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This chapter considers the implementation and effect of legislative gender quotas in the 2016 general election, a first for Ireland and a first for the proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote electoral system (PR-STV). It focuses on political parties and examines how they integrated the formal gender quota law into their candidate selection processes. Particular attention is paid to whether the law changed existing candidate selection practices, many of which are guided by informal candidate selection norms, such as a preference for incumbents and those exhibiting localist traits. The chapter concludes that the gender quota law did engender change in the candidate recruitment, selection, and election of women, but, as scholars of feminist institutionalism would describe, the change was 'nested' and 'bounded' within existing practices surrounding candidate selection, thereby denting but not dismantling the gendered norms of this process.

gender quotas, candidate selection, political parties, feminist institutionalism, electoral system

33

Gender Quotas in Ireland: A First for Proportional Representation by the Single Transferable Vote

Fiona Buckley and Mary Brennan

Introduction

The adoption of legislative gender quotas in Ireland provides us with an opportunity to examine a unique case study in gender quota research: the 'fit' between gender quotas and the proportional representation (PR) electoral system by means of the single

transferable vote (STV). Institutional fit between gender quotas and electoral systems is essential if gender quota reforms are to be effective (Franceschet et al., 2012). Of the handful of countries employing STV for national, state, or local elections,[1] Ireland is the first to enact a gender quota law. Research shows that in PR list systems where district and party magnitudes are reasonably high, placement mandates can be built into lists to specify the location of certain candidates, thereby facilitating a relatively smooth integration of gender quotas (Matland, 2005; Freidenval and Dahlerup, 2013; Krook and Zetterberg, 2014; Ballington and Binda, 2015). However, Ireland's electoral system is notable for its low district magnitudes, ranging from three to five seats, consequential low party magnitudes, and the alphabetical ordering of candidates, features that complicate the incorporation of gender quotas. STV further influences candidate selection in Ireland, turning it into a hybrid process involving party headquarters and their decentralized local units, where candidate selection decisions are determined by many informal requirements such as localism, incumbency, and geographical considerations (Weeks, 2008; Farrell, 2011). As research shows, decentralized involvement in party selection processes and informal selection procedures are not always conducive to diversifying candidate lists and *gendering* candidate selection (Hazan and Rahat, 2010; Gauja and Cross, 2015; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg, 2016).

Research on women in Irish elections has shown that when women are on the ballot paper, the mechanics of the electoral system are relatively female-friendly and conducive to their election (McGing, 2013). However, the key challenge for women is accessing the ballot, as the interaction between STV and political culture privileges a status quo of incumbency and localism, a process that tends to benefit male candidacy

(Culhane, 2017). Given the institutional configuration of STV, decentralized candidate selection processes, informal selection norms, and male-dominated party cultures, the operationalization of gender quotas in Ireland was considered a challenging prospect from the outset. This chapter examines the roll-out of gender quotas in the 2016 general election, a first for Ireland and a first for STV. A number of questions guide this enquiry, notably: How did political parties integrate the formal gender quota law with existing informal candidate selection norms? And what does the integration of gender quotas in STV tell us about the implementation of legislative gender quotas more generally? We conclude that the gender quota law did engender change in the candidate recruitment and election of women, but—borrowing from the language of feminist institutionalism scholars such as Fiona Mackay (2014)—that change was 'nested' and 'bounded' within existing practices surrounding candidate selection in Ireland, thereby denting but not dismantling the gendered norms of this institutional process.

From here, the chapter proceeds with an examination of STV and candidate selection in Ireland through a gendered lens, uncovering the advantages that accrue to men as a result of the male-gendered norms that underpin these processes. To reveal these advantages, the chapter is framed within a feminist institutionalism approach, an approach that recognizes that institutions can be both formal and informal, and are infused with gendered norms that shape their operationalization and act as powerful tools encumbering systemic change (Mackay et al., 2010). Our attention then turns to the inaugural roll-out of legislative gender quotas at the 2016 general election. Drawing from existing research and some original empirical analysis, we review the selection patterns of women candidates at this election to assess how political parties implemented the

gender quota law. The chapter concludes with a discussion of our findings and an assessment of what the Irish case study contributes to the study of electoral systems and gender quotas more generally.

