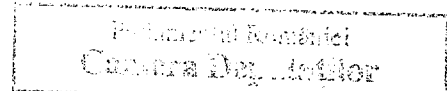


APROBATÎn ședința Biroului permanent al
Camerei Deputaților

din data de

22.12.2011

1388



S.P. Nr. 1388 din 22.12.2011

Parlamentul României Camera Deputaților

INFORMARE

**privind participarea la lucrările Comisiei pentru egalitate de șanse pentru
femei și bărbați
a Adunării Parlamentare a Consiliului Europei
(Paris, 8 decembrie 2011)**

În data de 8 decembrie 2011, la Paris, a avut loc reuniunea **Comisiei pentru egalitate de șanse pentru femei și bărbați a Adunării Parlamentare a Consiliului Europei (APCE)**, la care au participat doamna deputată **Maria Stavrositu**, membră a Delegației Parlamentului României la Adunarea Parlamentară a Consiliului Europei și parlamentar de referință al legislativului român în campania Consiliului Europei pentru combaterea violenței împotriva femeilor, precum și doamna Nadia Ionescu, director, secretara Delegației Parlamentului României la APCE.

În deschiderea lucrărilor prezidate de președintele Comisiei pentru egalitate de șanse pentru femei și bărbați a APCE, domnul Mendes BOTA, au avut loc dezbateri pe marginea proiectului de raport privind „Combaterea la nivel mondial a reacției cu privire la drepturile femeilor” al parlamentarei luxemburgheze Lydie ERR; pe marginea proiectului de raport privind „Promovarea Convenției Consiliului Europei privind prevenirea și combaterea violenței împotriva femeilor și a violenței domestice” al parlamentarului portughez Mendes BOTA; fiind adoptate un proiect de raport și un proiect de rezoluție pe aceste teme cu mențiunea ca rapoartele să fie prezentate în cadrul Sesiunii APCE din ianuarie 2012.

De asemenea, pe ordinea de zi a Comisiei APCE au fost prevăzute discuții pe marginea proiectului de raport al doamnei deputate Maria Stavrositu, „Bune practici pentru promovarea egalității de gen în partidele politice”, precum și cu privire la chestionarul care a însoțit raportul.

Parlamentara română, doamna Maria Stavrositu a prezentat în continuare un raport cu privire la participarea sa la Conferința „Tendințe curente ale evoluției mecanismelor naționale de gen în țările europene”, care a avut loc la Kiev, în perioada 25 - 26 octombrie 2011.

Pe marginea raportului „Femeile musulmane în Europa: pentru egalitate de șanse” al parlamentarei din Croația Mirjana Feric-Vac: membrii Comisiei au stabilit ca prezentarea proiectului de raport să aibă loc în cea de a doua parte a Sesiunii ordinare 2012 a APCE.

În cadrul **Campaniei Consiliului Europei de combatere a violenței împotriva femeilor și a violenței domestice** a fost susținută o alocuțiune de către parlamentara din Croația Mirjana Feric-Vac cu privire la participarea sa la Conferința regională privind „Modalități eficiente de prevenire și combatere a violenței împotriva femeilor și a violenței în familie”, care a avut loc la Bratislava, în data de 29 noiembrie 2011, precum și cu privire la participarea sa la primul seminar regional de promovare a Convenției privind prevenirea și combaterea violenței împotriva femeilor și a violenței în familie care a avut loc la Sarajevo, în perioada 24 – 25 octombrie 2011.

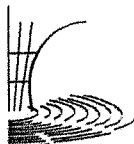
De asemenea, au avut loc dezbateri pe marginea proiectului de raport privind „Egalitatea de gen și statutul femeilor în cadrul vecinătății sudice a Consiliului Europei”, unde au luat cuvântul personalități de seamă, printre care doamna Khadija Mohsen-Finan, politolog la Universitatea Paris VIII și la Institutul de relații internaționale și studii strategice din Franța; membri Comisiei au decis să solicite Biroului Adunării să autorizeze raportorul de a efectua vizite de documentare în Maroc și Tunisia, pentru pregătirea lucrărilor sale.

În încheierea reuniunii Comisiei au fost stabilite locul și data următoarelor întâlniri ale Comisiei pentru egalitate de șanse pentru femei și bărbați a Adunării Parlamentare a Consiliului Europei.

