal members' women's organization(s);
- Women's post(s) in the party's voluntary organization;
- Women's posts on particular party structures, eg at leadership level, reserved seats on a national executive committee or party board; or as in a few parties' in respect of the party leader post (e.g. male and female co-leaders, for example); or in the leader and deputy leader positions;
- Women's posts in the professional/secretariat of the party;
- At the elected level there may well be a 'Women's Minister' or Opposition spokesperson, perhaps with associated staff; and
- At the legislative level, a women's formal parliamentary caucus or more informal cross-party caucus.

The extant literature (see Kittilson 2013) suggests a number of hypotheses coming out of more recent case study research regarding first, the existence of party member women's organizations, and secondly, their nature and impact.

*Women's Organization Existence.* Taken together, the first set of expectations focus on the existence and form of party women's organizations in contemporary party politics (see Childs and Webb 2012; Kittilson 2006; 2012). Comparative parties scholarship suggest, as noted above, (i) that the era of women's party organizations is over in established democracies, (Cross and Katz 2013; Young and Cross 2002). These expectations are often based on the claim that party leaders dominate party politics, and group identity has given way to individual representation. Different versions of this expectations point out that (ii) party women's organizations have often shifted form, moving away

from formal member organizations to looser ‘networks’ of women members, often more professionalized and oriented toward party policy change and/or toward promoting women in parliament. At the same time, other gender and party scholars suggest that (iii) party women’s organizations have resurged, renewing claims for women’s representation within the party organization (See Leyenaar 2004, 199 cited in Kittlison 2011; Childs and Webb 2012; Willarty 2010).

*Remit and Impact.* Rival hypotheses suggest that women’s organizations (iv) limit women’s descriptive and substantive representation by marginalizing women within the party. Specifically, they keep women from the true centers of power and decision-making within parties; women’s issues may here be perceived as special or separate from the party platform. (v) Party women’s organization may facilitate women’s descriptive and substantive representation by collectively representing and lobbying. The women’s organization may additionally (vi) provide resources to women seeking selection as parliamentary representative and, or encourage a collective sense of gendered consciousness, strengthening the women’s issue agenda demands of the political party.

Our empirical focus in this article is primarily on the *existence/form* hypotheses; our data speaks less comprehensively to the second set of hypotheses, although we are able to say something in respect of hypotheses four and five. We return however to questions of how scholars might empirically study the totality of the remit and impact hypotheses in the final part of this article as we develop a new comparative research framework.

In sum, we seek in this article to establish the presence of a party women’s organization across a range of European political parties, making use of new survey data. Moreover, we relate this presence/absence to the balance or otherwise of women in the party leadership. We do this because of wider debates about the changing nature of political parties. Plebiscitary parties, as noted above, are said to reject group organization and group representation (Cross and Katz 2013). In professional/electoral and cartel parties, policy is regarded as having become increasingly the preserve of the party leadership (Katz and Mair 1995). If this is the case, women’s party organizations

- even where they continue to exist - will likely be effectively emasculated by a disproportionately male party leadership.

There is, however, an alternative possibility linking women's party organizations and party leaderships; that women's enhanced presence in party leaderships has the potential to rebalance gender power within parties, and engender the descriptive and substantive representation of women (Kittilson 2011; Childs 2013). In other words, by studying the relationship between the absence and or presence of a women's party organization and the number of women in the party leadership, we are able to begin to consider whether these are working in tandem. In other words: to what extent do women's organizations divorce party women from the 'real' centers of decision-making and power within party organizations? Or do they constitute a potential site of substantive representation, alone or in conjunction with women in the party leadership.

#### *Research Design and Method*

A new political party database ([www.politicalpartydb.org](http://www.politicalpartydb.org)) helpfully permits us to identify which of the individual parties from across Europe do and do not have a *formal party member women's organization*. The definition used by researchers gathering the data for this survey is as follows:

*Which of the following types of non-territorial sub-organizations are mentioned in the party statutes (examples include women's organizations, youth organizations)? These are organizations with individual memberships.*

The Political Party Database Project (PPDP) team undertook their first data collection in 2012-13 with 2011 as the initial year for which data has been gathered (Scarrow and Webb 2013, 7). The project 'limited' its attention to parties 'official stories'. This enabled the systematic gathering of comparable data, even as the research design authors recognized that 'formal structures maybe a poor guide to actual power relations, and that official resource data may be far from accurate' (Scarrow and Webb 2013). It would also prevent more subjective analyses.<sup>v</sup> Three non-European parliamentary

democracies - Australia, Canada, and Israel, augment European countries in the PPDP project, although we do not include all of these cases in our analysis (see Table 2 below).