STV through a Feminist Institutionalism Lens

There is general agreement in studies of electoral systems that the higher the district magnitude, the more conducive this is for the election of under-represented groups and minority candidates (Norris, 2004; Salmond, 2006). District magnitude impacts on party magnitude: the higher the magnitudes, the greater the number of party candidates selected, and the greater the number of candidates selected, the increased likelihood that parties will diversify their candidate lists enhancing women's selection and election prospects. Such activity tends to be associated more with PR lists than other electoral systems. In their study of women's legislative representation in twenty OECD democracies, over a fifty-year period between 1950 and 2000, McAllister and Studlar (2002: 9) found that party list systems 'boost women's representation compared with the use of any other electoral systems, including mixed and STV as well as SMD [single member district] ones'.

Studies of the gendered effects of STV and its impact on women's election produce mixed findings. Engstrom (1987), White (2006), and McGing (2013) find that the system is relatively female-friendly, pointing to its multi-member nature, district sizes, and lower thresholds for electoral success as conditions that are favourable to women's election. Galligan (2008) and Schwindt-Bayer et al. (2010) are more circumspect. In her study of women candidates for Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, and Labour in general elections between 1948 and 2002, Galligan found no effect of district size on the

election of women. Schwindt-Bayer et al. (2010: 707) concluded that there was no advantage at all in being a woman under STV elections in Ireland, finding 'no individual, party or district characteristics benefit[ing] female candidates more than male candidates with the same characteristics'. They advise that the negative bias against female candidates is compounded by the fact that 'female candidates are particularly challenged when they run in incumbent-dominant districts' (Schwindt-Bayer et al.: 707). While Schwindt-Bayer et al. (2010) may have found a negative bias against women candidates in Irish elections, concurring with earlier research on the issue by Carty (1980), Marsh (1987), and Gallagher (2003), work by Laver et al. (1999) and McElroy and Marsh (2010, 2011) concludes that while women are under-represented in Dáil Éireann, 'the actions of the electorate would not appear to be responsible' (McElroy and Marsh, 2010: 830).

If responsibility for the under-representation of women cannot be assigned to voters, then interrogating the supply and demand dynamics of women's candidate emergence and selection is necessary. The supply and demand model proposed by Norris and Lovenduski (1995) argues that two key factors—resources and motivation—condition the *supply* of candidates into the electoral marketplace. Resources include candidate background, experience, and practicalities such as time and finance, while motivation focuses on an individual's confidence, interest, and ambition in politics. On the *demand* side, an aspirant's desire for political candidacy is conditioned by the preferences and decisions of a party's leadership and selectorate. Thus, parties are referred to as gatekeepers, determining who gets to contest elections.

A survey of candidates conducted at the 2007 general election in Ireland found that 80 per cent of respondents (83 per cent of male candidates and 72 per cent of female candidates) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'not enough women came forward' (McElroy and Marsh, 2010: 831). This points to a problem of supply whereby women are reluctant to come forward as candidates. However, the same survey revealed that 29 per cent of candidates agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'Women are not given fair opportunities by parties' (McElroy and Marsh, 2010: 831), indicating that a lack of demand for women candidates by political parties or the existence of an unlevel 'playing pitch' for women's candidacy prospects is an issue. Whereas only 22 per cent of male candidates agreed with the statement on 'fair opportunities', more than 60 per cent of female candidates did. This raises questions over why women are reluctant to come forward for s/election and why a majority of female candidates feel political parties do not offer them fair opportunities.