Doamna deputată, Maria STAVROSITU



Redactat: Nadia IONESCU



AS/Ega (2011) OJ 8 rev03
6 December 2011
Aegaoj08rev03_2011

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

**Revised draft agenda 03
of the meeting to be held in Paris
on Thursday, 8 December 2011
from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2.00 to 5.30 pm**
Council of Europe Office, 55 avenue Kléber, Paris, 75016
tel: +33 (0)1 44 05 33 60, fax: +33 (0)1 47 27 36 47 (Metro Boissière)

1. Agenda

[AS/Ega (2011) OJ 8 rev03]

Adoption of the revised draft agenda.

2. Minutes

[AS/Ega (2011) PV7; AS/Ega (2011) PV7 Add]

- Approval of the draft minutes of the meeting which took place in Strasbourg, from 3 to 6 October 2011;
- approval of the draft minutes of the meeting of the PACE Network of contact parliamentarians committed to combating violence against women which took place in Strasbourg, on 6 October 2011.

3. Statement by the Chairperson

[Statements, AS/Ega Inf (2011) 10]

- Information on statements relating to the International Day for the elimination of violence against women (25 November);
- taking stock of achievements and results for 2011.

This draft agenda, addressed to members of the Committee and their alternates,
is the convocation to the meeting
Copy to Secretaries of National Delegations

*These documents are published on PACE extranet website (restricted area for PACE Members)
when they become available: <http://assembly.coe.int/extranet>.
PACE IT Unit staff (it.unit@coe.int) remains at your disposal for any technical assistance.*

4. Advancing women's rights worldwide¹

Rapporteur: Ms Err, Luxembourg, SOC
[AS/Ega (2011) 42]

- Statement by the rapporteur on her participation in the Ninth Information Seminar on Parliaments and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) organised by the IPU and OHCHR, Bern, 20 October 2011;
- consideration and approval of a draft report; adoption of a preliminary draft resolution, in view of an Assembly debate during the January part-session 2012.

5. Gender equality and the status of women in the Council of Europe southern neighbourhood

Rapporteur: Ms Saïdi, Belgium, SOC
[AS/Ega (2011) 40; final declaration]

- Exchange of views with Ms Khadija Mohsen-Finan, political scientist at the University Paris VIII and at the *Institut de relations internationales et stratégiques* (IRIS);
- statement by the Chairperson on the participation of the ad Committee of the Bureau in the conference "Women as agents of change in the South of the Mediterranean" organised by the North-South Centre, Rome, 24-25 October 2011;
- consideration of a memorandum.

6. Best practices for promoting gender equality in political parties

Rapporteur: Ms Stavrositu, Romania, EPP/CD
[AS/Ega (2011) 41, AS/Ega Inf (2011) 9]

- Hearing with Professor Lovenduski, Anniversary Professor of Politics at Birkbeck College, University of London, Fellow of the British Academy and Dr Saskia Ravesloot, gender expert, Belgian Development Agency;
- consideration of a memorandum and a questionnaire.

7. Muslim women in Europe: for equal opportunities [2.00 pm]

Rapporteur: Ms Ferić-Vac, Croatia, SOC
[AS/Ega (2011) 27 rev]

- Statement by the Rapporteur;
- hearing on the French law on the integral veil and its implementation, with Mr Julien Le Gars, Deputy Director for public liberties, Minister of the Interior, and Ms Nathalie Tournyol du Clos, Head of the Department of Women's rights and gender equality, Ministry of solidarity and social cohesion, France.

8. Promoting the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Rapporteur: Mr Mendes Bota, Portugal, EPP/CD
[AS/Ega (2011) 43]

Consideration and approval of a draft report; adoption of a preliminary draft resolution, in view of an Assembly debate during the January part-session 2012.

¹ The original title of the report was "Fighting the global backlash against women's rights".

9. Activities undertaken by members to promote the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

- Statement by Ms Ferić-Vac (Croatia, SOC) on her participation in the Regional Conference "Effective ways to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence", Bratislava, 29 November 2011;
- statement by Ms Ferić-Vac (Croatia, SOC) on her participation in the First Regional Seminar to promote the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Sarajevo, 24-25 October 2011;
- exchange of views on activities conducted at national level.