Given the more expansive conceptualization of party women's organizations highlighted above, we recognize that PPDP definition – in particular its emphasis on them being mentioned in 'party statutes' - may not capture all forms.<sup>vi</sup> Nevertheless, and crucially, if anything, the Webb et al survey is likely to *under-count* rather than over-count parties with women's member organizations. The new data further enables us to determine whether the presence and absence of a women's party organization so defined, differs by party type, country type, and or region. We can also compare the absence/presence of a women's party organization with other indicators of feminization based on additional secondary data: (i) women's descriptive representation (the percentage of women in the national legislature); (ii) levels of party parliamentary representation (the numbers of women MPs that particular party returns to the legislature); and (iii) the presence of an internal party women's organization within the party leadership body, and the balance or otherwise of women and men in the party's internal leadership body.

#### *Findings: The Prevalence of Party Member Women's Organizations*

Of the 106 parties from 17 industrialized democratic countries for which Scarrow, Poguntke and Webb collected data, 48 parties currently have party women's organizations.<sup>vii</sup> Almost half of the studied European political parties have, then, a party women's organization. Moreover, most countries have at least one party with a party member women's organization. Indeed, amongst the 17 countries there are only two that have no parties with women's organizations: Denmark and Spain. Overall, and based on this new data, it is clear that the era of the party women's organization cannot said to be over. Instead, party women's organizations persist across a host of different party landscapes in contemporary European party politics.

If the ongoing presence of women's party member organizations in political parties is our first clear finding, our second observation - and a striking one - is that there is a great deal of variation within



most national party systems. Only in two countries, Italy and the United Kingdom, do all of the major parties have women's organizations. Or take, for example, Ireland where Fine Gael and Labour Party have party women's organizations, but Fianna Fail, Sinn Fein and Green parties do not. In Norway, the Labour and Conservative parties do not have party member women's organizations, but the Center and Liberal parties do. And in Canada, the Liberal, National Democratic and Green parties have women's organizations, while the Bloc Quebecois and Conservative Party do not.

Are certain types of parties more likely to have internal women's organizations? We examine this proposition by grouping our parties by 'party family'.<sup>viii</sup> We might assume that parties of the left are more accommodating: for reasons of ideological closeness, with concepts of women's equality better 'fitting' leftist parties, or because these parties may be more comfortable with notions of 'identity politics'. Similarly we might expect post-materialist parties to be more at ease with concepts of women's interests. In contrast, and given antipathy between feminism and conservatism and more especially radical rightist parties, we might be surprised to see an association with party women's organization. Of course, and in a counter argument, we know that conservative parties have frequently been very comfortable with concepts of 'women's interests' albeit defined in a non- or anti-feminist fashion (Celis and Childs 2012). Accordingly, we might expect to see rightist party women's organizations - the ladies auxiliaries of previous note, for example.

Figure 1 presents the percentage of parties with women's organizations, for each party family type. The total number of parties in each category is given in parentheses. As the Figure makes clear, Social Democratic/Socialist, Liberal, Agrarian and Conservative/Christian parties are similarly likely to house party women's organizations. In contrast, Communist parties appear to reject them, with none of the 11 Communist parties across our data set including a women's organization. Similarly, the newer niche parties such as Ecology, Right Wing, Regional, and Special Issue parties are also less likely to contain women's organizations. The pattern we have found here is one that draws a distinction between what we might call 'mainstream parties' of post-war European democracies and both parties at the extreme of the left/right spectrum and political parties newer in formation, as well as those underpinned by particular political concerns/interests.