Candidate Selection in Ireland

Prior to 2012, there were no legal requirements relating to candidate selection in Ireland (Buckley and Galligan, 2019). This changed with the passage of the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012, the first State intervention in the candidate selection processes of political parties. The purpose of the law is to improve the gender balance in Dáil Éireann, a chamber that has seen just 130 women elected between 1918 and 2020 in comparison with 1,211 men. The law instructs political parties to select at least 30 per cent female candidates and 30 per cent male candidates. Not to do so results in the forfeit of 50 per cent of State funding that political parties receive on an annual basis to run their operations (Galligan and Buckley, 2018). The quota, which is set to

increase to 40 per cent for elections from 2023 onwards, is designed to incentivize political parties to select women candidates but does not direct them how to go about this. Parties maintain their autonomy to decide their own candidate selection processes and procedures; the advent of gender quotas does not alter this freedom (Buckley and Galligan, 2019: 288).

In Irish political parties, candidate selection operates within a hybrid framework of 'local selection, but with national approval' (Weeks, 2008: 49). This dichotomous arrangement has resulted in power struggles between the national and local organs of the party, a struggle 'often portrayed as the battle between the forces of democratisation and centralisation' (Weeks, 2008: 48). While selection conventions take place at a constituency level, these are organized by party headquarters. Party headquarters reserves the right to issue directives to selection conventions, shaping selection outcomes, as well as reserving the right to deselect and/or add candidates. Internal party tensions resulting from candidate selection decisions are not uncommon.

Formally, the candidate selection processes of political parties do not favour any one person's candidacy over another, yet the informal dynamics and norms of candidate recruitment do. Incumbency, personalism, localism, and geographical considerations are all factors that party elites and selectorates take into account when making decisions about candidate selection. Prior to the 2016 election, little emphasis was placed on achieving socially diverse or gender balanced tickets (Weeks, 2010). Rather, maximizing a party's vote through the selection of a 'tried and tested' incumbent and/or a high-profile local candidate, as well as avoiding vote splitting through a process of vote efficiency (i.e. getting the number of candidates right) were the key determinants of a candidate's

selection prospects (Brennan and Buckley, 2017: 21). These informal norms of candidate selection are so ingrained in the political culture in Ireland that they are considered to be 'gender neutral, fair and effective' (Culhane, 2017: 48). Yet, when viewed through a feminist institutionalism lens, the male-gendered biases of these so-called gender-neutral requirements are uncovered. First, in view of the fact that the majority of incumbents are male, there is an immediate disadvantage to women, few of whom can take advantage of this informal requirement of candidate selection. Secondly, given that men dominate local councils, fewer women than men can benefit from localism as an informal norm of candidate selection. Therefore, incumbency and localism are highly gendered.

Gender quotas are a proven mechanism to increase women's descriptive representation in elected bodies. They are the most frequent form of affirmative action in use, and are designed to compensate for the gendered barriers that women face in candidate selection and election races (Krook, 2010a). These interventions can be broadly categorized under the headings of legislative, party, and civil initiatives, and it is argued that optimum results require the implementation of a combination of all three of these strategies (Galligan, 2006). The near global introduction of these types of policies since the late 1990s has been referred to as a 'quota fever' (Squires, 2007: 10), with many regarding the implementation of gender quota schemes as one of the most critical electoral reforms in recent times (Krook, 2010a; Krook and Zetterberg, 2014). The impetus for this wave of gender quota adoption was the UN Beijing Platform of Action of 1995, when governments and political elites committed to using affirmative action to eradicate gender imbalance in political participation. The adoption of gender quotas has contributed to an increase in the global average of women in parliament from 11.7 per

cent in 1997 to 25.1 per cent in 2020[2] Nonetheless, the extent to which gender quotas increase the percentage of women selected and elected varies across parties and nation states depending on such variables as the type of electoral system in use, the level of gender quota threshold in place, the use or otherwise of placement mandates, and the existence of effective enforcement mechanisms (Htun and Jones, 2002; Jones, 2004; Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2005; Matland, 2006; Paxton et al., 2009; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). More specifically, studies examining the impact of electoral systems on gender quota effectiveness find that quota implementation is most successful under PR, particularly when operated within a closed list with placement mandates, and where the district magnitude is at least seven (Baldez, 2004; Larserud and Taphorn, 2007: 8–9; Paxton et al., 2009). What is common across all these studies is the prominence of institutional context in determining the effectiveness of gender quotas, and given the discussion in the previous section, we know that these institutional contexts are infused with gender norms that act as powerful mechanisms, shaping the effectiveness of gender reform measures.