10. Feedback on members' participation in external events

Statement by Ms Stavrositu (Romania, EPP/CD) on her participation in the Conference "Current Trends of Development of National Gender Mechanisms in European Countries", Kyiv, 25-26 October.

11. Work programme

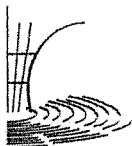
[AS/Ega/Inf (2011) 01 rev08]

Exchange of views.

12. Other business

13. Date and place of next meetings

- Strasbourg, during the 2012 1st part session of the Assembly (23-27 January).
- Strasbourg, during the 2012 2nd part session of the Assembly (23-27 April).
- Strasbourg, during the 2012 3rd part session of the Assembly (25-29 June).



Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

<http://assembly.coe.int>



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

AS/Ega Inf (2011) 09
28 November 2011
Aegadocinf09_2011
Original: English

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Best practices for promoting gender equality in political parties

Questionnaire

Rapporteur: Ms Maria STAVROSITU, Romania, European People's Party

This document is available on the Parliamentary Assembly Extranet website (restricted area for PACE Members)
<http://assembly.coe.int/extranet>

A report on best practices for promoting gender equality in political parties is currently under preparation in the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The report aims at identifying best practices introduced by political parties which can be disseminated and inspire similar initiatives in others.

The replies to this questionnaire will provide invaluable information for the Rapporteur to carry out her work and propose recommendations.

Questionnaire for political parties

A) Party membership

- A1. What is the proportion of women amongst your party's membership?
- A2. What are the main actions taken within your political party to promote gender equality?
- A3. Are there specific actions for recruiting women members?

B) Party leadership

- B1. What are the decision-making bodies in your party and what proportion of their members are women?
- B2. Are the procedures for the selection of leaders gender sensitive?

C) Internal party charters

- C1. Does your party have the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming as an objective in its internal charter ?
- C2. If not, is it being considered?

D) Women's conference/forum/wing

- D1. Does your party have a specific structure involving only women (a women forum, women wing, or similar)?
- D2. What are the main activities? Does it exist at the local, regional and central levels? Does it hold regular meetings?
- D3. Is membership of the women's forum voluntary or automatic/compulsory for women members of the party?
- D4. Is the head of the women's forum a member of the party's highest decision making body?
- D5. What proportion of the budget is allocated to this structure?

E) Finances and fundraising

- E1. Does your party allocate specific funds for promoting women's participation?
- E2. Does your party allocate specific funds for promoting women's leadership?
- E3. Does your party organise trainings on fundraising for women candidates?
- E4. Is the treasurer of your party male or female?
- E5. Does your party provide incentives to encourage women politicians to run as candidates in elections (including, for instance, covering child care costs)?
- E6. Are there figures on the gender allocation of party funds for candidates running in elections?

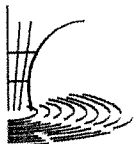
F) Electoral lists and campaigning

- F1. Does your party apply or has ever applied gender-related rules for electoral lists, such as gender quotas, all-women lists or zip-lists (alternating women and men)?

- F2. What is/was the impact of such measures?
- F3. Are/were these measures foreseen by the law or introduced voluntarily?
- F4. In the case of legally imposed measures, are sanctions foreseen in case of non-compliance? What kind of sanctions?

G) Media

- G1. Does your party have a media strategy ? If so, does this strategy cover gender mainstreaming and gender issues?
- G2. Does your party promote gender balance in the choice of its spokespersons?
- G3. Does your party have a policy on ensuring balanced access to the media for men and women candidates ?
- G4. Does your party take into account gender considerations when deciding how to allocate the time slots made available by the institutional broadcasting systems?
- G5. Does your party organise media training? If so, does it organise media training specifically targeting women party members?



AS/Ega (2011) 41
25 November 2011
Aegadoc41_2011
Original : English

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Best practices for promoting gender equality in political parties

Memorandum

Rapporteur: Ms Maria STAVROSITU, Romania, Group of the European People's Party

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1. Introduction

1. Gender equality in political parties is a precondition for increasing the representation of women in politics. While the issue of electoral quotas imposed by law has been widely addressed, the issue of measures to increase women's participation and representation within political parties, at their own initiative, remains widely unexplored.

2. This report will look at the latter aspect, with a view to promoting good practices and experiences. The findings will integrate the Assembly's previous work on the impact of electoral legislation on women's political representation. It should also be taken into account in the context of the award of the Gender Equality Prize.