### *Party Member Women's Organization and Women in the Party Leadership*

Past research suggests that party women's organizations may limit women's substantive representation of women by keeping women out of the centres of power within the party – the ghettoization thesis (see for the UK case, Childs and Webb 2012; Kittilson 2011). To test this claim, we examine the relationship between the presence or absence of party women's organizations and the percentage of women on the party's top leadership body. The top leadership body is often referred to as the National Executive Committee (NEC) or some variant of this term. In a different fashion, party women's organizations may advocate for rule changes within the party to promote women in the party leadership or as party candidates. Note the above claim that party women's organizations may constitute a site from which women can mobilize for the enhanced descriptive representation of women, within the party and as elected representatives of the party. Party rules for the leadership (NEC) range from reserved seats for women, a quota, or target for a certain percentage of women on the NEC. Party rules for candidates include both quotas and set targets for percentages of women candidates and, or MPs.

First, we examine some simple correlations among party women's organizations and the outcomes of interest. Table 3 presents these bivariate relationships. Party women's organizations share little relation with women on the party's NEC, nor the presence of rules regarding women's presence on the NEC or quota rules for **parliamentary** candidates.

Given the findings of past research, we move on to control for the presence of internal quota rules for the NEC and Left-Right party ideology in predicting the percentage of women sitting on the NEC. Our measure of Left-right party ideology is taken from the Parliament and Government Composition Database (see Appendix) and it is a zero to 10 scale, where higher numbers indicate a more rightist party ideology.

Table 4 below presents the results of an OLS linear regression model explaining the percentage of women on the party leadership body (NEC). Even after controlling for these influences, we find *that party women's organizations are not associated with lower percentages of women on the NEC*. Thus, we do not find any evidence that women's organizations marginalize women from the power centers within parties. At the same time, *party women's organizations are not associated with more women on the NEC, and so do not seem to serve as a springboard for women to ascend to party leadership either*. Our results also suggest that leftist parties are no more likely to have women on the NEC than rightist ones. Crucially, rules regarding party gender quotas or reserved seats for the NEC are not related to higher percentages of women on the NEC. We also present some diagnostics for this model in Table 4, to be sure that our model does not violate assumptions of OLS regression. To test for multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is presented beside each coefficient. Collinearity among our predictors does not appear to present problems for our model. The VIF hovers around 1 in each case, which is well within the boundaries for this diagnostic. In addition, we employed the Durbin-Watson to test for autocorrelation, and this figure (1.18) indicates there may be some positive autocorrelation, but not enough to present problems for our model.

Table 5 presents the covariates from logistic regression models that predict the presence of two types of gender quota rules: **parliamentary** candidate gender quotas and party gender quotas for the NEC. Both models control for party ideology. For **parliamentary** candidate quotas, *the presence of a party women's organization does not dampen (nor heighten) the likelihood that a party will adopt gender quotas for candidates*. The relationship is not statistically significant. However, *the presence of a party women's organization does increase the propensity for parties to adopt gender quotas for the NEC*. For both models, a leftist ideology is a statistically significant predictor of candidate and NEC quota policies.

On the basis of analysis of a 17 country study of political parties, our findings establish (1) that almost half of all the parties studied across these European democracies have a party women's organization –

so party member women's organizations remain a significant feature of political party organization in contemporary party politics, even working with the 'official' definition demanded by the PPDP research schedule; (2) women's party organizations are mostly a feature of traditional political parties – those that may well now be considered electoral-professional, but are the contemporary versions of the mass and catch all parties of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. In contrast, newer parties and parties of the extreme right and left are less likely to have women's party organizations. These finding may well take on additional significance, if greater party proliferation occurs (as arguably observable in austerity Europe), and or with the electoral success of populist or radical parties to the detriment of long-established mainstream parties. Some of the party positional gains made by our traditional parties *vis a vis* women's representation might, then, be threatened by these parties that have little desire for, or organizational space for party women's organizations. Indeed, when we turn to the consequences of the presence of party women's organizations, we were able to examine whether these give rise to greater descriptive representation of women, both internal to the party and in terms of a party's elected representatives. Here we found that (3) parties with women's organizations are not more likely to have women among their party leadership, nor more likely to have party gender quota rules for **parliamentary** candidates. However, parties with women's organizations are (4) more likely to have gender quota rules for the top party leadership body (NEC). In this way, women's organizations within the party are only *indirectly* related to women's presence among the party leadership; these organizations are associated with the sorts of rules that promote gender equality among the party leadership.<sup>ix</sup>