The Implementation of Legislative Gender Quotas in Ireland

The Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012 came into effect for the first time for the 2016 general election. It resulted in a near doubling of women candidates running,[3] and the number of women Teachtaí Dála (TDs) elected increased from twenty-five in 2011 to thirty-five in 2016. After the election, the proportion of women TDs stood at 22 per cent. While a long way off gender parity, a seven percentage point increase in women's political representation was observed between the 2011 and 2016 general elections. To see a similar increase, one needs to track twenty-two years and five

electoral cycles spanning the period 1989 to 2011. Thus, it can be argued that the gender quota law brought about *fast-track* change, a change that is all the more notable when one considers that little or no increase in female candidacy rates was occurring naturally in the four general elections prior to 2016 (see Figure 33.1 for details). So how did political parties meet their gender quota law obligations? Where were women selected to run? How did political parties integrate the formal gender quota law requirement with informal candidate selection norms such as incumbency? We look at each of these questions in turn.

[Insert Figure 33.1 about here]

Selection Routes

Across the four main political parties,[4] Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin, and Labour, a total of 245 candidates were selected, made up of 80 women and 165 men (see Table 33.1). Of the women selected to run, 62.5 per cent came through convention without a gender directive,[5] 13.7 per cent were selected at convention with a gender directive, and 23.8 per cent were added on by party headquarters following the completion of candidate selection conventions.

[Insert Table 33.1 about here]

When comparing the selection routes of women to those of men, it is clear that male candidacy still dominated at selection conventions: 86 per cent of men came through convention without a gender directive. It seems that the safety valve of the 'add-on' selection route was employed to shore up the female candidacy base. Mariani et al. (2021) find that in 2016, women add-ons were 5.3 times more likely to contest 'non-competitive' races than other candidates,[6] with this finding being largely attributable to

the fact that Fine Gael female add-ons were thirty-eight times more likely to run non-competitive races.[7]

Incumbency and Newcomers

Studies consistently find evidence that incumbency is a strong predictor of election (Gallagher and Marsh, 1988; Lovenduski and Norris, 1993; Schwindt-Bayer, 2005; Kittilson, 2006; Gallagher et al., 2011). The reality is that no political party will deselect a proven winner in favour of a newcomer for the sake of equality. As observed previously, the majority of incumbents are men, but when we review the gender profile of newcomers in elections from 1997 to 2016, we see that there is also a preference for men within this cohort of candidates, though the implementation of gender quotas for the 2016 general election saw a reduction in the number of male newcomers (see Table 33.2).

[Insert Table 33.2 about here]

The electoral successes of Fianna Fáil up to the 2011 election allowed the party to nominate a slate consisting of a majority of incumbents, which would go some way to explain the relatively low levels of opportunities for new contenders in that party up to 2011. The dramatic change in the fortunes of all parties in the 2011 election had varying impacts for the implementation of gender quotas in 2016. While the challenge for Fianna Fáil to find space for new women candidates was softened by the loss of so many incumbent men in 2011, Fine Gael faced the opposite test, going into the election with the highest number of incumbents in its history. There is little doubt that without a quota requirement Fine Gael would have been unlikely to double, as it did, the number of women on their ticket. However, as research by Mariani et al. (2021) demonstrate, female non-incumbent candidates for Fine Gael at the 2016 general election were less

experienced than their counterparts who were selected to contest the 2007 and 2011 general elections, were less likely to raise funding than the 2007 and 2011 cohort, and were significantly more likely to contest non-competitive races in 2016 than in the 2007 and 2011 general elections. This contrasts starkly with other parties, whose profile of female non-incumbents in 2016 did not differ significantly from those selected to contest the 2007 and 2011 general elections. It suggests that Fine Gael engaged in a *sacrificial lamb* strategy, selecting women with little political experience or name recognition to run against entrenched incumbents, thereby curbing the electoral prospects of these women candidates while simultaneously meeting its requirements under the gender quota law. This finding coincides with research by Brennan and Buckley (2017), who found that at the 2016 general election, Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil were more likely than other political parties to select new female candidates in constituencies with incumbents and in constituencies with low levels of marginality (either safely winnable seats or safely unwinnable seats).