2. Scope and methodology of the report

3. The present memorandum is a preliminary working document addressing only some aspects of the issue. My work will be developed on the basis of an exchange of views with two experts, Professor Joni Lovenduski, Anniversary Professor of Politics at Birkbeck College, University of London and Dr. Saskia C.I. Ravensloot, Gender Expert at the Belgian Development Agency, to be held during the meeting of the Committee in Paris, on 8 December 2011.

4. A key contribution to the report will also be provided by the replies to a questionnaire, to be circulated amongst the political parties which are represented in the Assembly. The main added value of the questionnaire is that it will enable me to identify examples of good practices drawn from practical experience.

5. At this preliminary stage, it seems to me that the report should cover at least the following topics:

- facts and figures (women's membership in political parties, women's leadership in political parties, existence of women branches within political parties);
- the internal functioning of political parties: between self-regulation and law;
- self-imposed gender quotas, zip-lists and all-women lists;
- procedures for the selection of leadership with political parties: are they gender-sensitive and respectful of equal opportunities?
- internal party charters on gender equality;
- gender mainstreaming strategies within political parties;
- access to political parties' financial resources;
- access to the media (especially during electoral campaign);
- media training for women politicians;
- the effect of financial penalties for non-respect of gender equality provisions.

3. Background: Assembly's position as regards gender quotas

6. The Parliamentary Assembly has consistently supported the introduction of quotas in parliamentary and other types of election. The most relevant recent texts on this subject are Resolution 1706 (2010) and Recommendation 1899 (2010) on "Increasing women's representation in politics through the electoral system".¹ As far as countries with a proportional representation system are concerned, these texts recommend:

- the introduction of legislation imposing gender quotas, ideally of at least 40% of female candidates;
- recourse to a rank-order rule (for example alternating male and female candidates);
- the introduction and implementation of effective sanctions for non-compliance.

¹ Other relevant texts include: Resolution 1780 and Recommendation 1949 (2010) on "Promoting the most favourable gender equality laws in Europe"; Resolution 1615 and Recommendation 1838 (2008) on « Empowering women in a modern, multicultural society » Resolution 1489 and Recommendation 1738 (2006) on « Mechanisms to ensure women's participation in decision making »; Recommendation 1676 (2004) on Women's participation in elections.

7. For countries with a majority or plurality systems, recommendations include:

- choosing a candidate amongst at least one female and one male nominee in each party district;
- gender quotas within political parties.

4. The internal functioning of political parties: between self-regulation and law

8. Political parties are a fundamental feature of democratic systems. They determine what issues will have prominence in the political debate and what candidates will run for elections. Affiliation with a political party is often a prerequisite for becoming a parliamentarian. Political parties act as gatekeepers of elected bodies, notably parliaments, and have a crucial role to play in enhancing the political representation of women.

9. Political parties have a great deal of autonomy in regulating their structure and internal functioning. Their existence is a direct expression of fundamental freedoms such as freedom of association, assembly, thought, which are recognised by modern constitutions.

10. Normally, the law does not interfere with the internal regulation of political parties. However, it may do so to protect the general interest or to ensure the respect of fundamental democratic principles. Amongst these, are the principles of non-discrimination and gender equality.²

11. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission have elaborated a set of **Guidelines on political parties regulations**, aiming at promoting best practices, applicable to any legal system.³

12. The Guidelines include 10 general principles. Principle number 5, on Non-discrimination and equal treatment, reads as follows:

"State regulations of political parties may not discriminate against any individual or group on any ground such as 'race', colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, sexual orientation or other status [...]".

13. The interpretative notes of the Guidelines recall the obligations to which states are bound, particularly under the Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women:

"Women are likewise guaranteed equal protection of all rights by a number of international instruments. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) requires that states take 'all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men'. Further, Article 4 of CEDAW makes clear that special measures taken by states to ensure the de facto equality of women "shall not be considered discrimination...but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards".

14. The Guidelines add that although not required by law, it is recognised as good practice that the internal functions of political parties also respect the principles of non-discrimination and equality. Such principles may include measures to ensure that qualifications for membership, candidacy and activities of the party provide for equal participation of women.