Notwithstanding the clear value of our findings relating to the prevalence of women party member organizations – of being able to present an overview pan-European picture - such large N study leaves room for additional research. We noted earlier how the official definition of what constituted a women's party member organization used in the PPDP study may exclude other party women's bodies that did not quite fit the PPDP definition<sup>x</sup> – recall our list of illustrative typology of party women organizations. Quantitative analysis will be unlikely to capture such multiple types and variation unless it is designed precisely to do this. To be sure, scholars do need to establish what

number and type of party women's organization(s) any individual party might have. And again whether these vary by party family type, and how these relate, if they do, to women's presence in the parliamentary and internal party leaderships. A recent study of the UK Conservative party (Childs and Webb 2012) for example, identified: the Conservative Women's Organization (CWO), a party member organization, the infamous 'blue-rinsed' backbone of the party, more recently organized around policy issues; Women2win, a 'ginger group' of party members and supporters directed towards women's candidacy for elected office; the CWO Muslim Women's Group (rather short-lived, ending in 2010); Women's Summits and Forums that brought together party members, interested third sectors organizations, MPs and interested outsiders on particular policy issues; a party Vice-Chairman for Women; a shadow Minister for Women; and Women's Policy Group of MPs and party professionals. In such a context, noting the presence of a party member women's organization, as the PPDP survey data documents, cannot fully account for the number and variety of forms of women's party bodies in play at any one time, and limits in turn a full understanding of what such women's organizations do, and to what effect vis a vis descriptive and substantive representation.

Subsequent studies might also want to consider the relationship between women's party bodies and the prevalence of other group representations, for example youth, or minority ethnic institutions within parties. Often women's organizations mirror the structure and functions of the party's youth section. These additional institutions would help examine to a greater extent the prevalence of the plebiscitary party characteristics said to be indicative of contemporary political parties, speaking directly to the comparative parties literature. It is also the case that other factors might facilitate the presence of a party member women's organization, or any other party women's body, for that matter. Critically, these may not always be internal to the party. Pressure from feminist women might be a contextual factor in contemporary times as it was, of some parties in the 1970s and 1980s (see Evans in this issue). As noted elsewhere (Childs 2014) gender and politics scholars have take very little notice of party regulation (including party funding) as part of the context within which women's descriptive and substantive representation takes place, but this might well facilitate their presence.<sup>xi</sup>

*Developing a Comparative Research Framework for the Study of Party Women's Organizations*

A key proposition answered only indirectly by the PPDP data is the possible relationship between the presence of a party women's organization and the substantive representation of women. The argument is intuitively attractive: a party member women's organization might constitute a 'safe space' from which to articulate not just demands for women's descriptive representation within the party, but to make demands of the party in terms of policy (Allen and Childs 2014; Celis et al 2014) and might constitute a resource for individual critical actors in Parliament or Government. The opposing contention is that a party women's organization may keep women's issues and interests away from the party leadership – the aforementioned ghettoization thesis. Whilst our analysis of the PPDP data cannot fully address questions of substantive representation, it is importantly able to show that in the European case, a women's party organization is not a zero-sum game with women's presence on the party NEC.

Given the rather limited ways in which existing data speaks to the question of substantive representation we now turn to map out a new research agenda for the study of women's party organization. Once a careful mapping of the range of a party's women's bodies has been undertaken, it is necessary to grasp the extent to which these different party women's organizations are institutionalized within the party proper and what kind of activities they undertake. Ultimately, we are interested in establishing what re-gendering (following Beckwith 2005) effect party women's organization(s) have. In light of recent conceptual refinements of feminist institutionalism<sup>xiii</sup> a focus on the formal and informal will be needed. Research questions include: to whom, and through what processes or structures, are different party women's organizations accountable? Are women constituted as subjects in their own right? Are they the centre of their own conversation? (Campbell's 1987, 283) Do they work together? Most importantly, does each or any of the party member women's organizations seek to substantively represent women *as women*?