Party Ideology

Ideology matters when it comes to the selection of women candidates. Parties of the left tend to prioritize equality and be more open to newcomers (Beckwith, 1992; Krook, 2010b). Table 33.2 demonstrates the effect of ideology on quota outcomes in the Irish context. It shows that political parties of a left hue had less work to do to meet the quota and were more likely to select women candidates in higher proportions than parties on the centre right.

However, when we drill down through the numbers we observe some variation in the selection behaviour of the parties that is not necessarily reflective of their ideological

positions. An implicit requirement of the quota is that fewer men must be selected to make way for a greater number of female candidates. This was the case for all but one of the main parties. Sinn Féin, a party of the left, and particularly vocal in its support for gender equality in representative politics, was the only party able to increase its percentage of female candidates without reducing the absolute number of male candidates (see Table 33.2).

The Labour Party's large electoral losses in the 2016 election included the loss of six of the party's eight incumbent women TDs.[8] We suggest that while the quota resulted in an increase in the numbers of women elected, its success was somewhat muted by the collapse of the Labour Party vote.

Location of Women Candidates

While the quota has certainly increased the recruitment of women by political parties, a review of constituencies shows that in one constituency, County Limerick, the option to vote for a woman from any party or none was not available to the electorate. In 40 per cent of constituencies (sixteen out of forty constituencies), Fine Gael selected no woman candidate, while Fianna Fáil selected no woman candidate in 45 per cent of districts (18/40). There is still some distance to travel, therefore, before parties can offer all of its supporters an option of voting for a woman (see Table 33.3).

[Insert Table 33.3 about here]

UN-Habitat, the UN programme that supports the development of socially and environmentally sustainable human habitats, notes that compared with rural areas, cities offer women greater prospects for political representation.[9] Recent US-based research suggests that geography has an effect on how voters react to female candidates, with a

significant number of the electorate in rural areas of the USA remaining uncomfortable with women in political leadership (Urbatsch, 2018). Similarly, a study of twenty-nine European countries by Sundström and Stockemer (2015) found that areas with high degrees of urbanization tend to elect more women. To examine if there is a tendency to select more women in urban rather than rural constituencies in Ireland, we ran a logistic regression. The results find no evidence of such a relationship (see Table 33.4). The coefficient for gender, while positive, had no significance. This was also the case for the incumbent variable. Thus, being a woman or an incumbent gives no indication as to whether the candidate is more likely to be selected in an urban or rural constituency.

[Insert Table 33.4 about here]

Did Selection Routes Affect Voting Behaviour?

Previous studies have found no evidence of a gender bias among the Irish electorate (McElroy and Marsh, 2010, 2011). It is worth exploring whether this remains constant in an election where women's candidacy enjoyed a high profile as a result of the discourse surrounding gender quotas. In Table 33.5 we examine the impact of the quota, as well as the selection route of candidates, on voting behaviour. To do this, we run a linear regression model using the first preference vote of candidates from the four main parties as the dependent variable. We include controls for the impact of socio-economic factors, using the Pobal HP Deprivation Index,[10] and employ constituency proportions of the yes vote in the 2015 referendum on marriage equality as an approximate proxy for liberal views (we refer to this as 'Liberal').

[Insert Table 33.5 about here]