5. Positive action introduced by political parties (gender quotas, zip-lists and all-women lists)

15. Within the limits imposed by the law, political parties can introduce a wide range of systems to enhance women's representation. For instance they can adopt a quota system and decide autonomously how to enforce it. Other tools used to increase the representation of women are zip-lists, based on alternating women and men, and all-women lists. All these systems have an impact on the electoral results and interact with electoral legislation to determine the final outcome of the voting.

² Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), Guidelines on political parties regulations, [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2010/CDL\(2010\)073-e.pdf](http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2010/CDL(2010)073-e.pdf)

³ See above.

a) Nordic countries

16. Denmark, Norway and Sweden have been at the forefront in the area of women's political representation for decades. They have amongst the highest figures of women in parliament and in the government in the world.

17. The case of Nordic countries is remarkable also because equal representation is not demanded by the Constitution or the law. Instead, women's groups within political parties and the women's movement in general have managed to enhance the participation of women through political pressure.⁴

18. As far back as the 1920s, some political parties established a "women's wing" to influence and form opinions, as well as to conduct training for women members in political matters. Later, particularly from the 1970s, the women's movement applied pressure to all political parties, asking for quotas. The proposal met with some resistance, as certain parties viewed quotas as un-liberal. However, in 1983 the Norwegian Labour Party introduced the rule of a minimum 40 percent of candidates of either sex at all electoral nominations. The Danish Social Democratic Party applied a similar rule starting from 1988, while in 1994 the Swedish Social Democratic Party introduced the principle of "a woman every second candidate on the list" (zip-list).

19. Quotas were a major step in a more general process. As Birgitta Dahl, former speaker of the Swedish Parliament, said: *"We did not start with a quota system. First we laid the groundwork to facilitate women's entry into politics. We prepared the women to ensure they were competent to enter the field; and we prepared the system, which made it a little less shameful for men to step aside. Then we used quotas as an instrument in segments and institutions where we needed a breakthrough."*⁵

b) The United Kingdom

20. In the 1980s, all the UK political parties stated that they were committed to improving the levels of women's political representation. Most parties encouraged women candidates to come forward and called on local branches to give them fair consideration. However, the overall improvements were negligible, at first.⁶

21. A major improvement in women's political representation took place in 1997, when 120 women parliamentarians were elected to the House of Commons, doubling the number of women in parliament. This was primarily the result of positive action introduced by some political parties, namely the Labour Party's 'all-women lists'.

22. The policy of 'all-women lists' was, however, abandoned by the Labour Party following the decision of a tribunal which found that the exclusion of male party members from the shortlisting was in breach of anti-discrimination law.⁷

23. At the following general elections, held in 2001, political parties did not put in place effective positive action mechanisms for fear of legal challenges. As a result, the figures of women elected went down to 118 (17,8%), for the first time in over twenty years. The positive trend reappeared in 2005 with 128 women MPs elected (20% of seats) and in 2010 with 143 (22%).

c) Belgium

24. In Belgium, the issue of women's under-representation in politics emerged on the political agenda in the early 1980s. In the framework of Belgium's proportional electoral system, quotas were deemed the most effective tool to redress this situation. In 1994 Parliament adopted a law prohibiting political parties to form electoral lists comprising more than 66 percent of candidates of the same sex.

25. In 2002, a constitutional reform introduced the principle of gender equality into the highest level source of law. Following the reform, several pieces of federal legislation were issued to increase the number of

⁴ Dahlerup, D., Using Quota's to Increase Women's Political Representation, International IDEA, Women in Parliament, Stockholm 2002.

⁵ Dahlerup, D., *ibid*.

⁶ Gender and Political Representation in the UK: The State of the 'Discipline', Fiona Mackay, BJPIR: 2004 VOL 6, 99–120.

⁷ Meg Russell, Women's representation in UK politics : What can be done within the law?, June 2000.

women in legislative assemblies at regional, federal and European level. Non-compliance with these rules leads to the invalidation of the electoral lists.⁸

26. Against this background, a Charter of Political parties was adopted in Belgium on 23 January 2007 and signed by 10 Belgian political parties.⁹ The Charter's goal is encapsulated in the subtitle "Woman-man equality as permanent goal of Belgium's political parties". The Charter's nine articles contain standards to which the political parties commit themselves in order to ensure gender equality within their structures. The application of the Charter is not monitored by any specific monitoring mechanism.