Table 6 displays the operationalization of our approach. The three dimensions seek to capture capacity and likely influence. Institutionalization seeks to establish the permanency, autonomy and embeddedness of the women's organization. Regarding powers, one needs to establish whether and to what extent the women's organization formally participates in policy development. Accountability refers to where the organization sits regarding the party leadership and women party members; whether it is a body 'of' the party leadership, of its women parliamentarians, and, or its party members, and whether it sees itself in a represented/representative relationship with women party members. In addition to these, and reflecting concerns in the wider gender and politics literature, we also ask about ideology: whether if and when these institutions seek explicitly to act for women whether they do so in light of defined feminism or some other gender or gendered ideology (Celis and Childs 2012).

Building upon these three dimensions, Table 7 shows how we might operationalize status and remit for comparative empirical research. Many of the measures relate to 'formal' party rules or statutes. For example, it should be relatively easy to determine if a women's organization is officially equal to another similar group, say youth, for example. Ditto, the difficulty or ease it is to abolish such a group - whether this requires a special party rule change, thereby constituting an effective protection from abolition. However, such observation of the formal will also likely need supplementing by consideration of the informal. Formal equivalence between party organizations need not necessarily be 'real', for example. Similarly, official resources may not capture the effective capacity of a women's organization. Take for example, the UK Labour party's parliamentary Women's Committee, which usually small in number in terms of attendance at its member meetings, arguably punches symbolically and substantively above this size (Allen and Childs 2014). On the ground, case study research, both quantitative and qualitative is, then, required.

The outcome of such empirical research informed by our approach can be represented graphically via a spider or radar chart with three legs, as shown in Figure 2. In turn, this will generate ideal types of, and rankings for, women's organizations across these three dimensions.<sup>xiii</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Documenting the prevalence of political party women's organizations is the first step in better understanding the role played by such bodies in the feminization of political parties, and in better capturing the contemporary form of political parties. This article, drawing on extensive new European quantitative data, should lay to rest the claim that women's party member organizations are old hat, replaced today by party forms that do not provide for group representational institutions. Indeed, given the range of possible party women's organizations, from the purely party member to those including party professionals and parliamentarians and party leaders, the party politics community needs to undertake more nuanced accounting of the role of women and their institutions when considering the nature of parties and party change. To do otherwise, would be to miss a significant part of what has changed about (some) political parties as well as contemporary features of inter-party competition and party systems. Our findings are clear: many parties, especially traditional parties, retain party member women's organizations. However, no direct relationship with higher levels of women at the MP level or in the NEC is found. Looking beyond simple accounts of descriptive representation, we are also interested in what the presence of women's party organizations means for women's integration within political parties. Importantly, there is little evidence in the European data to support the marginalization thesis. Women members are not restricted to only 'their' parts of the party. Turning to substantive representation, and in addition to some optimism that women are not excluded from the party leadership in parties with women member organizations, in the final section of the paper we think through new research questions prompted by our analysis of the Webb et al data, not least in terms of what kind of women's party bodies would best deliver good substantive representation. Comparative empirical research requires the development of measures that can travel; these have hitherto been absent in respect of women's organizations (Kittilson 2011). It is for these reasons that we have sought to develop both conceptual indicators and measures in the final part of



this article; we hope to prompt subsequent engagement by both gender scholars and comparative party scholars. Despite it lacking from most studies of party politics, feminization – the inclusion and integration of women and women’s concerns - should, we contend, be a significant dimension of party scholarship. An important part of this lies with documenting and examining the role played by women’s organizations therein.

**Table 1. Feminization and Party Types**

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> dimension</b>		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Dimension</b>
	<b>Integration of women parliamentary elites</b>	<b>Integration of women party members</b>	<b>Integration of women’s concerns</b>
<b>Responsive Party I (Feminist both dimensions)</b>	High/moderate representation; Well designed and fully implemented quotas; or absence of obstacles to women’s representation	Parity of members; women’s organizations are fully integrated into party policy making	Positive and in feminist direction
<b>Responsive Party II (Feminist 2<sup>nd</sup> Dimension)</b>	Low representation; absent or poorly designed/ implemented quotas	Fewer women members; integrated women’s organizations	Positive and feminist
<b>Co-optive Party (Feminist on 1<sup>st</sup> dimension, neutral 2<sup>nd</sup>)</b>	High/moderate representation; may have quotas	Parity of members; auxillary women’s organizations	Neutral or where positive, in a neutral direction
<b>Anti-feminist Co-optive Party (Feminist on</b>	High/moderate representation; may have quotas	Parity of members; either anti-feminist women’s organizations fully integrated	Positive but in anti feminist direction