The results show no evidence of the gender of a candidate or the selection route being related to the size of a candidate's first preference vote. Even the interaction variable of *Gender X Selection* fails to find significance at any level. Incumbency, however, is positively related to the size of a candidate's vote, as is membership of a larger party. These results are consistent with McElroy's research on voting behaviour at the 2016 general election. She found that in the main, the Irish electorate is not motivated by gender bias, with the exception of Fianna Fáil voters, who do appear to have a preference for male public representatives (McElroy, 2018). While voters, for the most part, do not exhibit biases against women candidates, it would be disingenuous to assume that the implementation of gender quotas in Ireland passed by without comment. The reality is that when gender directives were applied at selection conventions to advise on the number of women to be selected, there were accusations of 'gendermandering' (Bielenberg, 2016). Questions were also raised about tokenism. If we take 'current office-holding' as a simple measure of 'qualification to run', some 52 per cent of female candidates were office-holders at the time of their selection for the 2016 election, as was the case for 61 per cent of male candidates (Buckley et al, 2016: 192). This means that some 48 per cent of women candidates and 39 per cent of male candidates were not office-holders at the time of the election, yet while many women candidates were asked whether they were 'a "real candidate" or a "token woman candidate"' (Buckley et al, 2016: 192), male candidates were rarely referred to as 'token candidates'.

Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter has examined the operation of gender quotas in the Irish STV electoral system for the first time in 2016. The implementation of the new legislation had a

significant impact, increasing the numbers of women selected and elected. But gender quotas have neither replaced nor dismantled the prevailing norms of candidate selection. Rather, they have been layered into the established framework, coexisting alongside informal norms such as incumbency, and are now deemed another, albeit formal, consideration in the candidate selection process. This is a success given the fact that prior to 2016, striking a gender balance in candidate slates was largely ignored by political parties.

To meet their obligations under the gender quota law, political parties reduced their numbers of male non-incumbents in favour of female newcomers. The mechanism of the add-on candidacy route was used by parties to shore up their female candidates. Political parties could choose where to run women candidates, and there is some evidence to suggest that women were placed in constituencies where they effectively acted as running mates to sitting, usually male, incumbents, sweeping up votes to be transferred to the incumbent on the woman's elimination. Parties also continued to offer their supporters an all-male slate of candidates in some constituencies. Overall, the operationalization of gender quotas for the 2016 general election, and indeed their transformative potential, was 'nested' and 'bounded' within existing candidate selection processes. Political parties were able to meet their obligations without significantly upsetting the male apple cart. The male dominance of selection conventions is still clear to see, with 82 per cent of male candidates coming through convention as opposed to 62.5 per cent of female candidates.

At the time of writing in January 2021, research on the 2020 general election is still at an embryonic stage, but the evidence points to similar patterns of female candidate

selection as observed in 2016. While 2020 was the first general election on record where a woman contested in every constituency, political parties continued to present all-male slates of candidates in a number of constituencies. Furthermore, the add-on route was still relied upon to shore up the female candidacy base, for example, 58 per cent of Fianna Fáil's female candidates were added to the ticket post-selection convention in comparison with 21 per cent of their male candidates; the respective figures for Fine Gael were 44 per cent of female candidates and 18 per cent of male candidates (Buckley and Galligan, 2020). In total, thirty-six female TDs were elected in 2020, the highest number of women ever elected at a general election in Ireland, but only an increase of one woman since the 2016 election. The proportion of women in the Dáil now stands at 22.5 per cent, a record high, but nowhere near gender parity.

The gender quota law in Ireland does not specify placement mandates, stipulations that can be built into the law, advising where women are to appear on the ballot paper or in which constituencies they should be selected. Given the alphabetical ordering of candidates on the Irish ballot paper, placement mandates are unlikely unless the ordering of candidates is randomized. In 2013, the Convention on the Constitution recommended the randomizing of ballot papers for Irish elections,[11] but the government rejected this proposal (see also Farrell et al., Chapter 36). To overcome an issue where voters in some constituencies continue to be offered all-male candidate slates, or indeed prevent a scenario where political parties can avoid selecting women candidates in certain constituencies, the Irish government could learn from the Welsh case. In a 2017 experts' report on electoral reform compiled for the National Assembly of Wales, it was recommended that gender quotas should apply at district level rather than simply at

national level.[12] However, any moves in this direction should be cognisant of constitutional provisions surrounding freedom of association.

Our research shows that political parties were able to integrate the formal gender quota law into existing selection norms. We conclude that much of the success of the quota in terms of increasing the number of women selected and elected can be attributed to the financial mechanism built into the law. This served to incentivize political parties to comply. Without it, it is questionable whether political parties would have met their obligations under the law, as there is a sense that political parties did just enough to achieve the quota, as opposed to implementing any fundamental change in their selection process. The significance of enforcement measures to ensure compliance with gender quotas has again been demonstrated by the Irish case study.