6. Access to financial resources

27. Unequal access to financial resources is one of the major obstacles to women's active participation in politics.

28. Like all party members, women need financial resources to:

- develop their skills,
- network,
- campaign.

29. Without financial resources, women politicians cannot campaign successfully and progress in their political career. They cannot get a nomination for which they have to travel, participate in party meetings, network in their constituency and organise a campaign team. The lack of financial resources for women candidates can slow down their progression within political parties and therefore their access to elected positions.

30. Article 5 of Belgium's Charter of political parties includes a commitment to allocate more resources to gender mainstreaming within political parties: "*The political parties release according to their own budget, additional financial means for gender mainstreaming and/or for the functioning of the women or gender structures*".

31. In general, the function of **treasurer** of a political party still remains male-dominated and the practice of gender-budgeting is not yet widely used within political parties. The political decision to promote the participation of women in the political parties and in the elections needs financial implications in order to be fully effective.

32. In order to enable women party members to campaign, political parties may set up specific **financial incentives to help women reconcile their political ambition with their private life**. In order to campaign successfully, women with children would need to be able to benefit from childcare facilities.

33. The Fawcett Society looked at this issue in the United Kingdom and suggested having childcare costs included in the campaign financing covered by political parties. "*Assistance for candidates in financial difficulty and an understanding for candidates with caring responsibilities are essential if genuine equality of opportunity is to be achieved*".¹⁰ There is no doubt the reimbursement of care expenses by the political parties for the members in campaign alleviates the burden of campaigning on the family life of the candidates. The reimbursement of childcare costs when seeking a nomination as done by the New Democratic Party in Canada is a commendable measure.¹¹

34. The preparation of an election starts well ahead with the outreach to the constituencies. In order to campaign effectively, candidates would need to fundraise outside the political parties. **Women fundraising organisations** have been influential in raising and mobilising funds for women candidates in the United States. The American organisation Emily's list (Early Money Is Like Yeast – it helps raise the dough) founded

⁸ Report submitted by Belgium at the 7th Council of Europe conference of Ministers responsible for equality between women and men, Strasbourg, May 2010

⁹ The Charter of political parties of Belgium – Gender equality as a permanent objective of political parties in Belgium, http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/binaries/Politiek_charter_170107_web_tcm337-40333.doc.

¹⁰ Fawcett Society and Joni Lovenduski, *Experiences of Labour Party Women in Parliamentary Selections: Interim Findings*, London: Fawcett Society, 2001.

¹¹ I know politics – International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, *Best practices used by political parties to promote women in politics*, IDEA, IPU, NDI, UNDP, UN Women, 2009, www.iknowpolitics.org/node/10103.

in 1985 supports women candidates of the Democratic Party in the pre-nomination stage. Once screened and selected, a candidate would receive funding to start campaigning for nomination.¹²

35. Women face various obstacles when fundraising according to Julie Ballington, researcher on the participation of women in politics. "*Male politicians are better networkers, and manage to mobilise resources outside the political parties more easily.*"¹³ Women may also face a psychological barrier when fundraising and therefore need to be encouraged to overcome their reluctance to fundraise and be convinced that they can raise enough funding to win an election.¹⁴

7. Access to the media (especially during electoral campaign)

36. Allocation of media time during electoral campaigns is key to ensure the visibility of women politicians.

37. An example of good practice can be drawn from Timor Leste, where political parties with women high in their lists of candidates receive additional media time.¹⁵

8. Media training for women politicians

38. Political parties have adapted their media strategies to new media. With the development of the internet, social networks, blogs and online forums of discussion, men and women party members had an opportunity to be on a more equal footing when communicating information and launching web campaigning.

39. Nevertheless, both the new media and the traditional media (press, television and radio) perpetuate a stereotyped image of women politicians, commenting on their looks, life and family choices rather than on their programmes and proposals. While a male politician is almost never questioned on how much time is spent with his family, it is often one of the first questions asked to a woman politician.

40. In addition, when invited to news shows or televised debates, women politicians are often confined to soft politics. While men politicians are asked to talk about the economy, financial crisis, or foreign policy, women are more likely to be questioned on family affairs, education, women's rights or children. Journalists, with their questions, can contribute to strengthen a stereotyped view of women politicians.

41. Political parties regularly provide media communication trainings to their members entering into an electoral campaign. The strategies often include information on the use of the new social networks and the interest for a politician to maintain a blog and provide information about his or her activities via regular feeds to a twitter account.