<b>1<sup>st</sup> dimension, anti-feminist on 2<sup>nd</sup>)</b>		into party policy making or ‘auxillaries’	
<b>Non-responsive</b>	Low representation; absent quotas	Indifferent to representation of women; auxillary women’s organizations rather than integrated ones	Negative
<b>Anti-feminist Party</b>	Low representation; rejects principle and practice of quotas	Indifferent to representation of women; either anti-feminist women’s organizations fully integrated into party policy making or auxillary women’s organization	Positive in an anti-feminist direction

Source: Amended from L. Young 2000; Childs 2008.

**Table 2. Party Women's Organizations, by Country**

<b>Country</b>	<b># Parties with Women's Organizations/ Total # Parties</b>
1. Australia	3/4
2. Austria	2/5
3. Belgium	6/12
4. Canada	3/5
5. Czech Republic	1/5
6. Denmark	0/8
7. Germany	3/7
8. Hungary	2/4
9. Ireland	2/5
10. Israel	4/9
11. Italy	5/5
12. Norway	3/7
13. Poland	2/6
14. Portugal	2/6
15. Spain	0/5
16. Sweden	6/8
17. United Kingdom	4/4

**Table 3. Party Women's Organizations and Party Centers of Power, Bivariate Correlations**

	Party Women's Organization
% Women on Party National Executive Committee (NEC)	.006 (N=79)
Party Gender Quotas for NEC	.161 (N=104)
Party Gender Quotas for Candidates	-.058 (N=105)

\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.005

**Table 4. The Influence of Party Women's Organizations on the NEC**

	<b>% Women on Party NEC</b>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor</i>
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Party Women's Organization	0.37	1.04
Party Gender Quotas for NEC	2.29	1.08
Left-Right Ideology	-1.77	1.08
Constant	40.33***	
Adjusted R-Squared	.031	
Durbin-Watson	1.186	
Number of Cases	65	

Note: Table entries represent coefficients from linear regression \*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.005

**Table 5. The Influence of Party Women's Organizations on Quota Rules**

	<b>Candidate Quotas</b>	<b>Party Gender</b>
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		<b>QuotasNEC</b>
<b>Party Women's Organization</b>	-.19	0.96*
<b>Left-Right Ideology</b>	-0.24*	-.24*
<b>Constant</b>	1.4*	.30
<b>Nagelkerke R-Squared</b>	.09	.12
<b>Number of Cases</b>	79	79

Note: Table entries represent coefficients from logistic regression \*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.005

**Table 6. Parties' Women's Organization Status and Remit**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Operationalization/Components</b>
<b>1. Institutionalization</b>	Officially constituted; resourced; autonomous; status; marginalized-integrated continuum;

<b>2. Powers</b>	Policy development-policy veto continuum; Descriptive representation guarantees
<b>3. Accountability</b>	To whom? The party leadership (and when in office, to the Government)? Women elected representatives? Women party members? Women voters?