Candidate selection under STV is regulated by few formal rules but many informal practices. As demonstrated in this chapter, many of these informal norms are gendered to advantage male candidate selection. In 2016, the primacy of these informal norms remained, resulting in gender quotas being layered into existing selection processes rather than fundamentally changing them. It could be argued that existing selection processes provide enough space for entrenched party and male interests to be accommodated while also facilitating the integration of gender quotas. Gender quota implementation in a STV system may not offer a best fit combination, but it can work, as evidenced in the near 90 per cent increase in female candidacy and 40 per cent increase in women's election at the 2016 general election. However, in the absence of placement mandates, strong political leadership will be required to sustain these advancements, combat male resistance, and ensure gender quotas are effectively applied.

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Table 33.1: Routes to candidate selection across the four main political parties in 2016

	Totals Candidates (*n*)		**Convention (*n*)**		**Added-on (*n*)**		**Gender Directive (*n*)**	
	W	***M***	***W***	***M***	***W***	***M***	***W***	***M***
Fine Gael	27	61	13	50	9	6	5	5
Fianna Fáil	22	49	8	40	9	7	5	2
Sinn Féin	18	32	16	29	1	3	1	0
Labour	13	23	13	23	0	0	0	0
Total	***80***	***165***	***50***	***142***	***19***	***16***	***11***	***7***
	32.7%	***67.3%***	***62.5%***	***86%***	***23.8%***	***9.8%***	***13.7%***	***4.2%***

Note: Total Candidates refers to the total number of candidates selected by the four main parties by gender, Convention refers to the number of candidates selected at party conventions, Added-on reflects the numbers of men and women added to the ticket by party headquarters, and Gender Directive refers to the number of men and women selected under a special party directive specifying the gender of the number of candidates the convention was to select

Table 33.2: Gender profile of total and non-incumbent (newcomer) candidates in the four main parties, 1997–2016

Party	Gender	Election Year									
		1997		2002		2007		2011		2016	
		Total	*New*	*Total*	*New*	*Total*	*New*	*Total*	*New*	*Total*	*New*
Right of Centre											
Fianna Fáil	**Male**	88%	82%	88%	88%	87%	78%	85%	79%	69%	58%
		(98)	(45)	(93)	(36)	(92)	(32)	(64)	(19)	(49)	(31)
	Female	12%	18%	12%	12%	13%	22%	15%	21%	31%	42%
		(14)	(10)	(13)	(5)	(14)	(9)	(11)	(5)	(22)	(22)
Fine Gael	**Male**	83%	78%	82%	73%	84%	79%	85%	80%	69%	37%
		(75)	(40)	(70)	(29)	(76)	(48)	(88)	(49)	(61)	(10)
	Female	17%	22%	18%	27%	16%	21%	15%	20%	31%	63%
		(15)	(11)	(15)	(11)	(15)	(13)	(16)	(12)	(27)	(17)
Left of Centre											
Labour	**Male**	75%	60%	76%	78%	78%	87%	74%	75%	64%	40%
		(33)	(9)	(35)	(21)	(39)	(27)	(50)	(39)	(23)	(4)
	Female	25%	40%	24%	22%	22%	13%	26%	25%	36%	60%
		(11)	(6)	(11)	(6)	(11)	(4)	(18)	(13)	(13)	(6)
Sinn Féin	**Male**	87%	87%	81%	81%	76%	72%	80%	78%	64%	57%
		(13)	(13)	(30)	(29)	(32)	(26)	(32)	(28)	(32)	(21)
	Female	13%	13%	19%	19%	24%	28%	20%	22%	36%	43%
		(2)	(2)	(7)	(7)	(10)	(10)	(8)	(8)	(18)	(16)

Note: This table shows the percentage and numbers of total candidates and non-incumbent candidates selected by the four main political parties across five election cycles