42. Specific media trainings for women politicians have proved to be a good practice, providing them with advice and tips on how to use the media time allocated in the most efficient way and on how to avoid being trapped in gender-biased questions.

9. Sanctions for non-respect of gender equality provisions

43. The lack of compliance with gender equality legislation may have financial implications for the political parties. In France, the law requires an equal access for women and men to electoral mandates.¹⁶ According to the parity principle (*principe de la parité*), 50% of the candidates on electoral lists must be women for the municipal (towns with less than 3,500 people are exempt), legislative and European elections. Party lists are declared invalid if they fail to meet this standard for municipal, Senate, and European elections.

44. Parties face financial sanctions for not complying with this requirement for the elections to the National Assembly. **However, financial sanctions for political parties not respecting gender equality laws have not proved to be effective.** Political parties often prefer to pay these sanctions or have their public funding

¹² *Electoral financing to advance women political participation*, United Nations Development Programme, 2007, www.content.undp.org/go/cms-service/stream/asset?asset_id=1535234.

¹³ Julie Ballington, International IDEA, Paper on *Gender Equality in Political Party Funding* presented at the Workshop Is Financing an Obstacle to the Political Participation of Women? Inter-American Forum on Political Parties, OAS, Washington DC, USA, 16 December 2003, www.idea.int/gender/upload/OAS%20presentation%20JB%202.pdf.

¹⁴ Idem.

¹⁵ *Iknow politics – International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, Best practices used by political parties to promote women in politics*, IDEA, IPU, NDI, UNDP, UN Women, 2009, www.iknowpolitics.org/node/10103.

¹⁶ *Loi sur la parité*, 6 June 2000, modified on 14 May 2009, www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000005629480&dateTexte=vig.

allocations reduced. In 2002 and 2007, “the French Socialist Party lost more than 1.5 million Euros and the Union for a Popular Movement nearly 4 million Euros” for not complying with the law.¹⁷

45. The sanctions introduced by Spain’s Gender Equality Law of 2007 appear more effective. In case of non compliance with gender equality provisions, notably quotas, party lists are not validated by the Electoral Commission. Parties are given a short period to amend their lists. The implementation of these provisions have raised some controversy in 2008.¹⁸ In order to be effective, these rules require strict and consistent implementation.

10. Preliminary conclusions

46. As major players in the functioning of democracy, political parties have a crucial role to play in promoting women’s representation. They should make full use of the range of measures available to enhance gender-balanced participation in all aspects of their work, from internal debate to members training, from lobbying to campaigning.

47. Self-regulation appears to be the most effective way of introducing gender-sensitive policies, as shown by the example of several European political parties.

48. The most effective way in which political parties can boost women’s representation is the introduction of positive measures in the context of electoral lists (gender quotas, zip-lists, all-women lists). Such measures, especially quotas, can change the gender breakdown of elected assemblies dramatically, over a single electoral round.

49. However, they are not the only existing tool, nor the one that should be enforced first. The ground should be prepared through other measures aimed at enhancing women’s active participation both within the political parties and the institutions. For instance, women’s wings or branches of political parties largely contribute to support female members’ development and enrich the internal debate on gender-related matters.

50. The allocation of funding can play a major role in promoting gender equality. The repartition of funding for campaigning should be allocated fairly between women and men party members; in addition, specific funding should be set aside to support capacity-building activities for women party members. Parties could also offer incentives to enable women to stand up for election, for instance by covering the cost of childcare services. A rule imposing that female and male treasurers should be appointed alternately within the party could also have a positive effect on gender-sensitive financial management.

51. Media have a significant impact on the interaction between political parties and the voters and ultimately on the electoral results. Parties should be encouraged to choose women spokespersons, including in relation to hard politics issues. Training activities targeting women should include a substantial part on communication. During electoral campaigns, space and time slots made available to the parties in the media should be allocated in a non-discriminatory way.

52. The impact of such measures is strictly linked to their effective implementation. In particular, these measures should be enforced consistently at all levels, both horizontally – across local branches of a given party – and vertically, across the party’s hierarchy and at the local, regional and central levels of governance.

¹⁷ Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan, pippa norris and mona lena krook, 2011, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>.

¹⁸ www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=ES.