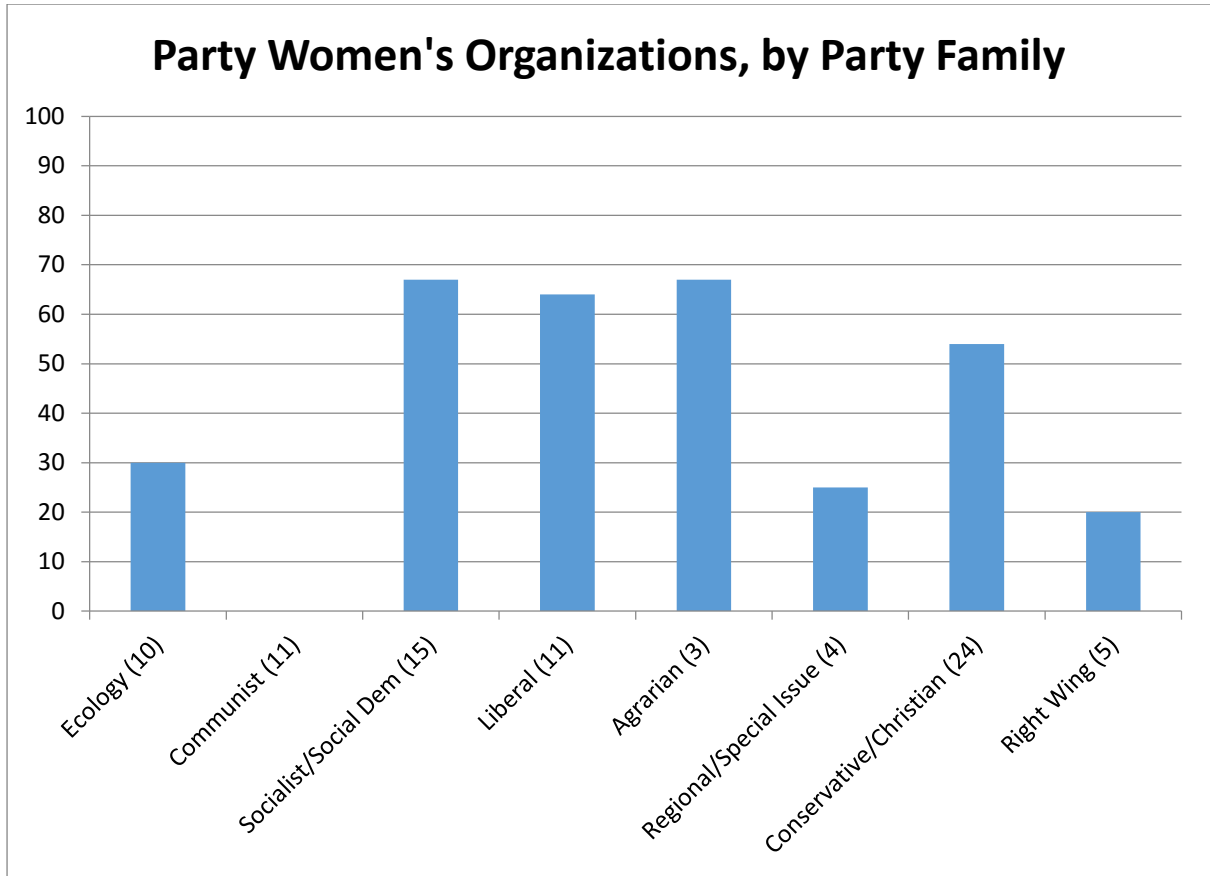
**Table 7. Measures for the Assessment of Parties' Women's Organizations**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Possible Measures</b>
<b>Officially constituted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established as part of the party's constitution/rules;</li> <li>• Status change subject to formal requirements of the constitution/rules</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding protected in party constitution; secured as set percentage of party</li> </ul>

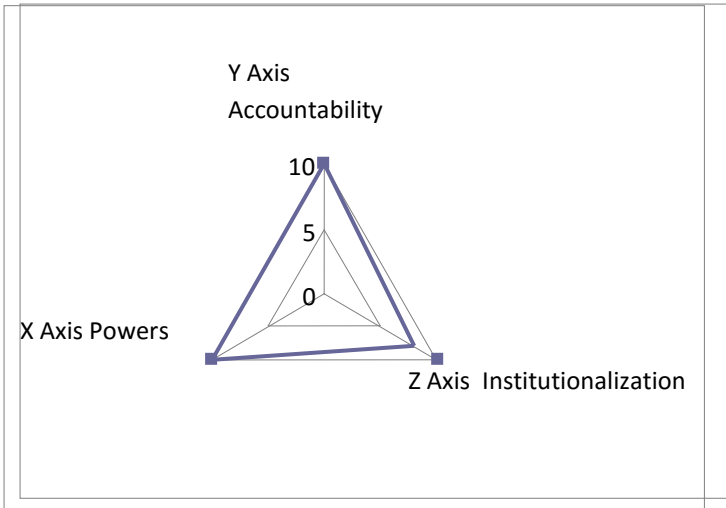
	<p>funds; women's organization(s) personnel paid out of the central funds of the party;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receives 'resources in kind' from the party proper, eg offices, admin support, meeting rooms, postage and other materials</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy-making Powers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laid out by party constitution/party rules;</li> <li>• Has policy initiative rights regarding, and policy veto powers over, explicit women's issues;</li> <li>• Women's organization(s) have a formal right to advise on draft election manifestos;</li> <li>• A representative from the women's organization(s) is an equal member of top party policy making forum;</li> </ul>
<p><b>Autonomy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women's organization(s) are a creature of (constituted via election by) women party members;</li> <li>• Internal party quotas provide for the representation of women's organization(s) representatives on all internal party bodies;</li> <li>• Parity of representation is required by party law/constitution throughout party structures, including parliamentary and executive;</li> </ul>
<p><b>Status</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least equal to other internal party identity groups, for example, youth, minority ethnic groups, LGBT groups (eg resources, powers);</li> <li>• Fully integrated into party's policy and other decision making bodies, eg campaigning and strategy internal structures;</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accountability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are women's organizations constituted? Are they elected by women party (parliamentary) members? Does the group have an Executive, and if so, are they elected? Are there Executive term limits? How frequently does the organization meet? And how do they decide on what foci and actions they undertake?</li> </ul>