Table 33.3: Gender of all candidates by constituency across five election cycles

Year	1997		2002		2007		2011		2016	
	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M
No Wo/man on the Ballot	3	0	9	0	5	0	4	0	1	0

No. of constituencies where										
Fine Gael ran no wo/man	27	1	27	1	30	3	28	0	16	5
No. of constituencies where										
Fianna Fáil ran no wo/man	27	0	29	0	28	1	32	3	18	5

Note: This table includes the total number of candidates from all parties and none who stood for election by constituency in the five elections, thus indicating the number of constituencies in the past five elections where the electorate had no gender option on their ballot

Table 33.4: Relationship between urban/rural location and candidate selection across the four main parties in the 2016 general election

Dependent Variable: Urban Selection	
Gender	0.11
	(0.45)
Incumbent	0.49
	(0.43)
Socio economic	0.08
	(0.06)
Liberal	0.32 ***
	(0.05)
Constant	-21.29 ***
	(2.96)
AIC	175.50
BIC	193.00
Num. obs.	245

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Table 33.5: Regression showing the relationship between first preference votes and candidate selection route across the four main parties

Dependent Variable: First Preference Vote

Selection Route	-0.05
	(0.17)
Gender	0.12
	(0.10)
Incumbent	0.99 ***
	(0.11)
Selection x Gender	-0.09
	(0.22)
Controls:	
Party	-0.30 ***
	(0.02)
Socio-Economic	-0.01
	(0.01)
Liberal	0.00
	(0.01)
Constant	8.47 ***
	(0.47)
R^2	*0.43*
Adj. R^2	*0.43*
Num. obs.	*551*

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Note: The control variables ensure that the results for impact on first preference vote is driven by selection route and gender only, with the impact of political party, socio-economic factors, and culture being separately measured

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Notes

[1] Similar to Ireland, in Malta, STV is used for elections at all levels (parliamentary and European). It is also employed for Senate and many state parliament elections in Australia, for the Northern Ireland Assembly elections, and for local elections in Scotland and Northern Ireland. For more, see Carty (Chapter 18).

[2] Figures sourced from the Inter-Parliamentary Union and correct as of 1 January 2021.

[3] There was a 97 per cent increase in the number of party women, while the number of independent women candidates increased by 65 per cent.

[4] We use data for the four main parties only in all our calculations as gender quotas apply 1) to political parties and not to independent candidates and 2) the minor parties in Ireland are too small to statistically count. Thus, using only the four main parties' data allows us to examine the effects of the quota more specifically.

[5] A gender directive is an instruction from party headquarters to the party selectorate to select a specific number of men and/or women at the selection convention.

[6] Mariani et al. (2021) define non-competitive races as those in which the candidate scored in the bottom two-fifths of candidates in terms of the proportion of the quota earned in the first preference vote.

[7] In contrast, Fianna Fáil female add-ons were not more likely to run non-competitive races than other candidates.

[8] One of whom, Deputy Roisin Shortall, left the party and was re-elected as a Social Democrat Party representative.

[9] https://unhabitat.org/topic/gender-equality (accessed 13 January 2021).

[10] This index draws on data from the 2011 census and includes the three dimensions of demographic profile, social class composition, and the labour market situation in

each measure. It is available to view at: https://www.pobal.ie/app/uploads/2018/06/The-2016-Pobal-HP-Deprivation-Index-Introduction-07.pdf (accessed 3 April 2020).

[11] For more information about the recommendations from the Convention of the Constitution, please see: http://www.constitutionalconvention.ie/Recommendations.aspx (accessed 3 April 2020).

[12] In November 2017, the Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform recommended on p 132 of its report *A Parliament that Works for Wales,* that Wales should adopt STV and that the parties' lists of candidates in each electoral district should consist of 50 per cent female candidates and 50 per cent male candidates. The full report can be viewed at: http://www.assembly.wales/NAfW%20Documents/About%20the%20Assembly%20section%20documents/Expert%20Panel%20on%20Assembly%20Electoral%20Reform/A%20Parliament%20that%20Works%20for%20Wales.pdf (accessed 6 July 2018).