**Figure 1. The Presence of Party Women's Organizations by Party Family**



**Figure 2. The 'Good' Party Member Women's Organization**





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## Appendix 1. Sources of Data

<b>Party Women's Organization</b>	Political Parties Database. 2015, Scarrow, Webb and Poguntke  Dichomous variable, 1 indicates presence of party women's organization.
<b>% Women on Party NEC</b>	Political Parties Database. 2015, Scarrow, Webb and Poguntke
<b>Party Gender Quotas for NEC</b>	Political Parties Database. 2015, Scarrow, Webb and Poguntke  Dichomous variable, 1 indicates presence of gender quotas
<b>Left-Right Ideology</b>	Doring and Manow. 2012. Parliament and Government Composition Database. Version 12/10 Zero to ten scale, higher values represent more rightist party ideology.
<b>Party Family</b>	Doring and Manow. 2012. Parliament and Government Composition Database. Version 12/10
<b>Party Candidate Gender Quotas</b>	Global Database of Quotas for Women. Drude Dahlerup.  Dichotomous variable, 1 indicates presence of party candidate gender quotas.

<sup>i</sup>[www.politicalpartydb.com/](http://www.politicalpartydb.com/)

<sup>ii</sup> This is another way of talking about the gendered political demands made by party women.

<sup>iii</sup> Lovenduski 2005, 1998; Krook and Mackay 2011; Kenny 1996; Crawford and Pini 2011; Franceshet 2010; Hawkesworth 2003; Puwar 2004 Chappell 2011.

<sup>iv</sup> Lovenduski 1988; Grace 2010; Kenny and Lowndes 2011; Lovenduski 2011.

<sup>v</sup> There is also, rightly, recognition by Webb et al that alternative research designs suffer from limitations.

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<sup>vi</sup>We'd like to thank one of the data collectors for this survey for pointing this out to us.

<sup>vii</sup> Israel is dropped from the analyses below because it is not included in the datasets for party family, party ideology and percentage of women on the NEC.

<sup>viii</sup> Data on party family collected from Doring and Manow (2012). Parliament and Government Composition Database. Data not published for Israel and a few parties in other countries.

<sup>ix</sup> Of course, and as Kittilson (2006) has noted previously, the higher presence of women on party NECs is in turn related to higher numbers of women MPs and the adoption of candidate gender quotas. Take the UK Labour party, for example, qualitative study has shown how the process of quota adoption for **parliamentary** quotas *followed* the adoption of internal gender quotas, which in turn and amongst other factors, provided the women's bodies at party conference who were able to vote in order to pass the necessary rule change introducing parliamentary gender quotas (Russell 2005; Childs 2004).

<sup>x</sup>We'd like to thank one of the data collectors for the Scarrow and Webb survey for pointing this out to us.

<sup>xi</sup> In Finland, for example, party regulation laws designate a specific percentage of party funding for women's party activities. When there is a new government after the elections, there are governmental negotiations which include the level of party funding that goes to political party's women's organizations (between 8-12 percent of general funding goes to 'women specific activities') (Kantola and Saari 2014).

<sup>xii</sup> See footnotes 2 and 3.

<sup>xiii</sup> These findings have the potential, in turn, to impact gender party activists' strategies.